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Christian Mission and Natural Calamities in Nepal

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ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the role of Christian missionaries in earthquake in Nepal in 2015. It bases its research on qualitative research method as the tool to investigate and understand the role of church as a missional church. In doing so, semi-structure interviews are taken in order to collect data. Fourteen different people are chosen for interview – seven people are from victims and seven from the church representative. The church as a missional church and the overall role of the church in the world are the dominant theories in this research.

Christianity is a minor religion in Nepal. This research tries to analyze the base of Christianity in Nepal through its service to different sectors – education, health, infrastructure and cultural and social practice. It tries to present the social and religious role of the church in society and the responsibility of the church for society. It also observes the identity of church in a Hindu majority society. It also tries to analyze the responsibility of leaders of the church. It tries to understand the role of the church in society before and after the quake. It will also try to view the identity of Church in a multi-cultural, multi-religious society where the constitution has given the freedom after the new constitution of Nepal after the introduction of democratic republic of Nepal.

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Problem

1.1.1 Historical Background of Nepal

Nepal is a mountainous country situated between two giant countries, India and China. It is a landlocked country with the area of 1, 47,181 sq. km. Regarding the geographical location of the country, its latitude is 26°22' North to 30° 27' North and longitude of 80°04' East to 88°12' East (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015). It is small country with a variety of geography, culture, religion, caste, and ethnicity. Due to the variation of geographical structure, its climate also varies. The low land of Terai has a subtropical climate, whereas if you ascend to the Northern part of the country the temperature decline. It is the land of Mount Everest, the highest peak of the world. Nepal is also known as the birthplace of Lord Buddha who spread Buddhism in the world. As the variation of climatic condition, there is also the variation of people having different castes and cultures. The rich cultural diversity makes it as a unique place of the world.

Cultural diversity is one of the fascinating things one can observe in Nepal. Despite having a variation of geography, culturally it also represents a lot of variation. It is believed that there are two main cultural groups: Indo-Aryan and Tibeto-Burmese. The Indo-Aryans is believed to have migrated from India, and the Tibet-Burmeses from the Northern belt of Nepal from Tibet and China. The ancestors of the Indo-Aryans followed the Hindu religion, and followed the ritual of Hindu religion, whereas the Tibetan Burmese followed the Buddhist religion. Among these cultural groups it is further divided into caste systems, and people of the different castes have their own ritualistic practices. This is to say that Hinduism represents much variation regarding to the castes and ethnic groups. The Hindu traditions and rituals of people living in the Eastern part of Nepal varies from the Western part of Nepal. Despite having similarities, they do have their own ways of celebration. However, the rites and rituals vary from place to place within the country. Nepal is also known the country of festivals too. Within the 365 days they have 366 festivals; that is to say they have numerous festivals throughout the year. The major festivals, which are celebrated in Nepal are: Krishna Janmashthami, birthday of Lord Krishna, Indra Jatra, Dashain, Tihar, Chhath, Loshar, Basanta Panchami, Maha-shivaratri, Holi, Ghode Jatra, Bisket Jatra, Buddhajyanti, Rato Machhendranath, Naag Panchaami, Rishi Panchami, etc. (Turner, 2017). Some of the above-mentioned festivals are

celebrated regionally, for example Bisket jatra, Ghode jatra, Indra Jatra, Rato Machhendranath Jatra is celebrated only in Kathmandu valley. Similarly, Chhath is celebrated in Terai region of Nepal (Turner, 2017).

Climatic variation in this small country is really interesting. There is Terai, which is known as low land, and has the boarder to India has sub-tropical climate. Terai is also known as the food store of the country, which covers most of the food for the country. The diverse natural vegetation, hills, and mountains add the beauty of the country. Terai has sub-tropical vegetation, and supplies wood for furniture. When we look at the climatic conditions according to the altitude, then there are tropical and subtropical zones of below 1200 meters. As you ascend above 1200 meters to 2400 meters, which is the hilly region of Nepal, along with some valley, these areas have cooler temperature. As you ascend further from 2400 meters to 3600 meters it is called the cold zone; sub-arctic climate zone is followed by 3600 meters to 4400 meters and above you have arctic climatic zone (The Library Of Congress Country Studies, 2006).

Along with the variation of climate, it is also rich in culture and religious diversity. Many caste systems, rituals and other variations have made it a garland of different flowers. Hindu religion, which is the major religion of Nepal, occupies 81.34% of the population, Buddhist 9.04% of the population, Islam 4.39%, Kirat 3.5%, Christian 1.42% and 0.76% belong to other religions (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Being a country of diverse religious followers, Nepal has maintained religious tolerance and has got freedom of religion, so that people can follow their own religious tradition. Nepal has faced great political transitions from time to time. Before the unification of Nepal, after the introduction of democracy and the present democratic republic, there has been change in the laws regarding the follower of various religions. Religion is taken as the base of law and there has been amendment regarding the religion. Before, the unification, the government law was based on the Hindu religion. After the unification, the code of conduct, which is called Muliki Ain, enforced in 1854, which includes the customs, laws, uses, social norms, royal proclamations, including untouchability and punitive action for breaking of caste hierarchy making legal the traditional rules of the caste-based discrimination in Nepal was broken down (Thapa, 2015). There has been changed in the political situation over the course of time, which followed by democracy and multiparty system, which gave freedom of the religion. According to the 1962 Constitution of Nepal, the country was for the first time declared independent, indivisible, sovereign, monarchical Hindu kingdom. Religious freedom has been granted though, but conversion of religion was prohibited (Thapa, 2015). As the shift of time, Nepal shifted from democratic kingdom to a

federal democratic republic. The king who is known as the incarnation of Lord Vishnu was thrown out of the nation, and a normal citizen founded the state without the king. This shift of kingdom to federal democratic republic made smaller changes in religious law. However, after the people's movement, major changes in the way people viewed religion. This enforced secularism as a result of the political and social development. But before that Nepal was considered as a Hindu kingdom.

Along with the religious diversity, Nepal accommodates various languages, ethnic groups, and cultures. The diverse cultural artifact follows different rituals and rites, which is different for each caste, and which is different for various regions. It is small country having different castes, all with their own significant rituals. Different religious festivals along with the local festival throughout the year add to the diverse situation of Nepal. Along with the diverse religious festivals, it is also a country with a number of ethnic groups with their own language. However, the regional dialect is also prevalent with the same language. There are 123 languages recorded in the census 2011 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015).

1.1.2 Religious Faith in Nepal

Nepal is multi-religious country with huge diversity. According to the census in 2001, the Hindu religion is the dominant religion in Nepal, which holds the total of 80.6 percentage of the total population. The Buddhist population is 10.74 percent, the Islamist population 4.2%, the Kirat population 3.60%, and only 0.34 % holds other religions. Christianity holds the 0.45% of the total population (Dahal, 2003). After the introduction of democracy, different religious institutions got the freedom to spread of their religion, which can be viewed with the proportionate growth of the Christian population. The Christian population recorded 458 in 1961 and made a dramatic growth when it reached the year 2001 with the huge population of 1,019,760. Religious freedom gained its momentum after the introduction of democracy and equal respect of all religion was obtained after 2008.

1.1.3 History of Christianity in Nepal

The history of Christianity dates back to 1628 when Portuguese father Cabrai visited Nepal. But the actual growth of Christianity became possible when the Malla rulers gave permission to Christians to live in Kathmandu in the year 1715. Then, after the ascension of Prithivi Narayan Shah, Christian missionaries had to flee from Nepal in the year 1769 (Barclay, 2009). After the 1950s, the church started to grow again in Nepal. Nepal, who has a boarder on three sides to India, got influenced by Christianity, which was growing rapidly there. Many Nepalese

worked in the tea plantation in Darjeeling, which is on the Eastern border. During that time (1870) William Mac Farlane, who was a missionary from Scotland, worked in the Eastern part of India. He worked on education and with teaching the Bible. The translation into their local language was a historical event. Such an influence was also established from Australian Nepalese Mission (ANM) across the board when the missionary John Coombe and his wife Lillian established a base in Ghorasahan, Bihar. Another significant approach of the church can be viewed with the Ducan Hospital, which was established in 1930 by Dr. Cecil Duncan in Raxual, South of Kathmandu. After the introduction of democracy and the reign of King Tribhuwan, Christianity started to flourish in Nepal. Three different denomination of church have the contribution in formation of church – father Moran, a Jesuit priest in Patna, Bihar who established St. Xavier’s School on the edge of the Kathmandu valley. Other denomination of church arrived from Nautanwa got permission to establish hospital, which is also known as shinning hospital. Following the success of shinning hospital was extended to International Nepal Fellowship in Pokhara and further extended to other Western part of Nepal. United Mission to Nepal was started in the year 1951, which made the remarkable change in the society. Dr. Trevor Strong and Ernest Oliver were permitted to run medical and educational work, but open preaching of Christianity is banned. Despite of the hardship and continuous help finally with the assistance of American missionaries – Bob and Bethel Fleming (Methodist) and Carl and Betty Frederick (Presbyterian) got permission to open a hospital in Tansen and Clinic in Kathmandu (Barclay, 2009).

Christianity is spreading rapidly in Nepal. A survey done in the year 2001 showed that there are 2799 churches in Nepal. A total of 274,462 baptized member, which covers 1.5 percent of the total population (Rai, 2016). Ramghat Church was established in the year 1952 with the pastor named David Mukhia. After that other churches were formed in Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and other places of Nepal. Tir Bahadur was the pastor of Bhaktapur in the establishment in the year 1954. Following the year 1956, Rongong and Karthak’s small group came from India and became the pastor who developed into the Ishai Mandali in Kathmandu. Similarly, the other Christians of Darjelling arrived in Kathmandu as missionaries and started to work as a part of United Mission to Nepal (Rai, 2016). Their project was launched in a remote place of Nepal, which further helped to develop Christianity. This congregation helped to multiple the numbers of churches. However, in early phase of the growth of the church, there arose several problems regarding the legal authority to establish churches. But during the first phase of the growth of church (1951-1961), the Nepalese constitution did not give legal allowance for it, which hindered the official establishment of the church, but, however, United Mission to Nepal and

other organizations have been doing their charity work and have won people continuously. Economic problems are also a drawback for the growth of the church. The churches have been self-funded, and the congregations are autonomous. In this initial phase, there were no denominations of the church. The missionaries that came from India were only preoccupied with evangelic mission rather than focusing on denominations. During the period of 1951-1961, there are throne on the path of Christian followers. The government has not legally given permission for baptism and conversion (Barclay, 2009). Thus, Prem Pradhan who is the pioneer of Christianity in Nepal had to go to jail many times during 1960-1975. However, his strong faith continued. Prem Pradhan who was a former British soldier got his Christian training while serving in the army. After the introduction of democracy, Christianity rose and free from all suppression. People who had cases in the court were freed with the announcement of King Birendra. Today, Christianity in Nepal is growing in a fast pace.

1.1.4 The Role of the Church in Nepal

Disaster is sudden happening, which creates havoc and life becomes miserable due to its occurrence. Vulnerable situations can be predicted and minimized due to the modern advancement of science and technology, but no one can predict, when a disaster is going to occur. A disaster makes the society physically and psychological weak. To come out from grief and sorrow, one has to hold the faith in the superpower and has to look at the positive aspects of life. There is trauma and panic for the lost of humans as well as the property that we worked for our whole life but also have the positive aspect and faith in the God, which can help the victims to further their life. The Bible, the holy book of Christianity, has some similar faiths to tackle such a tragic situation: “An important biblical text that has shaped this understanding is found in Matthew 25: 31-46 where the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned are lifted up as being in need of care and attention. The specific diaconal dimension of this story, however, is the way in which Christian identity relates such action to Christ, and to his identification with those in need: ‘... you did it to me!’” (The Lutheran World Federation, 2009, p. 47). It focuses on help one another in time of need with what we have – physical, psychological and technical ideas that we have. We should always work to minimize the vulnerability and avoid the hazards. Church should also promote helping hands and teach individual for self-assessment and build the environment of co-operation and sense of brotherhood in the time to disaster.

1.1.5 Vulnerability and Disaster Situation in Nepal

“Earthquakes are inevitable, unstoppable and unpredictable geophysical natural events that occur on the earth’s surface. They have devastating effects and cause remarkable impact on lives of people” (Kapucu and Özerdem, 2013, p. 13). Everything was in tune and people were hustling and bustling in the crowded street of Kathmandu on the last week of April 2015. When the clock hits 12:50, the earthquake struck Kathmandu valley, which is the capital city of federal democratic republic country. It was a Saturday afternoon when people hurriedly moving around the valley with their daily activities and also enjoying the holiday for those who were involved in offices. All of a sudden, a heavy tremble was felt, and a noise all-around of the falling of building and moaning of the people in few seconds could be heard. It was a devastating earthquake with the magnitude of 7.8 on the rector scale, which collapsed the buildings, towers, historical monuments of nearby city of Kathmandu-Patan, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur. With the death toll of almost 9000 people and thousands of people all of a sudden being homeless and left within a miserable situation (Government of Nepal, 2015). Not only that, the situation also got even worse due to the weather of that time. The freezing cold weather added challenges to victim families. The victims were yielding for help, but few families had access of the goods. Goods, like blanket and tents, were distributed by the government, but not reachable to the poor and needy people. According to the home minister, “the government is trying to send the relief material to the victims, but due to the remotely situated village, destruction of the road by the earthquake and also the challenging weather, it is difficult to send the relief material” (Gautam, 2015). Children and aged people had to pass the shivering cold weather. With the blink of eyes the city was devastated. People feared to live in their house. All the people gathered in the open square and started to live in the tents. It is said that disaster blurs the boundaries between the rich and poor people. Thus, rich people and the poor lived together in the tent. It is said that, disaster comes without informing. As it was mid day, there were crowds of people who were ascending in Dharhara Tower and some were waiting there, queuing to get into it. The tower collapsed and people were falling in dramatic ways. Those people who were at the top of the tower fell directly to the ground whereas the people who were on the way crushed between the wall of the tower. One could hear the panic noise of the victims passing through. However, there was an earthquake for 82 years ago, in 1934. Despite the prediction and vulnerable situation of Kathmandu, none had given heed on it – neither the government nor the public. The citizens were not given any precautionary training about the disaster beforehand and aftermath. Thus, Nepal, who falls in the category of a developing country, lacked the capacity to recover from the aftermath of calamities. However,

organizations and donors were providing physical assets and grocery for immediate help. Despite the collection of funds, assets and property still the actual victims were living the life of extreme helpless condition. In this research project tries to explore the missionary help in the time of the earthquake in the Kathmandu and nearby locality of Kavre, Banepa. It also put spotlight on the church's role in mitigating the effect of calamities and the immediate help provided by the church. Moreover, this research will focus on the right-based approach of dispersion of the aid to the real victims and marginalize population. The research would follow the following questions:

- 1. What is the task of the Christian church in the world?*
- 2. How did the Christian church respond to the earthquake according to Christians?*
- 3. How was the Christian church responds to the earthquake perceived by Christians and non-Christians?*

1.2 Research Material

The material that will be dealt with in this research project is twofold: First, it is literature about the mission of the Christian church. I have chosen to read some material, which seem to be commonly accepted among many Christians. So the material is ecumenical in scope. This material is supposed to shed light on the first research question. Second, this project will carry out an empirical survey that is to shed light on the second and third research questions. Below, I will explain a bit more about the methodology employed in carrying out this empirical survey.

1.3 Research Method

1.3.1 My Inclination Towards the Topics

The researcher is Nepalese student in Norway. During the earthquake in 2015, many Nepalese lost their home and their relatives, which is the heart-rending instance for every Nepalese living in any part of the world. The researcher being Nepalese was touched by the incident tried to put some spotlight to the event and try to direct the missionaries and aid agency about the post-quake situation and would also appeal through this dissertation for the human help, which could be the great solace for the victims. However, it is the problem of Nepal, but as a human, all the people of the world should have common responsibility to help each other in times of need. With this research, I am stating that serve mankind is to serve the good. The researcher is not available in Nepal, but the sorrow of his fellow citizens can be felt thousands of kilometers away. The story of the Nepalese sorrow and what happened published in newspapers and other

media made the researcher to contemplate on the tragic situation. The researcher as a student in Oslo has also participate in the campaign of collecting fund in Norway through Red Cross Norway in the street of Oslo carrying the box in many days. He is overwhelmed and thankful for the servitude attitude of Norwegian and non-Norwegian immigrants in Oslo. Having such a servitude attitude of the foreigners drove him to do some effort and plead for the recovery of Nepalese people. This research would be helpful document who would like to see the situation of Nepal in the year 2015. This research would also shed some light on the missionary help from the Christian church through persons and Christian aids who not only live out their faith in words but also in action through their constant efforts to help human being after the tragedy. It is said that nothing is challenging and cannot be solve if we have the unify vision of serving each other in time of need. Because of the vulnerability and lack of human preparedness these kinds of uncanny events happens in the world with the avalanche of human tragedy. Due to the lack of knowledge and level of economy, it is very difficult for the developing country like Nepal to come out of the trauma easily. The citizen consciousness of preparing earthquake resistance home and overcrowded Kathmandu valley that resulted in maximum loss of the population and property. The government agencies have also lack the ability to check the unplanned town, which can be seen on the earthquake, which occurred in 2015. The failure of government organization in inspect to the tall towering and old houses in Kathmandu. This is not the first time this kind of earthquake occurred in Nepal, but what lacks is the policy of government is to take the situation seriously enough and be aware of such vulnerable situation. Not only that the political instability and responsible government may be the root cause of destruction. Through this research, the researcher tries to open of the drawback of government and minimize the happening in the days to come.

1.3.2 Qualitative Method

The research will utilize a qualitative method. Different organization and foreign aids are spreading their hands to put an ointment to the victims; among them the research will focus on the church and missionaries role on the disaster. The research would be an empirical survey in the place near and around the Kathmandu valley. It would also analyze the effectiveness and weakness of the church while rescuing and revival of the victims. It will also suggest the optimal suggestion for the church and missionaries to carry out the programs in time of disaster. As the research bases it finding on the ethnographic survey of the people affected from earthquake in Nepal in late April 2015. The data collection procedure was followed by interview of seven interviews from the local and seven from the church personal. I planned to

visit the affected part of Kathmandu and near places where the maximum destruction caused by the earthquake. For that purpose, I planned to visit the general store where the people were connected and who had more information about the locals about the happenings. As I met the first informant, s/he guided me to the others, which are what we call snowball method to get in contact with other informants. Regarding the accessibility of the church, I planned to visit churches in Kathmandu and will approach the church personal in different locality in the Kathmandu valley. As the research proceeds, I scheduled the time for the interview. Before that, I asked for their consent stating my research on that field. I mentioned about the research ethics and their confidentiality while publishing the result. Having done that, I asked their permission to audio record of the interview. To engage them in the research, I provided them little amount of remuneration for that purpose. The research carried out in two phases. First, the entire core interview was recorded. Second, it was transcribed and presented as the form of data. Those data were used to manipulate the findings of the research. The interviews were taken in English and Nepali depending on their ability to respond to it. The methodology of the thesis dealt with in detail in chapter three.

1.4 Research Structure

The thesis is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter, this present chapter, I introduce the general research design of this thesis. The second chapter gives an introduction to theory the research deals with, namely an understanding of the mission of the Christian church presented in the twentieth century by Christian theologians. The third chapter presents the basic methodology of the empirical survey that will be carried out. The fourth chapter four will present and discuss the data from the empirical study. And finally the fifth chapter will conclude.

1.5 Research Ambition

According to the mental health professionals the role of clergy seems limited in fulfilling the basic needs such as water, food and blankets, and they lacked the long time vision to provide the long term psychological counseling related to the disasters, which occurred in 21th century. For instance, Hurricanes Sandy (2012) and Katrina (2005) in the United States and an 8.9 magnitude earthquake, which occurred in Japan (2011) noticed the limited role of the clergy (Hirono and Blake, 2017). Regarding the active participation of the church, one research has reported that community played vital role aftermath of disaster (Hurricane Floyd 1999), but hardly none of church representative were found volunteering. People from United States and

Canada volunteered with the free will of helping other (Keller, 2017). This is the dark side of the church seen on the research.

Due to the Civil war in Syria, 150,000 fled to Jordan, 150,000 to Turkey and even greater number fled to Lebanon. During this crisis different basis need such as food, hygiene items clothes, blankets, etc. was distributed by the church in Jordan and Lebanon. The church is facilitating the people in the disaster for fulfilling the basic needs that is needed for the survival of the people in the affected region. This kind of servitude nature of the church proved the importance of church in any locality. That is the reason why the church is growing the world. Besides that church significant role was noticed during Typhoon in Philippines in 2012 where 900.000 people were affected with the death toll of 68. The church circulated 2000 volunteers for helping with the cleanup and providing basis needs items (food, sanitary kit, blankets, housing materials etc.). Similarly, it is well-known that the church played a significant role in Japan earthquake and Tsunami.

The church in different disasters seems to help the people to fulfill the basic need and seen in providing the help for immediate response but the long-term help for sustainable development for the recovery of the affected people are not noticed. People who are hard hit by the disaster find difficult to pave the way of life after the situation. Of course it is important to provide the immediate help for the people who are entangled in the crisis due to the disaster but also the church and Christian mission should also provide long-term skill, which would help the people to further their life. They should implant some life enhancing skill to affected area people who would not have to rely on other for other time. This life enhancing skill would make them proud and self-sufficient. It is said that if you donate things that it will be used and finished but if you implant the skill than it will never finish but grow in multiple ratio.

The main ambition with this project is to investigate how the Christian church in Nepal responded to the earthquake in 2015, and how people did understand the actions of the church as Christian mission.

CHAPTER 2

2 THEORY

2.1 Introduction

The word “mission” is derived from the Latin word *mittere*, which means “to send”, and it thus assumes a sender, someone sent, a place or persons whom the messenger is sent, and a task to fulfill (Goheen, 2014). By this basic definition of mission it can be said that God has a message to deliver, and that he has sent a messenger to spread it among people in the form of a missionary. Christians have used this word to describe the mission outside the church fellowship, to gather people into the church. Thus, Christians are to spread the gospel among those who have never heard about it. For centuries, the majority of Christians lived in Europe and North America due to colonial expansion. As Canadian missiologist Michael W. Goheen states, “colonialism and mission, as a matter of course, were interdependent; the right to have colonies carried with it the duty to Christianize the colonized” (Goheen, 2014, p. 16). He further asserts the role of missionaries often has been viewed in two ways: One who spread the news of Jesus Christ to the people and place where there was no witness. But at the same time missionaries have an important task to fulfill that is to expand the colony. These two go side by side and delude the missionary essence in the non-West where only the few number of Christians exist.

Goheen defines mission as, “mission as the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole person in the whole world” (Goheen, 2014, p. 26). In the year of 1963, this statement was announced on an ecumenical missionary conference in Mexico, which also operated with a distinction between *missions* and *mission*. Missions have sometimes been understood as a problematic word, which tells the story of expansion of cross-cultural geographical expansion of empires (Goheen, 2014, p. 26). However, through the gospel, through mission, the church tries to serve people. However, sometime it is taken as the expansion of empire. Back in history we see how the Roman Empire expanded its territory, and how it was often understood as mission. At some point Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire. Through the expansion of this empire, the Western church has influenced the rest of the world (Goheen, 2014, p. 145). But the issue of contextualization is relevant to understand in the expansion of the church. As Goheen states, “missiology must remain rooted in the gospel and the world of

God. But it must address times and places in which it lives” (Goheen, 2014, p. 29). Thus, the gospel spreads its root to other cultures, and the culture of Christianity merge with these cultures. Missiologists Stephen Neil and Kenneth Scott Latourette see the history of Christianity in various form of developments: It spread through Roman Empire (as a persecuted religion, as a state religion), it Christianized Europe (Germanic, Frankish, Anglo-Saxon peoples), it moved from Europe to the world (Roman Catholic European missions, Pietistic European mission, European / North American Protestant missions), and through ecumenical partnership it has become a worldwide church (trying to reach the unreached people) (Neill, 1986; Latourette, 1937-1948; cf. Goheen, 2014). A similar understanding of the history of Christianity is presented by English missiologist Andrew Walls who said that in evasions of the land there comes the culture of invaders (Walls, 1996, p. 28-53). At first the gospel took form in a Jewish cultural context and later it took form in other cultures of the world. Later in the part of history, gospel takes the form of locality. In other world it can be called as cultural contextualization of gospel. Similarly, South African missiologist David J. Bosch presents a notion of mission, which is shaped not only by church’s place and role in its cultural setting, but also by host of cultural and theological assumptions (Goheen, 2014). The concept of God’s mission was injected into the bloodstream of mission thinking by the global conference of the International Missionary Council at Willingen in Germany in 1952 (Goheen, 2014). By God being Triune we mean that God is God the Father, the Son and the Spirit. As the Son is sent by the Father, the Son has sent the church with the power of Spirit to continue the mission. The gospel is carried out in mission in order to spread the good news of God. To make it more clearly, we need to understand the formation of church from the sending of the Triune God. The ecumenical movement who gained the momentum in 20th century presented the insight concerning the inner-Trinitarian sendings of the Triune God: The Father who sent the Son; and the Father and Son who sent the Spirit and the Spirit further assigned church into the world. This network of Triune sendings justifies the role of church in spreading the message of gospel as it follows the commandments of the Father (Goheen, 2014, p. 57).

According to Dutch theologian Hendrikus Berkhof the formation and purpose of the church can be understood in three ways (Berkhof, 1979, p. 339-422): (a) It can be understood as an institution with preaching and teaching, sacraments and fellowship, leadership and diaconate. (b) It can be understood as a community, which serves as a network of responsibility toward one another. (c) Finally it can be understood as unity called to renew of all humankind, of all of humankind’s life and of all creation (cf. Goheen, 2014). Also, he asserts that the church should to preach the gospel and at the same time be involved in diaconate ministry and in

service of the people. He continues with the historical development of ecclesiology as – sacralization and secularization. Sacralization can also be called churchism focuses on institutionalization and work for the Christian only. Other group of secularization body of mission is focuses on solidarity of culture. According to Berkhof both the group are disobedience and betrayal (Goheen, 2014). He defines sacralization as the limiting the boundaries within the church. To further clarify it, the people of God should remain in the boundaries of the church, which is also called *churchism*. It is built on the foundation they only practice the institutionalization of the church – prayer, their language and their institutional practice. It seems that they are self-oriented and limited to the service. Whereas the secularization focuses on worldliness character of church, that is church should address everyone and departs from the previous notion of sacrament.

Missionaries have to face problem regarding the role they play and the theological foundation in which they have the stand: “Missional theologians believe that two major problems have developed in the western church, largely because of its once privileged status in society: western individualism and accommodation to the culture” (Boe, 2010, p. 4).

During the time of the Reformation, the Bible was translated and individuals got the access to it, and therefore the gospel could be read. In the gospels, it is mentioned that the Christian gospel it not only about the story of resurrection and death of Christ, but also about the restoration of God whole creation, including humanity. The message of the gospel embraces and includes the whole creation and the entirety of human life (Goheen, 2014). The meaning of the gospel, which is good news, is not only about the resurrection and death of Christ, but it is also about saving the human kind, about the whole creation. If the gospel and the kingdom of God is all about preaching and evangelization, then Christians have a superficial understanding of the gospel according to Goheen (Goheen, 2014, p. 95-96). He stands for the position that Jesus is not only concerned about spiritual matters, but also one who spreads peace and happiness through the good news. In continuation of this, Goheen introduces a distinction between a missional dimension and a missional intention, which states that there are something central to mission and something not so central. “Church is the mission there is a missionary dimension of everything that the church does. But not everything the church does has a missionary intention” (Goheen 2014, p. 82-83). By the intention of church he meant that the church should go beyond the frontiers of its own life to bear witness to the Christ as Lord among those who don’t know him. The above mentioned relates to the broad understanding of mission, that mission is about the whole creation and that mission is about the whole of the life of the church (Goheen, 2014).

2.2 Historical Perspective

2.2.1 The Ecumenical Movement

The ecumenical movement occurred as a matter of a debate in late 19th century. American theologian Thomas E. Fitzgerald states that the ecumenical movement is the quest of Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Old Catholic, and most Protestant churches for the reconciliation and the restoration of their visible unity in faith, sacramental life, and witness in the world (Fitzgerald, 2004). The ecumenical movement has been organized by the World Council of Churches from 1948. The Roman Catholic Church has never been member of the World Council of Churches, but has been involved in its work. The ecumenical movement has brought together churches discussing integration of the church worship and practice. The present general secretary, Olav Fykse Tveit, has emphasized the term pilgrimage, which was further accentuated by Konrad Raiser at the Harare Assembly: “Konrad Raiser quoted a few sentences: We are challenged by the vision of a church, the people of God on the way together, confronting all divisions of race, gender, age or culture, striving to realize justice, peace, upholding the integrity of the creation” (Gardan, 2016, p. 60). Raiser gave the term *pilgrimage* multiple logic. Firstly, he saw it as an open-ended concept, which allow its goal to be more dynamic. Secondly, the ecumenical movement is a polycentric network of diverse partners, churches, organizations and movement of Christian people on regional, national and global level (Gardan, 2016, p. 62). The World Council of Churches gave a new vision of ecumenical movement. In effect of that movement, as mentioned, the World Council of Churches was formed in 1948. Similarly, there is another organization formed names as Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom in 1857, which put forward its view for the unity of the church.

In the ecumenical movement there has been a long debate about the mission and church. For many years these aspects were disintegrated. The father of the modern mission movement William Carey encouraged his contemporary Christian to participate in world mission. This appealed is to many Christians in Germany and England (Nikolajsen, 2015). Hence, we see a dispute among church leader on the integration of church and mission. At a world mission conference in 1910 in Edinburgh and in 1928 in Jerusalem we see a division of church and mission. The mission bodies were assigned to proclaim and be in charge of the spread of gospel in foreign country, whereas the church was seen to uphold and sustain the already converted Christian West and also to support the foreign mission. In 1938 in Tambaram, India, the world mission conference was pre-occupied with an exposition of theological relationship between church and mission (Nikolajsen, 2015). The important thing is that this conference established

the relation of the church and mission. It states that mission is the part of the church. This very thing is also mentioned in the writings of Lesslie Newbigin. There came a huge debate at the conference of Willingen in 1952. Because one report did not accept the inclusion of mission in the church, but another report established a connection between church and mission. It also established a notion that God is in and works through the church in order to reach out to the world. This was important according to the report, but it was less significant how God was working in the world. By the mid of the twentieth century, church and mission was integrated (Nikolajsen, 2015). In late eighteenth century, the father of the modern mission movement William Carey appealed to many church leaders in Germany and England to participate in world mission. Before that, official churches were not ready to accept the church to do any missional task (Nikolajsen, 2015). By the beginning and middle twentieth century the church and mission was reintegrated. The last decade we have seen the church taking a turning point and now church and mission have agreed to work together and have even been integrated to some extent. Before that, the church's role was to spread the gospel in foreign countries and mission's role is to uphold and sustain the already converted Christian in the so-called Christian West (Nikolajsen, 2015).

2.2.2 Lesslie Newbigin

Newbigin was born on the 8th of December 1909. He travelled to India in the 1936. He became the bishop over Madurai and Ramnad of South India. During that time, there was a colony of British Empire there and missionaries were the part of it. One of his major contributions to the field of missiology is the advancement of missional ecclesiology. His second major contribution is the furthering of reflections on mission in the Western world. Hence, he is known as an influential writer who wrote about de-Christianization of the Western world. Newbigin's position was developed as a reaction to modern missionary movement in which mission and church were seen as two different entities. The role of a mission was seen to proclaim the gospel in foreign countries, whereas the church was only to support the mission in the foreign countries, and then maintaining the churches in the Christian West (Nikolajsen, 2015). His efforts made the reintegration between the church and mission possible. His position was also developed because of the secularization of the West. He disclosed the delusion of the concept of the Christian West, which is also called the de-establishment of Western Christendom. Newbigin stated that Christianity began in the Roman Empire, which was surrounded by many religious societies making claim to offer personal salvation to their member through variety of teaching and disciple (Nikolajsen, 2015). He made another striking

point regarding the Christianized world and non-Christianized world, as he stated that mission in the Western Christendom was left out of sight because the whole community was baptized people (Nikolajsen, 2015). He blamed the Western churches for not supporting the mission. The church and mission have been separated and as a result the missionary act was declined. Newbigin states the problem of Christendom was affected by Reformation theology with showed little interest in mission. Here, the church became a community with functioned as a religious department in the European society. To clarify it, Newbigin stated that today the church became allied with the established power and lost its prophetic critical stance toward society (Nikolajsen, 2015). Newbigin stated that Christendom led to the distinction between church and mission and this was negative, yet Christendom can also be viewed as an attempt of the church to Christianize the world. Thus, the Constantinian settlement was “the first great attempt to translate the universal claim of Christ in political term” according to Newbigin (Nikolajsen, 2015, p. 31). Newbigin states that the role of the church varies in the course of time. Now, in the West the church should be engaged in mission and carry out a prophet voice in society.

2.2.3 Missional Church Movement

Initially church and mission were taken as two different entities. Later it is used as conjoined word missional church, which was contributed by the researchers after the publication of the book titled *Missional Church* (1998). The researcher coined the term *missional* which was the influence of the language of Vatican II. Also, the phrase *the church as pilgrimage* became important to express the missionary by nature of the church (Van Aarde, 2017).

The term *missional* signals that the church is sent to fulfill a mission. Quickly the following questions arose: What is the mission? And who are sent? Its meaning of mission is: “it is the call of all Christians to actively live out a missional lifestyle through service, through a lifestyle which affirms a conscious decision to proclaim the gospel” (Van Aarde, 2017, p. 2). This statement refers to encourage all the different denominations of Christianity to unify through the common goal to spread the message of the gospel and should be ready for the service in a missional lifestyle. The church can be understood in two forms: “church as institute and organism with its members function as an organic church sent out on a mission by the institutional church has informed the Reformed perspective of mission through the influence of Abraham Kuyper” (Van Aarde, 2017, p. 4). Then two important years are noted down in the development of missional ecclesiology, namely 1952 and 1998. 1952 was the year when the Willingen meeting of the International Missionary Council was held. Similarly, 1998 is

historical because of the publication of the book *Missional Church: A Vision for Sending of the Church in North America* (Goheen, 2011). With these groundbreaking dialogues the way to the missional church was paved. The former meeting established the church's identity as to be found in the role it played in God's mission, whereas in 1998 the significant publication employ the term missional church instead of missionary (Goheen, 2011).

Mission and church are two key words here in the discussion: "Mission is not a segment of the church's life; rather, the church exists in the world to participate in God's mission of calling the world to Himself through faith in Jesus Christ (John 17:13-23)" (Boe, 2010, p. 4) These two components were integrated partly by the ecumenical movement and partly with Newbigin, but especially with the missional church movement, which has been promoted by the North American academic network called the Gospel and Our Culture Network. This network published in 1998 the important book *Missional Church*. Canadian missiologist Alan J. Roxburgh has mentioned the characteristics of missional church as follows: (a) Western society as mission field, (b) mission is about *missio Dei*, (c) missional church is about the nature and purpose of the church and (d) the church as a contrast society (Roxburgh, 2004). According to Roxburgh the church is formed around a set of beliefs and practices, which continually form and which make up a particular culture in which people can be invited into (Roxburgh, 2004). The church in Western society should be engaged in the practice of evangelism and should be aware that it exists in the context in which people generally take it for granted that the Christian story is a normative, regulative part of the cultural backdrop within, which they live (Roxburgh, 2004). Roxburgh also states that the theology of *missio Dei* is about the theocentric rather than anthropocentric understanding of mission. The focus is on what God is doing in the world. The focus is on Jesus' life, death and resurrection, as the apocalyptic engagement of God with the world, breaks into creation in order to call forth that which was promised from the beginning – that in this Jesus all things will be brought back together and made new (Roxburgh, 2004).

2.3 Theological Perspective

An important theological perspective of mission was established by Newbigin, who borrowed the term from Gospel of John, namely "as the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (Goheen, 2014, p. 57). The concept of Trinity – the Father, the Son and the Spirit – shows that God has sent the Son and the Spirit into the world. "Missional theology builds on the understanding that God is Trinity and missional. Mission is participation in the life of God. It is to be caught up within the dynamic sending and being sent that God the Holy Trinity has done and continues

to do” (Niemandt, 2012, p. 2). Thus, there should be a missionary dimension to our understanding of the Son, the Spirit and the church, and also a missionary dimension implicit to the preaching, teaching ministry, diaconate, catechesis and liturgy of the church. Historically speaking, some parts of the Christian church wanted to send missionaries to the third world, and wanted to send money, which could solve the local problems. Today, Christians believe that God has command all to go out on mission. It says that the Father has sent the Son that help people to belief that God is present in the time of difficulties (Hale, 1995). Christians are given certain tasks to perform, being the church. As mentioned by Bosch, missionaries have two-fold of duty: “Within the context of theological disciplines, missiology performs a critical function by continuously challenging theology to be *theologia viatorum* – that is, in its reflecting on the faith theology is to accompany the gospel on its journey through the nations and through the time” (Bosch, 1991, p. 496). However, there is not a strict rule mentioned in the Bible for the way that mission is to be conducted, but Christians should have missional responsibility and apply this in various ways. Bosch also adds that mission is an inter-subjective reality in which missiologists, missionaries, and people among whom they labor are all partners (Bosch, 1991, p. 497). Here is another striking issue in the book of Bosch about what is missiology is: “theology is not itself proclamation of the message, but reflection on message on its proclamation. I do not in itself mediate the missionary vision; it critically examines it” (Bosch, 2010, p. 320). So Christian should be involved in mission and at the same time critically examines their own mission. “A missional theology does theology by focusing on global, local and particular issues with the intention of doing something about the reality and problems confronting society. It does this because God, in God’s coming to us in and through Jesus Christ, initiated something that changed people and formed them into a missional community of people called to love God and their neighbour” (Hendriks, 2009, p. 1013).

Another proponent thinker American missiologist Donald Anderson McGavran has stated that, “if effective mission was to take place, it must take place through planting churches within their particular context” (in Tucker, 2003, 24). He also believe in homogeneous unite principle. He believes that “mankind should not be viewed as one undifferentiated whole, but in differentiated whole but in different social structure” (Tucker, 2003, p. 24). To further clarify there should not be barrier in the society regarding race, class, ethnicity in order of evangelize the people.

2.3.1 God as a Missional God

God has a mission for his creation. Thus, mission has become a buzzword in the present world. It is difficult to distinguish mission and church. The preaching done by the church along with the social aspect of the work of the church can be combined as mission. The Orthodox Christians who understand the church as having a sole responsibility of evangelize the non-Christians, and thus limits the function of mission. This reflects an insight, which was brought about by Newbigin who worked as the missionary in South India and spread the gospel to the people there. Because a missionary God is the subject of mission, Christians' activities originate from and are directed toward God. This is founded in the Trinity – the Father, the Son and the Spirit has sent Christians to serve human beings (Goheen, 2010). God is a missionary God who sends a missionary church. In fact, a survey of the term “sending” in its various forms in Scripture reveals the missionary nature of the Triune God, as well as the very essence of the church. The church is a sent people and is sent as a community in order to witness to God's presence and work in the world. The church is God's instrument sent into the world to participate in God's redemptive mission. God's primary activity in the world is *through* the church.

2.3.2 Church as a Missional Church

The church is a chosen people who spread the God's message. The very nature of the church is now been regarded a missional by many. American theologian John Howard Yoder asserts that God as revived from death and that all power has been given to him and now he reigns until all his enemies are brought into subjection (Nikolajsen, 2015). He makes this statement, which open up ground for the world mission of church to evangelize and free the people from sin. God has taken the form of Jesus who is here in the earth to spread the gospel. As a missionary the church is doing its work in the name of God and everything it does is directed toward God's mission, both its preaching, its evangelization and its diaconal work. There lies the existence of the church. Thus, the church should witness to society and therefor has a public role in society. Church as a missional church has to do with the word mission. In general understanding of the word “mission”, it refers to something that “the church does to bring the gospel to the other part of the world or to unbelievers” (Goheen, 2005, p. 2). This very statement refers to spread the gospel to world who have not yet receive it. This is the limited point of view of looking the mission as the part of the church. But in Broader sense, it is taken as, “evangelism, service projects, church-planting, cross-cultural missions and the like are

certainly parts of the missional calling of the church, a missional hermeneutic assumes a much broader and deeper understanding of mission” (Goheen, 2005, p. 2).

2.3.3 Missional Church in Practice

As we have seen, there has been a long debate about the church and mission. Coming across different huddles, the nature of church is now understood as mission. However, the mission of God should be the subject of all the activities that is performed by the church. Lately, the definition of church has been transformed and a missional outcome has been accepted. The church therefore can be called a community of God in the midst of society existing for mission in the world (Roxburgh, 2004). The gospel is the foundation of the church. The church anticipates the eschatological future of all created things through the power of the Spirit. The calling of God is beyond the personal need. The call of God is a vocation for the sake of the world, not one’s own personal needs according to Roxburgh (Roxburgh, 2004). He asserts that the point is that God’s mission in the world has two folds, one of the cultural context and one of the purposes of God in the world revealed by Jesus Christ and his gospel. These two folds of the understanding of the role of the church helps the church to be in the world, but on of the world. He further ascertains the fact that the church is the called-out community of God in the midst of a specific culture. Thus, the church is treated as an *ecclesia*, a called-out assembly whose public life is a sign, witness, foretaste and instrument to which God is inviting all creation into in Jesus Christ (Roxburgh, 2004). Roxburgh finds a contrast of the missional church in the church’s form in a multicultural society like North America, which is shaped by modernism and postmodernism. Here, the church is formed around a set of beliefs and practice that continually shape its way of life, which cannot be derived from the gospel. Sometimes the church much therefore be embodied as a contrast culture (Roxburgh, 2004).

The book *Missional Church* argues that mission lies at the very centre of the nature and identity of the church. It goes on to then identify five key elements in a missional ecclesiology: (1) missional ecclesiology is biblical and must be grounded in what the Bible; (2) missional ecclesiology is historical and must build on and take account of the historical developments and reflections on the church; (3) missional ecclesiology is contextual and will develop within particular cultural contexts and seek to be faithful and relevant within those contexts; (4) missional ecclesiology is eschatological which will drive the church to be dynamic in its movement toward the consummation of all things; and (5) missional ecclesiology must be practiced and therefore the missional understanding of the nature of the church must be translated into practice(s) (Guder, 1998, p. 11-12; Sheridan, 2013, p. 4). By this definition of

the missional ecclesiology, the church has multiple roles to exhibit. It should have historical development, should reflect the cultural context. “The church is regarded as a dynamic cultural expression of Christ’s followers in any given place, and its incarnation witness thereby enfleshes the presence of Jesus Christ in the world” (Cheung, 2012, p. 190). Through the church the people in the community are realized physically that the Christ is addressing their problem. To elaborate it, the church should be active in such a way that people would believe that there is the presence of Christ in their dealing.

2.3.3.1 Missional church in practice in Nepal

Nepal is the small mountainous country with the majority of Hindu population. Being the minority religion, Christian people are doing their effort best to uplift the life standard of the people. Tear fund is the Christian based organization who is working with the motif of Christian belief to meet the practical need of the people of Nepal: “Sagoal are working with local churches, to help them challenge stigma and become agents for positive change in their communities. Local government is listening and providing the services to those living in poverty so desperately need” (Tearfund, 2018, p. 2). The “sagoal” project is conducted by the church and the community, which brings hope to the community people to reduce the poverty and move forward with the spiritual bonding. The project aims at providing practical training such as literacy, hygiene and sanitation, agriculture, small business development etc. This type of training has build the confidence in the people in the community to meet the basic requirements and tackle with the poverty. It also encourages people to increase the local food production by providing training related to the agriculture. Small-scale businesses are promoted through the effort of the sagoal movement conducted by tear fund. It also started saving and credit groups, which would be helpful for their community to invest money in their small-scale business. Moreover it provides the adult literacy to the community people (Tearfund, 2018).

2.4 Conclusion

This theoretical chapter has dealt with some issues, which has debated about the mission of the church, the role of the church, and how this has been understood in different periods. The church is a chosen people built on the gospel and who is to spread the good news. But back in history this definition was not accepted. However, in the early church period, the church was responsible for the spread of the gospel among other people. It focuses on evangelism, preaching and teaching of the gospel. Later, the church was limited to its own domain, to the

activities that were done within the church. This concept is also called the churchism. Later, in the 19th century, when ecumenical movement started, the idea came up that all church denominations should have a visible unity of their faith and that they should reconcile. This movement focuses on reconciliation and restoration of churches' visible unity in faith, sacrament life and witness of the world. In the growth of this movement churches, new understanding developed: The Western world as mission field, the concept of *missio Dei*, the nature and purpose of the church as missional. Thus, new theological insights developed with the growth of the ecumenical movement. The church was now to be rooted in an understanding of the Trinity. Moreover, the church should also have a contextual form. It should also respect the context where it practiced its faith. It should also merge within the culture of the particular place. One thing the church has learned is the missiological foundation of church and that it should not only participate in proclamation, but it should also reflect on its proclamation. Today, as we have seen, there exists a widespread acceptance of the obligation of the church to be engaged in mission. This implies the church communicating the gospel, but also the church to be engaged in helping people where there is need. Therefore, theoretical chapter shed light on the role of the Christian church during the earthquake in Nepal in April 2015. This chapter shows how Christians are informed about their action during a disaster.

CHAPTER 3

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

One cannot deny the fact that without the proper method it is hard to explore the fact and reach to a valid conclusion. This chapter will cover the overall process of the data collection of this project, the overall pre-process, the taking of interviews, etc. For this research, I have chosen a qualitative field study, which suits my ambition of answering the basic research questions of this thesis. This chapter will apply an ethnographic method to explore the situation of earthquake victims and the role played by the missionary. By ethnography, we study the normal happening that occurs in the life of the respondents. It focuses on the respondents' way of living and their way of living in such situation. As British professor Martyn Denscombe quoted the line from Malinowski there is special attention given to way people being studied see their world (Denscombe, 2010, p. 80; Malinowski, 1922, p. 25). It will outline the research strategy, the research method, the collection of data procedure, the data analysis, ethical considerations and the limitation of the research.

This specific research will focus on the earthquake in Nepal 2015 and the role of missionaries in mitigating the disaster-prone area. I believe that this will be a milestone in the field of study for those who are still unaware about the role of missionaries in disasters. It will also unearth the hidden facts about the missionaries and their role in the earthquake in Nepal. It is also assumed that it will answer the question, which was raised about the role of Christians in a Hindu dominating world. It will also contribute to the establishment of the identity of Christians living in Nepal. I believe that this research will establish the general conception about Christians and would further lay foundation for further scholars in this field.

Social structure, religious upbringing, their culture and traits are studied in order to analyze the matter in detail. In this perspective, this is a systematic study of the given topic and perception about the Christian people, which was created by the people before and after the quake. As a researcher, I should not interfere being non-Christian and focus mainly on the objective finding rather than assuming my own subjective view.

3.2 Fundamental Research Method

The research method should fit with the research question and the basic research design, which should provide a basic outline to conduct the research. As mentioned, I am employing a qualitative research basic to ethnographic research. It would follow a systematic process of choosing the informants, doing interviews, recording the interviews, noting down their behaviors, their gestures, costumes, etc. As this research methodology is central to ethnographic study, it is important to record the intent of the subjects being interview. As Martyn Atkinson says, “there has been a tension between treating the accounts of the people being studied as source of information about themselves and world they live and treating those accounts as social products who analysis can tell us something about the social cultural process that generated them” (Gibbons, Hammersley and Atkinson, 1986, p. 97).

At first it would select a target group, which is going to be part of the data collection. Target groups are selected through the snowball method. As soon as the targeted group is chosen, these persons are asked about if they would be willing to be interviewed. Due to the limits of this research project, it was based on seven non-Christians of earthquake victims in 2015, and seven Christian representatives. The researcher will visit the earthquake occurred area and sample the target people. For some Christian representatives, the researcher will then visit some of churches in that area for the collection of data. The interview will take place one to one after the selection of the targeted groups. The interview will then be recorded in an audio-recorder and later transcribed in a readable text format, which will be used in the data presentation chapter later on. Beside that, their daily way of life and their cultural trait will also be noticed, which would give the researcher concrete understanding of the situation. Noting the expressions and their attitudes and the way they response to the interviewer is noteworthy in analyzing the data.

Qualitative research properly seeks answers to question by examining the various social settings and the individuals who inhabits these settings. Qualitative researchers, then, are most interested in how humans arrange themselves and their settings and how inhabitants of these settings make sense of their surrounding through symbol, ritual, social structures, social rules and so forth (Berg, 2007, p. 8). The researcher’s task is to find out, “some of the important aspect of lives of the people who are being studied, and this also includes finding out how these people view the situation they face how they regard one another and how they see themselves” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p. 16).

The interviews of this research project will take place in natural setting with the usual way that the informants live their daily life. But the researcher should be wise enough to pick up

important aspects during the interview. During the research, “what is distinctive is that it involves a more deliberate and systematic approach than in common for most of us most of time, one in which data are specifically sought to illuminate research question and are carefully recorder” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p. 3).

Taking qualitative research into account, this research will use a inductive approach with some sample of seven Christians and seven non-Christian persons. However, it takes small group for the research making believe to represent the whole population and also note the help they got from Christian missionaries or the Christian church who were active in Nepal after the earthquake. The question of reliability is tested through the outcome of the result of the research. However, it is hard to find the reliability with this limited sample.

3.3 Data Collection

3.3.1 How Will I Approach to the Interviewee?

Interview is one of the methods that can be used to collect data in qualitative research. The purpose of an interview as a means of data collection is to use the content of interview about what and how the people are doing their activities in the given context (Silverman, 2014). Context is important in ethnographic research. However, it is more time consuming to study the behavior of the people through their activities. As mentioned, I employed a qualitative research, which would make an ethnographic survey in the field. This research would base the some of the place in Nepal where the earthquake hit in late April 2015. It would take seven participants of victims of earthquake and seven participants of missionaries or church related persons, who are involved in tragedy, occurred in the earthquake 2015 in Nepal. Due to the limited time, only few interviews were taken. I visited the affected area of Nepal for the collection of data. I went to the ward office of Kathmandu where they have registered the name of the victims. I stated the purpose of my research and asked for the detail of victims. I asked permission to note down the details of the victims. Similarly, I searched the different locality of churches and their contact persons through the Internet. I found their contact number on the Internet, and then I contacted them through telephone at first as I stated my purpose of research, to carry out an interview procedure. I made an extensive sample survey because of the time limit. Finally, I chose from the respondent of church who are available whom I contacted them through the telephone and fixed the meeting schedule and rest of the people from the random selection from the victims.

3.3.2 How Will I Select a Sample Group?

Sampling is a difficult task even though it sounds easy. It is the target individual or group, which the research is going to focus on. In this research there is a target individual, who is the earthquake victim of 2015, and also a church representative, who had an active role in the mitigating process. In doing so, I chose different people randomly from the affected population. As a researcher, I will try to interview people with different backgrounds so they represent a diverse population. For the selection of sample population, I will target individuals, who match with the research question. As it is obvious, my research question has to do with the earthquake and its effects after the help of church representatives. In doing so, I will make the general specific. Just for instance, the people of vulnerable places is further specified as how many people lost their relatives, how many people lost their home, how many people met with an accident in the quake. I will narrow down the specific population to seven from the victims and seven from the church representatives. The reason behind making sample survey is because of the time limitation and the budget size.

3.3.3 How Will the Interview Take Place?

After having chosen the target group, another important task is to conduct an interview. Interviews can be of many kinds: Structured, semi-structured or unstructured. For this particular kind I have chosen semi-structured interview in order to open up the interviewee in detail. To clarify it further, semi-structured interviews are those interviews in which questions are prepared before the interview, but the interviewer is allowed to make necessary corrections and add something more out of the structure. To maintain the level of flexibility and in order to be more informal, this type of structure is chosen in social science research. (Wilson, 2014, pp. 162-163) This research will proceed with one-to-one interview based on a semi-structured interview. An interview guide will be prepared beforehand and will be informal at the time when needed. The researcher will record the interview in audio version, which will be transcribed later and presented in the data presentation. The appropriate locality and time will be fixed before the interview is taken place. According to the consent, the researcher will go to the spot for the interview. By request of the interviewee, names will be kept confidential as agreed upon. There will be a formal introduction about both the interviewer and interviewee. As it is a semi-structured interview, some questions are prepared before the interview is taken place and some will be added during the interview. It will be conducted in an informal way and the interviewer will raise the questions and the interviewee is free to express his or her view on that topic. Depending on the mood of the interviewee and to promote originality the research

will also base on unstructured interview to some extent. It will probably help the interviewee to express his or her view in his or her own words. Denscombe asserts unstructured interviewed as, “the researcher’s role is to be as unintrusive as possible to start the ball rolling by introducing a theme or topic and letting the interviewee develop their ideas and pursue their train of thought” (Denscombe, 2010, p. 175). Moreover, this research will follow the semi-structured interview. However, there is also liberty for the interviewee to answer the question, put by the interviewer in a semi-structured interview too. Denscombe asserts the point in an semi-structured interview as: “However, with the semi-structured interview, the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered, and perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas raised by the researcher. The answers are open ended and there is more emphasis on interviewee elaborating points of the interest” (Denscombe, 2010, p. 176).

To conduct an interview, I have prepared two sections of interview questions. One selection has the set of questions that will be asked to the Christian representatives, and the other set of questions will be questions for the non-Christians victims of the earthquake. In order to know their background information, the introductory part will tell that about the interviewee. However, names will be kept anonymous, and they will be marked as C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6 and C7 for Christians and NC1, NC2, NC3, NC4, NC5, NC6 and N7 for non-Christians interviewee. John W. Creswell states it points of anonymity of the respondents as: “A researcher develops case studies of individuals that represent a composite picture rather than an individual picture” (Creswell, 2007, 141). He states that the anonymity of the respondent must not be able to be traced through the interview.

3.3.4 Interview Guide

Two different sets of semi-structured questionnaire will be prepared for the interview, which will focus on Christians and non-Christian respondents. Before starting the interview, I will briefly introduce about myself and my research to the respondents. As the respondents agree to proceed for the interview, I will ask them for the permission to record or to take notes from the conversation. Furthermore, anonymity of the respondent will also be assured before starting the question and answer phase of the interview. The semi-structured questions for two different sets of respondents are as follows:

Part 1

Questions for Christians

This interview would be following these questions for the data presentation:

Name: | Age:

1. What were you doing when the earthquake hit your region?
2. What are the immediate help you provide for the victims?
3. Why do you think, you need to help the people who are not Christian?
4. Did you understand your action of help as mission?
5. Do the people allow you to serve without knowing your religious background?
6. Do you any identification representing you as Christian?
7. Did you get help from the others Christians during the earthquake?
8. Did you call your Christian fellow for the immediate help? Or did you go alone to serve them?
9. Did you ask any help from other Christians?
10. What is the response that you get from the people who are the victim of the earthquake?
11. Do you face any kind of obstacle in your way to serve people?
12. What is your experience related to the earthquake in Nepal?
13. Did you find any other organization actively participating is helping people?
14. What is your relation with other aid organization in helping the people?
15. Are the people ready to get help from you? What was their reaction?
16. Do you face any difficulties while being Christian in any way before and after the quake?
17. Have been trained from your church to deal with such situation?

Part 2

Question for Non-Christians

This interview would be following these questions for the data presentation:

Name: | Age:

1. Tell me about the scenario what happened on that day?
2. When did you first feel the tremor? What was your first reaction?
3. What is the reaction of the people around you? Can you describe little bit?
4. What were you doing at that time? Are you at home or in the city? Are you together with your family member?
5. Do you get any lesson about what to do in that situation?
6. Have seen the casualties near your locality?

7. What did you do for the immediate help that you can do?
8. Is there someone to help you?
9. Whom do you run to ask for help with?
10. Does any representative from the Christian church come to help you?
11. What do you think about the people who came from the Christian church for the immediate help? Tell me briefly about their help.
12. Do you think the Christian church make difference in your situation?
13. Can you name some Christian organizations, who are working hard in time of difficulties?
14. How is your impression toward the Christian people?
15. What is your impression for Christians before the incident?
16. Do you find any differences about your previous thoughts and now about the Christian people?
17. Do Christian people made any discrimination in serving you in time of difficulties?
18. Do they ask for the conversion in return of the help they provide you or what is the situation?
19. Is there any ill practice in the name of the Christian religion?
20. Do you think that missionary aid is distributed without the differentiation between the religious followers?
21. What do you want to say to those Christian followers who served you community in time of earthquake?

After completing the questions, the respondents will be asked to add something special for them regarding the interview topic. Finally, appreciation of their time, help and support will be shown to the respondents.

3.3.5 Participant Observation

Observation is one of the important techniques that are implied in qualitative research because it allows you to study the subject from their perspective. The research should present the data from the perspective of the subjects to be interpreted. It can be classified into different kind such as disguised observation, undisguised observation, participant observation, non-participant observation, recording observation data, etc (Bryman, 2008, p. 273). Participant observation is done in this research project.

While conducting the interview, the researcher should also see the expressions, the emotions and the natural setting where the interview is conducted. While answering the question of the

interviewer, the respondent makes some expression, which can be noted in order to know the intention and willingness of the respondent. It is noteworthy in describing the data. Field observation earthquake affected areas helped me to understand the day-to-day activities and the behavior of the informant. Field observation is important because it unfolds the context and behavior of the people, their expression, their intention, etc. Besides the interview, the natural settings and the situation of the affected part is observed. Field observation is done during the interview to see the changes that took place after the quakes.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

This research was done basing on an ethical foundation. The interviewee have given the consent willingly in the verbal form. At the same time, the researcher had clearly stated the purpose of the research. Participation on the interview was voluntarily. They were not forced to proceed to the interview if they find it difficult. The researcher had no right to ask why they were leaving in case they didn't want to continue with it.

3.5 Data Transcription

Data transcription is a lengthy process, which can consume a lot of time so that you will have a lack of time for analyzing your data, which is the core part of your research. The important thing is that you should present as it is spoken the interviewee without making any grammatical correction of your own. The correction of language makes a lack of the originality of the interviewee (Bryman, 2008, p. 484).

As the interview will be recorded by a digital audio-recorder, it is further processed in the textual form which is called data transcription. For that purpose, I will need to type every word spoken in the interview. For the confidentiality of the data, the names of respondents are named as C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6 and C7 for Christian respondents and NC1, NC2, NC3, NC4, NC5, NC6 and NC6 for non-Christian respondents. After the transcription done, the data is produced and ready for further process.

3.6 Data Analysis

As the research will collect the data in audio version, the researcher will then transcribe the data in written form. After transcribing the data, he will then categories the data in different themes and sub-themes so as to analyze the data. Data analysis is done on the lenses of Christianity. To further clarify, the researcher will base the analysis based on the Christians' view on disaster and the role Christians should play after such a disaster.

In doing qualitative research, the researcher needs to see the reliability and validity of the presented data, which will be the objective interpretation rather than subjective interpretation. In term of reliability, this research tries to project the detail procedure how the data are collected and presented. In term of reliability of data, the most important is that the research tries to handle the same case with the same procedure should have the same finding and conclusion but the important thing is that he or she should document the previous research (Yin, 2014). Validity assumes a role of the researcher without having the biasness for his or her subjective perspective. It is not the researcher being spoken out in the research, but the subject should have power to control the conversation. Creswell asserts this point as, “Clarifying researcher bias from the outset of the study is important so that the reader understands the researcher’s position and any biases and assumptions that impact the inquiry” (Creswell 2007, p. 251). Validity refers to valid reasoning based on the inference that you have made in that situation. For example if you are doing the research on climate change over the past year then you should mention the climate before and now, which should definitely show some changes. In order to do so, you should have valid data, which shows the temperature of the past years and also the data, which shows the temperature now. In case of validity, detailed description will be helpful for other researchers to follow the footprint presented in this research assuming the certain condition (Yin, 2014).

Due to the short limited time of the research, this research will focus on the role of Christian missionaries in the earthquake of 2015 in Nepal. Besides that many field of study remained untouched by this study. Because of the limited time small sample were selected which may or may not represent the all the victims. As this is most debated question because of the minority population of Christians in Nepal, the researcher will focus on unbiased data presentation. Information presented here are collected in different wards of Kathmandu randomly to the victims of the earthquake as well as church personal in two weeks’ time in January 2018. Due to the language barrier, the interviews are taken in the mother tongue of the interviewee and later translated into English.

3.7 Limitation of the study

The researcher had to face many problems regarding the recording of the data. Some of the church representatives were not open-minded to express their views and strictly avoided a recording of their interview. Sometime the interviewer had to choose between different churches where he was comfortable to conduct an interview in an audio-recorded version. There arrived numerous problems while taking the interview. Sometime the church

representative was not available, and the research has to visit the next day again. Sometimes, they would refuse to give the interview because they thought that there would be no advantage for them participating in an interview. In some cases the researcher had to provide some incentive for the church representatives, which would encourage them to give an interview.

CHAPTER 4

4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will conduct analysis based on interviews taken in the aftermath of earthquake in 2015. In doing so, he will come up with the ideas and thoughts presented by the respondents about the missionary task during and after the earthquake. The respondents, who are part of the interview, would be the focus of this research. On the other hand, this research will also highlight the deeds of Christians or church representatives and the perception of the victims towards Christian missionaries. This research will prove, I believe, to be a milestone in the field of understanding Christian mission in Nepal. In doing so, this research has categorized the data on different themes based on respondents reply. Responses from the interviewee have been transcribed and will be presented in tabular form under different sub-headings.

4.2 Responses from Christians

4.2.1 Preparedness for Natural Calamities

The church is a religious organization that has the aim to cultivate the religious feeling of people. Beyond that, it bears some social responsibility also. It should participate in the matters that makes people trouble, either it is manmade or a natural disaster. In this research, the researcher tries to explore the social responsibility of the church. But for that purpose of serving the people in natural disaster, has the church prepared itself to work effectively in such a situation, is a question raised during the research. To explore the idea about the preparedness for the responses to the emergency natural calamities, the interviewee were asked the question, “Have you been trained from your church to deal with such situation?” As answers to this question the Christian interviewee said the following, as this table about the training and rescue operation shows:

Interviewee	Before the quake	After the quake
C1	We have not gained any training as such. But I have participated in the health camp before. As it is the natural disaster we have not any idea when and where it is going to occur	We are thinking of getting such training but for that we need the expert manpower who can conduct such training. We are discussing this issue with our donor church if it is possible to conduct such training.
C2	Our church focuses on prayer and the only savior for us is Jesus. We have not had any training related to the disaster.	We have no idea how is that possible.
C3	We participated in the rescue operation in different times and offer our volunteer help the victim but not got any training regarding the rescue operation and minimize the effect of the disaster.	No plan yet.
C4	We have not any idea about the sudden occurrence of the quake in Nepal. Honestly speaking we have not such training as such.	We got some training after the psychological counseling for the traumatic people who have lost their relatives in the quake. Emmanuel hospital Association, United states have provided the training where I have participated
C5	Not yet. We thought that it should be more effective if we have training for rescue operation. We could at least do the rescue operation effectively.	I go to pray in Bethel Assembly church where we had training about the psychological counseling.
C6	We work together with the other experts who are here for help but	We are thinking about this matter but still looking for some expert who can teach us about it.

	haven't received any training how it should be done.	
C7	We have not received any training as such but it would be better if we are trained to do so.	No planned yet.

Conclusion: None of the church representatives were pre-trained about the rescue operation and some of the interviewed did receive the training after the earthquake.

4.2.2 Motives behind Emergency Support to the Victims

Beyond the social responsibility, there arise the vital question: What is the purpose of the church for serving the community or individual before and after the quake? This question excavates the inner motif of the church. By the end of the interview, the research would come up with some insight about the intrinsic motif of the church. It will try to explore the purpose in an individual level and also in the level of community. It will also analyze the church relation with individual and community level. Similarly, I asked the question about the aim of Christian church of serving disaster victims. In response they presented their view as:

Interviewee	Responses	
	Religious	Humanitarian
C1	It is guided by our religious teaching.	But at the same time it is for the sake of humanity.
C2	It is more than religious guided help.	I would say, it is more from the humanitarian then with some religious motives. We do not see the people religious background for helping them.
C3	I would say it is our lord who teaches to help our neighbor in times of difficulty.	
C4	Religious faith is my belief but my action is directed to the humanity.	I am Christian before that I am a human. So I would say it is humanitarian drive, which motivates us to help the people.

C5	I would love to help the Christian people but would deny the one who ask for help with said that I am the follower of Shiva-God of Hindu.	But I would love to help the public who comes for help without any strict adherence to religious organization.
C6	I hold the strong belief on Jesus. He motivates to spread the good news in the people through the good works	Religion teaches moral education after all is for noble cause and humanity is the basic essence of it.
C7	Religion is my guide to do some good work for the human.	I would say through the religion I got the knowledge and to use in the practical field I spread my hands for the humanity.

Conclusion: Rescue operations and distributing aids are guided by religious teaching and most of them cannot deny the fact that they serve the purpose of humanity.

4.2.3 Emergency Response Efforts and Collaboration

The quakes have made a huge damage in the property and life of the people. To mitigate the problem only the church leaders' efforts are insufficient. In doing the rescue operation and distributing aid has the church co-ordinate with other organization, community people or their own well-wisher church nationally or internationally is being observed during the research. This particular church would put the spot light whether the church spread its hands with other organization or community people for joint venture of rescue and aid operation. Moreover, when another question asked about the effort that was made solely or with other organizations, the respondent replied as:

Interviewee	Sole effort	Joint venture
C1	We, people of church have helped in rescue operation.	

C2	We helped alone.	We collected the fund from our church family and helped the people.
C3		We collaborate it with Lutheran Federation and Manekor Society Nepal for providing long-term sustainable aid for constructing home for the victims
C4		We helped with our donor churches, which we made appeal from the internet.
C5		Some Korean Church representatives have helped to collect the fund. We are in contact with them before the quake and they helped us before for our growth and development.
C6	We alone helped whatever we can from our budget and fund collected from the member of our church	
C7		We receive some immediate help from the friend and relatives who transfer the amount in our account, which was used to providing immediate help.

Conclusion: Most of the churches received the help from other churches and donor organizations and some helped whatever they could from the fund they had in the church fund

by providing immediate help. Some churches made an effort with the help of Christian organization for long-term help.

4.2.4 Immediate and Long-Term Support from the Church

The aids from Christian churches and the Christian community were focused on diverse areas. These supports range from immediate aids for food, shelter, first-aids to long-term aids such as education, health, psych-social counseling, life enhancing skill development etc. The responses from the Christians and the church representatives regarding the types and nature of aids are presented below:

Interviewee	Short term help	Long-term help
C1	We did the immediate help by providing the tarpaulin and essential food items (rice, lentils, spices, salt and sugar)	
C2	We help in the providing the shelter for almost 40 days to our neighboring people. There are around 600 people using our church for immediate shelter	
C3	I have provide the psychological counseling for which I am trained by the church	Fund raising and active involvement in reconstruction of devastated village
C4		We have helped by providing the Zinc sheet to prepare new house for the community people
C5	We have provided immediate material of livelihood such as bags of rice, sugar, salt, lentil, spices etc. from our church with the fund that we have.	
C6		We have trained the mason for construction work and

		also provide some fund for construction.
C7		We have made a mutual support from Lutheran World Federation Nepal and Manekor Society Nepal who assist for construction of houses.

Conclusion: Immediate materials and some long-term efforts like construction of houses and some health camps were provided by the church representatives after the earthquake.

4.2.5 Public Perception of the Churches and Christian Community

As it is obvious for the above data the church or Christian minority represents a small group of people in the total population of Nepal. Being a minority, their identity is not very visible and most of the people in Nepal are not aware that there exists a Christian religion, especially the remote villages of Nepal. To establish their identity and approaching to the community, the churches should play an effective role. This particular section will try to explore the church representatives' attitude as perceived by the community people and individual as they offer their service to the victims. Besides, the church representative perception of public while conducting the rescue operation is the important part in the interview. In this question, how the churches are perceived by the public, the respondents replied as:

Interviewee	Responses	
	Positive	Negative
C1	The victims are looking for some help and positive towards our help.	
C2	Positive and co-coordinative in our mission to help the victims	
C3		They are suspicious and enquired whether we are there for conversion purpose.

C4	Positive and helpful for distributing the aid. Plead for more help for construction of school in their area, which was badly devastated.	
C5	People are blushed with tears when we approach them. None of the organizations have approached them before our arrival. They thanked us for the help.	
C6	Positive and participated in the mission of developing infrastructure.	
C7	Positive and thankful for our help and treated us as God. They welcomed us with the open hearted. None of them question our religious background	

Conclusion: In most of the interviews, Christians are welcomed and coordinated by the public. In one of the interview, the person was anxious and questioned whether their hidden motive was to convert other people.

4.2.6 Challenges Faced by Churches during the Aids Delivery

Besides, there are many challenges faced by church representatives during the rescue operation and distributing aids to the victims.

Interviewee	Physical challenge	Social	Others
C1	The village is remotely situated and there is no easy access of transportation to deliver the things.	People are susceptible about our service because protestant have distributed Bible along with the rice bags.	The relief materials are few and the victims are more. So it is difficult to distribute to victims. I called the village leader to sort out the neediest one.

C2	Poor transportation		Delay in distribution because of the lack of fund in our church
C3	The road was narrow which make trouble to our truck to pass all the way through. We shift our aid in small tractors, which can pass easily on that way.	People question our purpose of the help	Limited materials were taken whereas there are many people waiting for the relief aids.
C4	The road was damaged due to the quake. We have to hire some porters to carry the relief aids.		People are eager if we can help them to renovate the school, which was not in our plan. For that purpose we need to collect the fund, which takes time to fulfill their wish.
C5	As above there is poor transportation in the area where we went to distribute the aid		The victims are in worse condition because of the delay in service
C6	The road was badly damaged		The victims lost their hope waiting for the response.
C7	The weather was bad and started to rain, which makes us problem to deliver the thing.		People are keeping eye on who is coming to help them.

Conclusion: Nepal is a mountainous country where there are hills and slope. Due to the earthquake many roads were damaged and it became difficult to carry things. The places where the earthquake affected most were remotely situated. There conditions of the roads were poor. The roads were not blacktopped, which was affected by the monsoon rain. Trucks and other

means of transportation could hardly pass. The villages carried their goods on the back or on small tractors, which could hardly pass the road. The trucks were halted half way and could transpose the things on the tractors, which were more time and money consuming.

4.3 Responses from Non-Christians

4.3.1 General Perception of the Public towards Christians

As mentioned above, the Christian church and the Christian people were not equally familiar with the people of the community where the earthquake hit. In order to explore the church's position in the society before and after the earthquake the following question will excavate this. It will also explore the general conception of Christian people or the Christian community before and after the earthquake. As this is a foreign religion, the below question will try to explore the people's notions about the Christianity. Moreover, the public perspective have been observed and intensity of answering the questions during the interview with correspondents who are non-Christian. Based on the interview the responses can be presented as follows:

Interviewee	Before the quake	After the quake
NC1	They are people who are misled by the colonial agents who ruled in India	They are like our brother and sister
NC2	Christianity is the religion of Cow eaters. We should not trust them. They are our enemy	They are helpful people and ready to help in time of need
NC3	We have no relation with them	We are thankful for their service during and after the quake.
NC4	They spoil our religious environment.	They are part of our society.
NC5	Christianity is the religion of the white people.	They are good people with positive attitude.
NC6	Similar to the notion of NC2.	They are like our brother and sister.
NC7	I have no idea about the Christian people. I have never met them nor tried to understand them. The only thing I know is that it is the	I found them helpful and guided by moral ethics to help each other in time of

	Westerner religion, which is not suitable to our cultural practice.	difficulties. I am positive towards them.
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Conclusion: The view of Christian in the public was completely different before the earthquake, but it changed due to the behavior and help they provided in the earthquake.

4.3.2 Perception of Christians by Majority Hindu Community

In the above section, the researcher tried to explore the work of the churches solely or with the communal efforts. But in this section it will analyze the church relation with the majority Hindu people. As it is stated above that Nepal has a majority of Hindu population. In taking part in rescue operation and distributing aid, Christians had to co-ordinate with the Hindu majority. The question below will explore the relationship of the church with the other religious community – especially the Hindu religious community:

Interviewee	Social nature	Cultural practice	Religious practice
NC1	They are helpful, kind and co-operative	Readiness and care-oriented	Morally guided by the principle
NC2	Helpful and kind	Showing interest in helping	Moral people
NC3	Co-operative	Culture of helping one another	Moral and descent people
NC4	Helpful	Sense of brotherhood	Have strong faith in God and belief that everything will be fine because we are under the shadow of our father, Jesus
NC5	Eager and kind	Believe on common effort	Have good moral upbringing
NC6	Helpful	Ready to help despite the hardship.	Kind and virtuous
NC7	Helpful	Touched by other problem	Morally guided and have strong faith

Conclusion: The Christian followers, who is a minority, showed interest in people’s trouble without hurting the social, cultural and religious practice, was praised by the victims during the earthquake.

4.3.3 Social Changes Occurred During the Recue and Aid Operation

Society was divided between the lines of rich and poor, high-caste and low-caste, etc. Due to the joint efforts made during the earthquake by the missionaries, this narrow-minded concept changed. People’s inclusion in development work despite the difference made by some elite and high class was blurred due to the church inclusive effort. The below chart will presents the view of the public after the inclusive development effort made by church representatives:

Interviewee	Before	After
NC1	Before there is the vast difference between rich and poor	Rich and poor are brought together in one shelter
NC2	There are two sects in dealing with any social matter. The rich people think as the superior being than that of poor people living in the same community.	Every people are treated equally because of the quake.
NC3	Superstitious beliefs are prevalent in the society. The community people are divided in caste and creed. The high caste and Low caste. The low caste people are deprived of using public resources equally. Just for example: Water tap, temple etc.	They gained the equal accessibility in the public property.
NC4	However the constitution have made the equal right to all the citizens but so called elite people shows the power in every social activity.	Everybody is equally responsible for developing the community. Joint effort in every development work is emphasized.
NC5	Despite the law which have forbidden to caste distinction, which was still in practice that made the community weak intrinsically.	Humanity is emphasized and previous caste

		distinction was put to an end.
NC6	Similar to the NC2	
NC7	Rich and poor are treated differently	People view was changed.

Conclusion: Thus, the important thing noticed in the earthquake is a unifying factor of society, which is made possible by the deteriorating situation caused by the earthquake. The social change due to earthquake is an interesting fact about the society, which was not seen before the earthquake.

4.4 Data Analysis

This second part of this chapter will critically examine the role of the church in easing the people who were affected by the earthquake in Nepal in 2015. This part of this chapter will also analyze the service provided by the church in order to uplift victim from pitiable situations by providing basic needs and also long-term recovery from the earthquake.

However, there were many organizations putting effort into and providing fund to help people to recover from the wound of the earthquake. This particular research will see the role of church in different levels of help, such as primary help of fulfilling the basic needs to survive for a few days to sustainable development of providing long-term help that can be helpful for the victims where none other organizations were able to help.

The researcher has provided the data in the previous chapter based on interviews by victims of the earthquake and church leaders from different places in Nepal. However, some of the interviewees were positive towards the church representative whereas few were dissatisfied with the role of the church and blamed them as “opportunist”.

It is the view of the interviewee, which is interesting in the research. So in this analysis the researcher will view the role of the church from the perspective of the victims, and also from the view of church representatives who participated in various ways in helping others after the earthquake. This research will analyze the perspective of the victims and the perspective of the church representative as they viewed the earthquake in Nepal in 2015. It will also analyze how the victims felt after the earthquake and how they found the church representative in coping with such situation. Beyond that, the research will also try to dig out what is the understanding of the victims toward the church or Christians. It would also analyze why the churches were

actively participating in helping other people. It would also analyze the effect of spiritual belief, which drives the church to help the people despite the difference in religious viewpoints.

4.4.1 Immediate Responses from the Christian Community

Many church have helped the victims in many ways. Among such activity, providing shelter is one of them. In one of the question presents the view of the church representative as:

We have a big space in our locality of church. Many people came to our church to take shelter after the earthquake. The tall neighboring building clashed and some were torn and signs of cracks were visible on them. After seeing such situation, the neighboring houses were unsafe for living. In that situation, six hundred people from the neighborhood took shelter for almost forty days. As a matter of fact, no one ever asked about religious belief, economic status, etc. No one seemed to caring about the personal life. They lived together and the church facilitated with things such as bed and food, which was collected from donors. Some of the people among the victims want to help in our mission, as reported by C1.

During the earthquake, many volunteer were active for the purpose of rescuing victims and everywhere the wailing sound hover over and in this situation nobody was looking for the background, which they came from. This aspect of humanity drove people to help each other independent of them being Christian or Hindu.

However, there are Christian minorities in the Nepalese society, but the effort made by them in terms of rescue and recovery is praiseworthy as told by one of the respondents. A pastor who was a respondent (C1) said in an interview:

The Christian community worked hand in hand with the other local people to link the road, which follows to a main road and that connects the surrounding nearby and also they can fetch water in a communal base where everyone despite their religious background can use the water source. Before that community were divided and water sources are limited to use for certain community.

The Christians who helped the community as a part of their diaconal work are praiseworthy. An example of this can be seen on the disaster prone area like Nepal. They brought the community together and joined others for the reconstruction and the helping of the marginal

people in need, which had been perceived as a right religious practice that be analyzed through the activities shown by missionary in the aftermath of the earthquake in Nepal in 2015.

Another example of diaconal work that the church brings the community is to the marginal people who are called *dalit*¹ are often neglected and outcast by the other high caste people are brought in the light of Jesus. Those neglected people are called for the prayer together and ask to receive the divine light of Jesus. Dalits who are double marginalized – from the community and from the earthquake itself – were helped by the church in order to recover from the tragic event of the earthquake. In this context one of the informants responded interestingly to the question: “Do the Church people ask your background before helping you?” In response to this question, NC2 stated:

We were asked to join in prayer together with them. We were not allowed to pray in the temple because of the low caste system which is still practiced in Nepal despite the law has forbidden that. But the welcome nature of the church interested me and I joined the prayer for the recovery from the trauma of having lost some of my relatives in the earthquake.

Similar to that story of blind faith follow of the culture, there is also some evil practice culturally in the society where the earthquake hit in Nepal in 2015. The traditional people still believed that God was angry on them and gave them a punishment in the form of an earthquake. In order to avoid such kind of practice, they performed rituals to please the God instead of helping people in need. Despite this deep-rooted cultural faith, some church leaders beg for help through the internet and reached to people with immediate help. The Christian church, who belief in healing of people through the means whatever they can from their side, was seen involved in activities and in providing relief aid. In this view the role of the church was to maintain the spiritual flavor with the social cause to serve the people (Nikolajsen, 2015). As NC2 replied:

At first we did not know who these people were, they were providing foodstuff and materials immediately. They came with an open heart to help us without knowing our

¹ The low caste that are outcast from the society and are treated lower than animal which are not given to go to temple for prayer and are labelled as untouchable people.

religious background. We didn't think a minute for their offer because it was a matter of our survival.

The Christians showing the divine light through the charity was involved in mission. Their God has sent the Son to spread the Holy Spirit. They wanted the entire human race to get the divine light and the protection from their Lord. Not only has that one of the pastor (C2) added in the spreading the holy light among the children who are the victims of earthquake as:

It was an opportunity for all of us as Christians to help the people in need and this is the right time for us to show our belief and make our belief known among our followers and non-follower, that the Christian people not only utter good words but also execute this in time of need. Christ made us proud in the work that we did for the needy people.

This kind of thought and deed and their missionary work after the earthquake inspired many. Not only in word they uttered the divine oneness of being one with God, but the Christian people in Nepal also helped many. Through their holiness and their strong faith in Christ one of the victims was able to remain calm during the earthquake. He said after the earthquake that there was something great going on and he was given power to endure the pain. As C3 responded:

If you have strong faith in God then there comes a power to help you to endure pain and battle all the difficulties. I was buried under the broken wall and finally a rescue team came and helped me out of it. I never lost hope in that situation and I was praying within about my survival. Finally, Jesus listened my voice and I am now alive and therefore my faith is stronger than before.

It is said that faith has power to heal and endure pain, which was seen in one of the respondents during the interview, which proved this to be true. When the tragedy occurred, you could either try yourself to come out or you could trust yourself of having a faith of a God who would have some special plan to overcome such tragedy.

4.4.2 Missionaries Aid to Reconstruct the Building

After the earthquake hit Kathmandu and nearby localities, the initial work was to develop an infrastructure, which was devastated due to the earthquake. After fulfilling the basic needs, there occurred a problem of shelters. A shelter is most important because soon after the earthquake the winter would come and it would be difficult to live in the tent. The Lutheran World federation initiated in developing houses and distributed various amounts of money in different phases after the completion of work. To develop a foundation, the amount of Rs 50,000 was paid in one installment. Later they proceed with another installment. Finally, the total amount that was provided to the finishing of the work was Rs 300,000. In the interview with C3, who was affiliated with the Lutheran World Federation, he reported:

After the earthquake hit the Rasuwa district, people were traumatized and had no hope to stand again due to their economic condition. With the help of Government official and the field visit we made a priority list and started to give an initial of 50,000, and other installments were given to progress the number of shelters. Along with the Manekor Society of Nepal (MSN) we made a little effort to rescue and reconstruct the devastated village in Rasuwa. We were happy to serve the people who were really in need of it.

There was given training for masons who are available in the nearby locality which serve two purposes, one of easy access of help and one of employment of locals in order to better their care. This is the reason why the Lutheran Federation is so popular among persons there and which work has been inspiring for other organizations.

The church is a religious organization, which is setup on the belief of founding the spiritual belief in the people. Spiritual belief teaches the people to be good moral beings. Besides this, it has also promoted social responsibility in the way of developing its community. Many religions teach people to help their own kinds in times of difficulty. According to the Christian faith, the Father has sent Christ, and Christ has sent Christians you to spread the good news and take care of other people. In carrying out the responsibility of the church, it will have to support underprivileged people for the upliftment of life. Despite the hardship and poverty, if some heart-rending event occurs and started to deteriorate, the normal situation of the church is to help other people in time of difficulties. The church, which is a religious organization that is formed to serve the people, thus, will also participate in a tragedy in its society. In my research, the role of the church is observed and its implementation of service through different

kind. The church, which is also one of responsibility, thus, have proven to participate in the recovery and reconstruction of society, which was devastated by the earthquake that occurred in Nepal in the year of 2015. This is according to the conducted interviews. In one of the interviews taken about the role of the church, NC1 replied:

The earthquakes devastated and ruined our life. It took away our home and house where our children used to study. None of the organizations were aware of it or say they approach to us. It is the remotely situated place of Gorkha district, which was named as Saurpani. We had no hope of life, and the life of the people became miserable day by day. In such a critical situation, God sent a people to help us. They are from the St. Ann's Catholic Church, which is situated in Pokhara. The church representatives provided us some bags of rice and other food items at first, and as they saw the situation of our village, they promised to reconstruct our school too. First, the political leader asked them to collect the amount in PM (Prime Minister) relief fund. But they insisted that they would do the work themselves or deny collecting the amount in PM fund. For that purpose they had to ask the permission from the government which took a long time. After they got permission from the government, they started to reconstruct the school building and completed in around two months of time.

The church representative C3 mentioned that it was difficult to conduct the reconstruction work because of the accessibility of the place, but it is not impossible.

At first we asked our donor for collecting a fund. We heard in the media about the situation of people who were waiting for help. We could not approach them immediately because we needed to collect funds to execute our actions. In order to collect funds, we appealed to churches with which we collaborated. With the help of our donors nationally and internationally, we were able to conduct the work two weeks after the earthquake occurred. However, it was physically difficult because of the poor transportation opportunities. We hired a truck to transport the relief material up to Dodhpani, a place in the Gorkha district, and then we hired a tractor to go all the way to Saurpani. We exchanged the goods to the tractor from our truck, and finally we reached the place. During our first visit, we had not planned on reconstructing the school, but after seeing the poor condition of the school we made it our next effort to reconstruct the school within few months of the earthquake. The reconstruction of the

school, demanded more money and for that reason too we had to wait until we had collected sufficient fund to reconstruct it. Beside that there were also some paperwork to get permission from the government to reconstruct it, which was lingering and time consuming. We observed during our first visit the situation about the school and the estimated material that is needed to reconstruct the building. Based on our estimation, we again came to visit with construction material and some workers in order to renovate the building. In doing so, the villagers helped us in our mission of reconstruction. Finally, after the consistent effort and hard work, we were able to renovate the school building, which took almost two months.

4.4.3 Showing the Light of Jesus through the Immediate Help

In term of faith and action, some church leaders gathered their volunteer to serve the needy people in some earthquake prone area of Gorkha.² According to C3, as they heard the news of earthquake, they felt that they should help the victims of Saurpani, a place in Gorkha district. For few weeks they collected relief materials and donations from donors so that they could execute their plan of helping. In the first week of March 2015, they managed obtain materials and aids from donors, which they had applied for and now they were ready for action. For that purpose they hired a truck carrying the relief material and altogether there are twelve volunteer working in it. The truck was covered with the banner of St. Ann's Catholic Church. As they proceed their way to relief, they thought that there were many people who were seeking the help and the materials they soon realized that their help would not be sufficient. In order to distribute the material they asked of help of the army to control the crowd. At first, they asked the village committee chairperson to make a list based on priority for the victims. They had only 65 bags of rice and 100 pieces of tarpaulins (tent) with them, which was far less than the victims demand. As the priority list was given by the chairperson of that VDC (Village Development committee), they proceeded to distribute the items to them. According to C1, who said:

We were pleased to help the needy people hit by the earthquake, which was the Saurpani village in the Gorkha district. We carried 65 bags of rice and 100 tarpaulins (tents) with us and distributed it in accordance with the priority list of the chairperson

² A place in Nepal where the earthquake devastated mostly in 2015.

of VDC. We felt proud to be Christians because we believe that we not only should pass the light of Jesus to people but also put ointment to the victims who are after all the children of Jesus.

It is often said that God is there to save you in time of difficulties. The people of St. Anne Catholic Church proved it through their direct support in time of difficulty after the earthquake. Without knowing the religious background, the color, the caste or the ethnicity of people, they served without distinction, which is praiseworthy and can inspire other organization as well. Despite the difficulties of transport and due to the rainy season, which was going to begin, their consistent hard works in reaching the victims were applauded. Similarly, C2 from the Bansbari church who in collaboration with the Nepalese Bible Society spread the helping hands to the earthquake victims of different remote district of Gorkha with infrastructure material, Zinc sheet and construction material. Their humanitarian aid without knowing their religious background was profound, which was clear while taking an interview. In an interview, NC3 made clear:

We are surprised because one group who came here to provide relief items handed Bibles along with the relief aid, which was embarrassing for us. But this group who provides us zinc sheet and other construction materials were indifferent from the previous groups who were here for aid.

The innocent villager who know nothing about Christianity and why they were handing Bibles out. The protestant group of Christian followers also went to Barpak – a village in Gorkha – were the local people became furious because conversion was against their religion. However, a Catholic group responded to the victims that they came with an open heart to serve on the basis of humanitarian ground. They further added that if they wished to join their group, they would more than welcome, but it would not have to be with compulsion. They did not want to force anyone to join their church but if they wished to join the church then the door would be open for them, they stated. After having said that the community showed welcoming graces, which according to the informant was overwhelming.

4.4.4 Religious Conversion in Time of Earthquake

Disaster and religious conversion are two different things, which however go side by side. In time of difficulty the primary purpose of the community is to facilitate the people to ease their life. In one of the interviews, NC1 came up with the view that the church representatives were trying to convert people by providing the relief material and the Bible together. He asserted that, “they came with the sack of rice and the Bible with hurt our religious sentiment. We denied taking the help because it was selfishness to take the situation as an opportunity to convert us.” These types of comments are heard in media as well. During an interview encounter with such an interviewee who is totally against religious conversion, NC1 said that we have been following our own religion since our ancestor, and we are happy with it. Why should we convert to other religions? His point of frustration and negative belief towards the Christian religion as a whole can be seen in the interview with him. I posed the question to him: Do you receive any other assistance from other organizations? He said that the government organization was delaying the service, and it is also heard in the media that they were promising to provide relief as soon as possible, but we were not aware them coming anytime soon. But some other organization like Red Cross provided some material for relief. I asked him again, do any Christian organization help you beside those who offer you Bibles? He replied: “Yes. One church situated in Pokhara helped us with some relief material such as rice, lentils, some spices, salt, sugar, etc.” In another question posed in the same interview, I asked: “Do they try to persuade you?” Then, he said they didn’t say anything as such. I asked him again: “Do you think all Christians are the same?” In response he replied that not all Christians are the same and neither are the Hindus.

Another interesting story that was unfolded by one of the NC2 was the following: “In the name of religion they have been treated as inferior beings? I am Bishwakarma by caste [low caste people according to Hindu religion] and our community is deprived of using the communal property like tap, banned to enter inside the temple, etc. I found the way out in Christianity and I was now a converted Christian before the earthquake.” Such is the situation of conversion in Nepal. However, media publicity is making a blame that Christians are the opportunist, but as I observe the situation, this is not hundred percent true. Because of the overwhelming Hindu population there might be some misunderstanding in dealing with situations like that and also some people even practice it.

In a question to one of the pastors of Mahima Baptist Church about his own explanation about conversion, C3 said:

Jesus is the father of all; in time of difficulties God has a message to deliver to its people, which can calm them through the Bible. For that reason some might have distributed the Bible in order to provide peace and calm to them. He further added that it might not be a forceful conversion, but might be for showing the proper path through studying the Bible.

His interpretation of distributing Bible is logical, but at a time, it would be more relevant if it were done not during the time of the crisis, but before the crisis. Every event has both positive and negative influence on the people. For the victims' perspective, it seems also reasonable that why they didn't distribute it in other time rather than in the problematic phase where they can lure the people by providing the aids and tries to convert us. It is a straightforward logic that they try to convert people taking the advantage of a pitiable situation.

4.4.5 The Church's Role in the Health Sector

The church as a religious organization has helped in different sectors and has provided its service to the people. Health and education is important aspects of human life. It is said that if good health is missing, you have nothing left with you. In the context of the earthquake, many thousands people were affected in terms of health. Some were lucky that they had minor injuries and recovered after a short treatment, but some people were badly traumatized by the shock created by the earthquake. They had pain and constant fear afterwards. Some people lost their near and dear ones in the earthquake, which made them traumatized in the event of the earthquake that occurred in the year of 2015.

Then, what is the healing process, what is the role the church played is the matter? This is what I will discuss in this second part of this chapter. Besides providing the materials immediately after the earthquake, the church also provided psychological counseling in different affected districts of Nepal. As mentioned earlier, Bethel Assembly Church trained their representatives in post-earthquake psychology, and thus trained people to serve in the affected areas of the earthquake. These volunteers effectively counseled people in the affected area of Gorkhar, Kavre, Sindupachowk and Rasuwa. These volunteers visited tents and provided psychological counsel to the affected people. Before the earthquake there was not such training provided to church people. After the earthquake, it was felt and realized that many people were in dire need of such help, which was different from aid organizations who primarily contributed with providing medical assistance with trained manpower related to physical health issues. Emmanuel Health Association was one of them. Miss Lizzy Julia, applied psychologist, was the trainer, as mentioned. Such type of training was very important and which would also

encourage the people to live their life, people who were almost hopeless and confused about what should happen next. Through trained volunteers psychological counseling was provided and people were able to normalize their way of life.

After the earthquake hit the different places in Nepal, many people were homeless; and many people lost their loved ones. These kinds of conditions made the direct effect on the people's life. They were traumatized and in constant fear what would happen next. In such situation, the church saw the need of those people affected, and different churches – as it became apparent in my interviews – participated in health campaign programs along with foreign expertise medical teams. They tried their best to normalize the situation by counseling and motivational speeches. C4, who was a representative of the church to participate in training conducted by TOT (training of trainer) on post-disaster psychology in collaboration of EHA (Emmanuel Hospital Association), there were 75 participants in the training programs, which had 38 representatives from the church. Miss Lizzy Julia, applied psychologist, was the trainer. The people trained would spread in the affected area and do counseling. The church representatives would come with other volunteers from their community to conduct such psychological training. The training was conducted in tents for three weeks.

Similarly, Bethel Assembly Church of Bhaktapur district conducted day training about post-earthquake psychology to their representatives. Those representatives would further split in the community and provide counseling to affected people. NC5 replied that she was in constant fear what would happen next. She further elaborated that she felt the moving of the land and was in constant fear to enter houses. However, volunteers were taking care of her in a tent. I met the volunteer who have encouraged her to face the challenges. She is still in a terrified mood.

Different organizations were actively participating in the mission of healing the people as told by one of the victims. Everyday new people are arriving in our tent to ask about our problem. I asked them if they could name some. In response they said that they did not remember all, but some were affiliated with Health Care Fellowship Nepal, Nepal Christian Medical and Dental Association, etc.

Moreover, providing psychological counseling, various missionaries were actively participating in the daily health of people. As told by victims of the earthquake, they lived in groups with poor hygiene with would have probability of spreading diseases. A Christian organization named Emmanuel Health Association helped by providing water purifying tablets and also some packets of relief materials. As told by the victims, they provided them with the basic first aid kit, which was very helpful to them. However, there were numerous health issues

related to the earthquake such as epidemic in the disaster prone area, which was caused by the dense population sheltered in the tent. Besides, it had poor hygienic condition, which would further deteriorate their health. As told by one of the victims, different organizations were reaching them through different medicine such as antibiotic, injection for tetanus for the wounded people, etc.

4.4.6 Sustainable Development for the Earthquake Victims

The earthquake taught lessons for those who were victims but also for those who saw it from a distance. The immediate rescue was done as soon as the earthquake hit the capital city of Nepal where the most affected places were Gorkha and Sindhupalchowk. It was notified that the epicenter of the earthquake was in Gorkha district of Nepal. As observed by responses from C4, they are provided the zinc sheet to build the housing. Many other places were also affected more or less by the earthquake. Different organizations, representative from different countries, directly and indirectly, were involved in rescuing of people affected from the earthquake. Many tons of relief material from donors were received and stocked in government store to distribution. The government made a committee to distribute the aid, which was received by them. These were the initial stage of rescuing the population. In the long-term the victims were in need of psychological counseling, renovation of partly damage property, construction of houses, which were collapsed totally, etc.

4.4.7 The Church's Role in Education Sector

The church was offering its service in different sectors. One of the important sectors, which were directly connected to the public, was the education sector. As the earthquake had shattered different school building, it was difficult for children to continue their studies. The government's access was far beyond the reach. The children who were the future stars were passing the idle days at home. It affected the future of the children. The parents were worried and did not have any means to continue the school of their children. At the other hand some schools started their class again in tents, but due to the rainy season, which was going to begin in a few months, it would be impossible to continue these classes. The government was doing its best to reach the affected population as narrated by the ministry of home, Mr. Bamdev Gautam (Gautam, 2015) but due to the transportation it was very difficult to address all the affected population at a time. The slow action of the government added to the worries of the people in some remotely situated district of Gorkha, Kavre and other villages. Hearing the

appeal of the people from these remote villages of Nepal, Saint Ann's Catholic Church planned to visit and help the people of Saurpani village of the Gorkha district. They helped to reconstruct the school building in the Saurpani village. Save the Children contributed to construct the bamboo houses with the tarpaulin to continue the education of the children in different affected district of the Gorkha, Kavre, Sindupalchowk, Rasuwa and Dolkha district. Here is a picture, which shows how a temporary school was formed. Not only that, the role of the church in providing aid to the reconstruction schools is praiseworthy. Schools are called the second home of the children, where they were taught various skills to enhance their life were shattered by the earthquake. Because of the effort of the church, these schools were opened again with some temporary building in some places immediate after the earthquake. The children were happy to continue their school education despite of the cruelty of the natural disaster in the year of 2015. For example, St. Anna's Church, situated in Pokhara, contributed to renovate the school building after the few month of the earthquake. I asked the Christian respondent (C3) about what motivated this work. In response it was stated, it was spiritual guidance and an act of humanity and brotherhood that derived the church to renovate the school. At first they had not plan to renovate the school, but they could not stop to do it. In response,

People praise us for our work and treated as we are their loved ones. This kind of respect and love is only possible through our good works. It is said in the gospel that to be a true Christian one should spread the good news. The inner essence of spreading good news is to spread the happiness in the people's life. At that point of time, I realized myself as a true Christian. This is actually the following of the concept of trinity – as Father has sent Christ, Christ has sent us.



Source: (Briggs, 2017)

It is visible at the photo how the situation was after the earthquake. It was very difficult to continue the study in the rainy season, which was going about to start. However, efforts were made in resolving the problem that occurred due to the earthquake in Nepal.

4.4.8 The Church's Role in Social Transformation

During the interview, the researcher tried to see the social transformation caused by the role of the church. The Christian church is a religious organization, which is founded on spiritual belief. It discards the distance created by society such as rich and poor, high-caste and low-caste, etc. There are some important changes so far being made by church representative while doing rescue operations and distributing relief aid to victims. It is also seen in the construction work after the earthquake. Church representatives together with the community people together built temporary shelters, managing the source of water and most interesting seen both rich and poor and high-caste and low-caste share the same tents. The situation before the earthquake was completely different. People were living in tall buildings and so-called elite groups did not share any feeling and communal life with that of poor people. They were treated as cheap people, and they saw them as inferior citizens. As observed from reponse from NC1. The blurring of boundaries and the bringing together people in tents created a positive change as seen in the service of church representative and other organizations.

The Nepalese society was divided before the earthquake occurred in 2015. The division was based on caste, religion, political background and so on. This unfair division was blurred by the pathetic condition, which destroys their ego, superior complex. This was a positive aspect of the earthquake. This kind of division was melted down because the community came together in order of the protection of life. Consequently, people living in towering building and people living in small houses met in shelters; before they never encountered each other, and this confronted many people with the fact that these poor people are part of the society. One of the reasons for the mentioned division was also due to religion. To elaborate, the Hindu majority maintained dominance in society and for example Christians were often treated badly. But this boundary of otherness was blurred after the earthquake.

4.4.9 Development of Infrastructure with the Effort of Church

In this research, I am not differentiating between different denominations of the Christian church, but I will address the church representative as a whole. Church representatives contributed in different developing projects such as reconstructions of schools, providing

materials for constructions of houses, building taps for clean drinking water, providing different training for the youth so that they could make their living as well as they could help their community where there was a lack of trained manpower.

I divide the construction work in two levels: Short term construction, such as building bamboo house with the tarpaulin roof, and long-term construction, such as building house with the people's participation. The immediate help provided when the people did not have a place to live. They provided the tarpaulin with which they could construct temporary shelters. As mention in the data presentation, St. Ann's Catholic Church provided 65 tents for the community of Saurpani, a village in the Gorkha district. Similarly other churches contributed for providing tents for the victims by collecting fund from donors.

4.4.10 Providing Relief Material

The church participated in the development of temporary housing as an immediate relief for the victims. In time of difficulty, small help of any people and organizations carried out the important role to recover from the difficult situation, which was created by the earthquake. Among many organizations, the church is one of them. As it is clearly mentioned in Bible, one should help his/her neighbor in time of difficulty. With these motifs of Bible, the church leaders encouraged Christians to help the people in their surroundings without any selfish motives. As stated in the data presentation, did the church representative ask religious belief before providing any kind of help? The majority of the interviewee responded that they had not found any church representative doing so. According to the victims, the servant nature of the church influenced them, which were beyond their expectation as reported by NC3 According to the Christian faith, Christians are assigned with the role of spreading the news of Jesus Christ to other people and to places where there has been no witness. This has motivated Christians to serve people in order to realize and witness to Christ in the presence of society where there is trouble and suffering. It is also based on the foundation that real Christians should have the role to help people in time of difficulty. In a course of history, there have occurred many problems with this, but the nature of the Christian faith is to help other people; this is the true identity of Christian people. Christianity in the world should have same ethos and servitude nature, which is the reason why the Christianity is a growing religion in the world. Without knowing the religious background, Christians are called to treat every individual in human ways, which can be viewed in the service of Christianity. This sense of brotherhood and action towards humanity has aroused the people's faith and unite in Christianity. As we can see there are different wars fought in the name of religion, but Christianity is universal religion and seek

for the wellbeing of all people and has in Nepal contributed to building a sense of brotherhood in the societal community. This is the reason why many so-called Christian countries are serving in different places where there are calamities and disorder. The core of any Christian denomination is to provide the service to other people. However, as mentioned earlier Christians should also spread the good news of Jesus through the gospel and the witness the spiritual power. All of this, I made clear also in chapter two.

As narrated by one of the interviewee (NC4) that it is the religion of the people who eat the cow. In the Hindu religion, a cow is worshipped and believed to the form of God. But the situations after the earthquake have changed their view as Christian are people like us and share the emotions, feeling and servitude nature as we do. This is the inspiring thing, which made the Christian identity to cleanse the negative thought in the people mind in Nepal after the earthquake.

Despite the hardship and people's difficulties with accepting Christians as members of society, a Nepalese identity has been established as reported by C5 in the interview. Earlier it was punishable in society to be Christian, but now things have changed, and the Nepalese constitution has given the right of religious freedom in the country. People are able to practice their religious belief. However, the earthquake also brought about negative consequences for people, but through it a strong belief was created. It also helped to establish our identity in Nepal. It is said that every consequences have good as well as bad effects hidden in it. Despite the negative consequences, the earthquake built a new the strong faith in people and united them as never before.

4.4.11 People's View on Church after the Earthquake

Even though few are Christians in Nepal, Christianity played a vital role in the earthquake of 2015. After the introduction of democracy in Nepal in the year of 2008, religious freedom was gained, and Christianity got a chance to represent its identity. Before that period, it was restricted and punishable to practice and convert the people in Nepal. However, a long history of Christianity, it has now gotten its freedom after Nepal got the recognition as a secular state where every religion is given an equal opportunity to be practiced. The people of Nepal have been influenced by the Christianity from historical time when it was a colony of Britain in India. Since then many missionaries have travelled to Nepal and spread the religion. However, it has been difficult for many years, because of the political leaders saw conversion as a sin. Sometime many Christian followers were sentenced to jail for following the religion. As

discussed earlier, in the section about the growth and history of Christianity, it has dealt with the hard times in different historical period and rule of the monarchy in Nepal.

Despite of being a minority religion, it has been showing its representation on different occasions and in time of difficulty whether it being landslides, floods or earthquakes. Being a minor religion, it has showed its representation every time when the society is in need of them. In doing so, Christianity has showed its identity to the wider society, as seen in Christian's behavior after the earthquake in 2015, as demonstrated in this research project. The general notion of Christian has changed overtime. Earlier Christians were not treated well, but now people treat them as their own brothers and sisters. This is the victory that they have gained over a period of time. The servitude nature, readiness and participation in people's sorrow and pain are qualities that have been seen after earthquakes, which have won the heart of many Nepalese people. That is in my mind a main reason why Christianity is growing in Nepal.

The general conception of Christianity has been one of a religion of the colonial agents. It has also been one a religion of cow eaters, which is a sacred animal according to Hinduism. NC2 reported that has not been ready to accept the aid because they came with the Bible. They blamed Christians that they wanted to convert people in time of difficulties. But in most other interviews (NC1, NC4) they saw Christian people as very helpful, co-operative and with a servant attitude with the motive of humanitarian values of helping others in times of difficulties. To provide the people with immediate help and providing training for sustainable development has been inspiring activities that have been done by the church representative after the earthquake in 2015. The thanks to Christians and the gratitude shown to church representatives clearly shows that the view towards the Christianity has changed in the course of time. It is said that if people have good intentions to serve other, one will always be rewarded. The church representatives have been making tireless efforts to serve people without any selfish interests, and the Nepalese people have praised it. Providing tents for homeless and supplying materials and medical teams has been praiseworthy work that the church representative have done during and after the earthquake.

Before the earthquake many Christians were seen as agent of colonial expansion and treated as such. In one of the interview, I asked about the people who helped after in the earthquake. In response, NC1 eyes were full of tears, and he replied that the church representatives were good to him because none of the organizations have addressed his problems, even the government was delayed its service. In such situation the church representative provided him with tents and foodstuffs. However, it was not a small effort, but it cost millions of money, which helped his community to survive.

4.4.12 Universal Role of the Church

In order to mitigate and minimize the effect of a disaster, developing countries should share their knowledge. The world is divided into two: The developed countries and the developing countries. If the developed countries helped the developing countries, would it then be a nicer world to live in? If these things still happen, would the world be like the Eden Garden where no sorrow and trouble is? With this basis idea of serving people despite the nationality, race, religion, etc. then it could be imagined as the God created world where there is peace and order everywhere. God created the world with a meaning. If the essence of Christianity is to serve the people in the world, then this would awake the humanitarian ethos of it. However, the belief of Christianity varies from one denomination to another, but in 1938 in Tambaram, India, the world mission conference was preoccupied with an exposition of theological relationship between church and mission (Nikolajsen, 2015). Before that, missionary work and church were understood as separate entities. The proponent thinker Lesslie Newbigin contributed to an integration of church and mission. He asserted that the church should always be involved in mission not only by preaching, but also in service in other ways. This contributed to understand that the role of the church should not be limited to evangelism, which emphasize on baptizing and prayers. After the decades of debates the church was seen as an entity that should incorporate mission and diaconal works wherever it exists. Out of that a movement arouse and the outcome was the notion of the church being a missional church in practice. Now the church is engaged not only in the evangelism, but it also spread its path through diaconal work.

4.4.13 Missional Church in practice in Nepal

The church has a mission to accomplish as it believe it has been sent by a Triune God to the people of the world, and in this way has to be involved in the diaconal work in society. God has a mission to fulfill and that mission is to serve the mankind whether it is through the evangelism or through diaconal work. The churches in Nepal are not only engaged in the prayer and evangelism, but also are actively participating in social activities. It is clear from the fact that their service and aid they provided during the tragic situation in Nepal when the earthquake hit in 2015. The church is built on the command of the God, but its mission is to realize the presence of the God through its activities. God presence is felt when the entire creature or the children of God is free of trouble. As in the concept of the Trinity, the father has sent the Son

with the Spirit to maintain peace and order in society. It can be further elaborated as God's presence and peace should be realized through the work of missionaries. The missional fields are places where the church should take responsibility, which is everywhere. Once church and mission was understood as separate entities. Now the mission of the church has been strengthened. Despite the challenges different missionaries have met, they have extended service through different projects such as leprosy care, family planning service, health camps, etc. Now the church and missionaries are integrated in society and the church is also assigned with social responsibility.

4.4.14 Challenges of Church during the Rescue Operation and Aid Distribution

Challenge is the part of life in every sector. Without challenge, there is no victory. During the rescue operation, many challenges faced church representatives. Due to poor transportation, relief item were not distributed in time, which extended people's suffering. As it is obvious from the fact of the churches in Nepal, they are not doing well in terms of economic conditions. In such a situation they had to delay their service in order to collect fund from the donor organizations. It takes time doing so. Thanks to technology they could appeal through the media about the tragic situation and confront donors. As soon as the fund was collected they departed in order to reach their destination. Because of the poor transportation and destruction of the road, it was very difficult for them to access the targeted population. In some cases, they took aerial means, which is very costly. Due to the costly air transport, they had limited aid to offer, which was not sufficient to the targeted population. Besides that, many aid materials were delayed due to poor government strategies why many relief aids were hold back in the airport and why it took a lot of time to deliver to the victims. In addition to these physical challenges, the government delayed a providing of approval for conducting renovations, which one of the informants clearly stated in an interview.

4.4.15 Generating Faith in the People

People were waiting for the aid and support they could get from the government. For one reason or another, they the government did not state the different causes why they were incapable of providing aid in time. The government, who was believed to be the responsible body, failed to deliver any support for months. It was also said that the communities who had the direct link to representative of the government received aids, but innocent villagers were not taken care

of. In such a situation, different church representatives nationally and internationally were working hard to reach remote villages with aid, which was surprising and challenging for the government authorities. This immediate help brought back the hope in the people. With the religious guidance and readiness to help others, the Christian missionaries were travelling in remote area with the available means of transport in order to help people and this developed faith and love in them. With the Christian faith that Christians should help all people, whether people belong to their own religion or of other religions, the help was provided. This kind of fair service provided by the missionaries created great respect in the people, which can be seen in the victims' faces as they praised the missionaries and the church representatives. They were true followers of Jesus, as they were true to the commandment of Jesus, that as the Father has sent him, he wanted to send Christians to spread the good news, which is the essence of gospel. Due to this reason, the churches in Nepal are increasing. As mention before, the missionaries or the church representatives have a double duty: One is to build the faith and the other to serve the people in need with the lesson that is taught in the Bible. The church should not limit its action only to the prayer and evangelism, but should also invest in diaconal work. This very essence is the guideline of the church in Nepal and elsewhere. In some essence it is fulfilled in the context of the earthquake in Nepal. The church with its service fulfilled the material and religious goal of the church. However, Christianity is minor religion in Nepal, but it made its full effort in providing the help to the needy people. The church can with reason say that God's presence in the world was realized through the act of the church representatives.

4.5 Conclusion

In this part of the research, I have focused on the main points that I have discovered during the research. As this is a qualitative research, my interests have been based on the interviews, which were guided by my research questions. In this research, I have tried to investigate the role of Christian church after the earthquake in Nepal in 2015. I have tried to explore the unseen facts about Christianity and its growth in Nepal. I have looked at their service and the help they provided to the victims of earthquake in 2015.

In order to find the role played by church representatives, I interviewed seven people of the church and seven people being victims of the earthquake. In doing so, I gained the perspective of the church as well as of the victims who were all non-Christians. This particular research has highlighted the good deed done by Christian followers in the time of the earthquake in Nepal. It has also explored the Christian perception before and after the earthquake. It has also tried to look into what was the preconceived notion about the Christianity after the earthquake.

Christianity, which is a minor religion in Nepal, played a vital role after the earthquake by providing immediate relief aid where the government agencies were lacking to gain access to the victims. It also tried to portrait the scenario and accessibility of delivering the rescue aid. Despite the easy access of transportation, church representative consistent efforts of providing the relief material were praiseworthy. In some of the places the church representatives along with donor organizations provided relief material through helicopters, which were costly. This kind of caring and the effort to collect funds to provide relief material has been inspiring for many.

Another interesting thing about the research is the people's involvement in the activities of the church representatives. Relief aid and long-term help for victims were possible with the joint venture of the church representatives and public organizations. People of the affected areas co-operated with the church to conduct health camps, distributing relief aid and also providing different training related to building infrastructures. The most interesting thing is that people accepted the service of the church. Before the earthquake the church and Christian people were looked down upon and some communities did not allow them to enter their villages. Such situations could have created problems to the church to provide the relief materials, but the situation changed and so did the perspective of the people viewing the Christian people. This positive change of the people's understanding of the Christian is in my mind an inspiring thing that this research has made clear.

Similarly, the church's serving attitude toward other people knowing their religious background is also an interesting thing that this research has made clear. Christians have opened their hands to serve all people, and therefore, obviously, the people's view has changed, which has clearly been seen during the periods of the earthquake in 2015. In other words, a sense of brotherhood was activated through the earthquake, which created the need of helping one another in times of difficulty.

Not only is that humanity aroused in everyone whether they were church representative or affiliated with other organizations. Thus, it can be said that humanity is revived through the act of serving one another in time of difficulty. The church's role in providing service to mankind without knowing about the religious background paves its way to universal humanitarian ethos. It is clearly stated in Christian gospel to help thy neighbor. Helping one another in time of difficulty is the humanitarian appeal, which has shown a new way for the church in Nepal.

CHAPTER 5

5 CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This research focuses on the role of Christian people in the context to Nepal, which is a multi-cultural, multi-religious society. It has analyzed the historical, contextual and gradual development of Christianity in Nepal. It has analyzed the introduction of Christianity through the different periods in history of Nepal. Furthermore, it has excavated the problem for Christianity in the reign of different kings and political upheavals. It has tried to portrait the figure of different religions, which exist in Nepal.

It has also analyzed the systematic development of Christianity. Christianity carries a long history in Nepal, from the colonial rule in the neighboring countries. Many colonial agents travelled in Nepal through different periods. Nepal was a Hindu kingdom through a long historical period. Hinduism is the national religion, which is also the religion of the ruler.

After the introduction of democracy, religious freedom was gained; Christianity gained its identity, and soon after it got its momentum. Hinduism and Buddhism were the dominant religions of Nepal. Christianity was treated as the religion of colonial agent and also the religion of Cow eaters. It gets its fame as the religion of the Westerner. The gradual accentuation of Christianity is gained through the development and progress of Nepali people. The global popularity of Christianity is gained through service and simplicity of the religious ethos.

The teaching of the church and its practicality in the service of people is effective seen despite some media misunderstandings and despite people's negative attitude. The reformation of Nepal not that long ago changes how people understand the role of the church. The churches seemed to invest their knowledge, wealth and media accessibility for collecting fund, which is praiseworthy.

This particular research effortlessly has tried to excavate the role of the churches in Nepal where it is a minority religion. Being a minor religion it has faced many problems with the public, which Hindu dominated. In some cases, the government agencies are delaying for giving the permission to renovate the infrastructure, which was devastated by the earthquake. It has also tried to investigate the changes caused by the church after the earthquake. It has also excavated the Nepali people's notions about the Christian church and the Christian community and how these have changed over time.

Basically, this research has focused on the research questions, which were made before conducting the interviews. Those research questions are: (1) what is the task of the Christian church in the world? (2) How did the Christian church respond to the earthquake according to Christians? (3) How was the Christian church responds to the earthquake perceived by non-Christians? To address these questions, the research has prepared a research design that could promote the collection of data and the further analysis of these in light of the theory of missional church. The research project has employed a qualitative research method in order to collect the data. It has chosen seven different church representatives and seven different victims for the data collection. Empirical survey has been done to collect the data in this research. Semi-structure interviews have been conducted for that purpose. After the data was collected, a thematic chart was made, which showed ideas expressed in the interviews. On the basis of thematic chart the data was divided in accordance with the theme of different topics. In doing so, the research presented the speech of the interview as it was. Regarding the data analysis chapter the research has tried to relate to the theory, which was presented in chapter 2.

Chapter 2 presented the dominant theory of mission and church, which presented the role of the church as missional and diaconal. The research has been based on these theories in order to look at the research questions, whether the theories match with the data or not, which would further derive to the finding of the research.

Moreover, chapter 3 presented the dominant method in this thesis. The research reflected a qualitative research method, which was based on an ethnographic survey of different places of Nepal. It also analyzed the process of how the interviews were conducted. Interviews were the means for collecting the data, and people's behaviors, attitudes, etc. were observed in order to provide valid data.

Finally, chapter 4 presented the data dividing it in different themes. The interviews were quoted as real speech as presented in the interviews. The interviewee perspectives were then analyzed in the data analysis part of this chapter.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The research came up with some interesting findings about the role of church after the earthquake in Nepal in 2015. Through the qualitative research method, the research has showed the Nepali people's view of Christians before and after the earthquake. In trying to excavate the role of church the following findings were derived:

1. Reuniting the community through the joint effort of missionaries and the community.

2. Establishing the identity and recognition as responsible representation in the time of the quake.
3. Showing the light through the good works in the community where the churches exist.
4. Following the universal ethos of the religion in a contextual way.

Beside these above ideas the perspective of the people / victims were as follows:

1. They shift in the notion of Christians was changed after the quake. The general conception of the people about Christianity as a religion was subverted and they started to treat it as the religion of their own brother and sister.
2. The readiness and attempt to help the people in the need was praised by the community where there was no access of any government agencies and other helping hands.
3. The form of contextual Christian faith actions won the heart of people. People started to view Christians as messiahs of God.

In attempt to understanding the perspective of the church representatives and the victims of the earthquake the research has gained a lot of information. During the aid distribution and providing access to the people there came many hurdles, which the church representatives had to face. It is said that where there is will, there is way. The church representatives found their way in a difficult situation. Moreover, there are many challenges that one has to face as a Christian as mentioned by some of our interviewee:

1. People thought Christians just wanted to convert others.
2. The bad means of transportation created problems while delivering things to the targeted population.
3. Difficulty in providing the aid because of the large mass of people who were seeking for aid, and the church representatives had collected small amounts of aid for the immediate purpose.
4. The government slow process in allowing the permission for reconstruction of devastated school buildings.

Thus, it is believed that this research would be an important milestone in the field of research, which depicted the Nepali society in time of the earthquake in 2015. It has made clearer the role of the Christian church after the disaster. As a researcher, I believe that this qualitative research will prove an important academic document for scholars and students who wish to enquire into the matters of disaster in Nepal in 2015.

5.3 Recommendations

This research has tried to explore the role of the Christian church in the mitigating and the recovery of the earthquake in 2015. While conducting the rescue operation, the churches were not seen prepared technically. The churches should have at least trained for the first aid during the casualties. This type of earthquake was triggered in 1988 with the huge loss of human casualties. It has also often been predicted that Nepal is vulnerable to earthquakes. Despite this fact, none of the institutions seem to be serious about this matter. The churches, which are responsible religious organizations, should also care about this matter seriously and should train their followers about precaution and first aid training, which will obviously be helpful to minimize casualties. As a part of society, it is equally responsible for the saving life of people, which will be possible from the precaution and preparedness of such a disaster. None of the churches had prepared or trained people to face such a situation. In developing countries like Nepal, the government agencies cannot spread its reach to people where the institutions like Christian churches should also play vital role in people's safety and casualty.

Besides that there were few areas that were addressed during the quake. Only few relief aids were distributed and some construction works were conducted, which has showed the effectiveness of the churches was not sufficient enough. There were many places and people who were deprived of such aids and recovery means. To further elaborate it, the Christian churches should spread its service more widely and effectively, which would further the popularity of the church. During the conduction of this research, few churches gained training after the earthquake about the health issues, which is an important issue for the survival and the generation of the hope of life to the people. There should be extensive training that can outreach the majority of the affected people so that there can arouse hope for the further life.

Moreover, many people were deprived of minimum basic needs to survive such as food, clothes and shelter. The churches should have addressed these issues in wide scale so that more and more people could have benefitted from their service. Beyond that, the church should have built a strong faith through their religious teaching, which would then have encouraged the people to be positive in times of difficulties.

Besides this, the church should trained people about the basic life skills for sustainable development, which would have helped the victims to generate income with which they could have earned livelihood. However, some efforts were made to train the people about some skills to construct houses, but it should have been spread in a large scale. Nepal is an agricultural based country where major parts of the populations are dependent on agriculture. Many of the families lost their fertile land for cultivation with which they depends on their living. None of the organizations or the government have keep eye on that sustainable development. The

church should address this issue of sustainable development as a remedy of disaster, which would help the victims to grow stronger forgetting their sorrow and pain.

Despite these facts, very few steps were taken for the renovation of schools and educational institutions. As people poverty increased, they could not afford learning materials. Besides the basic needs, none of the institutions spread their hands to facilitate teaching material to children. Education issues were rarely addressed during my survey in the field of the earthquake. This issue of providing and facilitating victims children with the necessary materials should be addressed, which I found lacking during the survey.

5.4 Limitations

During the research, the researcher has to overcome different challenges. First of all, the research had to carry out the research in a limited time. The time frame allocated to field study was four weeks. Within that short time he managed to interview different respondents. He visited churches many times because of the unavailability of the interviewee. The interviewer sometimes denied recording the interview, which created trouble to the research and then other churches had to be visited in order to collect data. The location was distant apart from one respondent to the other, which was more time consuming. Beyond that, the travel expenses and costs were another problem that came on the way during the conduction of the research. The researcher had to travel to Nepal from Norway for the data collection, which is very costly. Along with the travel expenses he had to manage the living, which added more budget than expected. Moreover, some respondents could hardly speak English, which was a problem. He had to take an interview in the Nepali language, which was recorded and translated later on. Transcribing and translating the interview was tiresome job, which is another problem, which was faced during the research. More than that, there was also the fear of losing the originality after the recording is transcribed and later translated. Having these problems, which are counted, the researcher faced more trouble than mentioned above.

CHAPTER 6

6 LITERATURE

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