



**Exploring the Diaconal Working Approaches of One Norwegian
Mission Organization;**

HimalPartner in Nepal

Master`s Thesis in Diakonia and Christian Social Practice.

Diakonhjemmet University College,

Oslo, Norway.

Sanu Maiya Bhandary.

June 2013.



**Diakonhjemmet
Høgskole**



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At

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Supervised by:

Associate professor Kari Jordheim.

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ABSTRACT.

This thesis has discussed, analyzed and explored the diaconal working approaches of one Norwegian mission organization, HimalPartner. The majority of people in Nepal are living in villages without basic facilities. HimalPartner is involved with local partners in Nepal and is one of the Christian mission organizations working for poor and marginalized people. This thesis gives background of caste, women, and health situations in Nepal.

This study has focused on Nepalese rural areas to explore the diaconal work through the HimalPartner. A qualitative method was chosen for the study using semi- structured interviews with open-ended questionnaires as data collection tools. The empirical findings have been clarified with eight informants and diakonia theory as theoretical framework.

An analysis from the study indicate the diaconal work have changed according to the needs of people in the rural areas of Nepal. The HimalPartner has responded to problems mostly on reactive level which has been beneficial to a lot of poor and marginalized people in the rural areas of Nepal.

Furthermore, the study concluded that the HimalPartner's work changed the conditions of people and positive encouragements of Christianity in Nepal.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AHREP	Andhikhola Hydroelectric And Rural Electrification Project
CA	Constituent Assembly
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
CTECT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DEO	District Education Office
ECEC	Early Childhood, Education Centre
ECJP	Ecumenical Call to Just Peace
EG	Ethnic Groups
F	Female
GAD	Gender and Development
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HP	HimalPartner
INF	International Nepal Fellowship
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
M	Male
MOHP	Ministry Of Health and Planning
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NMO	Norwegian Mission Organization
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
Sq. km	Square Kilometer
SWC	Social Welfare Council
UMN	United Mission to Nepal
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VDC	Village Development Committee
WCC	World Council of Church
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER I: - INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

My interest for choosing this topic is because of my background from the Hindu traditional society in Nepal. I belong to this society. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. Geographically, it is surrounded by hills and mountains. The majority of people are living in rural areas. These people in the village are not getting equal access to mainstream of facilities due to various factors. Nepal is characterized by major social problems, discrimination based on caste and gender, and many struggle with deep conflicts for the 10 years long civil war. Poor economic condition, education, and health are important to them.

Many poor children compelled to stay at home without education due to the lack of schools in the villages. The parents are also not able to send their children to city for the education because of the weak economic conditions. They have many difficulties to organize the food for the morning and evening. Many people are constrained to die in young age because of the lack of hospital in the villages. People should spend a day, and sometimes weeks to go the hospital. Emergency people have death on the way because of the bad roads in the villages. People should carry the sick people in the stature, and basket. Only the government health posts have established in the villages without qualified doctors and medicines.

These rural areas have limited access to basic facilities like education, health, communication, electricity, roads and so on. People residing in these areas have to travel for many days. Many people are still influenced by traditional Hindu culture in rural areas. Most of the women are compelled to follow the traditional rules in the family without any respect. A lot of people are affected by different problems; many are trapped in dire poverty. Another problem is people mental illness in both cities and rural areas. A lot of people in these areas are suffering from mental illness, and they are extremely worried about it because of the lack of proper treatment. According to the Hindu traditional culture, persons who have mental illness are the cause of hereditary sin. Some people believe that persons who have done something bad before get their punishment now. I was really interested to find out more about the Nepalese people's situation, and to find means of alleviating this suffering. This mental illness has affected a lot of people in Nepal. There are very few people trying to understand mental illness, family members also don't want to take care for their sick relatives. People with mental illness often sleep on the roads and eat everything. Nobody cares for them. Caste discrimination is the next big issue of Hindu society. A lot of people lost opportunities because of the caste system. High caste people have access to everything but lower caste people have limited access to all types of opportunities. Dogs can enter

into the temple and high caste people also kept them inside their houses or in all public places, but the lower castes cannot enter these places. Every human being is created by the same God but human dignity is different in the Hindu society. So my interest in this topic has increased over the years.

There are very few Christians in Nepal but they are increasing in numbers due to different international mission organizations that are working for poor and marginalized people. HimalPartner is involved with local partners in Nepal and is one of the civil society institutions in the country. HimalPartner has been involved in the eradication of poverty mostly through the reactive work, thus responding to the problems and dealing with immediate social needs. This has been helpful and beneficial to many people. The mission organizations in Nepal generally agree on the needs of their involvement in social issues: like poor, orphans, handicapped children and women, helping those in deep poverty, promoting education and health service in rural areas of Nepal. It is, therefore, in order to raise the economic condition, good health, and quality education of the rural people, HimalPartner has considered as solution.

Studies on diakonia especially the booklet *diakonia in Context*, which push much emphasis on taking care of the poor and marginalized people in society, sparked my interest in the topic. Diaconal work is about social development carried out by the Church which promotes serving and empowering people. In a Nepali context, some of the examples of marginalized groups are orphans, handicapped children, widows, poverty stricken people, mental illness and physical disabilities. Women are generally marginalized because they live in a society that is biased against women almost in every aspect of life. When I started to study diakonia, it was an eye-opener for me to examine Nepalese society and I became very interested in these social problems.

1.1 Objective of the study.

The main objective of this thesis is to explore the diaconal working - approaches in Nepalese society through the one Norwegian mission organization HimalPartner. The importance of my research is to challenge the Hindu society to take responsibility for the poor and marginalized people by looking at the work of the Christian mission.

1.2 Focus of the study.

Working with the topic has been a learning process in itself. First I wanted to examine how Christianity has influenced Nepalese society. But this was too big to push on. Therefore I

narrowed my focus and decided to work with one Norwegian mission organization and see how it has worked in Nepal and influenced the society.

Otherwise, I do not want to perform a “checklist” of how the HimalPartner diaconal working approaches have been taken care of. I have not had the resources to conduct such a study. My goal is to create space for understanding and reflection of diaconal working approaches in the remote areas of Nepal through the HimalPartner. It emphasizes the thinking and development processes “how”, “why” and “what “they should work in perspectives of diaconal working approaches.

“Diakonia in context” claims “For diakonia interpretation of context is never an end in itself, the aim is to mobilize the diaconal action and ensure that measures are informed with regards to people in need” (LWF 2009:13).

I wanted to develop my own understanding of the work being done through the writing task, and to make a contribution to the *“mobilization to diaconal action”* of the poor and marginalized people. This I will do by studying the goals of HimalPartner.

I collected the empirical data through interviews with questionnaires to staff in HimalPartner both in Norway and missionary people from Nepal. I will discuss these approaches further in the methodology, empirical and analytical chapter.

1.3 Research questions:

My thesis is based on the following research questions:

How has HimalPartner worked with different diaconal approaches in the Nepalese society?

1.4 Structure of the thesis.

This thesis is divided into following chapters:

The first chapter covers the general background of the study and objective of this thesis, with outlines of the research questions.

The second chapter gives a brief presentation of Nepal, and the history, vision, and goals of HimalPartner and its work in Nepal.

The third is about the methodology of the research. It basically explains how I conducted my research and what methodology has been used.

The fourth chapter presents the theory of diakonia and the mission. I also include the Christian vision of humanity.

In chapter five I present the empirical findings which consist of the all questionnaires through the interviews to my informants.

In the sixth chapter is an analysis of the findings and I discuss the empirical findings on the background of diaconal theory.

The final chapter provides a final summary and conclusion.

CHAPTER: II CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND.

2.0 Introduction.

This chapter is divided into two main parts: an introduction to Nepal and an introduction to HimalPartner.

2.1 Introduction to Nepal.

Nepal, officially the federal democratic Republic of Nepal, is a Himalayan country in south Asia and, as of 2010, the world's most recent nation to become a republic. It is bordered to the north by People's Republic of China, and to the south, east, and west by the Republic of India. With an area of 147,181 square kilometers (56,827 sq mi) and a population of Nepal 26.49 (National census Report 2012) million, Nepal is the world's 93rd largest country by land mass and 41st most populous country. Kathmandu is the nation's capital and the country's largest metropolitan city. Nepal is a country highly diverse in geography, culture, and religions. The mountainous north has eight of the world's ten highest mountains, including the highest, Sagarmatha, known in English as Mount Everest. The fertile and humid south is heavily urbanized. It contains over 240 peaks more than 20,000 ft (6096 m) above sea level. By some measures, Hinduism is practiced by a larger majority of people in Nepal than in any other nation. Buddhism, though a minority faith in the country, is linked historically with Nepal as the birthplace of the Buddha. About half of the populations live below the international poverty line of US Dollar 1.25 a day.

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. According to the report of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Index (HDI) Nepal has been ranked in

157 out of 187 countries in the world (UNDP, 2012). The majority of Nepalese today identify themselves as Hindu believers (Britannica: 2006). The people of Nepal have incredibly diverse languages, cultural and traditions. The religions range from animism and nature – worship to Hinduism to Tibetan – influenced Buddhism- Syncretism among these religious has always been strong in Nepal. Nepal has never been colonized which makes it different and rather unique compared too many countries which were inextricably intertwined with colonial power. Until the mid.18th century, Nepal was a patchwork of many small kingdoms. In the late 1700`s King Prithivi Narayan shah (The King who built the united Nepal) was successful in bringing together diverse religious-ethnic group under one nation. He declared Nepal a Hindu kingdom and banished foreigner, including the handful of catholic monks who had started a church in Nepal (Jonathan 1979: 36-37).

The country remained more or less closed to the world for the next 200 years (ibid: 41). The majority of Nepalese people worked as tenants. (ibid: 65-68). Farming migrant laboring was extremely difficult and development stayed at virtual standstill. Nepal is an agricultural society where farming often appears impossible- the majority of the population subsists on crops grown from spectacularly terraced fields cut in to the thin dry soil of the mountainside.

Administratively Nepal is divided into 5 development regions consisting of 14 zones and 75 districts. The districts are further divided into small units, i.e. village development committee (VDC) in rural areas and Municipalities in the urban areas. There are total of 3915 VDC and 58 municipalities throughout the country. Sixteen districts out of 75 are situated in Northern High Mountain, 39 district lies in the mid hill and 20 in Southern Terai (Plain Land) belt. Districts of mountain and hill have very few have access to roads. In Nepal, around 40% population is still illiterate. The current Central Bureau of Statics (CBS) (2004: Pp 61-79) report explains that male and female literacy rate is 63% and 39% respect. Nepal living - standard surveys (1995-96) indicate that around 50 percent of the population lives in poverty. The situation probably has not changed for the better due to the conflict that emerged in 1996.

2.1.1 The Caste system in Nepal.

Nepal is one of the most multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-religious countries with around 26 million in population (census 2011). The Nepalese caste system is complex and continues the traditional system of social stratification of Nepal. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>). This system was formally banned in early 1960s, but its influence has persisted well into the modern day. It has divided people into four folds which are: (i) Brahmin (priests, scholars and educator), (ii)

Kshatriya (soldiers', governor and king), (iii) Vaishya (merchants, traders and farmers), (iv) Sudra; (laborers) (<http://www.thelongestwayhome.com>). In this system, the membership is both hereditary and permanent. Inter- caste marriage is almost impossible as it carries a social disgrace, especially when it takes place between two castes at the extreme ends of the society. The lower caste people are regarded by the rich and higher cast people as an incarnation of sin (ibid). Unfortunately, they are very poor, and they always depend on high caste people. Even in the hospital the doctor doesn't like to touch the lower caste patient. The lower caste people still have limited access to land, position of political power and command of human labor. People belonging to the lowest caste are declared impure for higher caste people for their lifetime (ibid). The lower castes are not supposed to touch high caste people. They are discriminated against and the higher caste people need purification if they come in contact with them.

Traditionally within the caste system, the lower caste were not allowed to enter the temples, enroll children in schools, attend certain festivals, walk on the same road as members of high caste(Article 2012). Low caste people face huge discrimination within their communities, and are treated in the way lepers were treated long ago. An untouchable person is seen to be dirty. Their children can only play within their groups. If an untouchable person touches food or water, these items are also deemed to be contaminated and cannot be consumed by higher caste people.

According to the Hindu culture, lower caste is discriminated in every place in the street. They cannot touch other people. They are like an untouchable creature in this world. They should live outside in the yard like dogs.

Nepal is also the poorest country in South Asia, with an overall poverty rate of 31 percent, 10 percent in the urban and 35 percent in the rural areas (World Bank 2009). Many of Nepal's poor are lower caste, which is cause for major concern. Although these rates are high, they have gone down from previous years. One reason for the lower caste high poverty rate is job segregation. Lower castes are assigned to low-income jobs, including blacksmiths, goldsmiths, tailors, shoemakers and street cleaners. Also, it is often the case that lower caste women and children are forced to work as servants for their landlord without much of a wage. Then there are the lower castes, which are working in bond labor or force labor, who have no wage at all. Hence, this account for why the poverty rate is so high and why it is not decreasing as much as despite Nepal is trying to move away from the caste system (Shrestha 2002).

There are other rights that lower caste in Nepal do not have and trap them in poverty. One is a lack a sufficient education. There are many instances where the teachers do not pay attention to their

lower caste students. When lunch time comes and lower caste students want to buy food from the school, they are isolated in separate lines. Also, in certain remote areas of Nepal, lower caste students are not allowed to sit next to a high caste students in a classroom. Without an equal opportunity in education, lower caste students have a disadvantage in getting jobs, which implies that they have less of a chance in having an income (ibid:2002). Another right lower caste in Nepal does not have the right to the same amount or participation in government institutions that every other Nepalese person has. Government officials, who are supposed to listen and help out the citizen of their country, are known to completely ignore lower castes. If lower castes somehow are addressed by officials then they are often insulted. When the lower caste needs a certain service from the government, the government often delays the process in their cases (ibid: 2002). Caste system in Nepal is still a huge problem.

2.1.2 The Women's status and role in society.

Despite the fact that basic human rights are assured to every Nepali citizen irrespective of caste, class, sex and color, by the constitution of Nepal, being a patriarchal society women are still perceived as inferior to men. Therefore, women suffer multi-dimensional suppression because of their caste, gender and also due to economic, social, cultural, geographic and rural factors (Acharya, 2007). In Nepali society, gender discrimination starts at the beginning of life. The birth of girl is taken as bad news for the family, as women are not considered to continue the parental family mainly after getting married. Regardless of their higher education and even higher economic accomplishments, women do not get equal chances and opportunities as men (Niraula, 2007). In the households, men (husband, father and sons) control the decision making process, property ownership and others resources, whereas women's work (which mainly includes domestic work, subsistence agricultural and services) has low productivity or unpaid and is not even considered to be of economic value.

Women are always dominated by men in all stages of life. Women never got the freedom to choose what they like to do. When the women were children they did whatever their father said. After getting married, they obeyed their husband even though the husband beat them almost every day on a small issue. They never argued with their husbands because they were taught from their childhood that men know more than women. Women always respect their husbands. If the women disobey their husband, it will be great sin. Therefore they never do anything of value in the home and society (ibid).

Women are generally prohibited from taking jobs or having access to cash. Men do any cash generating jobs, and often migrate to China and India for several months of year in search of unskilled laboring. Land is owned by men, and women have few legal rights and depend on their husbands for income. Divorce is unavailable and domestic violence is commonplace. There is no law against domestic violence in Nepal. Women must remain at home and get their husband's permission to go to the shop, health post, market etc. The economic contribution of women was substantial, but largely unnoticed because their traditional role was taken for granted. When they are employed outside, the wages are 25 percent less than men. In most rural areas, their employment outside the household generally was limited to planting, weeding, and harvesting. Although the constitution offers women equal education opportunities, many social, economic, and cultural factors contributed to lower employment and higher dropout rates for girls. In the early 1990s, a direct correlation existed between the level of education and status. Educated women had access to relatively high status positions in the government and private service sectors, and they had a much higher status than uneducated women. But these rules could not effectively rule in the society. Still women suffering from the traditional rules in the rural areas, almost all women did not get any opportunities for their rights from the government due to the lack of proper education and traditional culture. The women always go to the temple to pray for a son when they get married because son is very important in the Hindu society. If the woman couldn't give birth to a son, the husband can get married again. It is real phenomena in the Nepalese Hindu society; the husband burns and murders his wife because she has not borne him a son.

Moreover, another problem for women in Nepalese society is: if her husband dies then the Nepali woman has to face the horrors of widowhood alone in many villages (Acharya 2007). Widows are often kicked out of their homes. They only have limited food and resources. They are not allowed to wear red, which is symbol of life and passion. In the past widows would often be burned to death on their husband's funeral pyre. Since husband and wife are supposed to become one, the logic was that a widow is only a person, who would obviously have to be killed in the name of her husband. Still in the Nepalese societies, they have their own traditions for widows. According to the Hindu culture, the people are going to some special occasion and if they saw the widow's women on the way, immediately they use to return back home because people think that, that day is not lucky. They have not been allowed to participate in social activities and self help programs. Nobody greets them, never gives a plate of food or glass of water; nobody listens to them, that is the Hindu superstitious tradition in Nepal. The rich people introduced them into society; they sinned and were eaten by their husbands.

2.1.3 The Health Condition in remote areas of Nepal.

The health situation in Nepal is very pathetic. Health and health-care facilities are very poor and it reflects the condition of Nepalese people. Most of the people live below the line of poverty. They are deprived of nutrition, sanitation, medical facilities and doctors. Some of them even don't have shelter and accommodation, especially in the hill and mountain regions. There are hospitals in the district head-quarters and health-posts in some VDC's but the condition of these hospitals and health posts are very poor and dilapidated. Some of the hospitals even don't have beds, patients sleep on the floor. Most of the hospitals and health posts don't have enough equipment, Pathology x-ray machines and doctors even when a doctor is available, he can't diagnose the disease properly without proper equipment. Even if a doctor diagnoses the disease there is no proper medicine available (<http://health-govinda.blogspot.no/2010/12/health-situation-in-nepal.html>). Ministry of health assigns doctors in every district hospitals and health assistant in health posts, but in the hill and mountain districts they don't stay there more than nine months a year because most of them live in the cities. Some donor organizations provide medicine for poor and needy patients, but corrupt doctors and health assistants sell them to the pharmacy (ibid). So the poor patients can't buy it. Due to this, the health situation in Nepal is in a dire condition. That's why hundreds of thousands of people are dying every year without medical attention. The government has not been able to ensure health facilities for all. The budget distribution in Nepal shows the health sector received only the 6.3% of total allocation this year (Ministry Of Health and Planning 2012). It has only 0.21 doctors per 1000 people and only 2 hospitals beds per 10,000 (ibid). Even these figures do not capture the gravity of the situation in rural areas since most hospitals and health services are centered in the developed areas. In remote areas, where most of the neediest live, there only some health post and sub health post which are also not sufficient and are barely equipped (ibid). On account of health services, the government is failed to promote any research in the field of health. New discoveries are far-fetched things, and even the basic study of health status and disease prevalence are lagging due to very little funding and sufficient manpower. There is no proper training for health workers. Government has not been able to launch regular health campaigns and screening programs and those which have been initiated are yet to reach all corners of the country. Even the donor agencies struggle to reach the needy ones due to poor transportation facilities. In addition, limited access to education leaves the poor completely oblivious of the disease condition, their prevention and treatment (ibid). They still live with many superstitions and myths, which may result in harmful health practices. Many cannot afford the TV, and radios, and in Nepal where the adult literacy rate is only 56.6% (NLSS-III 2010-2011). Most

poor people cannot read newspapers and magazines. An associated problem is that the poor may not care for minor ailments. Due to a lack of knowledge and poor access to health services, they may not get a checkup until the symptoms become severe, usually at advanced stages of disease. This makes treatment difficult, more costly and longer.

Low incomes are also associated with reduced compliance with treatment regimes, since patients who have begun to recover may choose to spend money on other family needs rather than costly medicine, thus never receiving complete treatment. This is especially true for diseases like tuberculosis. Here the problem was so grave that even when the government provided anti-tubercular drugs for free, the poor would collect the drugs from the hospitals and sell them to local pharmacists at a lower price to earn some money for their family. Due to the extreme pressure of poverty they need to earn little money to support their family rather than attend health promotion programs in their community such as training on sanitation, proper nutrition, family planning, vaccination and free health camps.

The treatment services are often too expensive for them, and at centers where services are free, limited funding can mean that the range of services offered is very low and rare. In some areas, there are fee waivers and exemption schemes to help the poor but in practice these have been found to benefit better off groups rather than the neediest. Because health services are centered in the urban areas, they have to travel a long distance to access health services, and even the cost of transport can form a major barrier. The time spent seeking medical care also means loss of income, a further deterrent from doing so (ibid). Thus, service availability, accessibility, prices and quality greatly affect health outcomes for the poor citizens of remote village of Nepal.

2.2 History, vision and goals of HimalPartner.

The Norwegian Mission organization HimalPartner was founded in 1938, and began to work in Tibet, in what is now the province of Sichuan in China (<http://www.himalpartner.no/om-himalpartner/information-in-english>). When Norway got involved in the Second World War in April 1940, the connection between the two Missionaries and people at home was broken (ibid). After the war ended, the civil war in China and the subsequent communist revolution still made it impossible to continue working in this region. A ministry was established among Tibetan refugees in Sikkim in India, and then in 1955, the Mission accepted an invitation to be part of a new initiative in Nepal, United Mission to Nepal (ibid). The work in Nepal grew and their involvement became well known particularly for helping to build hydropower stations in the countryside, together with training nationals in technical and industrial skills. The Mission has completed

several hydropower projects with funding from Norwegian Government Aid and is still involved in different sectors in Nepal. They want to contribute to the development of local communities and help to build the capacity of local leaders and organizations, while respecting local culture and customs (ibid). HimalPartner was known to contribute to new development areas such as when it pioneered rural hydropower development in Nepal in the 1960s (HimalPartner 2012). The area of mental health was identified as a focus area after having supported local projects for some years and increasingly being made aware of the complexity of the problem through local partners and Norwegian professionals (ibid).

The restrictions in Nepal have made one traditional form of Mission, the sending out of pastors and professional evangelists, impossible for HimalPartner. What Nepal desperately wanted and needed were doctors, midwives, engineers, and other people with technical expertise. HimalPartner became a “working Mission”- of professionals. Some like to call it the “Engineer’s Mission”, for along with healthcare and social work the Mission has worked much with Industrial and hydropower development. Within the Mission there has always been a wide spectrum of thought about the nature of Mission and the relationship between service evangelism.

HimalPartner is a small Mission society by Norwegian standards with 16 active branches around the country (strategy 2010:3). Like many Mission societies in Norway, the Mission is organizationally and finally independent, but holds to the confession of the evangelical Lutheran Church in Norway. There is a small paid staff in Oslo, and the Mission is run mostly by volunteers (strategy 2010:3). During that time HimalPartner supported around 33 missionaries in Nepal at various points and for various periods of time. There was range of 6 to 15 HimalPartner Missionaries in Nepal every year. Currently, the Mission is focusing on mental health activism, education, power for poor, women at risk, peace and reconciliation and industrial and technical development in the Himalayas. (Strategy 2010:4). In addition to sending personnel, the Mission also supports some projects in Nepal logistically and financially.

“HimalPartner (formerly Tibet Mission) is a small and groundbreaking organization. We are working to give people the opportunity to better their living conditions. We want as many people as possible to know the Lord’s love and salvation and be made capable of sharing that with others. HimalPartner sees the use of Christian personal in development work as good way to do Mission. For HimalPartner, Mission means more than words. Mission also means furthering God’s kingdom through practical and neighbor- loving actions” (Strategy, 2010-2014)

With reference to the Mission statement, the strategy plan goes on to say that the Mission has “two equal callings: one to contribute to the growth of God’s kingdom, the other to contribute to

purposeful and sustainable development in the countries in the Himalayan region.” These are dependent on each other and mutual inclusive.

There is one Norwegian term unique to HimalPartner and often used in the Mission’s advertising and descriptions in news media-“yrkesmijon” which loosely translated means “working Mission”. HimalPartner used this designations to their method of Mission in which professional are sent out to share the gospel through “secular” vocations such as medicine or engineering. While this idea has clear similarities to the idea of tent making Mission, HimalPartner is not a true tentmaker organization because Missionaries receive salaries from the HimalPartner rather than being self-supporting professionals.¹ The Norwegian Mission Organization HimalPartner is a small and modern organization with a Mission to be an instrument of God’s love in the Himalayan region (<http://www.himalpartner.no>).

HimalPartner promotes the goals by sending Christian out employee to manage development and support local organizations that are change agents in their own ²communities (ibid).This Mission organization continues to help in projects for rural development, environment, preventive health, education, vocational training and power in the remote area of Nepal. Especially, they focused for poor and marginalized people (ibid).Through the project and cooperation with local forces they want to contribute to the change of society and the life of suffering people in Nepal. Mainly, they are involved in education and training, job /business creation, health, hydropower and local community development in order that the community will be enabled to improve their own living conditions.

The Norwegian Mission Organization HimalPartner, that aims to share the testimony about Jesus Christ with the people in Himalayan region, through the practical work and their everyday life (<http://www.himalpartner.no/om-himal-partner/information-in-english>). HimalPartner Mission organization is a Christian Mission and their field worker are especially Christian professionals, but they are working closely with the local population of all faiths. Their goals are not religious discrimination in order to improve the suffering people’s life- condition in the different rural areas of Nepal (ibid). However, they want to contribute to the development of local communities and to

¹ The term “tentmaker” Missionary references the apostle Paul, who supported himself as a maker of tents while he travelled around Asia Minor(Act 18:3) Today, it is often used to describe Christians who work abroad in secular jobs, which provide both their income and opportunities to form relationship and witness to the Gospel . This form of Mission has become increasingly popular, especially in countries where traditional Mission is forbidden, and was especially encouraged in the cape town commitment (Cape town, 24)

build the capacity of local leaders and organizations, while respecting local cultures and society. They work closely with people from other agencies and nations as well as with national Church (ibid). This Mission has since the 1950s been active Mission development work in Nepal. This has resulted in several hospitals, power plants, several schools, and health care, all for the public good. (ibid).

HimalPartner will reach with various goals through awareness raising, networking and partnership between Local NGO in Norway, Nepal and China. Their focus will be on capacity building through the training of local mental health trainers, support to local mental health advocacy groups well as assistance in research (ibid). From 2012 HimalPartner has been most probably be trusted to receive Norwegian government funding (via Digni NORAD) to further develop and strengthen their involvement in different areas in Nepal (ibid).

The HimalPartner wants to relate closely to local partners and their members to be flexible, creative and innovative. They want to be comprehensive in cooperating with Christians from various background and local groups, and benefiting people irrespective of gender, race or religion.

CHAPTER: III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

3.0 Introduction.

This chapter gives a description of the research methods used in this study. At first I will present the research approach, which includes the objective of the research, research design and includes comparison between qualitative and quantitative research methods with a major focus on my interview and brief description of validity and reliability. Moreover, I will explain the role of researcher with the literatures review, and explore the experiences, attitudes, feeling and thoughts of diaconal working approaches in the Nepalese society through The HimalPartner's members. They have expressed their views in open -end questionnaires. I used qualitative research methods, since it can provide a "deeper" understanding of social phenomena than the purely quantitative data. As a result I have engaged a limited numbers of informants, throughout the table.

3.1 Research objectives

The main objectives of this study are the exploration of the diaconal working approaches of one Norwegian Mission Organization; HimalPartner, in Nepal particularly. My research question is how has HimalPartner worked with different diaconal approaches in the Nepalese society? Therefore, I included the following questions in the interview. The interview guide was used in all the interviews and the meetings with the workers in HimalPartner:

1 How does the Norwegian Mission Organization HimalPartner pick the areas that they are working together with partners in Nepal?

2 How have the Projects changed the living conditions of Nepalese people?

3 What are the needs in the remote areas of Nepal, and how has HimalPartner tried to meet these needs?

4 What is the motivation for the organization to work among the poor and marginalized people in Nepal?

5 How has the work changed during the years according to political changes, and what differences did these changes have for the work of the mission?

6 How have the approaches in diaconal work changed during the years in Nepal?

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN.

3.2.1 Qualitative versus quantitative methodology.

A research study can be designed in two ways, namely “qualitative” and “quantitative, which has been classified by (Robson, 2002) “flexible” and “fixed” designs respectively. As the name “quantitative” says this method is mostly suitable for determining the size, extent or duration of certain phenomena or to find out the pre- specified effect of an intervention or specific cause (Berg, 2003). The method mostly used in the form of experiments and surveys with closed answers. Open-end questionnaires and the data collections are evaluated statistically (Robson, 2002). For conducting such types of research, well developed conceptual framework or theory is required in advance to know what to look for , what you are going to do and how to do it, as well

as an extensive pilot work to find out of the feasibility of the method. Quantitative methods mostly begin with the selection of hypothesis that can be proven to be true or false statistically, and such method is suitable for the measurement of analysis of causal relationship between variables.

In contrast to quantitative methods, the data in qualitative research are in the form of words, but can also be presented in quantitative form. For instance, the data collection qualitatively can be grouped together in accordance to the similarity of statements and therefore analyzes qualitatively by presenting the number of interview guides agreeing to the respective statement. Qualitative research does not always provide the kind of abstracts and keywords that facilitate readily to identify of the study designs they have used. (Silverman 2007). The data collection in qualitative methodology has much less pre- specification. The design evolves, develops and unfolds as the research proceeds and thus said to be a flexible design (Robson, 2002). Qualitative research can be done with a positivist or critical stance (Klein & Myers, 1999). Qualitative methods used open-end questionnaires with interview guides. Therefore, I used qualitative research methods in my study.

3.2.2 Validity and reliability.

Research is evaluated in terms of validity and reliability. Validity is in many ways the most important criterion of research and is defined as “whether you are observing, identifying or measuring” what you say you are” (Bryman 2008:376). Moreover, the understanding of reliability “refers to the consistency of measure of concept” (Bryman 2008: 149). According to Silverman “*for this reason, textual data are, in principle, more reliable than observation*” (Silverman 2006:285). One advantage of using documents is that they are non-reactive, this means that they “have not been produced specifically for the purposes of research” (Bryman 2008:515). However, the lack of a reactive effect can be discounted as a limitation on the validity of data. Documents have an ontological status in that they form a separate reality. This “document reality” is not to be taken as a representation of the organization or reality (Bryman 2008:527). Moreover, document is texts will write with a purpose.

As an introduction I will comment on the reliability and validity of my data. In quantitative research, there are several things that make it “difficult for researcher to copy another qualitative researcher’s research” (Johannesen et al 2010 229). There are different types of validity “internal validity” is about asking themselves: “we measure what we think we are measuring” (ibid: 230). I have to use the issue as a guideline. It’s also about having awareness of what is realistic that I can find out. To show that research is a result of research and not subjective interpretations, refer to

the confirm ability. Objective: the results to a certain extent can be confirmed through other studies on the same subject. Awareness and clarity about their choices is important in this context.

The purpose of my thesis is to explore the diaconal working approaches in connection of diakonia. It is important to note that content analysis will always have some sort of subjectivity. The issues of arise through the categories used to analyze the text.

3.2.3 Role of researcher.

In addition to follow the specific guideline for the methodology, the role of the researcher is important. The research are the primary instruments in interpretive studies, the role of researcher is crucial for the research design; data collection and management; data analysis and interpretation to make the outcome of the study trustworthy (Borland, 2001).The factors influencing the role of researcher including his/ her background and personal qualities, degree of neutrality and involvement, relationships with the informants as well as with organization.

Having background knowledge in the research is an additional benefit for a researcher. It helps me to find out the right participants as well as less time might be required to know the work of the study. The researcher should have an open and enquiring mind, be a good listener, be flexible and adaptive, and be able to grasp the issues as well as be devoid of bias (Robson 2002). The researcher out to be proficient in grasping the issues and interpreting them during the study so that any evidence, clues, etc. don't get missed or misinterpreted later, and have to be open to contrary finding in order to avoid bias. The researcher must acquire good communication skills and thus present oneself as reasonable, courteous and unthreatening human beings by cordially interacting with the subjects, and show interests in what people do and what they have to say while tolerating long periods of boredom (Randall, Harper 2008).

The researcher can be classified as either an insider or outsider depending upon his/her relationship with the subjects and the organization (Walsham, 1995).The outsider researchers remain at more physical and emotional distance from the subjects and thus the subjects feel to express themselves as the trust builds up and there is less chance of going native (Randall, et al, 2008). The insider researcher are those individuals who play a role as participant action

researcher and are involved within the research setting like a member of the organization even though it is temporary for a short period of time.

My position was student doing research for the academic purpose. The power relationship between researcher and being researched determines the research results. To maintain equal status and get access to become familiar with the informants, I knew work of HimalPartner in Nepal. I chose HimalPartner because it would be easy for me to get more information about HimalPartner's work in Nepal for the poor and marginalized people. English language supported me to communicate with the Norwegian staff in the HimalPartner office. I frequently communicated with missionary people in Nepal by Skype, who are working in Nepal in the HimalPartner project. I also used the Nepali language with Nepali contacts and English language with Norwegian staff in Nepal.

3.3 Data collection tools and techniques.

Various data collection tools and techniques were used to collect the primary and secondary data for the study. The choices of those tools and techniques were in accordance with those demanded by the research. The research has been conducted at HimalPartner's office in Oslo, Norway and Kathmandu Nepal. In order to meet the research objectives of this study a qualitative method Bryman (2004:267-68) was followed. The empirical data that form the basis of this thesis was collected during the February 2013- March 2013 from the members of HimalPartner office in Oslo and missionary people in Nepal, working in HimalPartner project.

3.3.1 Presentation of Informants

Informants	Gender/ Nationality	Category
1) Informant A	M/ Norwegian	Information Manager, HP
2) Informant B	F/ Norwegian	Project Advisor, HP
3) Informant C	F/Norwegian	HimalPartner missionary representation, in

		Nepal
4) Informant D	F/Norwegian	HimalPartner missionary representation, in Nepal
5) Informant E	M/Nepali	Ex-staff of HimalPartner
6) Informant F	F/Nepali	HimalPartner missionary representation, in Nepal
7) Informant G	M/ Norwegian	Ex-staff member of HimalPartner project in Nepal
8) Informant H	M/Nepali	HimalPartner missionary representation, in Nepal

(i) Interview.

The interview method was chosen as one of the main data collection tools because the qualitative research interview attempt to understanding the world from the subject’s points of view and also to uncover the meaning of their experiences (Kvale 1996:1). The total eight interviews were conducted with the key informants stated in table. As a Silverman (2006:20) argues “open- end” questions are the most effective methods to fulfill the aim of qualitative research and to gather an “authentic” understanding of people experiences, I included semi –structured and open ended questions to encourage my informants to share their experiences and feeling with as little imposition as possible. Most of interviews were performed in English, whereas few were performed in Nepali. The duration of interviews ranged from 35- 75 minutes.

I always started the interview with a brief introduction, followed by information on purpose and objectives of the study, and the confidentiality of informants. The interview were conducted mostly in the HimalPartner office when available, otherwise in the Skype in Nepal and emailing questionnaires. The interview was recorded on a tape recorder. Short notes were also made during the interviews to aid the transcription. One interview was not able to be recorded because of some technical problems with the records as well as internet problem on Skype from Nepal. However, I made notes on what she explained in my note books. Writing down the whole conversation was

very difficult, so I had to request her to slow down from time to time. Transcriptions of the notes were done later on the same day. The recordings were transferred subsequently to a computer and then transcribed and analyzed. The transcripts were read several times to retain the facts and make appropriate interpretations.

(ii) Questionnaires.

I also used questionnaires as a supported data collection tool in this study. A questionnaire is a list of questions which is prepared beforehand, in which informants can answer either in their own words or by choosing from a set of pre-prepared responses. Initially, I prepared my research questions in order to send these to the informants in Nepal. I used this method only in Nepal because the directly Skype interviews was quite difficult. If they didn't know the research questions in advance, this led to some confusion, so initially I sent my research questions by email and they also sent me answers back by mail. After that I took interviews by Skype in Nepal. But I did not use this method in HimalPartner office Oslo; there I took the interview directly. Because I was with them it was possible to ask and repeat questions and answers several times. Moreover, I used questionnaires methods with "informants F" in Nepal and "informant G" in Norway, as I have already mentioned above in presentation of informants. Several times I requested them for a face to face interview, but unfortunately they were extremely busy and they sent me answers by mail. The questionnaire method was very satisfactory for me and my informants. When I worked with the answers from the first interviews, I saw that some more supplementary answers were needed so I contacted a couple of the informants again.

3.3.2 Data collection instruments.

This study based on both primary data during the interview and secondary literature gathered from other relevant sources. Primary data was collected through the interviews and questionnaires. The Methods were used as a way to record the findings obtained with all these methods so as to correspond and draw on the same or similar conclusion" (Silverman, 2006:291) to ensure validity of the study. The sources of secondary literature were relevant according to the theory of diakonia and mission. I found books, journals, thesis, reports and others published or unpublished material very useful for my research work, which were gathered from the library, some from my lectures, HimalPartner office, some books from Nepali friends who are studying in Oslo, and also online sources.

3.3.3 Use of tape recorder.

Most of interviews were recorded with the consent of the informants, because “compared to short notes, recordings and transcripts can offer a highly reliable record to which researchers can return as they develop new hypotheses” (Silverman, 2006:20-21). All of the informants agreed to record their interviews, It is good for coding and analyzing. So I recorded interviews on the tape recorder and coded all answers. I found great similarity in the answers so I thought all informants had the same experience during the working period in Nepal. Some answers were different from the missionary people Nepal, because they are still in Nepal and working in same field before and now. I took some interviews second time without tape recorder and got more interesting views compared than first time.

3.3.4 Research sites.

The primary research sites for this study are HimalPartner office in Oslo, the local project of HimalPartner work in Kathmandu, Kaski and Palpa districts in Nepal. Further, I used the HimalPartner’s various publications to gather the information about HimalPartner’s history and its current status of diaconal works with focus in Nepal. I got the access to the sites through emails, personal, and Skype communication.

3.4 Reliability on data collection tools

The principle of contextualization requires that the researcher must have a better understanding of the social and historical background of the research setting (Klein& Myers, 1999). It is therefore essential to take a close look at each and every component under the study not only the context but also from the past to trace the changes occurred in due course. Though the HimalPartner and their work were not new for me, I had to know lots of things as I was going to interact with the people who I had not met before. I had to understand how HimalPartner undertakes the diaconal work in Nepal and how has the work changed during the year according to the changes in the Nepalese society. Moreover, I got an opportunity to know those first involved in this mission in Nepal, because Nepal is one of the Hindu countries of the world and most of people are affected by the traditional Hindu culture.

Further understanding of the situation and collection of data were performed by interviews. Interviews can be conducted by semi- structured or unstructured questionnaires (Robson, 200) depending upon the need and subject matter under study. In this case, I followed semi- structured interviews with open - ended questionnaires. The purpose of choosing semi-structure interviews

with open-ended questionnaires as the data collection tool was to be flexible enough during the interviews and provide opportunities to discuss other related topics. The interview method also allows the informants to elaborate their views and interpret them in their own way (Rodson, 2002) for better understanding of the real world setting. Accordingly, major points of interest were chosen during the interviews and questionnaires were developed around these topics.

3.5 Data analysis methods.

This study has used qualitative methods to analyze both primary data and secondary literature. Most of interviews were tape recorded and unrecorded interviews were carefully written in the short notes. The interviews were in the English language and some in Nepali language and then translated into the English language. I was careful with the transcriptions and translations, and also used both English and Nepali dictionaries when needed to be as accurate as possible. Those transcriptions were carefully read several times. The theme for analysis was identified and developed based on those transcriptions.

CHAPTER IV: THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK.

4.0 Introduction.

In this chapter I will present the theoretical framework that I have used for my study. I will explain the diakonia as part of Mission, and the Christian vision of Humanity, because these theories are very useful in my empirical chapter. I believe that the theoretical framework can provide a framework, which will help to understand and explain the empirical findings in more depth.

4.1 Mission: What does the mission mean?

“Mission encompasses proclamation, service and advocacy for justice” (LWF1988:7). “Mission as proclamation is an attempt by every Christian to tell and interpret the gospel story in his/ her context as away to discover God’s saving action and meaningful presence in the world” (ibid:7). Mission as service highlights the diaconal dimension of a faith active in love, working for empowerment and liberation of those in need. Mission as advocacy for justice denotes the church’s praxis in the public areas as affirmation of the dignity of human life, both as individual and as community, as well as a widened sense of justice, encompassing the economic, social and ecological spheres (Report p.20). Mission as pertaining to the being of the Church, while “missionary” is reserved to describe mission as action of the Church (LWF1988:7). “The mission

of the Church is to point to and participate in eschatological reality of the in-breaking of God's reign in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, anticipating its final fulfillment as the basis for transformation, reconciliation, and empowerment."(ibid: 7)

Holistic Mission is the process of leading human society toward holistic peace through the Church's work of creating communities of the disciples which engage in integrated ministry to cater for people's spiritual, social and physical needs. (<http://www.cca.org.hk/>)

New Testament perspective of Holistic Mission: (ibid)

In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus proclaimed that he was anointed to:

- Preach good news to the poor.
- Proclaim release to the captive.
- Recover the sight of the blind.
- Set at liberty go those who are oppressed.
- Proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

According to this biblical text, the reason for his coming is to do holistic mission, the spirit anointed him to attend to the needs of total person (to recover the sight of the blind), to affirm the divine image within the person (good news to the poor). To oppose the forces that distort that divine image (to proclaim release to the captive), to assist the blooming of that divine image into its fullness (to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor) if we take the meaning of this text seriously, and if we are seriously thinking to follow Jesus Christ in our Mission, there is no choice but to do the job that Jesus also did in his life as we found in Luke 4:18-19. (ibid)

The theory about Holistic mission as part of the Church, and diakonia as an integral part of this mission is my understanding in this thesis. Mission is being defined as the all embracing task of the Church, diakonia should be considered a fundamental dimension of the mission therefore, diakonia theory is playing a vital role in my empirical findings. I will present diakonia as next point.

4.2 Diakonia.

4.2.1 What is diakonia?

The Greek word diakonia can be defined as "the responsible service of the gospel by deeds and by words performed by Christians in response to the needs of people" (Lossky et al. 2002: 305).

Diakonia is a word used to describe the care and service amongst each other, especially of people in need. Diakonia is a verb and describes the very act of carrying out service. Diakonia is the works of the Church which encompass compassionate care, building of fellowship and all types of help or service offered to the needy. Diakonia is based on the love of Christ in order that our fellow men in the different situations of their lives and makes it possible for our fellow men to be free to believe and serve (Church of Norway 2008).

This indicates the fact that diakonia or diaconal work cannot exist without the works of Jesus. “Because of the holistic Mission of God, diakonia is deeply interrelated with kerygma (proclamation of the word) and koninonia (sharing at the table” (LWF 2002:6). Diakonia is theological concept that points to the very identity and Mission of the Church. Another is its practical implication in the sense that Diakonia is a call to action, as a response to the challenges of human suffering, injustice and care for creation (LWF 2009:8).

Diakonia is Christian service and fights for justice and peace in the society (.”(Nordstokke 2011: 17); especially taking care of the poor and marginalized people in the suffering society.

Diakonia has been linked to the situation of sick, poor and marginalized people, and has been carried out to accompany, support and defend people who are vulnerable”(LWF 2009:41) “Diakonia, widely understood as the ministry of care and solidarity with people who suffer and are marginalized, has been given renewed attention by church”(ibid).

“Diakonia is the caring minister of the Church. It is the Gospel of in the action and expressed through loving your neighbour, creating inclusive communities, caring for creation and struggle for justice” (Church of Norway plan for diakonia: 2008).

Diakonia is action that expresses God’s love and should therefore be generous and unconditional. At the same time, it is realistic taking into consideration the shortcomings of human beings and societies. Therefore it has to be prophetic, lifting up the dignity of the excluded, denouncing the powers that seek justice and life only for themselves, announcing ways of promoting human values and wellbeing for all (Nordstokke 2011: 27).

According to Rachel Madem, diakonia can be perceived as a response to how Christians should live their lives:

Diakonia is the active expression of Christian witness in response to the needs and challenges of our communities. Diakonia in all its many authentic form cannot be

separated from the struggle for peace and justice, and it is directly linked to the empowerment, transformation, and liberation of marginalized and poor people in every society (Medema 2005:1).

The quotation underlines the fact that diakonia needs to engage in the struggle for justice and peace as well as respond to the needs of people and challenges of today's world.

According to the biblical understanding "*Diakonia is care based on the love of Christ in order to help the people in the different situations of their lives, and make it possible for people to be free to believe and serve*". The pivotal point of this is Christ love and fellowship in the love of Christ.

At the moment most of diakonia work concentrates in granting immediate help to the poor and oppressed, but it is rarely becomes the voice of the voiceless to fight for the justice in the society. Diakonia has the responsibility to see the need in people's lives and do something about it. Diakonia must go beyond a charity that does not transform relationships. Diakonia is to give help, but the best way to do it is more complicated. Therefore "Diaconal work is often confused with ordinary health and social work, more or less inspired by Christian conviction" (Oftestad 2003:7). Today diakonia considers itself part of global network of people, organizations and church working towards a world where people can live their lives in peace and dignity. The people organize in the church to care the poor, sick, orphans, homeless and children. Diakonia work continues to be a valuable task for poor and marginalized people, It reaches out to all persons, who are created in god`s image, while diakonia being an unconditional service to neighbor in need. It leads inevitable to social change that restores reform and transformation. "Diakonia always takes place in the real life, where people suffer, experience poverty, violence and injustice or whatever threatens their dignity as human being."(Nordstokke 2011:14) In this way, diakonia always reflects the real status of the world, and is challenged by development in society that excludes the poor and those that are considered expendable, in order to respond to the challenges of today's society.

4.2.2 Theological fundamentals.

Diakonia is fundament in the trine- God as the creator, the savior, and the Holy Spirit:

God as the creator:-

Diakonia always have a special responsibility towards people in need. Faith in the creator implies admiration and praise, acknowledge the dignity and profound quality of what is created. This is

consistent with the creator's own conclusion at the end of every creation: "God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good."(Genesis 1) The dignity of human beings has its deepest roots in their creation in the image of God. However, this does not justify any form of anthropocentrism whereby all other operations are seen to be only at the service of human beings (LWF 2009:25). On the contrary, God gives a special responsibility to all humankind to care as stewards for God's creation (ibid). Diaconal action affirms this vocation and seeks to provide opportunities for being partners in God's mission. Such action confesses God's continued presence in the world as creator every day and every situation (ibid). God has created human beings and all that exists, and provides every necessary thing for human life. It motivates Christians to work together with all people of good will, acknowledging that every human being is created in the image of God and thereby given a mandate to be God's co-worker in God's ongoing love and care for all of creation (ibid).

God as the savior:

God loves all humanity. Because God loved people first, people themselves are able to love and respect the dignity of any person. Diaconal thinking and acting focus in particular on those whose dignity has been offended. This provides a spiritual basis, rooted in God's work and in the service of Christ. Therefore, the Church has the mandate to testify to all mankind of God's love for the world in Jesus Christ. Diaconal activity is one from this testimony (Eurodiaconia 2000).

Jesus- diakonia has several dimensions. It is an act of liberation and reconciliation, of healing and lifting up all those who are "like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36), especially siding with the suffering, the downtrodden and marginalized (LWF2009:26). Through Jesus- diakonia, human dignity is affirmed and defended. Another dimension of Jesus-diakonia is his authority to invite persons, even sinners to be included in the messianic fellowship that he established and to empower them to participate in his mission (ibid). Jesus- diakonia not only constitutes fellowship, but it also qualifies those who belong to it. It is a manifestation of God's grace that reconciles, transforms, and empowers (ibid). The word of diakonia portrays the service of Jesus as powerful action in the sense that the disciples "have share" with him John 13:8).

God as the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit makes inclusion of fundamental value in the life of the Church and in diaconal practice. Baptism is a holy space in the life of the Church where inclusiveness is radically announced as even small children are embraced in the communion of believers (LWF2009:26). Baptism is very moment in the empowerment by the Holy spirit for participation

in God's mission. According to an old tradition in the Church, the baptized received a lit candle, reminding the person and all the baptized of Jesus words to his disciples (ibid):

“You are the light of world...Let your shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father in heaven”(Matthew 5:14-15). In Paul's teaching this is related to the gifts (charisma) of the spirit: “now there are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit; and varieties of services, but the same Lord”. (Corinthians 1:4) Such gifts equip the individual Christian for service, but also the community as a whole to represent the body of Christ.

In the Lutheran tradition, this teaching of the equal value of gifts has led to what is understood as the priesthood of all believers (LWF2009:27). The basic condition for this reality is the outpouring of Holy Spirit, and the gift of communion with Christ. Because baptism gives people a share in Christ's death and resurrection (ibid). In Christ, who is light of the world, his followers are transformed to be light of the world themselves (ibid).

John Collins here two definitions from Church of Norway:

Diakonia has been related and referred to as humble service but this was challenged by the New Testament scholar, John Collins.³ Collins brought a controversial interpretation of Mark 10:45 which are used as Biblical basis of diakonia. Collins argued that this verse has been misunderstood, and that Jesus service here is not humble service. He argued that Jesus service was a personal commission under God. This understanding of service brings a different understanding of service. If this kind of service is understood in the context of the Church it means that the Church is involved first and foremost in service because it is required by the Lord. Collins understanding of the word, diakonia, has influenced the Norwegian Evangelical Church's understanding of diakonia. The old definition of diakonia had an emphasis on diakonia as service; it defined diakonia as “the Church's care for fellow human beings and its development of community spirit and as that service which is particularly directed at people in need (old plan for diakonia 1988). In the new plan for diakonia for Norwegian Lutheran Evangelical Church defines diakonia as “*the Church's care for fellow human beings*”. It is Gospel in action and is expressed through inclusive fellowship, brotherly and sisterly love, and fight for justice and care for creation”. (Kirkerådet Plan for diakonia 2007).⁴

4.2.3 Diakonia as Transformation, Reconciliation and Empowerment:

³ John Collins is a Roman Catholic writer whose PhD research led him to re-examining the word diakonia. He wrote a book on *Diakonia: reinterpreting the ancient sources*.

⁴ Own translation from the Norwegian language

According to the booklet diakonia in context, diakonia as Transformation, Reconciliation and empowerment are identified as the basic directions of diaconal work. According to my study diakonia is care and service, its purpose is to change the suffering society. This means that the mission of the Church is a continuous process to change the society and find out the proper ways to solve the problems. These three dimensions are very helpful for diakonia as they clearly point out the diaconal work. Here I am going to clarify the three dimensions of diakonia.

4.2.3.1 Transformation:

The theological point of view: Transformation:

In reference to the theological models, it would be important for the Church to willingly transform in order for it to be a transforming institution. In a continuously changing society, Church's social work can only remain faithful to its original assignment if it can develop different forms and structures that can be appropriate and suitable for the different conditions like being able to work in both the traditional and contemporary environment, (LWF, 2002:23). This transformation is for the sake of human dignity. The Church is called to serve humankind and to defend human life, God's image bearer. It is not an option but an obligation for the Church to act.

transformation is a reminder of God's constant renewal of creation, as every morning we experience that the darkness of night is transformed into the light of new day." (LWF 2009:44)

According to the above - statement as the night is followed by day- it means that the church as agents of transformation shed rays of light on the people of light. Often problems create a cloud of darkness on people. When the church helps people are transformed and are given a new life, light. Being transformed is God's gracious gift, and can be compared with how the night's sky every morning turns to day (ibid: 44).

"Transformation, perceived in the light of Christ's resurrection, is the unfolding of the potential life -giving nature to all creation and an expression of the working of God's grace in nature. It is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to effect transformation in and through the Church to the whole world." (LWF2004: 33)

It has to bring about newness of life in the individual. The church is empowered through the Holy Spirit as agents of transformation; this transform of the church is done by identifying the context, and being part of those affected by injustices, exclusion and exploitation. This means that the

power of the Holy Spirit in a church ensures that the acts as a medium through which this change is effected in society.

According to the statement given above, the resurrection of Jesus Christ gives Christians a new transformed life. , transformation is a continuous process by the church. It is done in the world and to the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. This makes the church an agent of the process of transformation in the world. This transformation however can be effected in different ways.

Christian theology understands human dignity on the basis of biblical testimonies; this is to say from the narratives that we have in the Bible and basing on creation theology. Christian theology recognizes human being as God's image- bearer and therefore ought to be handled with dignity (Gen 2:27). Considering this, the Church is obliged to be involved in socio-economic injustice issues, and any activity that robs this dignity is intolerable and arouses need for action.

“Diakonia in context” claim that transformation is: “Renovation of life with all its hopes, ideologies, structure and values” (LWF2004: 32).Transformation thereby hangs together with development. God constantly renews creation that life is a part of. Life is sacred, and transformation confirms this. Everybody needs to care for others in their lives. Transformation means that all who take part in it are changed in a way.

“Transformation is loosely linked to the diaconal work, which plays a vital role to change [.....] and processing the development.”(LWF 2009: 44)

The need for transformation calls for the Church to review its structures on perspectives on people. This transformation also calls for the Church to review its structures and be able to offer greatest opportunities to the least advantaged in the society; those who suffer greatly when it comes to socio-economic injustices. It can be almost impossible to talk about Church's involvement in socio-economic injustices if half of the population, women, are excluded in the whole process. The involvement of women has to start within the Church itself.

The other groups that are often overlooked and marginalized are groups with physical disability, blindness, deafness, intellectual impairment or mental illness. Such people face discrimination in different places and it can be said that this kind of discrimination has not spared the Church. True transformation of the Church should have such groups at its heart and fight for their cause.

Implementation of Church's advocacy for social services calls for the Church to transform and be able to integrate such marginalized groups.

4.2.4.2 Reconciliation:

Atonement says: "what God does for people's relationship with God to be restored. This transforms and empowers people to reconciliation" (LWF 2009: 44). Jesus Christ, reconciling the world to him, entered the world of reconciliation as diaconal dimension. It is God's merciful gift that also gives hope to a wounded planet. There is much need for peace and reconciliation in the world. Reconciliation is about to leave the wounded and oppressed come with their stories so that "wounds" can be cured. Jesus diakonia testify about many things, from the sight of him, one can say that "reconciliation never leads people back to where they were". It's about more than taking away the pain that victims feel and transforms the oppressor; it's all about walking together and enables people to new responsibilities, renewed relationships and new place.

God has reconciled the world in Jesus Christ. This gift is a promise of the broken world, and diakonia seeks to witness this promise through initiatives of furthering peace and reconciliation (ibid: 44). As people of God equipped for mission, the Church is called to participate in God's reconciling mission, beseeching people on behalf of Christ to be reconciled with God (Corinthians 5:19). Reconciliation refers to the God's action, through which human beings have their relation to God restored (ibid: 44). At the same time restoration implies being transformed and empowered for "the ministry (Greek: diakonia) of reconciliation"(ibid).The concept of " diakonia" clearly reminds all human beings that diakonia of Jesus , his way of unconditional existence among the poor and suffering people in the society (ibid :44).

Furthermore "reconciliation makes it possible to extend reconciliation to all human relations of the world: with family, others groups, societies and nation" (LWF 2004: 34). That means all human beings are living in the same roof of earth, and all are brothers and sisters. Only difference is that some are poor, and some are rich, with different religious backgrounds and capacities. All human beings are created by the same God and reconciled in the society as same family. Reconciliation opens a new narrative that outcomes "the narrative of the life" (Robert J. Schreiter 1992). In institutions of violence and oppression victims are not allowed to tell their stories. Moreover the real reconciliation cannot happen if the truth about the past is not revealed. "Truth is not always allowed to be told; it requires an environment of safety and mutual respect" (LWF 2009:45).

4.2.4.3 Empowerment:

Theological point of view:

Empowerment refers to the biblical understanding of creation that every human being is created in the image of God, with capacities and abilities, independent of their apparent social situation. (LWF 2009:45)

According to the statement given above, all human beings are image of God of the world. All human beings have the same body structure and same blood; nothing is different as brothers and sisters. The Mission of go- between is successful if distances can be bridged. When this happens, diaconal action can contribute to transformation of the Church. All diaconal actions, including those addressing direct desires, are rooted in a comprehensive authorization of building relationships. As a diaconal method, supplement seeks to overcome isolation and keeping out and to identify pathways that may present possibilities for boarder sharing in mutual solidarity and empowering the people (ibid: 47). Most of society, there are endless situations which call for the diaconal action of bridge- building, both inside and outside the Church (ibid: 47). People living with different diseases in the community, women suffer violence and their voices are not heard in the society, children of poor parents receive inferior education, daikonia tries to find out proper ways for all suffering people to empower them in the society as other people (ibid:47).

According to the biblical view of people are “empowerment” linked to that every human being is created in God’s image. The story of how the disciples in the face of the spirit of God were transformed and ready to preach the gospel of Jesus is an important backdrop for empowerment (Acts 2, 1-4). This authority does not keep still, and that conviction should characterize diakonia practices, methods and priorities, claims ibid: 46). Diakonia should enhance people’s dignity and “provide the opportunity to be subject “in both Church and society” (ibid: 46).

It should remember that empowerment always implies shifting of power, which means that imbalances of power must be dealt with critically (ibid: 46). Dickonia should constantly raise this issue, not only in society and in the relations between helpers and those helped, but also with reference to diaconal praxis and how power is established and lived out in the life of the Church (ibid).The task of being a bridge- builder is integral to the very nature of diakonia. The deacon was called “ear and the mouth of bishop”. It was the deacon who had responsibility to bring the stories

from the marginalized people and from the lives of the poor and sick in to the Church (ibid: 47). The mission's go-between is successful if distances can be bridged.

“In terms of empowerment, it is also natural to talk about power, and power switch. Unequal power structures must be addressed and redesigned. In this work, diakonia is a role as bridge builder. In the original use of the word diakonia was understood as mediator- go between and restored. Moreover, diakonia called “bishop ears and mouth”. Accompaniment can be seen as a diaconal method to promote relations and counter isolation” (ibid: 47).

Empowerment is the process of enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Central to this process are actions which both individual and collective assets, and improve the efficiency and fairness of the organizational and institutional context, which govern the use of these assets (<http://web.worldbank.org>).

Empowerment expresses [.....] something that individuals or groups who are in a powerless situation should acquire strength and power to get out of powerlessness. Through this power mobilization will they be able to resist forces that hold them down and get more power and control over their own lives. (...) Empowerment expresses therefore both an objective and means to achieve this goal. (Asheim and Starrin, 2007:21)

The empowerment is “of central importance in the slow process of social, political, and economic change that is needed to turn the alternative vision they present in to reality”(Rowland, 1997:19). Moser consider that empowerment recognizes women's triple roles, and seeks to meet strategic gender needs indirectly through bottom up mobilization around practical gender needs”(Moser, 1993:74).

Empowerment is a process that incorporates self-discovery and also development of collective identity. It is expansion of choices and opportunities of poor and marginalized people who are excluded and powerless because of unequal power relations and social structures. Empowering refers to the God sharing power (*dynamist*) with people for involvement in God Mission. God empower individual Christians and the whole Church through the most important of Holy Spirit and the bestowing of Spiritual contributions obligatory to take out the Holistic Mission of the Church (LWF 2004:35).

The Church is empowering to observe God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ in a world where detestation abounds, to speak of justification by grace in a world, where all human beings seem to

be considered by their market value, and to predict hope in the centre of countless violent suffering and despair(ibid:35). The Holy Spirit empowers the Church to resist misusing power as “power over” others and to walk in the way of Christ, where people are shared with all.

God’s empowerment extends to the society through the Mission activities of the Church as a one of God’s empowering instruments in the world. Through its service and diaconal ministers, the Church provides the help for the direct needs of people - refugees, displaced persons, [.....] Poor, marginalized and disabled people. However, the Church seeks proper ways to support those in need, regardless of their source to recover their human dignity by asserting power over their own lives (ibid :36).

Empowerment speaks of self - determined change. It implies bringing together the supply and demand sides of development- changing the environment within poor people’s lives and helping them build and capitalize on their own attributes. Empowerment is a crossed- cutting issue, from the education and health care to governance and economic policy activities which seek to empower poor people and increase development opportunities, enhance development outcomes and improve people’s quality of life (ibid:47).

4.2.4 Spiral of hope- hopelessness.

“Diakonia in context” claims that the spiral hope of hopelessness is not whole, but by having it in mind can analyze systems also linked to poor and marginalized people’s perspective as a diaconal working approach. Hopelessness’s “centrifugal effect” means that the marginalized are further marginalized. Marginalization can thus be seen as a “multidimensional experience”. It’s about the person’s loss of self- esteem, and at the social level can oppression be defended as an ideology, (LWF 2009:20).

“Diakonia in context” reviews the African of “ubuntu” in understanding a person’s identity from relationships with others. All together in a whole with relations linked together like a spiral that is always open and include new relationships (ibid: 20). This interlocking keeps hope alive, and makes it possible to break the spiral of hopelessness. It is clear from the following figure:



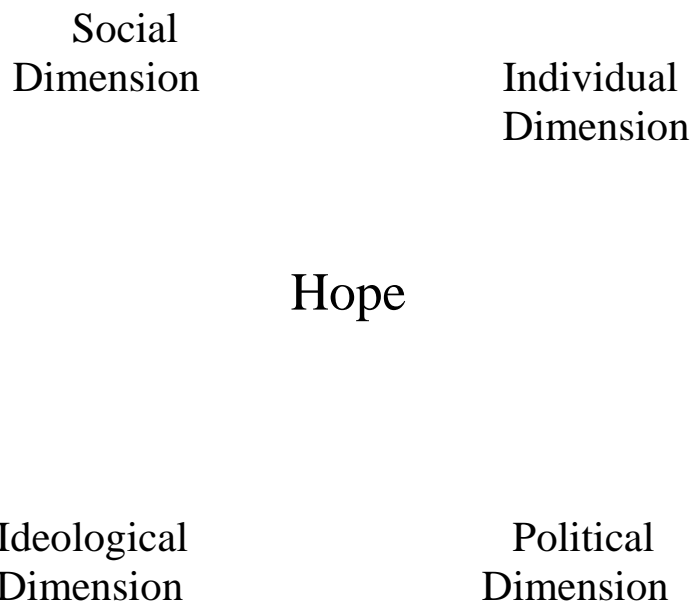


Figure 1: spiral of hope LWF 2009: 20

Diakonia in context claims that human dignity is expressed in different dimensions. People are living in different dimensions, Negative spiral increases hopelessness, and positive spiral builds up hope. God loves us, and we are able to love others, and it has changed society and political dimensions. The political dimension makes it clear that politics is dependent on citizens with hope and vision. The ideological dimension is about values about what is good, right and true. This is expressed in beliefs and life philosophy. The social dimension brings out the importance of space for participation to combat totalitarian point of view, but rather a basis for understanding and empowering of human differences as opportunities. The individual dimension reflects the individual as the whole. There are contradictions within the model. It can be seen as a “roadmap for hope” (ibid: 21). I will more clearly expand on this in the following paragraph:

Political dimension makes clear that political life depends on hope and vision, actually, it refers to the fact that political life depends on citizens who express their hope and vision for the future (ibid:20).

Most of people are spending their life as political citizen of their own country and they accept the new life in the future, because which way they have chosen, that way express their hope in their

future life. The links to the ideological dimension which defines what is true, good and right and where people bring their agendas promoting solidarity, justice, peace and care for creation, according to their worldview and values. If the people want a good future, they can find out the true, good and right way to continue with their life. The Church encourages solidarity, justice and peace in the suffering society.

The social dimension is where it becomes clear whether or not each individual is given space for participation according to her or his own identity and engagement. If there is no space, ideology may become totalitarian, which is the case when only one truth is allowed or only one understanding of the hope. It is the potential of the social area to establish mechanism of inclusion and empowering for participation, and acknowledging that human differences are potential, not a problem (ibid: 21).

In the Bible, Paul writes about hope, among other things, when they speak of “the suffering of this present time” (Rom 8, 18).” For hope we were saved, but hope is seen is no hope. Why hope for what one sees? But if we hope for that we see not we wait for it with perseverance” (Rom 8, 24-25).

It is also have nothing ambiguous about it, given that hope is associated with some uncertainty, which is challenged by the suffering in the world, but can be regarded as safe because it is rooted in existential wonderings and faith. “Diakonia challenged spiral of hopelessness and tries through practical action to support the spiral hope” (ibid: 21).

This is done by walking together from the different steps in spiral of hope from the vision of change, transformation, reconciliation and empowerment. These diaconal expressions I go on to explain later.

4.3 The Christian vision of Humanity.

The Christian tradition, basing itself largely upon the accounts of creation found in the book of Genesis, has insisted that humanity is the height of God’s creation. The Christian understanding of human nature is Genesis 1:27, which speaks of humanity being made in God’s image and likeness. According the Jewish interpretation of humanity’s creation in the image of God tended to avoid any suggestion that this established a direct correlation with God. Some Jewish exegetes argued that God created humanity in the image of angels, interpreting the context of Genesis 1:27 to imply that God’s words were addressed to an angelic audience. Some others argued that the text was to be interpreted as implying that humanity was created according to some image that was specific to it, thus distinguishing humanity from the remainder of creation.

The emphasis on humanity was based upon fact that the Bible claims all people are created in the image of God and that all people are created equal. Every human being is created by God, and they should have the same values and same rights irrespective of where they live.

As stated in the above sentence, every human being is created by God, and all should have equal freedom, power, responsibility, righteousness, hope peace and reconciliation in the world (Mc GRATH 2001:349). The Christian theology interpretation of human being is created in the image of God (ibid). All human humanity is image of God in the world [...] the strongest bond which unites people is humanity (ibid). Anyone who breaks it is a criminal and a parricide. Now it was from the one human being that God created all people. So the all human being are all of the same blood, nothing is the difference to each other. With the result that the greatest crime is to hate humanity (ibid). That is why all people are forbidden to develop or encourage hatred. So if all people are working under the same God, what else are all people but brothers and sisters (ibid)?

God created human beings in the “image of God”, thus endowing humanity with a capacity, wisdom as well as knowledge which were granted to no other creature- that being able to relate to and part of take in the life of God (ibid).

The doctrine of creation in the image of God was also seen as being directly related to the doctrine of redemption. Redemption involved bringing the image of God to its fulfillment, in a perfect relation with God (ibid). God created human beings in the “image of God”, thus endowing humanity with a capacity which was granted to no other creature- that of being able to relate to and partake in the life of God (ibid). Both man and women is image of God with same rights, and values.

Human life is always handled within the presupposition of creation, and thus in relation to God and society (Childs Brevard S. 1992:566). The Old Testament wisdom literature, where the focus is not on Israel’s history, man is still viewed within a concrete, particular, and time conditioned setting more than women (ibid). All human beings are created by God, and they should have equal dignity in the society, only difference is man and woman. Most of the societies of the world still have gender discrimination in the different sectors. But thus rules did not make by the God (ibid). Every human being should get equal values in the society. The anthropological and psychological language which is used in describing human existence and behavior is not unique to the Bible (ibid). But The Greek New testament one can discern at times terminology having its roots in a dualistic concept of human nature, which is a perspective at odds with much of the New Testament’s own witness.

As human means having the opportunity to exercise God-given gifts of creativity and productivity in such a way as contributes generously to the common good and thereby to the glory of God. according to Christian theology, humans are called to participate in their material life, “clothing” themselves with Christ (Romans 13.14) and becoming members of one “body” by dwelling in Christ (Romans 12:5). To be human means not simply to be a part of creation, but to be a stubbornly material part of that creation. To be in Christ is to partake in “a sharing of material food which make the people sharers in eternal life; of a community whose life together seeks to express within creation the care of the creator.” It is not to escape their material condition but to affirm it. The idea that humans have a particular, distinct quality which differentiates them from the rest of the created order has a long history. Writing in the second century, the church father Irene drew a distinction between ‘image’ and ‘likeness’ mentioned in Genesis , suggesting that “the former refers to humanity’s natural rational and moral capacities while the latter refers to the spiritual aspect of the human condition that had been lost through sin but restored through grace. The Enlightenment preoccupation with what is universal in the human condition was influenced both by the classical Christian view that what defines humanity is the soul rather than the body, and by the conviction that reason could be used to define the essence of the human animal. Enormously influential as it has been, however, there are some problems in tracing back to scripture this idea that the image is a fundamental rational quality. This is not to say that humans are not rational animals or that other creatures share the human capacity for rational thought (although there is some evidence that, in some measure, some do). Rather it is to say that if the people are seeking a substantial definition of the image, they are unlikely to find it in their rational capacities. More fruitful is the idea that humans are uniquely creative animals. The God in whose image people are made is a creative God.

4.3.1 Creation in God’s image:

God’s word speaks about the meaning human life, particularly, as people are vulnerable by the realities of evil, suffering and death. Those who believe in Jesus reveal who God truly is, who people truly are and what and world are finally become (John R.1991:11). When looking the backward from the Israel’s experience of God’s action in creating and saving it as a people, composed from different traditions, it is clear that God is the creator of all human being. It is God, and God alone, whose hand holds back pharaoh’s charioteers and original watery disorder, leading God’s creatures to fullness of the life and freedom. It is only in relationship with this God that the world and those who settle in it can find real life (Deut 30:15-20).

According to the Genesis chapter, found the two different creation stories, which is the meaning of creation and creature less. The first part is of the priestly tradition (from the sixth century B.C.E) and the second is from the earlier Yahwist tradition (tenth century BCE) (John R.1991:13). According to the Genesis stories of creation the power of God's word and creation is the expression of God's desire and purpose, everybody can move toward the world with confidence and hope in spite of the darkness and disorder which seem to pressure life. The world is reliable because it comes from God. It has a hope and a future because it is related to God. The Christian believer is sure that everything is created by God in the world, anything wouldn't be able to separate the people from the love of God (John R.1991:13).

Humanity as head of creation and gives us the concept, which has proved most significant for the Christianity's understanding of the human being as image of God. Even though it is not developed in the Old Testament (OT), it seems taken for granted in the New Testament (NT), and sets the stage for a specifically Christian understanding of God's saving act of recreation in which we are conformed to the image of God's son (Rom 8:29).According to Priestly tradition, the human being is closely related to God, no other type of creature. Even though everything is created by God in the world the human being is different from the other creatures. It is also the foundation of the inviolable dignity of human life (John R.1991:16).

The place of humanity as the head of the creation and seems different others animals because they are not only God's works, they are created to be God's image. As such, they are given a share in God's power. God's creative wish, and God given task as the "humanization" of the world as long one of the things which makes truly human is the distinctive ability to acknowledge, appreciate and delight in the reality of all other creatures as other, and to care to them (John R.1991:17).

4.3.1.1 Humanity: The male and female.

All human beings are created by God, as a stated already the reality of sexual differentiation means male and female. It is interesting that God has no gender, only he created the gender. People consider that God has made human beings as God's image. Since all people are created in God's image, the human, the personal, is a confidential, though analogical way of thinking about God. Thus, the scriptures are filled with male and female images of God; it is not only appropriate but important to use both every place. (John R.1919:18). God created human beings with the same values and same rights in the society. Human rights are "commonly understood as inalienable fundamental rights to which the persons are inherently entitled simply because they are

human beings” (Sepulveda et al 2004:3). Human rights are thus conceived as universal (applicable everywhere) and egalitarian (the same for all human being).

The human being, in traditional Christian understandings, is a composite of body and soul, of dust and breath, of mortality and immortality. Body and soul come together when God blows “breath” – soul – into a physically human receptacle. The creature is now understood to be *imago dei*, the very image of God. The human being is not a spiritual reflection of divinity (as in Islam) or suffused with divinity (as in Hinduism) but is the actual image of a deity that is wholly other. The human being is most highly valued by God of all things in the universe. Humanity and divinity commingle in only one instance, which is the person of Jesus of Nazareth. In him alone the human form actually becomes holy.

Humanity is commanded to be in close communion with God through obedience. Individual human beings are, paradoxically, both completely dependent on God and ultimately autonomous. Humans are dependent upon God because God created them in the first place, animating them and sustaining them throughout their lives. Simultaneously, humanity is given control over its own sphere. Through free will, individuals decide the course of events; they are not puppets of their creator. In every moment they have the choice to obey or deny God’s laws. The state of sinfulness resulting from the fall, humanity’s original disobedience, deforms the *imago dei* but not its ultimate worth. St. Augustine and others have argued that the damaged *imago dei* continues to make invaluable humanity incapable of avoiding sin.

Male and female are not simply accidental characteristics of human being; neither are they two different creatures (John R.1919:20).According to the Christian points of views all human being created in God’s image either male or female, only the difference is sexual but with equal values, and equal rights because both were created by same God.

4.3.1.2 The gift of human freedom.

Created in God’s image men and women have been given a creation capacity and responsibility for what becomes of God’s creation. God’s sovereignty and human freedom go hand in hand. Human freedom, as sharing in God’s power, is grounded in God’s own sovereignty, before which it is, therefore, ultimately responsible (John R.1991:27).The existence of the created world as the utterly free and gracious action of God. But according to the bible faith God’s word does not call creation into some kind of merely factual existence, but to being –god. That means to live with God, to participate in some way in God’s life. The priestly writer tells God found all that had

made to be good; he is not referring to a moral quality. He is talking about the desire and delight that God has in relationship with creation. For example: the smile of a mother holding her baby at the breast (Is: 49:15) images God's delight in her creation. This means people don't often take seriously. They are free to be themselves, different from God. According to the booklet John R. Sachs, the Christian vision of humanity, the real freedom of the world is what God most powerfully desires and is its greatest good (John R1991:28).

Christianity has traditionally understood freedom to be granted not by a state or by persons but by God. There is a strong duality between one's inner life and one's outer life. The Christian may understand to be completely free even when in physical captivity. Truest freedom is spiritual independence from the empirical world (Rouner, 1988: 44). Christianity does not view the world as something illusory to be overcome, but as something with the power (because it is fallen) to corrupt their ability to love and obey God. A Protestant theologian writes, "Freedom is not the goal of political action; it is the presupposition. It is founded in the religious conscience, in the religious self awareness of people who are free in faith and therefore not dependent on the state for that condition which constitutes them as free persons." Christian partnerships with secular rights advocates will be an effort to create a temporal mirror, an embodiment or institutionalizing of the true freedom of the soul already granted to all people (Rouner, 1988: 35).

Christian freedom means that each person is able to choose in every moment whether or not to live obediently. Fr. Bryan Hehir, a Catholic moral theologian, writes, "In the Liberal position, the principal meaning of freedom is 'freedom from' interference in the exercise of one's rights. The responsible exercise of freedom in the public realm is imperative. But because the image of the divine within humanity has been deformed by sin, it is understood that a faultless exercise of one's freedom is impossible. Christianity teaches a second kind of freedom in Jesus Christ, whose death and resurrection free humanity not from sinful acts but from the consequences of those inevitable sins. One will not be able to stop from sinning, but with repentance one will be forgiven them. The Christian, therefore, is freed to live into their holy responsibility to God, self, and others, and freed to live forgiven of their imperfect response to divine love and trust. True freedom is always God-given and Christ mediated a product of divine/human relationship.

CHAPTER: V. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS.

5.0 Introduction.

In this chapter I will present the empirical findings from my interviews. My interviews are semi-structured interviews, and I have interviewed eight people among the workers at HimalPartner's office in Norway and missionary people in Nepal.

5.1 Presentation of the informant's opinions.

I will start by presenting the informants' opinions, related to diaconal working approaches in HimalPartner. The informants talk about much of the same, but with slightly different starting focus. I will therefore put most answers together after each question, but sometimes I have added single answers to broaden the perspectives.

Question no. 1. How does the Norwegian Mission Organization HimalPartner pick the areas that they are working together with partners in Nepal?

The Norwegian mission organization HimalPartner was started in 1938 by a group of Norwegians who felt a calling from God to bear witness to the gospel of Jesus in the Himalayan region. HimalPartner is attempting to give the people opportunity to improve their own living conditions. HimalPartner became a working mission of professionals. Some like to call it the "engineer's mission," for along with healthcare and social work the mission has worked much with industrial and hydropower development. Within the mission there has always been a wide spectrum of thought about the nature of mission and the relationship between service and evangelism.

After the Second World War in 1955 the Tibet mission shifted its work to Nepal, through the international umbrella organization United Mission to Nepal (UMN). In 1955 the Tibet mission accepted an invitation to be part of new initiative in Nepal through the United Mission to Nepal. During that time, they started work in Nepal, mainly focused education, health, clean water and hydropower in the remote part of Nepal. They invested financial support through the local partners to prevent the spreading of mental illness. Gradually, they built the hospitals in the different remote places of Nepal. In the beginning when they built hospitals in different rural areas, they provided free treatment for the poor and marginalized people. Now people from the rural they are getting treatment facilities in their own village cheaper than government hospitals. . In the beginning of 1955, they opened primary schools. Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) and Educational Horizon Nepal (EHN) children better educational environment and the prospect of a better future based on help for orphans, handicapped and poor children in the suffering areas of Nepal. They started teacher projects in collaboration with HimalPartner and two

organizations in Nepal in order to raise the level of primary education. Gradually, they also started to develop the higher education in different faculties - education, management social science, and opened high schools and colleges in rural areas. They also used to organize teacher training for qualified teachers in these areas. HimalPartner thought that Nepal has a lot of natural resources but people are very poor. The mission opened engineer schools for the young people after the permission of government. Engineering expertise and Nepalese opportunity was able to manage and use their natural resources to promote sustainable development in the country and reduce inequalities. To avoid that graduates professionals seek out overseas to better paying jobs and to encourage increased investment in regional development, the engineering students and teachers for the short periods deployed rural areas. In the starting period they established health clinic to provide help and assistance in poor communities, especially in the rural areas where health services was limited, Part of the health assistance program is to provide education

Before HimalPartner's work started in Nepal, there were many people suffering from the unclean drinking water and people became hunger lack of the irrigation. People have sufficient land but no irrigation, and couldn't cultivate anything in the field. They were supplied food from the city with expensive prices because there was no transportation. People did not have income resources, and they couldn't buy food because of expensive prices. They were doomed to die without food in the early ages. HimalPartner managed the water pipe and provided clean water, and irrigation in the suffering areas of Nepal. Nepal's hydropower potential is huge, bigger than in Norway. New production of clean energy could bring Nepal's broken economy on their feet; The HimalPartner produced hydropower, and provided the light in the rural areas cheaper than the government. The HimalPartner changed of poor people life in Nepal. They decided about the areas to work in together with the government.

They have been working especially in the remote districts in Nepal where people are suffering and have few opportunities in life. These districts are Kaski, Rukum, Butwal, Dhading, Palpa, Rolpa, Okhaldhunga, Lalipur, Kathmandu, Dhulikhel and so on.

A Couple of others comments to add these answers to question 1.

“Informant B” said that, in the beginning, they entered Nepal. Nepal was practicing democracy so religious freedom, and other types of basic facilities did not reach the general public. The multiparty political system did not survive long because the king took the power in his hands, and exercised autocratic control by declaring a Hindu kingdom. Due to this people were suppressed much more and development suffered. The miserable conditions of the Nepalese people caught the eyes of different Organizations from abroad. It was not easy to enter for everyone however;

HimalPartner was able to join hands with poor people and gave them a voice. HimalPartner urged people to change their traditional thinking, and received knowledge ahead of Christianity. They mostly decided about areas together with local partner- organization, and registered NGOs.

“But Informant C” said that the mission has been working with local community partners. Through the local partners, they find out the condition of villager’s, and makes a plan to invest money for their life change. They mostly focused on the remote and suffering places in discussion with the local partners. They asked them, “we are a Christian mission; we want to help your communities, tell us, what do you need in your village”? The organizations invested money after having discussions about problems with the local people. They want to help and change the conditions of the Nepalese people.

Question no.2 how have the projects changed the living conditions of Nepalese people?

When HimalPartner started to work in Nepal, there were very few Christians, almost nobody. There was not permitted to preach the gospel, because there was no freedom for other religions, and most of the people were uneducated. The Rana era (1846-1951) was really difficult time to live in freedom (The Rana was a Hindu dynasty, which ruled the kingdom of Nepal from 1846 until 1951). At that time, there was a school only for their children. General people were not allowed to go to schools to learn to read and write. They feared the impact of education on the people and its potential threat to their rule. They were determined that the ordinary people would not be educated. Health care, education, hydropower and vocational training were far beyond the access of general people. During that time the HimalPartner’s work with the people on the above mentioned fields became very useful in diverting their minds towards Christianity. They have been working in Nepal and changed the living conditions of people. They built several primary schools for orphans, handicapped and poor children in the rural areas, and provided teacher - training for school - levels. It increased the awareness of people so they sent their daughters to school and started to fight against the any types of social discrimination. Nepal has a lot of water sources but people were compelled to live without light because of the lack of the proper technical education. However, they helped to promote skill education through Kathmandu University by providing technical as well as financial support. Now a lot of people live have light in the remote areas. When they started their work in 1955, mental health was big problems among the people of Nepal. It was thought as a punishment of god in the Hindu religion but after implementing the work of HimalPartner, people became positive towards medical treatment. They realized that religion was not reason for mental illness, and started co-operate with United Mission to Nepal.

Fortunately, they have great success in finding out the proper treatment for mentally- ill people. Now the suffering people have become healthier and they are working very well.

Poverty is another problem of Nepalese people. They tried to find out the proper ways to improve income by providing vocational training. After the HimalPartner's work in Nepal, many people are able to utilize their skills to work for income. They encouraged people to work with their new skill. The skill workers improved their lives in many ways. Now they can manage everything themselves, and they have become rich.

HimalPartner, the mission has since the 1950s been active in mission, and development work in Nepal. This has resulted in several schools, several hospitals, power plants, health and diaconal institutions today for the public good. I.e. Adhi Khola River was honored with blue planet save awarded by UNESCO (United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in 2005. The HimalPartner was praised for sustainability, and the way it had raised the standard of living for thousands of people in the surrounding area. Throughout the construction of the project, the mission adopted a policy of employing local people where possible, including technicians, engineers and local workshops. Hundreds of Nepalese gained experience and skills during the construction period, and many continue to be employed in the operation and maintenance of the scheme? Some of the senior technician, engineers and managers within Nepal's leading hydropower companies started their careers on the AndhiKhola Project. In addition to hydropower benefits, the AHREP provides water for gravity irrigation of 280 ha of land. The 800 subsistence households within the irrigation area had been prone to famine prior to the development of the scheme and were able to grow only a single crop annually. The development of a community organization to build, operate and manage the irrigation scheme has resulted in the in the cultivation of crops during the drier months, with three harvest now possible annually. The outcome is a reduction in famine, with sale of excess crops providing additional households income. 80% of the electricity users in the region are subsistence farmers, and an underlying philosophy of the AHREP is to benefit low income families in one of the poorest regions in the world. In contrast to most hydroelectric schemes, which provide power to urban communities that are often remote from the project site, the aim of AHREP was to make electricity available to rural communities close to the project site. Within the project area, over 17,000 consumers of electricity across 22 villages benefited from the scheme, with this number growing by 10% annually. Creating and maintaining educational and economic opportunities that empower communities to re-establish them under changed condition is a central factor in economic sustainability. So the

mission organization HimalPartner is currently working through denominational cooperative and local actors.

“Informant B” expressed in this way:

“I think HimalPartner is doing Holistic development work in the Himalayan region of Nepal. There were lots of waterfalls but most of the people were living without electricity. The HimalPartner opened the hydropower in order to promote the rural electrification. Now lots of people are getting more light and roads in the village areas. The HimalPartner focused on proper education for lower caste, orphans, and handicapped children. They distributed the different free material for children, like: books, copy, pen, pencils, and school dress and so on. The teacher’s role is very important for the children, therefore the HimalPartner managed the teacher training in the schools of the rural areas. HimalPartner played a vital role in gender equality. Women work, and incomes are very important in the family. Therefore, now the women are getting a lot of freedom, gaining good knowledge in the society, and play an important role in the family compared to before”. (Informant B)

But “Informant D” expressed this way:

“I think, the HimalPartner have changed mainly health and education situation of Nepalese people in the rural areas. They also started the women’s education programs, where women were discriminated against through cultural phenomena. Nepalese women were subjected to domestic violence, sex exploitation, incest, rape, and medical abuse. These have been exacerbated by several others factors such as poverty, domestic violence, trafficking, financial dependence, lack of education, and limited training opportunities, which have challenged the exercise women’s rights in the country. Low participation of women in education is the result of family decision at the beginning because when families choose which of their children will or will not be educated, sons are preferred. After marriage a daughter was the other’s property and investment in other’s property was worthless. Only the son was important in the family. Women were not allowed to go to school for education, they only worked in the house and field. Women have limited access to knowledge, food and care. HimalPartner fight against the gender discrimination in Nepal provided the first opportunity for women in the every sector. The woman’s life has been slightly changed in village city areas. Now the women are much more confident a self-assured. The representatives of this organization meet people who were wounded mentally, and they are able to help them heal. The early childhood education center is providing teacher- training, who can impact for the good of children’s future.”(Informant D).

“Informant A” told this example about a Nepalese girl, who got her life changed.

“Maya” is absolutely convinced now that it was God who saved her. She is from a village. Her mother had died, when she was 2 years, and her father two years later, so she grew up with her grandmother. At 16 years old, she moved to Kathmandu to attend the high school. She was living with her aunt. Aunt used to give her only pocket money, and was often tough to her. She had a lot of problems, and it was difficult to manage because of the lack of money. Maya suggested that maybe she could do some work at a restaurant close by. It was really perfect idea to cure her troubles. She loved dance. But she did not feel comfortable in the short dresses; however she hadn’t any other possibility so she decided to dance in short dresses by convincing herself that “it was just a job.” She was constantly more aware that it was a lie- this was a road that led to prostitution. Nepali societies ignore girls, who work in restaurant and bar, and say that they are bad girls. Maya worked two weeks in this dance bar, but she was uncomfortable with the situation of being lightly dressed and an attractive dancer.

One day one foreigner and pastorfrua Bimala Pokharel (staff of Higher Ground) came in to the bar and one boss came in to the back and said that one of them would go out and talk to them. She came out and talked to them about Higher Ground (part of work, HimalPartner are doing). They clarified Higher Ground’s work, and what they are doing. She agreed with Higher Ground’s work, and made contact continuing with “pastorfrua.” Bimala Pokharel, which she has now, becomes so happy that the boss at the bar thought she was lying and offered her higher wages, but she just had to know more about the “Higher Ground”, now as Bimala leader. She offered to learn how to make jewelry and earn a better living. It was really just what she wanted. After it she was able to make some pocket money and could have her own cell phone, with some makeup kits and good clothes. God saved her before things had gone too far. She has been changed due to the God’s guidance and she often worships at Higher Ground.

After seven months at Higher Ground she accepted Jesus as her savior. She would stop swearing, but still when she gets angry she utters bad words. A lot of people used to say Maya is a bad girl because she worked in a dance bar. But now she is a new creation in Christ, and has a happy life. Higher Ground changed the life of this girl and helped to identify the way to God.

“Higher Ground” is a company that manufactures jewelry, cards and bags and run bakery and café Kathmandu. They want to give women at risk a job- offer and a new life.

“Informant D” told following example:

During the 10 years of civil war (1996-2006), Nepal was very dangerous for grass root people in the remote areas. At that time one of the remote districts Rukum was really affected by the conflict. The village had more widows than many other areas in the district. A lot of women lost their husbands, and became widows. According to the Hindu religion widows are treated negatively in the society. They are not allowed to involve in any religious events and treated as witches in the society. Widows should not involve in any social groups. Nobody supported them in the society as well as any public places. They have not had the opportunity to win back self-respect and confidence. They have not been helped by the locals, nor been allowed to participate in community activities, and self-help programs. Even they could not get involved in any religious program, if they got involved; people thought that God was angry. They have a difficult life in the society. During that situation, the United Mission to Nepal (UMN), HimalPartner's umbrella organization in Nepal, had invited them to enter for rehabilitation programs. They sat together and listened to each other's stories. They soon realized that their stories were pathetic and solve able without any support from government and agencies. So they cooperated with them to assist their livelihoods. They formed groups, where they were able to share their pain and practiced income generating activities. Some made pasta, other cultivated mushrooms, extracted cooking oil or anything else. Thus, the worst pressure with respect to economy also eased slightly and gave them the opportunity to send their children to school again. Now they can participate in each and every sector. Everybody respect them in the society. Through the HimalPartner work, peoples' attitudes have been changed, and many widows have the opportunity to be a respected part of the community. Many widows now have realized that they are respected by the locals, and especially after they formed their group for widows.

Question no. 3 what are the needs in the remote areas of Nepal, and how has HimalPartner tried to meet these needs?

Nepal is one of the poorest countries of the world. The Church mission in Nepal, so far is not very successful, because Nepal has traditionally suffered from Hinduism. Many people are suffering from unemployment and compelled to go abroad for work. The majority of poor people are living in the villages and having a lot of problems. Villages are very far behind in infrastructure and basic facilities, so all rich people and political leaders live in the city. No educated persons are there to make something change. In the time of civil war (1996-2006), it was very difficult in the remote areas. A lot of people became homeless as they compelled to stay outside the home. Many children died of starvation because everything was blocked in the villages. A lot of children were forced to carry heavy loads and clean utensils in the restaurant. Children spent time with animals

in the forest due to the lack of the schools in the villages. Teachers were never regular at schools, and also not qualified. Parents couldn't organize the materials for their children's education... books, pen, pencil and school dress etc. because of the weak economic conditions. People really struggled because of the poverty and lack of basic needs. They had limited access to education, health, electricity, and transportations. According to the Hindu traditional system women shouldn't go to school. Still these systems continue to be followed in the rural areas.

A lot of poor people died young because of the lack of hospitals in the villages. Women were suffered and died during the pregnancy or in connection with child birth period. People were suffering from starvation and clean drinking water. Most of the remote areas are surrounded by hills and it is very difficult to develop roads. The cultivated land was also not growing good crops from the lack of irrigation. The rivers were not utilized. Most households used homemade "wicked" kerosene lamps. Unimaginable pathetic conditions of people were waiting for someone to make something happen. Before HimalPartner's work, there were a lot of facilities needed in Nepal like schools, hospitals, roads, electricity, clean drinking water, sanitation, some skill workers to generate income in the remote areas of Nepal.

The United Mission to Nepal (UMN) and HimalPartner organization jointly support remote areas for developing their life standards, and make better living conditions for poor and marginalized people. They built a very good hospital in Tansen Palpa-district, which has been in operation since 1959, and has become a prestigious hospital in the region. HimalPartner has for years sent the health professionals to the hospitals in the absence of national medical specialist who works in the big cities. It reduces mortality among pregnant women and mothers. In 1990, 870 women died per 100,000 live births but in 2010 the number was reduced to 380. Good health facilities are the key to fighting poverty. Poor health is both a cause of poverty and consequence of poverty. This problem in Nepal has been slightly decreasing during the year. This mission hospital has been an important contribution to Nepal.

Education is also a prerequisite for development and a way out of poverty. 90% of children in Nepal started school but half of those starting in first grade finish at the same level. Only 63% of those who go up to the primary school exam have the opportunity to further their education. This is not because there is a lack of potential in children, but because the quality of teaching is not good enough. Training courses for teachers are addressing the need of equipping teachers and preschool teachers in Nepal. HimalPartner worked with Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) to promote an educational approach appropriate to the child's level of development and strengthening teachers' professional competence. The different awareness program made aware

people of their rights and how to fight against discrimination. They fought the gender discrimination and began to send their daughters to school. Widows became respected person. The roads were constructed which make easier to supply food and transport, the teacher and school status has been changed slightly. Fertilizers, irrigation and training in the modern agriculture systems began to reduce the lack of food. Most rural areas had access to electricity. People used home- made light, popularly known as “Tuki”, to meet their lighting needs. Different vocational training promoted the income of people. Limited households used clean water. They normally fetched water directly from nearby springs and wells. Now HimalPartner supply clean water in the each rural area. The group farming system helped them in modernizing their life style. The most common positive changed of people is way of thinking for better future, now people are not afraid of the problems but can face it in the right way. So the HimalPartner’s work in targeted areas is playing big role in every sector of poverty in Nepalese villages.

“Informant E” expressed this the following way:

The majority of the population is living in the remote areas in Nepal. These areas have very difficult living conditions. People are wishing for much-needed facilities which are really essential in their lives. The main task of HimalPartner in Nepal is to support and develop the remote areas. In the beginning they were entered in Nepal through the United Mission to Nepal. They have seen a lot of people suffering in the village. They were working different fields and preaching the Gospel in the villages. The HimalPartner is committed to respond to needs not only through the health care, such as in Tanse but also through the different partner in different villages together with the Nepalese people, aiming to work in ways that is supportive and build capacity.

Question no. 4. What is the motivation for the organization to work among the poor and marginalized people in Nepal?

HimalPartner wanted to contribute to the development of local communities and help build the capacity of local organizations. The main purpose of the HimalPartner is to enable and improve the living conditions of the community in remote places. They found that Nepal has a lot of resources but people are very vulnerable and marginalized due to the lack of finance as well as technical support from the government. A law of necessity was effectively implemented by the HimalPartner to motivate people for the positive behaviors towards life. People were to become more active and motivated after they received the encouragement and support through the United

Mission to Nepal, and HimalPartner. Literacy programs able to help people something to read and aware for their good health. Health camp and vocational training perfectly changed the people's life. They have long term involvement in different fields like: hydropower, technical work, teacher training, health and education which already are in above questions. This was created some opportunities for people resulting in a better future. After securing their future they became more positive and motivated to do something actively to improve their life. They are supporting vulnerable people to uplift them into good condition. They encourage poor and marginalized people to fight against the any type of discrimination. They equally provide opportunities to all religions and castes with gender justice.

Question no.5 How has the work changed during the years according to political changes, and what differences did these changes have for the work of the mission?

The Christian missions came very suddenly to Nepal, In 1950s, Nepal's king ousted the powerful prime minister in a bloodless coup. Nepal's new ruler was much more open to the outside world and began to grant entrance visas to westerners and to groups of American doctors to open a mission hospital in 1953. This was to share the "open door" with as many people as possible and to avoid missionary competition. The American missions invited all the waiting missions along Nepal's border to share the Hospital visa as an ecumenical Mission. Those who accepted became the United Mission to Nepal (UMN). At around same time, Two British doctors and groups of Nepali Christian asked permission to start a leprosy hospital in the Pokhara district. These groups of missionaries would become the international Nepal fellowship (INF).

Through these different kinds of witness individual people in Nepal continued to hear the message of the gospel, and many believed and gave up everything to follow Jesus. After 1970, the number of those who first heard about Jesus from a Nepali pastor increased dramatically as the number of church grew. Due to the Government restrictions and to their own desire to let an authentically Nepali church grow without too much western influence, expatriate missionaries deliberately chose to leave all church planting or leadership to Nepalese. The house fellowship and cell Churches became their own congregations and daughter churches broke away from new fellowships. The first Nepali Churches grew in the three main places- Pokhara, Nepalgunj and Kathmandu. It was both forbidden by law for Nepali people to change their religion and culturally unacceptable for Nepalese to become Christians. Some were jailed for having broken the law

against conversion to another religion. In the 1980`s, the government intensified official persecution of Christians. While missions have clearly communicated to the Nepali government their Christian motivations for working in Nepal, Christian missions have visas to Nepal based on secular development and aid project that both they and the Nepali government saw a need for. Christian Missionaries have been deeply involved in Nepal`s huge industrial and economic development over the past 63 years, building up schools, hospitals, businesses and hydropower industries. While there were many other NGO`s working in Nepal, until the 1990`s the United Mission to Nepal was one of the country`s largest employers, second only by government.

Nepal`s political environment was one of rapidly evolving change and factions. These factions occupied different political positions but agree on one point- they do not want religious freedom for Nepal. Hard line communist only wanted Nepal to be a secular nation and others wanted Nepal to be only a Hindu nation. Even though Nepal is primarily a Hindu country, historically it has always been known for its cultural diversity. This diversity and `tolerance` however is generally not extended to Christians. For some years, Nepal went through a very difficult period of Christian persecution. Between 1970 and 1990 many Nepali believers lost their homes and saw their cattle killed because of their faith in Christ. At that time Nepal was ruled by an autocratic king

In 1990 there was some political change when the monarchy form of government dissolved and a so called `restoration of democracy` occurred. There were many changes but these changes excluded any true freedom of religion for Christians. The other minority groups were also badly suppressed so the conflict became a civil war for the rights and freedom of different minority groups. It went up to ten years and concluded with 12 point peace agreement in 2006 for a republic and secular nation. After the peace agreement in 2006 and winning historic constituent assembly election in April 2008, the Maoist became the leaders of the country. Nepal`s monarchy was abolished in May 2008 and the country, formerly the world`s only Hindu kingdom, is now a secular democratic republic. All citizens, regardless of religion, have equal rights. The announcement followed a large number of pro-democracy demonstrations and was welcomed by members of non Hindu religious minorities, like Christians.

In December 1951, with king Tribhuvan firmly in the throne, there was a second medical expedition into Nepal. For six weeks medical clinic were held in Tansen where over 1500 people received modern medical care for the first time. When members of the medical expedition met later in Lucknow, India, there was a `soberness settling upon them. For up to in the hills there had been laid like a yoke upon them, the first request was that they go into Nepal and establish

medical missionary work. They had been urged by influential Nepalese who assisted the bird expedition to start medical work in Nepal. After the meeting in Lucknow, Bob Fleming sent a letter to His Majesty government of Nepal requesting permission to start a hospital in Tansen. Fifteen months later, a letter came to in India. Dated may 18, 1953, it was written by assistant secretary, department of foreign ministry in Kathmandu. His Majesty government of Nepal had granted permission for a hospital in Tansen and women's welfare clinics at various sites in the Kathmandu valley. An invitation was quickly extended to Christian missions working along the border of Nepal inviting them to join and work together in a united way in Nepal.

The mission work was becoming wider with changes happening in Nepal. In the first fifteen years, the desperate need for medical care in Nepal resulted in the development of a variety of medically related programs. Within a few weeks of the beginning of maternal health care in Bhaktpur and Kathmandu, the need for expanded services became apparent. In addition to Kathmandu, Gorkha, Tansen, and Butwal, there were concerns for the people of eastern Nepal. The health work in the eastern part of Nepal resulted in a dispensary in Okhaldunga, a three day walk in to the middle of mountains. Permission came for this work in 1961. In those early years, work started by the UMN, evolved and concepts emerged which formed the patterns for development for most of UMN's history. As a work started to address one need, other needs would surface which had to be considered in order to be of support to the basic concern. Several factors converged which ultimately led to change in the delivery of health service in Nepal. Drawing upon the collective wisdom of the Nepalese and expatriate health personnel, the group analyzed the cause of death among children and identified preventative measures that could be done in the community with the available resources. Out of that analysis a community health team approach emerged which changed the concepts of district clinics from curative centers to primitive health centers. Another area of work in which the UMN health services took the lead was in work with HIV/AIDS. The need to care for HIV/AIDS patients became a reality in the hospitals in the early nineties, with the hospitals setting policies in regards to treatment of HIV/AIDS patient and implementing universal health precautions for all patients in UMN hospitals. This allowed hospitals staff to care for patients without stigmatization. Screening for HIV for donated blood was incorporated into blood bank policies as soon as serologic tests were available.

Activities evolved over the years to meet changing needs in education as prescribed by the government of Nepal. As in other functional work in mission work the changing priorities of the government offered challenges and new opportunities. Rural development emphasis was placed on community resources rather than external resources. For some development workers, this concept

seems to increase the responsibility of local participation. The effect of mission work was dramatic. Their work on education, health, and industry and infrastructure development was very important to change society. So the government of Nepal continues to welcome missions to serve the country under the terms of the general agreement, and project agreement. Mission's record of development work in the name and spirit of Christ is considered a positive contribution to the government's efforts to foster self-reliance and decrease dependence on foreign assistance.

But "informant A" expressed in this way:

In the beginning 1950s Nepal was closed country to foreigners, and Christian missionaries were not permitted nearly two hundred years earlier, Prithivi Narayan Shah from Gorkha conquered the smaller kingdoms dotting the hillsides of Nepal and unified the country. Whether for political or religious reasons, the Gorkha king expelled the Capuchin father working in Nepal at that time. From 1759 onwards Christians were not permitted to live in Nepal. But after regained the power by king Tribhuvan on 1951, the mission work was welcomed to serve the people's health without any cost. During that time there was no modern treatment centre. The mission work in Tansen was the first modern medical care center and its impact over there saw it expand into various places. At that time Nepal didn't have roads, hospitals, and schools with people lacking the basic facilities and awareness of the proper way to live. Due to these problems, people were insecure. But after the mission started work in Nepal, The literacy program made something change in the remote lives. The woman's life became secure when they were having child birth and pregnancy. The death of children reduced and youths were able to get vocational training. It gave hope to hopeless. It raised the standard living. The discrimination between caste and gender came down. It led people to have more rights and freedoms. The political involvement increased. So the government also felt that the mission work is needed and agree to expand it in more areas. That's why there are several education centers and hospitals providing services to the people in different areas. The rural electrification program is helping people to connect with the world.

Question no. 6. How have the approaches in diaconal work changed during the years in Nepal?

Until 1990, most of the Church groups in Nepal were united with few exceptions like Assembly of God and Church of Christ. But the democratic changes of 1990 brought relative freedom to practice one's faith. This freedom contributed towards a proliferation of various denominations and groups. Church as a whole in Nepal is an indigenous phenomena with no direct involvement of foreign missionaries. Nepalese themselves took upon the challenge of sharing of Gospel and Churches came into existence. However, missionaries began to enter the open doors in the decades

since 1990. As a result of missionaries and foreign missions, there are a plethora of foreign funded Churches and mission groups in Nepal. Although the Church leadership appears to be Nepali in nature, but the Nepali Christian leaders have adopted some of the names and practices as demanded by their donors.

In the early history of the church and mission in Nepal, diakonia was the work of missionaries while preaching the word of God was the work of the Nepali church. Nepalese staff, trainees, students in nursing schools and etc were part of the service of the mission in each place, but the church as such focused on church building and church planting. This was the case both for the UMN and for the other missions in Nepal.

The diakonia of the Mission in these years was largely institutional diakonia through the hospitals and schools with some outreach programs. What is new the last few years is that the churches themselves have started to engage in diakonia, often collaborating together and reaching out to people in need around them. Local Christian NGOs have come up which integrate preaching and services.

HimalPartner supports primarily where Nepalese see the needs. Himalayans constitute a powerful framework in Nepal. The political situation in the country requires that they tread extra carefully. The active areas of mental health and economic development are HimalPartner special focus areas. The education and human resource development is a common thread through the project.

HimalPartner supported many missionaries in Nepal at various points and for the various periods of time. Currently the mission is focusing on mental health activism, education and industrial and technical development in the Himalayas. In addition to sending personnel, the mission also supports some projects in Nepal logistically and financially. This was really a common humanitarian work, which works in partnership with various organizations for the poorest people of Nepal. They gave support to people who suffered from poverty, oppression, or violence in order for them to be able to change their situation. Their goal was to change, and believe that a just world is possible. No one can wait for this to happen by itself but is to change and bring the love of Christ and preach.

CHAPTER: VI ANALYSIS

6.0 Introduction

In this chapter, empirical data will be analyzed based on the findings from interviews taken with eight informants. I will use the theory about diakonia as Transformation, Reconciliation and Empowerment. The spiral of hope and hopelessness will hopefully show itself useful, as I am to analyze and discuss the different diaconal approaches of HimalPartner's work in the Nepalese society.

6.1 Diakonia as a response to the needs of people

In the theory chapter of my thesis, I define diakonia as "a responsible to the needs of people" (Lossky et al. 2002: 305). The needs of people are quite different depending on the context in which the needs take place.

Diakonia is to meet people who have needs, and try to do something about it, and care about the poor and marginalized people in the suffering society. Diakonia always have a special responsibility towards the people in needs, and promote their dignity in the society. Due to this, I believe that diakonia must relate to this perspective when I now discuss the understanding of diakonia as a response to the needs of people. The creation has the ability to cause need to human beings. Example mentioned in chapter five. Many people are lacking the clean drinking water, healthcare, education, and electricity. Furthermore, I believe domestic violence at personal as well as a structural level may cause immense suffering and need. Because of this, it may inflict wounds on the bodies and souls of human beings, in the society. The human dignity also threaded by discrimination, fear and oppression. Due to these perspectives, the diakonia must advocate on behalf of fellow human beings in order to do something about it. This is because the goal with promotion is help to people in need. The above mentioned about diakonia, and I am analyzing here, how the diakonia as response to the needs of people? HimalPartner has done diaconal work in the remote areas of Nepal, where they focused among the people needs like working with, health, education, hydropower clean drinking water, irrigation and so on.

HimalPartner member's reflections on the diakonia as a response to the need of people are extremely important to their understanding of mission in word and deed to their context in Nepal. They use the words rural road, Schools, hospital, and electricity imply that Jesus calls Christian to

take the Gospel to the remote, out of the way places where poverty and needs are obvious realities (<http://www.himalpartner.no/om-himal-partner/information-in-english>).

In Nepal, a Christian response to injustice and poverty is described in more a complex way- both as action in as witness about the nature of God that may potentially inspire people to faith. The main theme of HimalPartner's response to the needs of people in the rural areas of Nepal, and the commitment express a holistic faith in practice and emphasis on social justice as a reflection of God's love. HimalPartner supports among the needs of poor and marginalized people with the several hospital, schools, electricity, roads, and irrigation in the remote part of Nepal. For example:

HimalPartner have established the very good hospital in Palpa district, which is called Tansen hospital. This is very remote district of Nepal (UMN, 1954-2004). Tansen hospital was opened 1957, and this hospital has been in operation since 1959, and has become a prestigious hospital in the region (ibid). People have got all disease's can treat in this hospital with cheapest price. HimalPartner has for years sent the health professionals to the hospitals in the absence of national medical specialist who either works in the big city. It reduces mortality among pregnant women and mothers. In 1990, 870 women died per 100,000 live births, but in 2010 the number was reduced to 380 (UMN report 2009-2010). Good health is a key to fighting poverty. Poor health is both a cause of poverty and consequence of poverty (ibid). This problem in Nepal has been slightly decreasing during the year. This mission hospital has been an important contribution to Nepal. Another Himalayan district Okhaldhunga is also one of the remote districts of Nepal. In the beginning the UMN established Okhaldhunga hospital in this district, after HimalPartner also involved together with UMN. This became one of the good mission hospitals in the remote the place. Many poor people were suffering from the different disease, and used to die in the early age because there was lack of proper treatment. It was far from the City and there was no transportation facility. Therefore, this hospital is more remarkable hospital in this place. Now people can get treatment in their own place, and they do not have to walk long way to reach the hospital or not to carried on the back of family members.

In 1982, they also helped to established Patan hospital in Lalitpur district (UMN 1954-2004). This district is not a remote district compare than others district. It is near the capital city Kathmandu, but during that time it was not developed well, so this mission related hospital was really needed for the people. They provided grateful services for the poor people. From the beginning there was an integral relationship between the hospital and its community, usually established through an active community health program. This offered a two way benefit: the hospitals were interested in

keeping people healthy and avoiding disease progression and the community health programs needed a referral base. The hospital also had a training center. At the first, they were involved in the job training to secure the staff needed to run the hospital. All mission hospitals had lab and x-ray training courses simply to secure staff for their own hospital operations.

HIV and AIDS doesn't only affect the poor, but as with so many other issues, poor individuals and families are more vulnerable to its impacts, and have fewer resources to manage. The mission continues to strengthen district AIDS Coordination Committees and set up village AIDS coordination committee. All Village Development Committee (VDC) (i.e. local authority) secretaries received basic HIV and AIDS Orientation in Dhading district. Some VDC began to allocate funds to HIV and AIDS awareness, prevention, care and treatment (UMN Report 2009/10). Ten of UMN Partner with HimalPartner organization implement HIV and AIDS prevention, care and support work in their target communities, particularly in Dhading, Doti, Rupendehi, and Sunsari Clusters (ibid). Training peer educator to raise awareness on HIV and AIDS and adolescent sexual health between student and young people is another key activity. HIV is receiving nursing care and other support from community home based care progresses in Doti and Sunsari (ibid). Self-help groups of people affected by AIDS have strengthened, and more people have disclosed their HIV status and started to advocate for quality treatment, care and support at a local level (ibid).

Furthermore, HimalPartner focuses on ensuring that poor and marginalized communities get access to quality, relevant teaching and resources in formal and non-formal education for the children, young people and adults. Education is critical to breaking the poverty cycle, but so many children and adults miss the opportunity to learn. They work with partner organizations improving in quality education, and, organize the scholarship to children (including lower caste children). Moreover, they are working to raise parent's awareness about the importance of education.

For example: Courses for teachers addressing the need for equipping teachers and pre-school teachers in Nepal working HimalPartner with Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC), they work to promote an educational approach appropriate to the child's level of development and strengthening teacher's professional competence. (<http://www.himalpartner.no>) HimalPartner have given a school been first priority for poor, marginalized, and lower caste children in the remote areas. Despite mentioned above in chapter five, here I am going to more clear. They established the school in the different villages, and organized the scholarship for the intelligent students, and handed free necessary materials for the other poor students. HimalPartner spread public awareness about the education for the parents, who did not want to send their children at school. Many poor

and lower caste children got chances to access the education, and change their live from the poorest family. Teacher training is very much important for quality education. Unfortunately qualified teachers don't want to go to village in Nepal. Only the ordinary teachers became teacher at the school. HimalPartner provide the teacher training, and increases the quality education in the remote part of Nepal. The teacher from the ECEC (Early Childhood Education Centre) were traveling into the countryside and offered 18 days course for pre-school teachers (three rounds), two days training for principals, and some hours course for parents (ibid).

Many children in Nepal continue to suffer greatly from the effects of poverty and poor infrastructures provision and negative attitudes. Through it interconnected children's Programme; HimalPartner is endeavoring to provide direct assistance to children. However, HimalPartner has done diaconal work in the remote areas. Additionally, the HimalPartner transformed the communities with the various need of people and, people are changed.

6.2 The mission's aim to share the Gospel

Mission in word and deed is described as a way of transforming poor and marginalized people with the gospel. Mission is trying to create a better future for Nepal, and they want missionaries to be agents of change of people. Therefore, HimalPartner's common call to "share the gospel" in Himalayan region, the Gospel is proclaimed the word and deed. The word is preaching the gospel in the Nepali society; deeds are doing diaconal work for poor and marginalized people. The HimalPartner's priority is sharing the gospel of Jesus in a holistic way that involves both words and deeds. The mission is doing practical work in Nepal; it takes as its starting point a practical role in which deeds and words are extremely important to the mission. HimalPartner is attempting to give the people opportunity to improve the Nepalese living conditions through the Gospel to the action. In the beginning, Nepal has not allowed to preaching the Gospel because the Nepal was a Hindu kingdom. But after, these different kinds of witness, individual people in Nepal continued to hear the message of the gospel, and many believed and gave up everything to follow the Jesus.

Furthermore, the HimalPartner wanted to preach the Christian gospel in the Hindu society of Nepal. It was difficult to preach the gospel in the beginning, but I have already mentioned above, everything is possible to change after practice. At that time, Nepalese people did not want to the Christian gospel because they were part of the Hindu culture. Other religions were not allowed to preach the gospel, and people were subdued by the government. However, there were allowed to do development work. If the Hindu people converted into other religions, probably they should

have to leave the country. Many people compelled to live without any basic facilities. The general People were having many problems, but the government was not able to handle that situation for the people. Therefore, government also became positive towards the Christian mission for their development and social work. Then the government invited the foreign Christian mission in order to change the living conditions of Nepalese people. Gradually, the foreign missions started to preach the gospel as well, and people started to convert their religions. After that, many Churches are established in different part of the country, and Hindu people become more positive towards the Christianity.

In my analysis of this topic, I used reconciliation theory from the theory chapter, why the Hindu people reconciled towards the Christian people in Nepal. “Reconciliation makes, it possible to extend reconciliation to all human relations of the world: with family, others religious groups, societies and nation” (LWF 2004: 34). According to my findings (chapter five), and I believe that, suffering always try to transform and reconciled with mission work. Before HimalPartner started work in Nepalese society, people were really suffering from the basic needs. They used to ignore the Christianity from the society; even they did not like to talk about it. But later on, the mission work reconciled it within the different faith and culture. Hindu priests and Christian priests are reconciled each others. Religions are respected as well as people started working together in the society. Reconciliation works lead different groups together and provide new awareness of the constructive conversation and working together for the common cause.

6.3 Women and empowerment

In many developing countries, including Nepal, large parts of population, especially women, lack opportunities to get initial education and health in their life. Women are among the poorest and most vulnerable groups of people in Nepal. Women’s health is significant, not just for women themselves, but for the survival and sustainability of children and families. Many rural women live in extreme poverty, without any means of improving condition for themselves and their families. Many women are heading households and taking on the burden of sustaining the rural economy. Some cultural and religious practices in Nepal are so strong that many families and communities are trapped in hopelessness situation. Violent marriages, traditional practices like suffering and bitterness, discrimination against those who are born female and with disabilities. According to this practice, a man physically forces woman to become his wife without her consent. The

“helpless and hopeless” hears often in Nepal, from people so oppressed by their circumstances that they see no way forward.

Due to the traditional Hindu culture in Nepal, women are living behind the society as a second-class people. There is a lack of education, poverty, health service and superstitious tradition as a bar of freedom. Therefore, they should stay in the home and expect the children, dominated by husband and another husband`s family. Sanitation, water, kitchen are women`s duties.

Many poor rural families consider education for girls as a needless burden. In poor households, parents prefer to pay for their songs, education and keep their daughters at home to help their overburdened mothers (women in Nepal 1999). Labor and physical exploitation of young girl is widespread. In addition, gender- based violence is often reported in domestic as well as public areas and is largely attributed to derogatory attitudes towards women, which is reinforced by low socio-economic status. Many women in Nepal are involved in non-paying jobs in society, this includes in Hindu culture, and consequently, they are affected a lot with the results of injustices. It is not uncommon to hear statement like in ‘my society all women do not work they just stay at home’ even though the women are responsible for taking care of children, fetching firewood, drawing some water at home and all others household chores in which most of the time they spend almost the whole day to find such things. In Nepal, a society that is base on men, such structures have resulted in making the majority of women and girls become victims of poverty and HIV/AIDS. In spite of the fact that many women have low-income access, they take the responsibility of taking care of the sick. Often times the girl child takes many parental responsibilities in the absence of parents.

The above-mentioned situation for women is characterized by low levels of access to education, healthcare, and economic, social, and political opportunities. However, the Norwegian mission organization HimalPartner and other organization are also working in Nepal with these challenges. The increasing efforts from the Norwegian mission organization HimalPartner and other organizations to empower women in Nepal, there has been slightly improvement in the socio-economic, education, and health status of women at the grassroots levels. Many families became more positive for women involvement in the health education, and socio- economic status. From the beginning to ongoing time, HimalPartner is giving first priority for women. They wanted to change the conditions of women in the rural part of Nepal.

Although, the conditions of women have very difficult in the Nepalese society but these conditions would be possible to change. To raise the status of women in Nepal and push forward

the country's development and development organizations have focused their efforts on empowering. The concept building and organization people in order to overcome unequal relationships, in addition to increasing women's decision-making power at the household, Community, and national levels.

The empowerment is "of central importance in the slow process of social, political, and economic change that is needed to turn the alternative vision they present in to reality"(Rowland, 1997:19). Moser consider that empowerment recognizes women's triple roles, and seeks to meet strategic gender needs indirectly through bottom up mobilization around practical gender needs"(Moser, 1993:74).

Empowerment is the process of enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make to choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Central to this process are actions which both individual and collective assets, and improve the efficiency and fairness of the organizational and institutional context, which govern the use of these assets (World Bank empowerment website).

Empowerment people have freedom of choice and action. This turn enables them to better influence the course of their lives and he decisions which affect them (ibid). If the HimalPartner in Nepal has to implement predictive social work effectively, the aspects of empowerment should not be ignored. Empowerment can be a very effective method for practical social services. It has to be noted that if one is empowered on the other hand, the other loses power on the other side. It is about sharing the power. If the marginalized women's are empowered so that they are able to stand out on socio-economic issue, then the injustices can be reduced. Empowered, they are able to take a step further in their lives.

The word has been useful empowerment that can lead to some positive changes. The HimalPartner in Nepal needs to have a large perspective of itself at community level, and national level. Empowering of women at all the levels above can lead to mutual accountability, cooperative and transformation. This can help the Nepalese women be able to fight together against social injustices.

Thus, HimalPartner co- operations with partners in Nepal also offer them the opportunities to learn, and do something in the society. Thereby, the HimalPartner's aims to empower the women with different knowledge, skills and perspectives that assist them be fit in their society and enhance their socio- economic situations. Almost all HimalPartner's work is designed with a goal and promise to make positive changes in the lives of people especially women. Despite, the

variations in the ways to achieve such changes, extent of changes and its implications in the women lives. The HimalPartner's works empowering the women learning in the school/ college, and gaining different skills help to transform women's lives.

I believe that women's greatest resources are their personal capacities and when women put on the new spectacles in the different sectors, they can definitely see the world and surroundings differently. As a diaconal method, supplement seeks to overcome isolation and keeping out and to identify pathway that may present possibilities for boarder sharing in mutual solidarity and empowering.

In my opinion, the overall theme of HimalPartner program is to empower discriminated people to be proud of their identity and rights to enable them to the mainstream development socially and economically with the sustainable use of available resources. The movement of domestic and foreign mission directly and indirectly affect the society and culture. In addition, preservation of rights and development of social justice sharply contrasting aspects because any program of mission from place to place certainly influences the community by encroaching the authentic traditions and behavior. Thus there is disputes about whether HimalPartner, as modern mission institution will able to change women's condition, and empowering to them in all levels. This can help the Nepalese women be able to fight together against social injustices. Whereby, spiral hope is going up. When the women able to get all necessary things in their lives like: health, education, job opportunity, freedom, identity, and dignity etc, they become very happy then spiral hope is going up.

6.4 “The mission of engineers”

The HimalPartner has accomplished something good in rural areas of Nepal. It became “working mission” of professionals because the political situation of Nepal was closed to go openly as a Christian mission. Engineering expertise, and Nepalese opportunity was able to manage, and use their natural resources to promote sustainable development in the country (<http://www.himalpartner.no>).HimalPartner successfully developed hydropower plant project in Nepal that the mission has supported the poor and marginalized groups. Before HimalPartner started, their work in Nepal there was many young people were unemployment, and a water resource was wasting in different places of the remote parts. Therefore, the HimalPartner has established the several technical schools in order to develop the hydropower in the rural areas.

They encouraged faculty and students to use the resources for the benefit and provide the facilities to the people. They wanted to make possible for students to face reality that far removed from the immense with the intention that they will have a desire to exploit natural resources for economic and sustainable development of local communities. HimalPartner developed the comprehensive development plan with three main goals for the community. Firstly, they gave the students experience in working with education as a means for social development, for second they involved both students and teaching staff serving the community in which they reside, and finally they try to identify potential opportunities for helping poor people to higher standards of living through different types of businesses. For example, Construction of the 5.1 MW power plants, Andhi Khola rural electrification project (AHREP) brought big change to people lives (www.hydro-sustainability.org). It created new employment opportunities, provided irrigation services, built roads and electricity to the region. Many people benefited directly as well as in indirect way. Before the HimalPartner started work in Nepal, many women used to struggle from the morning to night. They were wake up at four in the Moring to fetch water that was drilling the hips in large pots over long distances. I.e. Forty-four members from 11 households living in Bajhang district was suffering from drinking water and this caused a lot of conflict and quarreling in the community, specially women faced a lot of problems and harassment, but after establishing two drinking water taps in this village by mission the community become peace (UMN Report 2009-2010). Many people were usually used the kerosene lamp, because no lights in the villages' even in the city also very difficult to open the industries. However, the HimalPartner established the some technical schools and produced the quality engineer, and provided opportunity to them for work in different development projects like power plant, water pipe for clean drinking water, irrigation, and roads. After established the different projects peoples are able to engage for the income then the condition of people has been transformed in the remote part of Nepal. The People able to get facilities and community become peace. Whereby, the spiral hope has turned from the hopelessness to hope on community level.

6.5 Everybody has the same values:

Every human being is created by God, and should have same rights and responsibilities in the society. HimalPartner is an innovative organization with a Christian mission to be an instrument of god's love in the Himalayan region. It is working to give opportunity equally to improve poor people's living conditions in Nepal. It has promoting these goals by sending Christian out personnel to manage development and support local organizations without any discrimination. The

HimalPartner mission means much more than words. Mission is also to advance the kingdom of God through practical and charitable action against the inequality in Nepalese society.

Moreover, HimalPartner mission is to show and tell about Jesus through what they do and what they say for the marginalized people. They help in projects for rural development, environment, preventive health, education, vocational training and power development to lift up the poor lives into equality. Through the projects and in cooperation with local forces HimalPartner want to contribute to positive change in the Nepalese society. Therefore, this Christian mission organization is fighting for the same values in the each aspect of poor life in Nepali society. There is not any discrimination on the mission work. Everybody, like low caste and women are getting equal opportunity on their development work because this is the Christian mission and Jesus said that, all people are the image of God and that all people are created equally.

HimalPartner wanted to transform the poor, lower caste and women who are traditionally suffered in Nepal, but everything is not possible to change because of strong traditional phenomena. They are working with local partners in Nepal that is good for them to find out the needs of people in the remote areas. Gender discrimination is big issue in the Hindu society. God created all human beings and, everybody should equal access to every level. But in the Nepalese society it is not implementation especially, in the Hindu culture. Whereby, many women compelled to stay at home, and taking care of the children and husband. Still the women are not allowed to go school as well as other outside works in some places. Although, the Job opportunity is impossible to them due to the uneducated family. After death of husband women, become widow and, they do not allowed accessing any social activities in the Hindu society.

Furthermore, the poor people are also discriminated in Nepalese society. The majority of poor people are living in the remote part of Nepal without any basic needs. The poor and rich, people have same citizenship, and created by same God, but the rights and values is not equal in the Nepalese society. The Poor people are very far from the human dignity compare than rich. Thereby, many poor have limited access to quality education, and job opportunity. Beside, Corruption and political power is most important to make changes in Nepal.

However, the poor people do not have power to fight against them. Through these reasons, people became hopelessness, and spiral hope is going down, as I already mentioned in the theory chapter, the figure of Spiral hope and hopelessness. The feeling of hopelessness that one feels in such situations, when one does not have that much power to change the situation.

Therefore, the HimalPartner try to change the conditions of people. So the poor and women from these societies can be transformed in their lives. They want to meet the needs of people in the remote areas. However, the HimalPartner spread public awareness about the education for the parents, who did not want to send their children at school. Many poor and lower caste children got chances to access the education, and changed their life from the poorest family. They established very good hospital, and provided the qualified doctors for poor and marginalized people in the rural areas. After irrigation, people are growing enough food in their fields. Nowadays, they can survive themselves, and they have possibility to take their products to the market and decide the prices. HimalPartner in some way succeeded to change the living conditions of poor and marginalized people but, difficult to change the women situations because, it has affected from the traditional Hindu culture. However, the HimalPartner is empowering many women through the different training and awareness program. They are providing the education, training, and skillful work in order to survive themselves. They have also successes to empower the widows. Now, widows are respected and can access to everywhere like other women in society. After providing the basic facilities, people become more positive towards Christianity, and change their traditional behavior. So, people are transformed, and communities are changed. Whereas, the spiral hope is going up.

Despite, everything is possible to change but the caste system in Nepal is very difficult to change. HimalPartner want to change the traditional caste system in Nepal but it has not succeeded well to change because it is traditionally rooted from the Hindu culture. According to the theory, The Christian vision of humanity “*every human being is created by God, then equal rights and values in every sector as a brothers and sisters*”. Unfortunately, in Hindu culture has huge discrimination in all places. The lower caste people are more poor and vulnerable people in the Hindu culture. They are living in the rural areas without any facilities and tremendously discriminated. But the HimalPartner has changed the conditions of lower caste people in some areas. They are empowering the lower caste people to see that they have same value with high caste people.

After working with the people of Nepal, high caste are people become more positive. Therefore, HimalPartner trying to reconciled them, and transform the societies. The lower caste People are slightly changed and become a part of the society. According to my findings, and analysis, by the help of HimalPartner, lower caste people’s conditions has changed, and they become more

educated, and success to involve in the social activities like as high caste people, but the caste system is still embedded in the Hindu society. Though, HimalPartner is trying to promote equally without any discrimination.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have explored the diaconal working approaches of HimalPartner in the Nepalese society. I mainly focused on the needs of the people in the remote parts of Nepal. I have used theory about Diakonia as transformation, reconciliation, and empowerment. I have discussed and analyzed the HimalPartner's diaconal work in Nepal, which are health care, education, hydropower and so on.

This thesis contains both of primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the eight informants with semi- structured interview. The secondary data have their sources on various research papers, texts from the library, article published in various newspapers and magazines. Thus, the information has been discussed through qualitative methods

HimalPartner has responded to the needs of People in the remote part of Nepal. This has been very helpful, and it is needed that they continue addressing the problems of Nepalese society. I also discussed the women and empowerment, how the HimalPartner empower the women in the Nepalese society. I also showed how they initiated that communities are transformed. The organization provides health, education and different training in order to change people's lives. The different theory can be used at different times, the long- term diaconal work that has the preferential aspect of the poor and marginalized people in Nepalese society. The HimalPartner has made an impact on many remote areas and touched the lives of many people.

I also stated the need for the people to empower, and involve at grass root level; thus to involve the marginalized of the society in the process of fighting against caste discrimination. Which I mentioned, everybody has the same values. I also mentioned the need to development issues through the "mission of engineer" in the remote part of Nepal. Therefore, the poor and marginalized people would able to lift up their status.

The HimalPartner's works understand of social involvement emphasis both responsibilities to help in solidarity with the Nepali poor and marginalized people, the transforming power of the gospel.

Finally, HimalPartner has always been doing diaconal work in Nepal through health care, education, hydropower irrigation etc. Even if they were not allowed to preach, their work was funded in Christianity, and they believe in the trine God as the creator, the savior, and the Holy Spirit. The work has changed according to the people's needs. They started with the more focused on health, education and hydropower. These resulted today, more hydropower hospitals and schools. Many skilled peoples are engaged on these projects. The engineers who were produced after HimalPartner establishing the different technical school are helpful to develop the today's development work. In the beginning, there was not allowed to preach the gospel. Today it becomes possible to preach the gospel and churches are built many part of the country because of positive impacts of the Christian mission for the poor and marginalize people. The mission organizations in Nepal generally agree on the needs of their involvement in social issues: like poor, orphans, handicapped children and women, helping those in deep poverty, promoting education and health service in rural areas of Nepal. It is, therefore, in order to raise the economic condition, good health, and quality education of the rural people, HimalPartner has considered as solution.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The lower caste women is having water from the higher caste child



Appendix 2: The United Mission Hospital in Tansen Palpa Nepal



Appendix 3: widows are respected



Through peace and reconciliation efforts by HimalPartner in Nepal, women get the opportunity to win back the confidence and self-respect.

Appendix 4: Street children in Nepal



CHILD Street to School

