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Petra Kjellén Brooke

Soup, Soap, Salvation

“Developing Faith based practices in
secularised societies”



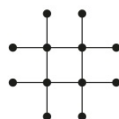
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Petra Kjellén Brooke

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Sammendrag

Denne doktorgradsavhandlingen utforsker praksisutvikling av kristent sosialt arbeid i trosbaserte organisasjoner og bidrar med økt kunnskap og kompetanse i sekulære samfunnskontekster. Praksis utvikling er i denne avhandlingen forstått som en prosess hvor resultat av utviklingen kan erfares gjennom endring i ansatte og frivilliges atferd i forhold til verdier og retning. Undersøkelsen fokuserer på menighetsbasert sosialt arbeid utført av profesjonelle og frivillige. Basert på en case studie av fire korps (menigheter) i Frelsesarmeen i Norge, undersøker studien hvordan ansatte og frivillige navigerer spenningen mellom evangelisering og sosialt arbeid som reflekterer Frelsesarmeens internasjonale oppdrag. På et abstrakt nivå teoretiserer studien forholdet trosbaserte organisasjoner har til en omgivende sekulær kontekst og hvordan dette påvirker praksis utvikling og hvordan denne spenningen har bidratt til en delt kompetanse utvikling i Frelsesarmeen som organisasjon. På ene siden har organisasjonen en del, Sosialavdelingen, hvor profesjonalisering og profesjonsutvikling har vært tydelig med høyt kvalifiserte ansatte og tjenester hvor identiteten som trosbasert organisasjon er vektlagt primært på et organisasjons nivå. Korps i Frelsesarmeen, tilhørende Programavdelingen, har ikke vært del av vært del av den sammen profesjonsutvikling som har skjedd i Sosialavdelingen. Korpsene gjenkjennes av et uformelt og relasjonsbasert arbeid som er uavhengig av ekstern finansiering og krav. I dette arbeidet har tro beholdt en fremtredende rolle i både kommunikasjon og for praksisutvikling. De ulike tilnærmingene til profesjonsutvikling gir kunnskap og innsikt om rollen tros-baserte organisasjoner spiller i sekulære samfunn.

På et overordnet plan reflektere denne avhandlingen om rollen av tro i sosialt arbeid. Mine funn beskriver hvordan tro har en mer eller mindre fremtredende rolle i ulike situasjoner men at tro veileder prioriteringer og handling i arbeidet med å gi støtte og hjelp til mennesker i nærmiljøet. På et individuelt plan beskriver avhandlingen hvordan tro, gjennom bønn og Bibel lesing gir inspirasjon og veiledning i hvordan de som arbeider skal møte individer, noe som gir tro en sentral rolle for praksis utvikling i Frelsesarmeens korps-baserte sosiale arbeid. En trosbasert tilnærming bidrar til å forstå situasjoner som og de som arbeider eller er frivillige referer til Bibel historier og hvordan Jesus møtte mennesker for å forklare hvorfor de handler som de gjør. Dette forskningsprosjektet viser også til funn som kan peke på at det å ha en trosbasert tilnærming kan begrense hvem og hvordan Frelsesarmeens korpsbaserte sosial arbeid arbeider og relatere til i den omgivende sekulære konteksten. Dette blir bekreftet i intervjuer hvor ansatte og frivillige beskriver hvordan deres syn på tro og verdier av og til kommer i konflikt med

samarbeidspartneres verdier og forhold til tro. Dette fører til at noen handlinger har et mer dempet tros uttrykk enn andre i det korpsbaserte sosiale arbeidet.

Funn og diskusjon i denne avhandlingen bygger på en kvalitativ studie. Individuelle og gruppeintervjuer, fokus gruppe diskusjoner, deltakende observasjon og dokument analyse har vært brukt for å samle materiale til studien. Jeg har gjennomført en tematisk analyse basert på de teoretiske perspektivene inkludert i studien. Sentrale begreper i «Community of practice» teorien, «domain», «community» og «practice» ble brukt for å beskrive praksisenes funksjoner og samhandling med hverandre og lokalsamfunnet rundt dem. De teoretiske elementene bidro til å forstå de som arbeide i Frelsesarmeens korpsbaserte sosiale arbeid og hvordan de bruker tro som et aktivt verktøy både som inspirasjon, motivasjon og for praksis utvikling. For å styrke praksis utviklingsaspektet i studien har jeg foreslått en modell for kompetanseheving, «Vocatio-Advocatio-Provocatio» som del av diskusjonskapitlet.

Funn i denne studien peker på at troens rolle for praksisene varierer i de ulike handlingene som utføres og illustreres ved at ansatte og frivillige justerer språk og uttrykk til situasjon og hvem de møter. Andre funn i studien viser hvordan tro bidrar til prioriteringer og metoder de bruker for å gi support til de som kommer for hjelp ved hvordan ansatte og frivillige bruker tros baserte handlinger for å forstå og gi mening til situasjoner og mennesker de møter. Bibelhistorier og eksempler fra Jesu liv legges til grunn for hvordan de bygger relasjoner og måter for å hjelpe. Avhandlingen viser også hvordan en slik tros-baserte praksis kan begrense hvem og hvordan de kan nå ut i sitt lokalmiljø. Dette skyldes blant annet ansattes og frivilliges usikkerhet i møte med et sekulært samfunn og hvordan det samfunnet aksepterer deres trosbaserte utgangspunkt. Avhandlingens forskningsspørsmål er *“Hvordan utvikles kristent sosialt arbeid i en sekulær samfunnskontekst”* og *“Hvordan navigerer ansatte og frivillige i Frelsesarmeen spenningen mellom evangelisering og sosialt arbeid”* diskuteres i tre artikler som er produsert som del av prosjektet. Artikkelen 1 presenterer hvordan Frelsesarmeen bruker hellighetslære som guide for deres sosiale arbeid og samfunnsmessige engasjement. Artikkelen bruker et diakonalt konseptuelt rammeverk «Vocatio, Advocatio, Pro-vocatio» (VAP) for å fremheve elementer som kan beskrive og utvikle teologi og beslutningspåvirkning. Artikkelen 2 beskriver hvordan tro former og påvirker metoder og måter ansatte og frivillige bruker i møte med personer i sårbare situasjoner og for praksis utvikling. Artikkelen analyserer det empiriske materialet og bruker teorien «Community of practice» for å diskutere rollen av tro for utviklingen av sosialt arbeid. Artikkelen 3 diskuterer hvordan perspektiver fra internasjonalt arbeid kan endre selvforståelsen i korps-baserte sosiale praksiser fra å prioritere et reaktivt mønster med å gi ut hjelp til et arbeid med mer langsiktige perspektiver og med fokus på relasjonelle perspektiver.

Summary

This PhD project contributes to a better understanding of Christian social “practice development” in the context of a secularised society. Social practice development here signifies activities driven by a facilitation process where the outcomes are noticeable in terms of changed behaviour in staff or volunteers’ values and beliefs, and the study specifically focuses on congregational social practices understood as local social outreach work done by church employees and volunteers. Based on a case study of four Salvation Army congregations or corps in Norway, the study explores how local practitioners navigate the double agenda of evangelisation and support provision. The project explores how these tensions contribute to different approaches to “practice development”. On the one hand, there are highly professionalised services being delivered on behalf of the state, often keeping the expression of faith on an organisational level primarily describing the motivation for the Salvation Army (TSA) engagement in social action, rather than directly affecting actions made and services provided. On the other hand, there are corps-based social services delivering an informal and relational based assistance that are independent of external funding and where faith has a prominent position for choice of language and identity expression as well as for priorities and actions taken. This study of the TSA social outreach environment in Norway provides insights into how churches and faith-based organisations play a role in contributing to meeting social welfare needs in a secular society. Overall, the thesis reflects on the role of faith in social work. My findings show that the role of faith is more central in some actions than others undertaken by practitioners in congregational social outreach. Faith is facilitating how the practices choose to act and engage with individuals seeking support and the needs presented in the local community. On an individual level, descriptions of how practitioners feel guided by God, through prayer and reflection regarding what actions to take renders faith a central attribute for how TSA corps-based practitioners provide support. Practitioners use faith to make sense of situations they encounter by referring to Bible stories and the way Jesus related to people, explaining the way they meet and build relations to be able to provide support to individuals. The research also shows that in relation to the wider social environment (local and national authorities that are part of the welfare state), faith can limit the scope of the practices by for example hindering collaborative efforts. This is described by practitioners as resulting in a conflict of values and value expression as they collaborate with secular actors and partners. Practitioners describe how they can experience pressure to adjust their language and faith related actions to be accepted as relevant partners in secular settings.

The research methods used in this study were individual and group interviews, focus groups, participatory observation and document analysis. The analytical process started by identifying core themes in the empirical material collected during the fieldwork. Following this, I distilled my main findings, and these were analysed using elements from the “Community of Practice” (CoP) theory (Buch, 2021; Wenger, 1998, 1999,2001). Using elements from CoP theory, namely the ideas of “domain”, “community” and “practice”, I was able to describe the practices’ inner structures, ways of communicating and relating to each other and guests accessing the practices and how they build knowledge. The chosen elements from the CoP theory also facilitated the observations of how practitioners relate to the surrounding community and wider society. This analysis revealed faith as an inspiration to why practitioners participated in the work and as a tool used for reflection around topics and situations to further learning and to develop practice actions. Building on the manner in which TSA corps practices use faith for developing methods and attitudes as they support people in vulnerable situations, I have suggested using the diaconal conceptual framework “Vocatio- Advocatio-Provocatio” (VAP) (Nordstokke, 2021; WCC & ACT Alliance, 2020) to describe possible ways forward based on the findings in the study.

The overarching research questions guiding the study, and which are discussed in the three peer reviewed journal articles produced as part of the thesis are:

“How is Christian social practice developed in a secular context?”

“How do TSA corps practitioners navigate tensions related to the double agenda of evangelisation and support provision?”

Article 1, “Anti Human Trafficking: The Salvation Army and Advocacy” (to be published in “Diaconia- Journal for the Study of Christian Social Practice” June/July 2023) discusses how TSA holiness theology guides social involvement and committed action. The article adopts the diaconal “Vocatio, Advocatio, Provocatio” (VAP) conceptual framework to present elements that can further link theology and advocacy.

Article 2, “Professionalism and faith -A case study of Salvation Army congregational social work in Norway” (to be published in “Journal of comparative social work”, June 2023) describes how faith shapes methods to support individuals in vulnerable situations and discusses

the relevance of faith for professional practice development. The article analyses the empirical material collected during the research using the “community of practice” theory and discusses the role of faith and the development of social work principles.

Article 3, “Discursive constructions of international and domestic social outreach in the Salvation Army: parallel worlds or an integrated mission?” (submitted to “Religion and development” May 2023) discusses how an international development perspective contributes to a long-term proactive approach to social problems rather than the current dominating reactive approach, which has been defined/described by participants as short term interventions. Given the existence of development work in TSA, the article discusses how corps-based social work can learn from an international development approach and in what ways are TSA addressing this.

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Foreword

Late one night – it was in the early morning hours – in the year 1888 William Booth returned to London from a campaign in the south of England and slept exceedingly ill when he arrived at his home. Bramwell Booth, living nearby, was early in attendance next morning, and scarcely had he entered the dressing-room, quick, alert, and cheerful, when his father, who was walking to and fro with hanging braces and stormy hair, burst out at him, “Here, Bramwell! Do you know that fellows are sleeping out at night on the bridges? Sleeping out all night on the stone?” Bramwell, thus checked in his greeting, exclaimed, “Yes, General; why, didn’t you know that?” The General appeared to be thunderstruck. He had seen those tragic huddled forms benched on stone for the first time on the previous night, and his own sleep in a warm bed had been robbed in consequence. “You knew that?” he said, “and you haven’t done anything!” To this attack the Chief of the Staff made answer – first, that the Salvation Army could not at present undertake to do everything that ought to be done in the world; and second – he admits now that he spoke like a copybook – that one must be careful about the dangers of indiscriminate charity. The General broke in angrily on this exordium. ‘Oh, I don't care about all that stuff,’ he said; ‘I’ve heard it before. But go and do something. Do something, Bramwell, do something!’¹

I started this PhD journey after having worked in Salvation Army services as a nurse and as an advisor for social services for about 10 years. I had many times been confronted with the echo of General Booth’s cry to do something, and I had as many times argued like Bramwell about reasons how to approach different requests. The tension between the needs that TSA staff and volunteers encounter and the need to deliver services of good standard have sometimes resulted in wonderful and fruitful projects and actions, and sometimes maybe in missed opportunities. After starting to work closer with corps-based social work I experienced this tension more closely and found that I was intrigued by the way some of the practitioners in these social practices reasoned as they worked. So, when the call from VID for projects investigating congregational social work came out, I grabbed it with both hands. The thought of describing what corps are doing and how they do it felt like a “calling”, something I had to do.

¹ LIFE of WILLIAM BOOTH, FOUNDER and FIRST GENERAL of the SALVATION ARMY by Harold Begbie, 1920. Volume 2, Chapter 7

The project has humbled me, and I am so grateful to all the informants that has given of their time and knowledge, passion and love and I hope this thesis capture some of the admiration I have for them. The quote above about William Booth and Bramwell Booth encapsulates so much of what is important as the Salvation Army reaches out in their local community, the need for knowledge, the resources to help and the inspiration to do so. I hope that this thesis will be a contribution for The Salvation Army to continue to “go and do something” and for corps to become active community agents for change as they serve both people and God.

This thesis has been a journey with many ups and downs and there are many people who have been part of that journey and I could not have done it without my two supervisors, Marta Struminska-Kutra and Hans Morten Haugen, thank you both for working with me on this. I owe a debt of gratitude to many friends and family and to the Salvation Army in Norway for allowing me to study what they do. However, there are some people I would like to thank for their attention, support and patience during this time. Elin Westby Herikstad, my previous leader and current colleague has been one of the most important reasons that I have done this. Without her encouragement, her wisdom, her faith in my ability, her flexibility and friendship this would not have been possible. Emma Tomalin has given me of her time, kindness and wisdom and made me believe I can do it. I also want to mention my mother, Agneta, that has been an example of how to “live right whilst righting wrong”. Many say I resemble her, and I am grateful for the way that she has taught me to stand up to injustices and fight for what is right. I also want to say thank you to my dad, although no longer with us, he’s belief in me as I started my academic journey many years ago has inspired me to see this project through and I know he is celebrating with me with a coffee and cake in heaven.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my husband Martin and my two boys Vincent and Benjamin that has had to put up with all the frustration, the joy and the sorrows during this time, your love and support has helped me to reach my goals. Thank you!

Moss, June 2023.

1. Introduction

An increased number of individuals in marginalised or vulnerable situations are turning to NGOs and FBOs for support (Fløtten et al., 2023). Exploring how the Salvation Army (TSA) provide support and what core qualities they bring to the general social provision in local communities is important in clarifying their role and value for Norwegian communities and society. This study contributes to studies researching the role of FBOs support as part of a wider societal social welfare system. In this study, I have explored TSA corps (congregation)-based social practices. TSA is an international church providing church ministry and extensive social work in over 130 countries worldwide. TSA explain its mission as;

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in his name without discrimination.²

TSA is a church with a holistic ecclesiological understanding. TSA ecclesiological statement describes one of several TSA characteristics by:

... worldwide tradition of service (arising out of the compassionate love of Christ for all persons) without discrimination or preconditions, to the distressed, needy and marginalised, together with appropriate advocacy in the public domain on matters of social justice.³

The overall mission and the ecclesial understanding of practical service and advocacy of social justice gives TSA a distinct holistic approach, where evangelism, i.e. spreading the word of God, is done by preaching the gospel using both word and deed. From the very start of TSA in East London in the 1880s, the idea of providing social support has been part of an evangelistic outreach, hence the slogan “Soap, soup, salvation”. The notion that anyone would be interested in listening to the word of God whilst hungry, cold and with no means to support themselves was pointed out as a hopeless aspiration. The goal of “saving souls, growing saints, and serving a suffering humanity” the need to provide care as well as the word of God with the aim of both social and spiritual transformation, has been a trademark for TSA (Hill, 2017).

² <https://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/Mission>

³ https://s3.amazonaws.com/cache.salvationarmy.org/d0154610-4552-43ab-b107-fd05010635e3_EccStat-English.pdf

Throughout Norway's historical development, volunteer organisations have been a visible and important part of the society. Voluntary organisations are known for their support of, and social justice advocacy for, marginalised and vulnerable groups (Loga, 2018). Because of this, voluntary organisations have become a constant reminder that despite a well organised and growing welfare state, there is and has been a need to support individuals that for many reasons cannot access help in the public and official social security systems. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) support individuals in various situations, including those that do not officially qualify for support within the public system (Fløtten et al., 2023; Haugen, 2018; Misje, 2020). Emerging and new social and structural challenges are often registered by NGOs and FBOs before public authorities become aware of them. As a consequence, there are grounds to conclude that the public and organised societal social work efforts do not fully encompass all the issues that a modern society faces (Fløtten et al., 2023; Misje, 2021), making it dependent on the NGO sector to complement the public system's support and social structures.

The COVID 19 pandemic, the rise in living costs and civil unrest and war in Europe in recent years, have all illustrated how the voluntary sector organisations are contributing and responding to these situations with both practical and spiritual support (Fløtten et al., 2023). Experience shows that volunteer NGOs and FBOs are essential as part of the Norwegian society's emergency response in times of crisis, which includes small informal church-based practices (Fladmoe & Enjolras, 2022). Whilst being a recognised part of Norwegian welfare society, the context in which FBOs are functioning makes their role ambiguous and contested. The role of religion has been diminished during the welfare and economic development in Norway that has happened throughout the last 100 years, also defined as secularisation:

...a process that accompany modernization—the gradual decline of religious contents and institutions or their sudden (and sometimes state-imposed) removal from the political, educational, or economic realms. (Jakelić, 2010 p. 49)

One consequence of secularisation is scepticism towards the role of faith and FBOs in both public and voluntary support systems (Loga, 2018). Despite this trend, there has been an increase in FBOs providing support (Leis-Peters, 2018), making them an important part of civil society in Norway. One example where FBOs are in fact the majority is the efforts and response of anti-human trafficking efforts and response, according to the list of who receives funding towards anti trafficking work from the Norwegian Justice department.

In TSA corps-based social practices, support is given by staff and volunteers based in a congregational setting. I have investigated the navigating process in which practitioners in TSA corps-based social practices faith-based social practices in a secular context and how this navigation affects the way members of these practices approach individuals of vulnerable groups as they hand out food, clothing and provide fellowships and networks as part of their church activity and mission. The focus on practice development in this thesis contributes to a better understanding of how the faith-based identity, that marks TSA corps-based social practices, facilitates development of methods to act and support individuals seeking help.

I understand practice development as an inclusive, participatory and collaborative process, engaging all levels of an organisation in order to create positive change, enhanced skills and knowledge for participants and the overall organisation (Bradd et al., 2017; McCormack & Garbett, 2003) and as a:

... systematic rigorous activity underpinned by a facilitation process. The outcome of practice development can be described in terms of change in the behaviours, values and beliefs of staff involved. (Garbett & McCormack, 2002, p. 87)

The activities attached to practice development address, amongst other things, the effectiveness of care through the transformation of care practice as practitioners use a reflective learning approach to develop their actions to better support individuals. Understanding practice development as a change in behaviour, values and beliefs touches upon the core of how Christian practices develops in a secular setting. For practitioners in church-based social practices, changing values and limiting beliefs and faith expressions to become more relevant or professional in order to better support individuals, stands in contrast to the need to preserve their identity and motivation based on their faith. The definition above points out tensions, such as the role of faith in providing social work and how to relate to evangelism and mission as part of the work, inherent in practice development for church-based practices. To analyse the empirical material, I used a theoretical lens of Community of Practice (CoP), a social learning theory focusing on how practitioners develop knowledge and practice by interacting with each other and the context in which they function. A further description of the theory is found in chapter 2.

In this thesis, TSA Norway is used as a case based on them representing a faith-based social service provider, functioning both within a secular, or non-religious, professional⁴ context through a specialised social service, as well as TSA corps (congregational)- based social practices. I have focused my attention on the latter, the corps-based social practices, and their work to support people with immediate needs such as food and clothes and other emergent and emergency-based need, hereafter referred to as a reactive approach. But corps-based social practices also encounter more complex issues that require added knowledge and competence and long-term engagement, hereafter referred to as a proactive approach. In this thesis, I have used the issue of human trafficking to illustrate one social injustice encountered by TSA local practices. Human trafficking in this thesis is defined as people who are recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of people through force, fraud or deception, with the aim of exploiting them for profit. This definition follows international and national laws regarding human trafficking (UNODC, undated). The concept of modern slavery is not a legal term but encompasses a wider understanding of exploitation and is defined by ILO as “situations of exploitation that a person cannot refuse or cannot leave because of threats, violence, deception, abuse of power or other forms of coercion”. (ILO et al., 2022, p 2)

Corps-based social practices are not traditionally professional, in the sense of being run by or having a high number of professional social work practitioners or building their work on skills extracted from a specific tradition or professional vocation. In the corps-based social practices, services are guided by experience, judgement and discretion, in this thesis referred to as generic professionalism. Generic professionalism is here understood as qualities obtained not from formal education alone, but primarily through experience and emphasises communication and interactive skills, sometimes physical skills, to work autonomously and can also include honesty and reliability (Green, 2009). Corps-based social practices represent practices where an explicit faith-based foundation meets a secular society, and the relationship between faith and professionalism is more evident in these practices than in corresponding work organised in TSA social services department.

My exploration of practice change, growth, and the development of methods to act and the consequences for TSA corps-based social practices is guided by two research questions. To understand the overall contextual implications, I ask “*How is Christian social practice*

⁴ Here professional is used as a noun, described as a person who has a job that needs skill, education, or training

developed in a secular (non-religious) context?" This question requires analysis of both TSA's theological standpoint and how the social practices in the corps are contextualised within a secular concept of social work. To explore the social practices themselves, the multiple case study of congregation-based social practices was conducted. The case study explored the question "*How do TSA corps practitioners navigate tensions related to the double agenda of evangelisation and support provision?"*. Based on the dual mission statement of TSA of spreading the word of Jesus, and providing support for people in need, this question allows for an in-depth exploration of how navigating between secular- and faith-based approaches has both developed practices, as well as hindered some aspects of collaborating with others. Critically examining how TSA relate to the dual aspects of the mission statement as they support people in vulnerable situations requires understanding how TSA understand evangelisation. TSA theology describes how salvation concerns both the persons soul and the need for a personal relationship to God or converting to faith. But the theology also refers to salvation as being free of burdens, suffering and oppression, pointing to the need to also work to help people out of desperate situations. This dual aspect reflects the way TSA corps-based practitioners relate to evangelisation, it is done by words and deeds alike, hence understanding the work as integrating both spiritual elements as well as practical elements, and that separating the two is not possible.

The three articles produced as part of this thesis analyse different aspects and levels of the overarching research questions. Article 1 aims to contribute to an overall understanding of how TSA utilise theological and faith-based themes as they develop their social practices and overarching strategies, using the example of TSA anti human trafficking and modern slavery (MSHT) work. By analysing core TSA theological and strategic documents the article asks: *How does the theological concept of "Holy life" inform TSA MSHT work?* The article contributes to an organisational level by theorising using Nancy Fraser's framework of "participatory parity" (Fraser, 1999) by highlighting empowerment and inclusion of individuals in marginalised situations and the three dimensions of redistribution, recognition, and representation. Article 2 contributes to a better understanding of faith as part of the development of practice methods and action on a local and individual level. By analysing the empirical material using a thematic approach, core elements of practice related to expressions of faith are described. The article asks: *How does faith contribute to professional attitudes and methods in TSA corps (congregational)-based social work?* The article describes the individual practitioner's relation to faith as part of practice as well as how faith affects

collaborating with other community actors, how they develop methods to give support and how they relate to guests⁵ asking for support. The article uses core elements from the Community of Practice theory to describe practice actions and attitudes of practitioners in the TSA corps-based social practices. Article 3 continues by exploring practices on a societal level, placing them in relation to a wider international context. Practice development is investigated by analysing the overarching nature of the practices by addressing two main research questions: *does the discursive construction of a particular problem and intervention as community development rather than service delivery/social work, and vice versa, point towards different practices and outcomes? And: how is this question being addressed by TSA and with what effect for the task of integrating its different domains of activity?* The article discusses the nature of corps-based practices and how community development and service delivery/social work are not just different terms for the same thing, but that they result in different practices and outcomes. The article also challenges the binary between Global North and Global South issues and need for development and social action.

The thesis' overall analysis and discussion are aimed towards expanding existing knowledge on practice development in a Christian context, hereafter referred to as diaconia, with a special focus on the role of faith. Studying the role of FBOs in a secular society is a relevant topic for the VID Specialized University doctoral programme Diakonia, Values and Professional Practice (DVP) and my project addresses some of the core aspects in the programme following its dedication "to studies and research of professional practice in two areas of society, health- and social services and churches and other faith communities and adopts diaconia and values as the main perspective in both".⁶ This project will contribute to VID's research portfolio regarding church-based social practice.

The extended abstract is organised in chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 - introduces the project.

Chapter 2 - presents main and supporting theories guiding the analysis and discussion of the material.

Chapter 3 - gives an overview of the research context.

⁵ I will use the word "guest" for people accessing TSA corps-based social practices to receive support. The participating practices use this word to describe the people with whom they come into contact.

⁶ From VID webpage concerning the PhD programme Diakonia, Values and Professional practice. For more information please go to <https://www.vid.no/en/studies/diakonia-values-professional-practice-phd-1/>

Chapter 4 – presents the research design chosen for this project. The chapter will outline methodological choices, methods and tools used to collect and analyse material.

Chapter 5 - presents findings from the articles.

Chapter 6 - discusses how findings from the articles and overall thesis can contribute to a more professional approach in TSA corps-based social work practices.

Chapter 7 - presents my conclusions and suggestions for further research.

2. Theoretical frameworks

This chapter sets out the tension between religion and social service provision in a secular context as a key aspect for practice development in faith-based social practices and presents the theories I used to analyse the core issues in this study. The chapter includes a presentation of three main approaches and professional fields I have identified as relevant for Christian social practice development, diaconal studies, social work and international development studies. These approaches emerged as a result of the process of moving back and forth between my empirical data, proving to be especially fruitful to explore and analyse TSA corps-based social practices. The diaconal tradition, understood as social action in a Christian and church context, provides insights and tools to explore the role of religion and faith in practice development. The social work tradition, in this thesis understood as research and knowledge based social work practice, was helpful to track methodological similarities and how rights-based approaches are implemented. The international development perspective places this project within a larger context of how religious and local faith actors can contribute with effective and valuable input into community development. The three perspectives are reflected upon in each of the articles resulting from this project.

Whilst conducting the literature and contextual background for the study, I confirmed the two theoretical approaches that would be used to analyse the material. The VAP diaconal framework (Nordstokke, 2021) has become a way to describe the possibilities and ways for congregational practices to increase their role and contributions to community development. The Community of Practice (CoP) learning theory (Wenger, 1998; 1999) has been used to study how practices function and the elements that are important for the social support response they provide as well as the motivating factors that can contribute to “practice development”.

2.1 Historical perspective on social engagement and service provision

The start of the Lutheran Reformation in Norway in 1537 led to an ecclesial order in which the King was the head of the church, making it a state church in accordance with other traditional Lutheran countries. This development resulted in erasing the borders between the church and the state’s responsibility for poverty care. When priests were put in charge of the poor boxes, were they then representatives for the church or the state, or did it make a difference? This state and church monopoly, with the church being fully integrated in the state structure, lasted for several centuries. Paving way for a diaconal revival was the 1841 repeal

of the Conventicles Act which required approval from the local priest for religious gatherings and stopped lay persons from preaching, and the 1845 Dissenter Act, which permitted religious diversity (Aschim, 2022; Hale, 1981). From the 1850s onwards, several faith-based diaconal entrepreneurs emerged and various social initiatives were started (Levin, 2004), amongst others the diaconal health and educational institution “Diakonhjemmet” which was a pioneer within health and social work education (Fanuelsen, 2011). At this time, such initiatives were still closely connected to the Church of Norway (CoN) structure and governance. At the start of the 1900s, Norway was predominantly a rural economy, however, migration towards cities had started, and with that, the breaking up of small communities. With gradual industrialisation and the growing socialist movement came a slow decline of the power of the church, allowing for the secular state to take over many of the services previously provided by the church (Lydholm, 2017; Kulturdepartementet, 2016).

Attitudes towards religion and the role of religion as part of the public space have changed in the last 100 years. The “secularisation” theory, that faith is declining to make room for more secular values is often referred to as secularisation (Bruce, 2008; Haynes, 1997). Although religious influence on societal structures has changed, personal faith or relation to faith has not changed as much amongst people living in Norway (Botvar, 2020). There has, however, been a recent increased attention to religious matters in the public debate in Norway (Botvar, 2020; Dinham & Francis, 2015). The changed role of religion in the public space had a profound effect on education and professionalism during the start of the 20th century. However, it is interesting to note that whilst establishing the Ministry of Social Affairs in Norway after the First World War, the secular societal context in charge used much of the existing church-based texts and legislations, meaning it’s operations and provision were similar to the previous provider, the Church.⁷ In a European context, in the 1960s and 1970s, the welfare state was built with the aim of organising help and support for almost every thinkable issue and expanding society’s knowledge in regard to social challenges. With the development of welfare structures in the 1960 and 1970s the welfare profession emerged and became more and more specialised, targeting certain social issues with focused solutions, and an evidence-based practice was seen as the correct way to deal with social problems (Van Ewijk, 2017), marginalising the role of faith and other values that could interfere with a neutrality principle

⁷ The history of political administration and departments, including the development of a department for social issues as part of the church administration can be found at <https://forvaltningsdatabasen.sikt.no/data/enhet/21000/endringshistorie>

adopted to ensure equal access to services. The major welfare issues that emerged after the Second World War were poverty, illiteracy, health and housing (Elias, 1978; Linklater, 2004). The welfare state was seen as the remedy for these ills and national systems were created to provide social and health services across Europe (Van Ewijk, 2017). In Norway, various reforms from 2008- 2017, including the revision of the Constitution in 2012, meant that the CoN was disestablished as a state church. However, the CoN is still regulated by separate provisions concerning religious and life stance communities and continues to have a special relationship with the government that is not granted to other faith- and life stance communities illustrated by amongst other things receiving funding for the employment of church staff (Billie & Kjems, 2021).

Today, the Norwegian state describes itself as “faith open” in documents relating to faith issues (Kulturdepartementet, 2013), meaning that there should be room for all faiths in society, but the influence of religion on welfare services and other state systems should be minimal to ensure equal and non-discriminative support (Barne- og Familiedepartementet, 2019). Welfare support is the responsibility of the state and as such is delivered as secular services. This means that services should be free from religious dogma and any pressure to adhere or conform to access help and that help is available for all regardless religious or non-religious affiliation. However, as part of the provision, the state does employ voluntary organisations, including faith actors, as providers, based on tender contracts and annual budgetary decision. This structure allows faith-based actors to provide specialised services on behalf of the state, whilst still adhering to their faith-based values. Some would argue that faith and faith expressions are adjusted to fit a secular context by rewriting faith as values and limiting expressions of faith both as spoken words and by not displaying artefacts with reference to faith (Bielefeld & Cleveland, 2013).

This historical overview describes the role of religion as being at the heart of the service provision at the start of the welfare state development, to becoming a marginalised and contested issue with little relevance or consideration in the public sphere. Today, organisations and welfare providers basing their work on religious faith are part of the voluntary sector defined by the Norwegian government as “working exclusively for a social purpose for the good of the community and reinvest any profit back into the purpose of the organisation” (Regjeringen, 2018, p. 8; Regjeringen 2019). As part of the voluntary sector, faith-based organisations (FBO) are to a large extent accepted as part of the Norwegian secular welfare system. The debate regarding the role of religious practice in the public sphere

is still ongoing in the Norwegian society. There is however an increased acceptance of religious participation in the public space. This participation can be seen as a result of existing in a pluralistic society where religious participation is accepted, one example is how the Norwegian society value and encourage FBOs to contribute to the welfare provision. Despite this increased participation of religious actors and providers, religious influence on Norwegian society politics and structures are still limited, illustrated by religious actors not having any formal role in political or public life (Henriksen Schmidt, 2020). The German social theorist Habermas argues that the increased acceptance of religion in the public sphere suggests that we are now in a “post secular” era where the previous certainties concerning the decline of religion (secularisation) and the injunction that religion should not have a public role (secularism) are less sure (2008). He argues for an increased dialogue between faith and reasons in upholding moral and ethical notions of the good, which directly relate to public concerns regarding social welfare. Habermas reaffirms Christianity as the nourishing source of conscience and human dignity within Western society (Habermas, 2008). This, as an understanding of the current societal climate in which FBOs function in Norway, raises questions regarding the Norwegian context. My experience from this project, and from discussions with employees and professionals in other FBOs during my years working for TSA in Norway, points towards a need to navigate what is experienced as a tension between the secular and the faith-based viewpoints. For TSA, the navigation of a secular context results in different approaches in different parts of the organisation. The social department in TSA, delivering services on behalf of the welfare state adjust language and actions to fit a formalised and knowledge-based sphere in which they exist. This means describing institutions and projects as “faith-open” in accordance with Norwegian standards, whilst still adhering to the dual mission statement of TSA on an administrative level. Conversely, corps-based social practices have explicit language and being localised in a church building they promote their faith as the main contributor for motivation. There is, however, adjusted language as soon as public funding is a reality also in these practices, illustrating how they also navigate their language in collaborative situations, or when they take part in collaborative effort, issues I describe and discuss in Article 3 produced as part of this thesis. These examples can be seen as challenging the “post secular” understanding by claiming that in Norway, secularism is influencing the state and the participation of religious actors.

2.2 The tension between the faith-based and the secular in social service provision: Perspectives of diaconia, social work and international development

An interactive process of theoretical reflection and empirical data-gathering resulted in identifying three main approaches as the analytical lenses for this project. Those lenses are rooted in the study of *social work*, *diaconia* and *international development*. These lenses provide important avenues for analysis of the material and how to better understand practice development in FBOs in a secular context.

Literature within the study of *social work* provides an understanding of a professional context and expectations with regard to supporting people in vulnerable situations. It further supplies the project with insights regarding ethical frameworks that are important for social work and social interaction and how those ethics becomes relevant in social action. The social work perspective has given me a lens to examine how the individual practitioner is working, the methods they use and how they are impacted by the surrounding context as they give support.

Literature from within the study of *diaconia* provided me the opportunity to analyse the material from a faith-based perspective, by including elements rooted in a Biblical tradition, such as reconciliation and personal calling and motivation (LWF, 2009). The conceptual framework, “Vocatio-Advocatio-Provocatio” (VAP) (Nordstokke, 2021) based on elements recognisable from both a social work tradition and a faith-based tradition that has helped me look for ways to understand and describe practice development. In this project, the diaconal perspective highlights how organisational structures and values impact local practices and how practice development is governed by that level.

An *international development* perspective has enabled me to examine domestic corps-based social work in Norway in a wider societal and global context. The empirical data illustrates that community development and service delivery/social work are not just different terms for the same thing but that they point to different practices and outcomes. Findings from this project suggest that as TSA develops its approach to ‘integrated mission’ that the binary between domestic and international social outreach is critically examined. I have also used this lens to explore the role of religion and faith-based values for local practices and how faith-based practices can contribute to support and solutions.

2.2.1 Social work

The tension between a secular professional expression and religion can be explored using a social work perspective. Social work is in general historically rooted in a value and faith-

based tradition (Bowpitt, 1998), but it is primarily a humanistic tradition that has shaped the development of professional social work. As a result of professionalisation, faith has become marginalised, largely due to the “neutrality” perspective (Holen 2021).

Below I explore the relevance of social work for my project by investigating the role of values as part of professional practice and social work education as well as in terms of personal motivation of people who train and work within social work efforts.

Values in professional social work and education

The creation of the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Act of 1998, where the right to both privately and publicly manifest beliefs is enshrined, has not prevented the role of religion in becoming marginalised in many arenas of society in general (Gray & Lovat, 2008), including the realm of social work. To better understand the relevance of faith in professional social work practice, the global definition of social work is an appropriate starting point:

Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledges, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing (International Federation of Social Workers, 2014).

This definition is explained in the Norwegian ethical guidelines for social workers as including faith aspects of the social work practice by acknowledging the role of religion for the individual that is accessing social services in Norway (FO, 2019; Vetvik, 2016). Other signs of social work, including what can be referred to as similar to faith-based values, are how guidelines for the Norwegian children services have included “love” in the official documents describing practice (Familedepartementet, 2021; Thrana, 2015). In addition, a relational attitude and concepts such as “friendship” (Furman, 2009) have become more prevalent. Some would claim that social work has its roots in a faith-based tradition, and for Norway this can be a correct historical account for much of the very early support work that was done at the start of the 17th century. However, the term social work was not used across the Global North until around the First World War and it was developed as an answer to a need for distinguishing structural and formal support work from philanthropic charity, often faith based. Based on this the faith origins of the term can be questioned (Bowpitt, 2000).

However, although wanting to distinguish social work from charity by pointing towards structural change and methods to support, social work draws on a faith-based tradition by springing out of the Christian charitable work done to support individuals:

According to the secularization narrative, social work's Christian roots were anathema to its continued progress toward professionalization, and thus the histories that were told in the textbooks and journals of the emerging social work profession downplayed its Christian roots. However, the article shows that Christianity continued to be a major influence on the development of the profession. Christian individuals and organizations played substantial roles in social work well into the mid-20th century, contrary to conventional historical accounts, which typically depict Christian perspectives and actors as being anachronistic. One consequence of this tendency to minimize the role of Christianity in social work's history is to miss out on the role that Christianity has played in current developments, for example, in social work's recent attention to human rights. (Vandervoerd, 2011 p. 238)

Despite steering towards a secular profession guided by humanistic and secular values (Bowpitt, 2000; Davies-Kildea, 2017; Vanderwoerd, 2011; Vetvik, 2016), the Christian root of social work is again evident in the increasing interest for religion in social work. One reason for the increased interest for faith-related issues in social work can be the need for individual assessments and context understanding, necessary to meet modern life's complexity and diversity as social workers interact with clients (Van Ewijk, 2017). A movement away from value neutrality in professional practices has changed how faith shapes and plays a role in people's life's and by that increased the understanding towards the role of religion in people's lives and as an important part of the relationship between the social worker and the individual seeking support (Vetvik, 2016). Another reason for including faith as a relevant factor in social work is the change in societies, Norway being one example, becoming more religiously open where the role of faith and beliefs have regained importance in the public sphere (Furseth, 2017; Schmidt, 2020), resulting in social workers coming into more regular contact with clients where religion plays a role for the choices and opportunities for the individual (Iversen, 2020; Vetvik, 2016). This can be seen in current social work by looking to the Norwegian social worker ethical guidelines, as well as an increasing body of research and educational material embracing faith and religion as important aspects. There is however still an experienced tension, mirroring the quote above, to what extent faith or religion can be allowed to shape or influence social work practices on a local Norwegian

community level, something that will be described by practitioners in TSA corps-based social practices when the empirical material gathered for this project is presented in chapter 5. The more faith inclusive language in guiding principles and documents are not always experienced in practice. This gap is confirmed in a Norwegian context by exploring literature concerning social work and educational social work material referring to a lingering scepticism (Henriksen, 2020; Skjeggstad, 2012) and an ongoing debate regarding the role of faith and spirituality in social work practice (Askeland, 2015; Danbolt, 2012) and as part of a professional social workers identity.

While the above discussion focuses on the formal/professional social work systems that emerged in the Global North after the first and second world wars, this project explores what has become a parallel social work practice in congregations/corps. Despite the increasing interest of faith as part of formal social work practices, there is a need for more research describing the capacity in faith-based social work practices, such as congregational social work and how these generically professional practices complement professional social services provided by local authorities (Dietrich, 2017; Sherwood, 2002), as well as how religious actors are accepted as professional partners whilst delivering social services or social projects. My research will play a role in contributing to filling this need.

Values as motivation in professional practice

The role of faith in social work can be explored from an individual perspective and how it affects the social worker giving support (Iversen, 2020). Although studies show that social workers do not see it as part of their prescribed duties to include faith and faith perspectives in their assessments of client's needs, it is seen as an important part of giving individuals tailored support (Vetvik, 2016). Research points towards social workers with a personal faith using their knowledge and attitudes to navigate difficult issues and to build trust and relations in meetings with clients (Skjeggstad, 2012). Used in that way, faith becomes a tool to adjust support and to understand how to approach subjects and issues as they support individuals in vulnerable situations (Bowpitt, 1998; Haugen, 2018; Danbolt & Nordhelle, 2012; Vetvik, 2016). In more informal social work practices, such as TSA corps-based practices, there is a tension between having a faith ethos, feeling called by God to care for people often regardless of or despite formal training or previous knowledge, and a professional ethos meaning being guided by formal training, education, rules and guidelines, within the practices. This tension is based on what aspects are lost as those practices are professionalised, such as the freedom to not just show God's love through action, but also the possibility to use faith-based actions

such as prayer and pastoral care as part of the practice. The scepticism towards professionalism is an understanding of professionalism, as not allowing personal faith and values to impact what you do (Leenderts, 2014), an understanding that could be argued is somewhat outdated or uninformed based on newer contributions in this field pointing to a higher acceptance and inclusion of faith perspectives in social work (Furseth, 2017; Vetvik, 2016). The tension between a faith-based ethos and a professional ethos will be discussed further in Chapter 6 in this thesis.

How faith shapes and contributes to professional social work and practice development can be traced back to educational efforts on values and faith as part of a professional practice.

Research describing the role of religious knowledge in research and educational material includes discussions regarding who provides social work education and if the value base of the universities educating social workers affects how they relate to faith and values in practice (Ben Asher, 2001). Connected to the role of education and educational institutions is the discussion regarding identified inadequate religious literacy in public policy and practice (Dinham & Francis, 2015). Shaw (2018) reframes faith-based initiatives in a post-secular discourse as an alternative and supplementary care paradigm to the bureaucratic cultures and consumerist models.

Even if the role of faith in today's social work literature and research (Johannessen, 2012) has received more attention, a strengthened and clarified policy framework for voluntary, including faith-based, organisations' access to public procurement (Nærings- og fiskeridepartementet, 2022), there is still an experience gap between faith-based and secular practices in reality as mentioned by participants in this study. Gaining access to internal discussions in TSA and my own experience of working in TSA for over 10 years confirm this gap. One example of this gap is how faith-based actors are experiencing loss of contracts to secular organisations delivering similar services because of religious bias, illustrating the need to expand the understanding of faith in social work practices.

2.2.2 Diaconia

Diaconia is the word used in the Norwegian Church to describe its outreach services to local communities and the fight for justice.⁸ The theological underpinnings of diaconia come from the Bible, more precisely from the book of Acts chapter 7, where seven able men were appointed by the congregation to take care of the handing out of food to those in need.

⁸ <https://www.kirken.no/diakoni>

Although the use of the word diaconia is not recognised in all denominations, the tradition of serving the local community and fighting for justice, equality and rights are encompassed by the term. The World Council of Churches (WCC) defines diaconia as an integral part of its mission and life and expressively describes diaconia as:

... serving human need, breaking down barriers between people, promoting one human family in justice and peace, and upholding the integrity of creation, so that all may experience the fullness of life. (WCC, 2022 and ACT Alliance p.16)

Diaconal actors have a long and strong tradition in Norway (Fanuelson, 2011; Gundersen, 2005; Lydholm, 2017) where their commitment to people as part of serving the local community. Diaconal service providers have a good reputation within Norwegian general public. However, delivering services as a faith-based initiative requires navigation of the secular approach, including an adjustment of language and use of faith-related symbols. Nonetheless, many diaconal institutions and service providers are seen as similar to secular social service providers, often taking similar actions and using a similar language (Lonergan, 2021).

The navigation of the secular context surrounding diaconal actors is, in this project, described as a tension between being faith-based and being an acknowledged professional social service provider, professional in this context meaning a formal and knowledge-based practice with an emphasis on guidelines, reporting and structures. To better understand this tension, one central point is how to investigate the relevance of faith and the impact of faith in service provision. Can faith be seen as professional and acknowledged as part of a formal social work context, or is faith purely a personal motivation and inspiration that otherwise should be kept in the background? While diaconia encourages individuals to fight for justice in cases of injustice, based on their faith (Nordstokke, 2021), diaconia also includes topics, primarily inherited from social work, such as empowerment, participation and justice (Korslien, 2015 ; Rodriguez, 2014; Rodriguez, 2017). There are also health related perspectives in diaconia pointing towards important elements such as care (Parson et al, 2021; Williams, 2017), theological approaches that highlight holistic care and existential issues (Dietrich et al, 2019; Nordstokke, 2021; Wyller, 2016) and international development perspectives (Dietrich, 2017; Rakotoarison, 2021). Because of this interdisciplinary character and the inclusion of faith perspectives also found in the TSA corps-based practices, diaconia provides this project with an important lens through which faith as part of informal social practices can be explored. However, describing faith as part of a formal and professional practice as it is described

above, can be experienced as controversial as it contradicts the aspect of a divine calling as well as ways to work, including having a loving and relational attitude to clients (Sherwood, 2002). Diaconia, having qualities to explore the more formal part of a social practice, the theological aspects of calling and being in service for God, is also making it an appropriate lens for the study.

TSA have, in contrast to other diaconal initiatives and organisations, an expectation of faith perspectives being relevant in all levels of the organisation, both in its leaders and its organisational values, which is different to many other diaconal organisations in Norway. TSA self-identify as a church and organise all their activity within the understanding of being a church (International, 2017). This is not the same as requiring all staff and volunteers to have a personal faith, but the faith perspective influences and is allowed to guide both the overall organisation as well as the local initiative. The result of this is that the same “code of ethics” and the foundation for these codes are found throughout the organisation, making faith an important part of strategies and development, as can be seen in both international MSHT documents and the TSA Accountability Movement to safeguard guests, users and practitioners (International, 2017, 2018). TSA would identify as a Faith-Based Organisation (FBO), however, the definition of FBOs is complex and far from straight forward (Haugen, 2019). Hefferan et al. (2009, p. 20-25) have provided a typology to help differentiate various FBOs. They identify six different types FBOs based on their research; faith-permeated (faith-saturated), faith-centred, faith-affiliated (faith related), faith-background, faith-secular partnership, and secular. Based on mission statements, funding, affiliations with other religious groups, selection of board members and senior management, TSA would, according to the typology, qualify as faith permeated/saturated with the exception of funding, as they receive funding from secular actors. However, due to how they organise their social services and programme services into two different departments where social services are in general closer to a secular societal context, they could be identified within several of the proposed typologies. In contrast to another FBO in Norway, the Church City Mission, according to their mission statement as displayed on their website (Kirkens bymisjon, undated), exists to ease suffering, with no further reference to faith in the statement and with embracing a “faith-open” attitude, they would fall into the secular type of FBOs. They do, however refer to their founding and lasting relationship to the church and their self-identifying as a diaconal actor, placing them within a faith-secular and faith-background category of the typology. The typology in Hefferan et al. (2009) is helpful in identifying the similarities between as well the

relatively striking difference in the use of faith references and language between the TSA and the Church City Mission (Kirkens bymisjon).

Literature concerning the concept of congregational diaconal action and social justice work has been valuable for this project. Contributions that described diaconal efforts for congregational advocacy (Cameron, 2013) and working with social justice causes such as human trafficking in a congregational setting (Venter & Semmelink, 2020) have provided the project with background to understanding the empirical material in light of ecclesial theology as well as social justice. Connecting faith and everyday life and how faith is expressed as part of how we live and congregate (Ammerman, 2020) connects faith to TSA theology of “holy life” (International, 2010) and ways to see social engagement as an expression of faith. There are other interesting and valuable contributions from a North American context (Garland, 1998;2009;2013; Myers, 2008; Northern, 2009) all describing congregational-based social work and community engagement. These sources have contributed to understanding how formally educated social workers work with congregations as a starting point, similar to some TSA contexts in Norway and other places, can function and work to support people. Apart from a North American perspective, the most relevant literature is mainly found within a Norwegian diaconal context (Addy et al., 2022; Dietrich et al., 2015; Fanuelsen, 2014; Haugen, 2018; Wyller, 2016), which explain diaconia as a faith- and rights-based approach, integrating the theological and social work perspectives. This literature is relevant as it deals with the same context I have researched, but it is also one of the main contributors within diaconal research, making it accessible and relevant for my project. From the perspective of religious faith, human rights have been previously contested, as they are sometimes described as contradicting religious dogma. Human rights are based on “faith” in those rights and can be said to function as a “secular” religion or framework for morality (Féron, 2014). Professional social work and faith-based social work do not need to be in contradiction or competition with each other which is the approach in this project. Justice and human rights are described as core parts of diaconal work (Haugen, 2018) and those perspectives of the diaconal lens is relevant as for TSA corps-based social work. There is a need to develop and include the more general and international definitions and framework of human rights in both TSA documents and practice as is discussed in Article 1 developed as part of this thesis. The concept of justice differs according to place and context, and there is a need to adhere to agreed concepts of justice, such as human rights and other international conventions. This is relevant for TSA and has been acknowledged by the central organisation, but on a local corps level, it has not

been elaborated or reflected upon in the same way. There is potential for TSA to instigate such reflections at a local level as there is no evidence in the material reviewed that TSA are not already including human rights in their approach across the organisation.

Different diaconal research work (Dietrich et al., 2017; Haugen, 2014; 2016, pp. 130-132; Stifoss-Hansen, 2014) has provided a rich theoretical and contextual background for community development and how diaconal efforts can contribute to long-lasting and sustainable change and transformation. These studies describe how theological diaconal understanding functions in relation to justice and human rights as mentioned above as well as emphasising diaconal methods, such as Use Your Talents (UYT) (Det Norske Misjonsselskap, 2021) and the CABLE (Addy, 2013) approach to grow reflection and develop new projects and programmes to better support communities. They also reflect on the diaconal identity and the role of church-based efforts as part of a community context. Diaconal research has, based on diaconal values such as transformation and reconciliation (LWF, 2009) focused diaconal efforts as part of being change makers whilst confronting local and global issues of injustice. Diaconal research has also described the foundation and function of diaconal efforts (Dietrich et al, 2011), describing diaconal leadership (Askeland, 2016; Askeland & Kleiven, 2016) and as part of welfare institutions (Skjortnes, 2017), framing diaconia within a professional practice sphere. Diaconal approaches such as “conviviality” and “hospitality” are framed within a faith-based perspective rendering them relevant for this research (Addy, 2019; Pohl, 2005). International diaconal research (Nordstokke, 2013; WCC, 2022), affirms this community-based integrated identity of diaconia, in addition to emphasising how diaconia is an ecumenical concept, and not specifically a Lutheran one.

While diaconal literature points towards a joint understanding of faith and human rights, the role of faith and its practical expression and proclamation in diaconal action is problematised (LWF, 2009; WCC, 2022), primarily based on the relation between evangelism, principally in the sense that proselytization and proclamation of the Christian gospel can or cannot be a part of a diaconal practice. For this project, this relates to practice development and the way TSA are actively using proclamation in their corps-based social practices, and faith as the basis for their methods and actions. TSA research (Pallant, 2014; Swan 2017) concerning faith expression in social practice, is most often framed within a holistic understanding, and the dual approach of serving and spreading the gospel reflected in the TSA mission statement whilst actively working against social injustices. The role of faith is more prominent in this literature than the previously mentioned diaconal literature, and evangelism is seen from a

broader perspective (Commission, 2011; International, 2019; Sherwood, 2002), i.e., evangelism includes being understood as action without words. The consequence of this is that practice development in TSA corps-based social practices is situated between giving faith a prominent role as they provide support or supporting guests whilst keeping faith as inspiration at the individual and organisational level with little to no apparent impact on the actual work done. In TSA literature, faith is described as a tool for social justice action (Swan, 2017) and as being important for practitioners' identity and calling (Gushee & Stassen, 2016; Miller, 2007; Pallant, 2012, 2014). Transformation, empowerment and reconciliation are core values in TSA theology as it is core values for diaconia (LWF, 2009). The belief in a God that is interested in supporting the individual to achieve change is closely connected to how TSA perceive faith. TSA also include a missiological aspect as part of the overall TSA goal and strategy, also recognised in the slogan "Soap, soup, salvation". Evangelism is cause for concern in diaconal literature. In a Lutheran context, an evangelistic aspect of diaconia is described as not compatible with the goal of diaconia, to serve regardless of who the recipient is:

This mission-focused method contradicts the biblical imperative of assisting people in need as a God-given mandate and an important action, as clearly exemplified in the diaconal practice of Jesus. In addition, it becomes ethically questionable to use people's needs as an occasion for evangelizing because when this happens, the dignity and the integrity of the person are not properly respected. (LWF, 2009, p. 84)

Although this text does not imply that the LWF opposes mission efforts, it emphasises the need to avoid proselytization and a pressure to convert to access services, when the power asymmetries involved in assistance operations seek to impose a change in persons' convictions or beliefs. A similar approach can be said to be found in the TSA handbook of faith (2010), the book outlining TSA doctrines. The holistic aspect of TSA social outreach/ministry uses a language that combines spreading the gospel and salvation with support and caring for the community:

All our activities, practical, social and spiritual, arise out of our basic conviction of the reality of the love of God and our desire to see all people brought into relationship with him. None of our practices or programmes can be divorced from the reality that salvation is both a promise and a possibility for all people. Our doctrine reminds us that salvation is holistic: the work of the Holy Spirit touches all areas of our life and personality, our physical, emotional and spiritual well-being, our relationships with

our families and with the world around us. When we exercise practical care, or seek to bring about healing in families and in communities, we are sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. (International, 2010, p. 187)

This quote makes salvation both an individual and societal concern, potentially opening the evangelistic efforts to not just be directed towards conversion and personal faith, but also directed towards the situation and injustice the individual is suffering from.

The mission of God's holy people encompasses evangelism, service and social action. It is the holy love of God, expressed in the heart and life of his people, pointing the world to Christ, inviting the world to saving grace, serving the world with Christ's compassion and attacking social evils. Holiness leads to mission. (International, 2010, p. 198)

The way TSA connect the holistic mission and the aspect of "holy life" creates a different approach to include spreading the gospel as part of social outreach to the Lutheran diaconal approach, making them more intertwined with social action and expressions, and by that, difficult to separate out as its own activity. In practice, this theology is expressed as social ministry, a TSA way to do diaconia. Alas it is still a question how this interconnectedness between a diaconal approach to serve the most marginalised and the wish to spread the gospel is done, perspectives that are discussed in both articles connected to this thesis as well as in chapter 6 of this extended abstract.

2.2.3 International development

The last perspective important in this project is the international development aspect. One reason for this is that in addition to carrying out domestic social welfare, both in terms of services at the corps level and those contracted by the state, TSA are also involved in international development activities. Therefore, in addition to the two environments outlined above (i.e. social work and diaconia), TSA activities are also shaped by a further approach with its own methods, approaches and languages. In this section, I will briefly address several aspects of an international development framing to addressing social problems that are relevant to my study of TSA social work in Norway.

The SDGs are globally relevant (i.e. to both Global South and North) in a way that previous development frameworks have not been due to the way the framework is addressing development issues across the globe, rather than targeting areas for intervention. Despite this shift towards breaking down the binary between Global North and South, TSA continues to

use a different language for its domestic work and its international work. Article 3 produces for this thesis, the question regarding learnings for Norwegian community action from an international development sphere and discusses how the language used can contribute to changing perspectives and attitudes.

Previous rights-based approaches in international development have had a tendency to ignore religion as a relevant factor. A more “inclusive” rights-based agenda (Tomalin, 2006) views religious and faith perspectives as part of the context in which people live and exist, and that faith is therefore an important aspect for any furthering of knowledge and skills, individual or practice. The UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) offer an example of how the binary between the Global North and the Global South is diminishing. This is demonstrated by welfare issues often addressed with reactive support and rehabilitation rather than prevention in the Global North, and development issues addressing root causes and implementing long term actions are seen as part of one global framework, narrowing the previous gap. This diminishing distance between the Global North and the Global South is also illustrating how issues previously addressed and encountered in one region of the globe have become global issues, human trafficking is one example. Experiencing a rising trend in local social practices, such as TSA corps-based social practices in Norway, of addressing complex social issues such as human trafficking (Birks & Gardner, 2019) implies that social initiatives must expand their local knowledge and way of working to address these issues. Currently, the way TSA corps-based social practices are working in Norway tends to be reactive and answering to emergent needs. This covers issues such as the need for food, clothes, shelter and sometimes fellowships. However, although there are examples of more long-term initiatives in the practices, the general attitude in TSA corps-based practices is reactive and addressing issues that have root causes in other countries, again looking at human trafficking, is limited today. For faith-based practices serving emergent issues in their local community, a sense of belonging to a wider context, and even a global context, and address issues with a more proactive and long-term approach, addressing root causes, can strengthen local practices as they encounter complex social issues.

Another example, in addition to the example of human trafficking being an emergent issue, is the growing gap between rich and poor happening in Norwegian society. This gap, previously often discussed as part of a Global South context can also benefit from implementing perspectives from an international development context.

Inequalities within high income countries mean that the types of policy analysis applied to poverty reduction programmes in developing countries have a broader relevance. ...The socio-economic impact of demographic and technological dynamics (as examples of structural change) requires careful policy-relevant research in industrialized countries just as much as in developing countries. (Sumner & Tribe, 2008, p. 19)

The quote above can be exemplified by how a Norwegian medium-sized town and the work done by a small congregation as they support the local community, would not understand themselves and what they do within an international development context, and the language used would be closer to frameworks of professional social work than social justice, as well as not exploring root causes and sustainable solutions to the issues they meet, but more likely be met by short-term help by practitioners in the congregation. This way of working has many practical reasons, as well as organisational reasons, such as the limited participation of corps-based social practices in what is seen as professionalisation of social work administrated by TSA social department, something I explain more in chapter 3. Another reason is low funding and a dependency of volunteers. In Norway, TSA use the term “corps-based social work” (Army, 2016) for the outreach activities performed at a congregational level. Had the same work been done in a corps in the Global South, chances are that the work would have carried some of the same definitions, but it would also have included a focus on development and tackling root causes, placing the action within a bigger picture of social justice and community development.

Methods and attitudes from a development perspective increase the acknowledgment of faith-based local actors and the role they play in community development efforts, as well as gaining a wider perspective of principles such as belonging and inclusion, adapting a holistic framework based on the need for better understanding of the role of faith for individuals and society based on the increased multi-faith and multi-cultural society Norway and other northern European countries are becoming. Methods and policy management, such as “Faith-Based Facilitation” (FBF) previously meant for evaluating and strengthening projects in a developing project context, are now proving useful in a Norwegian context (Army, 2016). This model was developed to assist TSA international practice development and tackle root causes based on available resources and knowledge. The five-step model, starting with identifying the issue (1) followed by describing and analysing (2) what they know about the issue. After collecting information follows a time of reflecting and evaluating (3), assisted by

both Bible reading and prayer to decide on a plan (4) to finally act (5). The model includes faith perspectives such as prayer and bible readings to relate the activity to the framework in which the corps is developing their actions. Being self-evaluating, the model aspires to be repetitive, so that the practice is constantly developing actions to meet current and emerging trends.

One feature of the international development space I see as an interesting way to explore the possibilities for local faith-based social practices in Norway to be seen as more relevant community actors has been what some have called a ‘turn to religion’, since the late 1990s (Tomalin, 2013). This shift has partly been a product of the realisation that despite predictions that secularisation would take place and religion would disappear as societies modernised and became like the West, that this has not been the case (Moberg et al., 2017). In much of the Global South, religion continues to shape values and the decisions that are relevant for development policy and practice.

While the role of faith and religion in social practices is a contested and sometimes controversial topic in social work education and practice in the Global North, I argue that investigations concerning the role of religion in social justice work on both an individual and societal level in the Global North would benefit from learning from development perspectives where faith actors have a different role in community development and where development of methods and strategies includes more proactive elements and approaches (Benham, 2013). Research regarding the “turn to religion” (Tomalin, 2020) and increased knowledge on the role of religion in processes of social and justice and human rights (Benham Rennick, 2013; Tomalin, 2006) can support how practice development, by increasing knowledge and community engagement can be done without compromising the inherent faith-identity, is especially interesting to investigate for my project. A “turn to religion” perspective from development studies can also assist congregational social initiatives learning as they face increased complex social issues (Van Ewijk, 2017), often related to international social injustices such as exploitation of migrants and persons in other vulnerable situations related to poverty and social exclusion (Misje, 2022). Faith-based social initiatives are facing increased pressure and exclusion from active participation in the public sphere in the Global North, exemplified by excluding or restricting faith-based organisations or churches access to public funding or managing the expression of faith identity in tender competitions by asking for all activity to be faith neutral. This exclusion results in societal challenges and situations being

solved whilst ignoring important aspects such as values and religious concerns and needs (Danbolt & Nordhelle, 2012; Leenderts, 2014).

The role of religion for the development of just and inclusive communities, done as part of a diaconal agenda, has gained interest in recent years (Haugen et al., 2022; Haus, 2017; Rakotoarison et al., 2019). However, the previous focus on the Global North is challenged, as emerging social issues such as human trafficking is becoming more and more evident in the Global North community context (Anderson & Rogaly, 2005; Bales, 2000; Birks & Gardner, 2019; Brunovskis & Ødegård, 2020), enhancing the need to expand research that ignores the previous binaries of Global North and Global South to provide more inclusive and comprehensive ways to address social injustices. The narrowing gap between the Global North and the Global South is happening at the same time as the secularisation discussion, bringing new and emerging insights describing how religion is becoming part of a community's resources or "capital" (Baker & Skinner, 2014) to be used to form way in which community can function and co-exist. Researchers also contributes with an understanding of religion as part of practice, being an inherent part of habitual dispositions and cultural resources that will play a role in how people will act, taking religion from an institutionalised understanding to being closer to the way individuals act and contributes to their communities (Ammerman, 2014; 2020). Others have described the need for increased religious literacy (Dinham, 2011) to better accommodate participation of religious actors in the public sphere. All these developments and shifts in paradigms will potentially increase the role of religious actors in community-based social efforts in the future, both secular and faith-based alike. However, the faith-based initiatives are still experiencing high levels of public scrutiny as they provide services in a secular context (Lonergan et al., 2021) and will benefit from an increased focus on how to communicate how and what they do as well as expanding their knowledge and actions to increase their capacity and local reach.

2.3 Presenting perspectives used to investigate the tension between secular professional expressions of social work and faith-based approaches.

In my thesis, I have identified a tension between a secular professional expression of social work and faith-based approaches. I am asking "*How is Christian social practice developed in a secular (non-religious) context?*" An in-depth case investigation into TSA corps-based social practices is guided by the question "*How do TSA corps practitioners navigate tensions related to the double agenda of evangelisation and support provision?*" This requires me to look closely at the structure of practices and the implications for practice development.

I am, in this extended abstract and two of the articles produced as part of this thesis, exploring how to navigate this tension using a practice development perspective. I understand practice development as an inclusive, participatory and collaborative process engaging all levels of an organisation in order to create positive change, enhanced skills and knowledge for participants and the overall organisation (Bradd et al., 2017; McCormack & Garbett, 2003).

My explorations have been guided by the “Community of Practice” theory. The concept of practice implies “doing”, according to the CoP theory, “doing” in a historical and social context that gives structure and meaning (Wenger, 1999). A practice should be understood as “embodied in materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding” (Schatzki et al., 2001, p 11). To reflect this approach to practice, I understand practice development as an inclusive, participatory and collaborative process engaging all levels of an organisation in order to create positive change, enhanced skills and knowledge for participants and the overall organisation (Bradd et al., 2017; McCormack & Garbett, 2003).

The three main approaches described above, social work, diaconia and international development have allowed me to explore the role of faith for practice development in faith-based practices serving in a secular context. Exploring how faith can contribute to the individual social worker’s values and ethics and how knowledge about faith can provide important information to give support and build trust between the client and the social practitioner allows me to describe how faith can both expand a relational attitude but also hinder practice development by limiting knowledge input and network reach. The diaconal approach places this project firmly within a faith-based sphere and allows for exploring social action from a holistic approach, allowing faith to become part of the exploration. Diaconal practices are more than just proving practical assistance; it understands the person as a holistic being (Nordstokke, 2021) and has served this project as a lens to understand the organisational aspects of practice understanding and the role of faith. The last perspective has placed my explorations within a wider global context and has made perspectives of how to understand the role of faith in projects addressing social injustices in the local community and how faith can contribute to developing relations and ways to communicate to enhance participation for people suffering from injustice. This has placed the project in a local context and adherence to assist the explorations of practice development in faith-based organisations in a secular context.

2.3.1 Community of Practice

It was necessary to include a learning approach to analyse the gathered material. The Community of Practice (CoP) theory has contributed to bringing important perspectives about learning, and practice development happens amongst practitioners to assist development of actions and reach into their local communities and the theory has been widely applied within social science and several other areas, such as business organisation, professional learning, education, and practice development, often connected to a formal social work environment (Allee, 2000; Duguid, 2005; Mackey & Evans, 2011). Elements from the theory have been used in this thesis to provide insight and to explain what is happening in the practices investigated here and as a foundation to explore what is going on in the TSA corps-based practices, as well as to discuss potential efforts within TSA to develop its approach to social outreach including how it navigates the secular space

Learning can be done in many ways. In my material, as described in the introduction as employing “generic professionalism”, building primarily from experience, judgement and discretion, TSA corps-based social practices cannot be said to embrace a traditional knowledge-based approach, i.e., learn first then do. Learning in this research project is understood as a social interactive process where experience and “learning by doing” are relevant perspectives. I have used the CoP theory to analyse what is going on in the TSA corps-based practices since it focusses on learning the lived experience and participation in the world. In CoP theory, learning is a continuous process based on the participation of the individual in the practice. To understand the interactions arising from this participation there are four core aspects of learning: meaning (learning as experience), practice (learning by doing), community (learning by belonging) and identity (learning as becoming) (Wenger, 1999). In this project, the four aspects above have helped me to not just describe what is going on in the TSA corps-based social practices, but also how practitioners develop actions, skills and presence in the local community. In addition, applying these elements has provided a way to identify where practitioners navigate to adjust practice and language to the surrounding context, and how to trace ways practitioners approach situations and issues that they encounter. I discuss the above applications and findings in detail in Article 2 written as part of this thesis.

Within CoP theory, part of learning is to create meaning and a sense of coherence in the practice. In CoP theory, the aspects of meaning and coherence are traced by using the additional three core elements of the theory; domain, (a joint enterprise), community (mutual

engagement) and practice (develop a shared repertoire) to support individuals (Wenger, 1999, 2011). Domain, community and practice are related by the way they target how learning is facilitated by inherent qualities in the three elements. Learning in Domain is about joint understanding of what the practice is all about and how the mission, in the case of TSA, facilitate communication, relations between practitioners and opportunities to learn about the issues they encounter. Community is all about how practitioners relate and work together both to learn and to develop methods. It is also targeting where the practice is situated, and for this project the secular context and collaborators in that context is the focus for exploration. Practice is what practitioners do and how and why they do it. It targets both the local practice, but also TSA as an overarching organisation facilitating learning and developing their social outreach. The three elements have been ways for me to trace faith in all these different aspects, something I explain in more detail in chapter 4. Part of the exploration using CoP theory is tracing creation of meaning and coherence (Antonovsky, 1998). This applies to both the individual practitioner but also for the practices in the desire to create meaning for others, reflecting a diaconal character of serving and supporting marginalised groups. Creating meaning and motivation is foundational in understanding why the practices develop as they do and the empirical material points towards faith to be the main contributor for this, as I describe in Chapter 5. Tracing the role of faith in the three CoP elements just outlined above and how faith contributes to building a strong practical foundation was helpful in understanding why the practitioners do what they do, something I discuss in chapter 6.

Reflection amongst practitioners regarding what is going on in the practice is key for this type of learning and when combining this with a faith-based perspective, it becomes evident that reflection is happening on several levels and can resemble “double loop” (Greenwood, 1998) reflective learning. Professionals learn by reflecting on their actions as the first loop, and then reflect on their inner framework (Chile & Simpson, 2004), in this case, values and norms based in a faith tradition, as a second loop. By doing this, practitioners can see and understand both their capabilities, possibilities, and limitations using knowledge and frameworks relevant to the context and situation, allowing faith to become part of a learning structure. The practitioners facilitate reflection by taking lessons learned from one case and transferring them to another similar situation. In this way, the practitioners create a framework within which they navigate systems and issues to create meaning, both for the individual practitioner and for the overall practices, critically reflecting on presuppositions on which actions and

attitudes have been built (Høyrup, 2004). This implies a navigation of life that is happening as part of a community, and not in isolation.

The core elements of CoP theory presented above facilitated the aim of the project to better understand practice development. This has allowed me to trace relevant examples in the empirical material to describe the inner workings of the practices, such as evangelism and social work, advocacy and networking, inquiry and relational approaches. I have also been able to identify gaps where the practices are not developed to their full potential with the biggest finding being a lack of learning structure and focus on pro-active and long-term social work, a topic I address in Articles 1 and 2, as well as in chapter 6 in this extended abstract. But more than that, they have provided me with tools to look for and evaluate the role of faith in the practices and how faith is positioned within the practices and used as an active tool in meeting and interacting with guests.

2.3.2 Diaconal conceptual framework, “Vocatio-Advocatio-Provocatio”, (VAP)

Diaconia expresses a biblical call to service and is understood as the social ministry of the church (Dietrich, 2014). It is important to note that I *do not* take the Norwegian Lutheran church’s diaconal definition as a starting point when I place this research within a diaconal sphere. Rather I understand diaconia as a perspective from where I find inspiration and guidance, and as a heterotopia tool (Wyller, 2009). Heterotopia was first used by Foucaud and explain as “spaces outside normality, contesting and confronting society and culture as a whole” (Wyller, 2016, p. 43). Wyller further describes ecclesial heterotopia as “heterotopic ecclesiology concerns a church that dissolves itself and let the other be prominent? And that this dissolving happens and is practiced because of traces of real hospitality” (Wyller, 2016, p. 44). I attempt in this thesis to describe how social work practices in TSA can be seen as “theology from the margins” and contribute to an understanding of building an ecclesial diaconal sphere based on practice (Wyller, 2016) and a heterotopic space with a focus on the other to guide that practice. Diaconia also facilitates an exploration of the hidden sacred in everyday practices, such as the corps-based social work practices. In this project, this means exploring the role of faith and what it means as social work is carried out in a church setting. This includes how practitioners create meaning and how their preconceptions affect the way they act (Krogh, 2012; Wenger, 1999) as well as faith being a tacit dimension in practitioner’s work (Polanyi & Sen, 2009).

TSA are part of the Norwegian Council of Churches and thus part of the Norwegian diaconal tradition.⁹ TSA are part of a diaconal tradition and as such, diaconia is the main theoretical foundation for this thesis. This is expressed by not just referring to traditionally diaconal texts and approaches, but also including traditions such as “lived religion” and TSA theological foundations. However, whilst working with TSA foundational material by conducting a document analysis for this project, one diaconal conceptual framework has become a central part of the theoretical framework, the diaconal conceptual “Vocatio-Advocatio-Provocatio” (VAP) (Nordstokke 2021) framework combines practice development and faith values to form an inclusive rights-based approach for practice development. Introduced by Nordstokke (2021) and used to describe diaconia in a global and ecumenical perspective (WCC & ACT Alliance, 2022), the framework is a relevant way to describe and develop congregational social practices.

The VAP conceptual framework maps key concepts for a congregational social practice, such as learning, community, meaning, rights-based perspectives and faith. Implementing these key concepts into the current TSA corps-based social practices will trigger a proactive practice attitude. The framework provides a context-specific model to generate new and innovative ways for development in TSA corps-based social practices, and the framework is still emerging within ecumenical circles (WCC, 2022, pp. 8, 15).

In the VAP framework, the core is a faith-based calling for service (*vocatio*) which creates a link between different perspectives of a diaconal practice. Whilst counselling, advising, and carrying out advocacy work (*advocatio*) as well as confronting injustices (*provocatio*), completes the VAP framework, the faith-based calling to work for the benefit of others (Nordstokke, 2021, p. 237) guides both practitioners and the practice, ensuring faith becomes a core value for the practice. The practitioners personal calling becomes the main foundation of the practice and creates a building block that guides which values are being reified¹⁰ in that practice. Their faith-based strength allows them to meet guests and not withdraw when confronted with someone else’s pain and suffering (Campbell & Bauer, 2021). Using tools and skills developed and aided by their faith such as reflection, relational attitude, and an

⁹ Read more about The Christian Council of Norway (CCN) <https://www.oikoumene.org/organization/christian-council-of-norway>

¹⁰ ‘Reified’ is a word used by Wenger as he explains how abstract elements such as values are being made visible in practice.

inquiry-based approach (discussed later in the thesis), their faith becomes a way to build resilience and encourage further action.

The VAP framework contributes to practice understanding by placing learning and development within a faith-based sphere. The VAP framework is focused on how practices develop and what the role of faith is in that process. VAP also presents some important diaconal aspects that can facilitate development to ensure a rights-based approach with a social justice focus on advocacy for and taking a stand on pressing issues, whilst also including the central diaconal aspects such as transformation, empowerment, and reconciliation (LWF, 2009). The model is discussed as a way for TSA to develop their corps-based social practices in chapter 6 of this thesis.

Vocation (“*vocatio*”) in a Christian context is understood as the workings of God in this world. Many Christians would translate this to mean “calling”, a reason for why they are doing what they are doing. The framework element of “*vocatio*” is closely linked to motivation and contributes to creating a domain for the practice. In order for practice development to happen, there must be motivation, not just for the action but for the goal or outcome of changed society and more justice for individuals. For this project, most of the practitioners referred to a divine calling that created meaning for the work, making it a relevant aspect of how faith contributed to practice development and the motivation for both action and the intended outcomes of the practice. Looking at “*vocatio*” from a practice development point of view helped me to better understand how faith facilitates participation, engagement and inclusion emphasising how Christians should not live “apart” from the world, it meant living as “a part of” the world (Kleinhans, 2005, p. 396). This notion enables churches such as TSA to view their calling to work as a Christian vocation, and in so doing, they can include people from other faiths and those without faith to become participants in the practice. Considering the vocational aspects of Christian work, emphasising the spiritual calling to do God’s work in the world (Wingren, 2004) resonates with TSA’s theology of seeing one’s life and work as a sacrament to God in whatever capacity one finds oneself (Clifton, 1999; Coutts, 1957; International, 2010a). A personal calling does not automatically give you all the tools to do the job, something TSA corps-based social practices are a good example of, as they keep learning by doing and discussing social issues and challenges as a group.

Advocacy (“*advocatio*”) often starts with the question “why”. In asking why the need presented exists for the individual or why public social service structures are not providing

enough support, the story and information provided by the person in need will often hold the key to the solution, and part of the work done between the “why” and the solution is advocacy. TSA corps-based social practitioners refer to this work as challenging and they find that this approach is difficult, time-consuming, and it might lead practitioners back to “why” they are dealing with this issue (Cameron, 2015; Swan, 2017). But the diaconal calling of the church is to advocate for the others and to find ways for them to prosper (Alliance, 2016; Nordstokke, 2021). Being an advocate for others is a conscious diaconal choice and way of working for the congregation (Northern, 2009) and involves prioritising some issues before others because of time, knowledge or simply interest. This aspect creates a sense of belonging to the community and the people they support. However, advocacy implies change for the practice and a need for practitioners to learn about issues and understand the surrounding context to allow for a deeper engagement with the issues creating the challenges they attempt to solve, as discussed earlier in this chapter as the need for more proactive engagement and long-term projects and solutions. The participating TSA corps-based practices all expressed a wish to expand their long-term engagement with individuals and were actively looking into how to develop programmes and other methods to build a longer term, proactive approach based on practice elements that support a relational service as well as elements of protest against injustices.

The advocacy approach can become provocative, as seen from Jesus’s example in the Bible when he confronted the authorities of the day. Advocacy is never done for the sake of being provocative, but it is sometimes a necessary way to protect and defend the most marginalised (Nordstokke, 2021). A provocation (“*provocatio*”) is defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as “an action that is intended to cause a reaction” (Dictionary, 2021). The provocation aspect of the VAP framework contributed to placing the practices in the wider context of their local community and the wider society elevating the sense of engagement and community important for a functioning practice. A diaconal approach to provocation is to make clear the diaconal reason or faith-based root of the suggested solution/attitude of the issue despite tensions involved in the discussion to help resolve or articulate the provocation or issue itself. The resolving or articulating of provocation is a way to describe the reasons behind the diaconal actions. In TSA social justice theology, this can be understood as a “holy protest” (Swan, 2017). To perform a “holy protest” is an example of a diaconal approach to provocation. Issues such as secularisation and how that contributes to the understanding of faith-based actions being seen as provocative by others was referred to by practitioners. One

example of this is how TSA were criticised by many people in society when they first started to support the migrating Roma population when they first began coming to Norway. There was much criticism in media and commentary sections of social media posts and I myself experienced negative comments made concerning where the money that was collected was going to, and if it were spent helping the Roma population, they rather give to someone else.

2.3.3 Using TSA corps as a case study

I have decided to explore faith-based practice development in a secular context and the tensions between social work and evangelisation by investigating TSA corps-based social practices. These practices can be described as representative cases due to their independence from societal input and regulation. Their use of faith as a primary source of inspiration is another reason why TSA corps-based social practices are interesting cases to research. As an important part of TSA local expression, the inherent tensions between a professional social work department and a more informal programme department and the way this affects the local practices has also contributed to corps being a relevant topic of interest.

3. Research Context

TSA have been part of the Norwegian society for more than 100 years, during which it has provided social outreach to marginalised and vulnerable groups in society as well as having a church and congregational presence. TSA organise all its activity within a church organisation, both on an international as well as national level. The International Mission Statement states:

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in his name without discrimination.¹¹

This statement connects faith-based evangelistic and social work activities to concerns for people's wellbeing and reflects the holistic approach in TSA theology described earlier. This theological approach and culture have developed as a part of a worldwide church with active congregations and social projects, presently in over 130 countries. TSA express themselves through a mix of social work initiatives, health and educational related activities and through a 14,000 strong corps¹² network worldwide (International, 2022). TSA has, during its history, developed professional social work as well as informal social corps-based practices based in the local community, ministering and serving those in near proximity to the project and corps.

TSA are a membership church, enrolling uniformed soldiers that adheres to both theological teachings and lifestyle guidelines (such as no drinking of alcohol, no gambling and serving other in need) as well as supporting the corps with their time and money. Another form of membership is adherents. Adherents are adhering to the theological teachings as well as promising to support the corps financially and with their time, but do not wear a uniform or adhere to the lifestyle guidelines. Officers are spiritual leaders in TSA, with a two-year vocational training serving in both corps and in social institutions as leaders and chaplains. Some volunteers in TSA are members, either soldiers or adherents. There are no requirements for volunteers to be or become members.

¹¹ Taken from TSA International webpage <https://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/Mission>

¹² "Corps" is the traditional word used to explain a local presence in the TSA, it is similar to a church congregation.

In Norway, TSA have five main departments, all directed by an overarching leader group with the Territorial Commander (TC) as top management. The five main departments are complemented by areas of responsibility directly answering to organisational leadership.

The *TSA social department*, administer over 80 social residential programmes and additional projects.¹³ Much of the work done by this department is on behalf of the state and local municipalities and fully funded either by grants or tender-based contracts. In addition, there are in addition some support functions within this department. The *programme department* oversees and administrates all activities connected to the corps, in addition to youth, music and activities for senior citizens. The programme department is also in charge of the “church” part of the organisation, and although there are projects and activities funded with external money, the majority of the work is financed by gifts, grants and internal TSA funds. The corps are part of the programme department but the professional advisory support for corps-based social work has been placed in the social service department since 2016 (see figure 1 below). The other main departments in the TSA structure can be said to support and serve the organisation as a whole and to support the work primarily done in the social work and programme department, such as communication and finance department.

The organisational structure in TSA Norway resembles the societal split between secular values and faith values in the Norwegian society. Although this organisational structure goes all the way back to the start of TSA, its continued presence, whilst some other countries have changed their structures to include both social and programme into one section, can be interpreted as an adjustment to the secular society and one of the ways TSA copes with the adjusting to a secular society. The professional social services function primarily in the secular and public sphere of society and the administratively smaller and less professional programme department provides services parallel to the public sphere as well as administrating more traditional church activities. This organisational context is important in this project, as the corps-based social practice activities are carried out in the area between the secular and professional and the faith-based and informal. Figure 1 below shows TSA Norway’s organisation and the placement of corps and corps-based social practice support, illustrating the relationship to the two departments.

¹³ For more information on TSA work see www.fralsningsarmeen.no

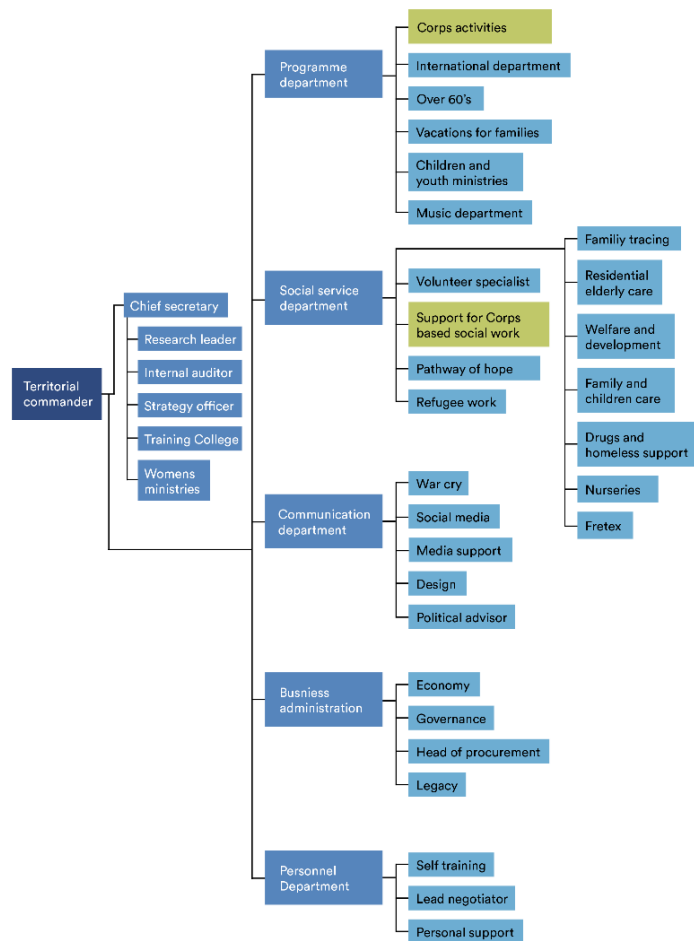


Figure 1: Organisational chart of TSA Norway territory

3.1 Corps in The Salvation Army in Norway

In Norway, there are 93 corps scattered across the country (Frelsesarmeen, 2021), a majority of these have a social outreach activity on a weekly or monthly basis. TSA corps-based social work represents an example where spiritual activities, such as prayer and the use of Bible texts as inspiration and guiding for what they do, dictated by faith and social work principles are explicitly intertwined. TSA place all their activity within an evangelical and missiological Christian tradition, and the corps-based social practices are evidence of that tradition. TSA doctrines state that any social practice expressions in a TSA setting can never be a neutral act of professional social work or based on only humanistic values (International, 2010a). TSA doctrines and presence mean that it must be described as a missional church “where the people of God participate in God’s mission through being, word and deed in their daily lives” (Jørgensen, 2019, p. 130). This does not imply that the gospel must be taught in every action, rather that there will always be a relationship between proclamation and social outreach. The

dualism reflected in the TSA mission statement of spreading the gospel and meeting social needs is navigated in TSA social services residential programmes in Norway as well as projects, however, more intense and perhaps more visible in the corps-based social practices because of their more explicit faith expression.

Most corps in Norway have an informal social provision programme, handing out food, clothes or serving meals to people experiencing situations that render them vulnerable to poverty, exclusion, exploitation, or loneliness (Fløtten et al., 2023). Most of the practitioners in TSA corps-based social work are volunteers. The work is led by local leaders, either trained officers¹⁴ or employed social workers.¹⁵ The social outreach provided by corps in Norway is primarily delivered by people with a Christian faith, although this is not the full picture. Volunteers adhere to many of the world's major religions as well as atheist and agnostic values. Corps-based social work practices are not traditionally professional, in the sense of being run by or having a high number of professional social work practitioners or building their work on skills extracted from a specific tradition or professional vocation. They provide support to hundreds of people every week across Norway using a primarily reactive approach, based on individual needs, with an emphasis on handing out food, clothes, and other practical support, as do many other congregations around the world (Todd & Rufa, 2013). AT the time of writing this thesis (winter/spring 2022/2023), the pressure on corps-based social work has increased due primarily to higher food and electricity prices and an uncertain economic situation around the world causing increased migration (Fløtten, 2023). Some corps more than doubled the amount of people they support during this period, illustrating the need to better understand their significance and role in the local community as well as how they can develop their services to meet people's needs in the best possible way.

3.2 The history of TSA corps-based social outreach

To better understand the current organisation of TSA Norway I will now give a brief outline of the history of TSA and corps-based social outreach.

Around 1890, TSA internationally organised the main part of their social practice into a professionalised “social wing”, or social department, to better meet the needs encountered

¹⁴ An Officer has a two-year theological, diaconal and leadership training background and are primarily pastors in TSA corps (Congregations) but can also function as leaders elsewhere in the church organisation. The training only requires previous basic education and is a vocational training programme.

¹⁵ Social workers are sometimes referred to as Deacons. They are employed primarily based on personality and experience rather than formal training within social work. There are no formal educational demands to work as a social worker on corps level in TSA.

(Hill, 2017) as well as including non-members in their support work (Pallant, 2012). The other “wing”, or department was the “field wing”, now known in Norway as the “programme wing”, which organises congregations and the activities connected to them. This organisational split is still existing in TSA Norway today.

TSA Norway have, during the last 30 years, changed part of this organisational structure, by moving many of the activities previously carried out done by “Slumstations”¹⁶ in local communities, such as handing out food and clothes and providing necessary help and support in an emergency, to the local corps. This has resulted in the high number of corps involved with corps-based social work¹⁷, and only one “Slumstation” remains in Oslo and is administrated by the social department. Although some efforts were to help facilitate these transitions, such as appointing a person responsible for diaconal work,¹⁸ many corps were left with little or no support in how to best provide and organise this social outreach. This, in combination with the less formal social work training required for TSA Officers, meant that a co-ordinated provision of social work development and support for corps was not prioritised for many years.

As the corps increased their community social outreach, TSA residential and specialised institutions, organised in the social service department in Norway, were growing in strength and professionalism. An increasing number of institutions such as child protection institutions and drug rehabilitation centres based on public procurement and state funded institutions such as Safe House Filemon, a protection programme for male victims of human trafficking and work exploitation, were established. The focus was primarily on professional services, although efforts were made to employ professionals that were also members of TSA in key positions to ensure the TSA identity and mission values were preserved within this structure (Stanghelle, 2002).

Efforts have been made to bridge the gap between the programme and social departments. In 2015, due to increased questions from those corps faced with complex social issues, the social department was formally asked to support corps-based social work practices. After this, more efforts have been made to support and advise all corps, such as developing a core document for why and how theology and professional elements influence the practices as well as a focus

¹⁶ Slumstations were staffed by TSA officers specially trained in social and health work and were considered to be pioneers in many ways in the early 1900 for their work amongst the poor and destitute.

¹⁷ See TSA Norway yearly report at www.frelsesarmeen.no/årsrapport

¹⁸ Diakonia is in TSA used as describing the social work done at congregational level.

on networking and knowledge exchange, “Platform for corps based social work” (Army, 2016) and appointing staff in to support and develop this work.

3.3 What is a corps-based social practice

TSA corps-based social practices are not homogenous. The employed staff are a mix of people with professional training, and those who have no formal or relevant education within social work or related professions. Similarly, there are volunteers with formal skills within the social, health or educational professions, and people who do not have any formal education. The volunteer groups also include those with personal experience of migration, poverty, exclusion, and exploitation. Most tasks are performed by most practitioners meaning people do not specialise regardless of whether they are a volunteer or paid staff member. There are tasks, such as pastoral care, and psychological crisis management that are primarily carried out by staff, but not exclusively. This joint enterprise to deliver social services to guests¹⁹ requires learning to be available for all, to ensure a continued common goal and shared approach.

Another important and distinguishing factor in these practices is faith. The practices are all located within a church building, they are primarily run by Officers who are pastors in TSA and as part of their ordination to Officers they promise to serve people in need. This reflects the diaconal aspect of TSA as a church where prayer, bible reflections, devotions and pastoral care are prevalent and seen as a natural part of the practices’ approach. Openness towards conversations regarding faith and seeing one’s work as a calling are other factors that define TSA corps-based social practices.

¹⁹ This is the most commonly used term to describe people accessing TSA corps-based social practices for help and support.

4. Methodological approach

In this chapter I describe which research methods I employed and the analytical methods I used to distil key concepts from the collected material for further discussion.

A multiple case study design has guided my research process and my wish to include as many participatory elements as possible, such as participatory observation and focus group reflections, which have made the study vibrant. The selection of locations was done in dialogue with TSA leadership and according to a set of criteria that would ensure enough saturation for the study as well as being a collaborative process including both TSA on an organisational and local level in the decisions made. To gather information, I used five different research methods to collect material: individual and group interviews, focus group reflections, participatory observations, and document analysis. A thematic analysis with an indicative approach was used at the start of the overall analysis of the collected material. This strategy was expanded to include a deductive approach using the earlier described theories to extract relevant material for discussion.

The use of several methodological tools over the course of the research period as well as including background material to describe TSA, and TSA corps have sufficiently ensured reliability in this process and the findings in this project are transferable to a wider diaconal context.

4.1 A qualitative empirical tradition

The goal of this study is to gain a better understanding of practice development in TSA corps-based social practices that operate in a secularised society as described in the introduction. The faith-based organisation selected for this research has a clear faith perspective and defines themselves as a Christian church. TSA corps-based social practices base their action on a divine calling from God, but some participate because they want to do something for others based on humanistic values rather than faith-based values. The practitioners in the participating corps-based social practices have very different backgrounds. Some are highly trained professionals, and some have no formal education. The practices also involve individuals recently arrived in Norway as migrants or refugees, who have become volunteers to learn the Norwegian language. The employed staff is also a mixed group, some with relevant social or health educations, sometimes in combination with theological pastoral training, and some with no formal training but with relevant background from similar work in the past. In addition, the practitioners all have a different relationship with the organisation

itself: some are volunteers and church members, while other are only volunteers or employees. This diversity creates a multiplicity of reference points, frames of interpretations and knowledge creation processes. It also produces goals for practice development and describes different ways in which members assess whether the developments are positive or not. To capture and understand this diversity, I have used a qualitative approach that addresses the “how” and “why” enabling a deeper understanding of experiences, phenomena, and context in addition to interpreting and understanding actions, traditions, and historical happenings carried out through language expressions. To understand the whole, we must see the various parts, and the history as well as the context (Bernstein, 1983). From a methodology perspective, this involves interpreting the meaning and the context in which the interviewees’ expressions are uttered. The case study design was chosen because of its emphasis on the relationship between the phenomenon and its context (Merriam, 1988).

To emphasise knowledge creation as a process of social interactions (Wenger, 1998), I have used a social constructivism perspective (Gergen, 2004). This approach has been helpful as it sees knowledge-creation as an action moving from experience to learning (Cooperstein & Kocevar-Weidinger, 2004). This perspective allows actions to dictate the concepts and a hands-on and inclusive approach to learning, reflecting the way TSA corps-based social practices function.

4.2 Positioning myself

I am a member of TSA, as well as having been employed by TSA social services department for approximately ten years.

There are different aspects as to how my own engagement into TSA is relevant. The first is a practical aspect of the access to this research field. Knowing the organisation and the structures has given me direct access to the organisation, including participants, documents, and internal discussions not accessible for research. It has also limited the time I have had to use on selection processes (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002). Understanding and navigating an international organisation such as TSA can be complicated, and not having had to use time on this has meant that I could concentrate on fieldwork and analysis. My personal connections to other researchers in TSA have also been invaluable for discussion and reflection especially regarding theological concepts and issues. It has enabled a direct communication with other scholars within TSA to discuss internal language, correcting the language to fit the English

terminology and has given me access to other relevant research and discussions already occurring internally in the movement.

In this project I am referring to and asking about processes and materials I have been involved with previously. Some of these discussions have been difficult for me to address without potentially putting the participants in a situation where they would have to guard what they say, for fear of criticising me as a person, as well as the risk of being biased (DeLyser, 2001). To address this, I have had to be aware of my understanding of statements and sentences made by participants and I have used follow-up questions rather than assuming I know what they mean (Hewitt-Taylor, 2002). In addition, there is also my potential preconception of what might be the most important elements to discuss. This has been the most difficult area of prioritisation to make, and therefore I had to make sure that the interview questions were designed to allow for the participants to reflect on what they perceive as important, instead of asking direct questions in regard to certain topics or resources. This balancing of the overall approach also impacted the analysis process, where I had to be conscious of my own wishes in terms of outcome and results, and instead let the material guide the process (Unluer, 2012). I have consulted my supervisors and other relevant researchers outside of the TSA to help me make these assessments.

4.3 Case study

At the core of TSA's mission is a wish to reach out to all people with the gospel of Jesus Christ and with practical support and help. Using a case study design, I have been able to observe those practices and analyse if and how faith plays a role in delivering social services.

A case study can be described as both a strategy of inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), a research strategy (Yin, 2009), as well as a method (Creswell & Poth, 2016). A case study develops an in-depth description and analysis of one or more cases, using a triangulation of methodological tools to gather data (Yin, 2009). It draws on different research traditions to analyse the material gathered to provide a detailed analysis of an action or a case (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Gerring (2004) defines case study as

...an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units. A unit connotes a spatially bounded phenomenon—e.g., a nation-state, revolution, political party, election, or person—observed at a single point in time or over some delimited period of time. (Gerring, 2004, p. 342)

Choosing a multiple case study, meaning including more than one case in the same study, increases understanding of both differences and similarities between the cases. It allows for data to be analysed both within and across cases and evidence created by a multiple case study is considered strong and reliable (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009).

Employing a triangulation of research methods contributes to the validation of the overall research results (Weyers et al., 2008). In this project this is done by using participatory observation, individual interviews, group interviews, focus group reflections and document analysis. Cross-examining findings from the different methods, exploring themes that arise using the different tools, as well as having the opportunity to compare the different units of analysis helps to ensure the reliability of the results.

To further the reliability and validity of the analysis the coding and analysis of the material have been discussed with my supervisors, as well as relevant professionals. Presentations that I have given in research groups as well as in conferences have given me an opportunity to discuss reasonable explanations and questions of reliability and validity due to my role as an insider researcher (Unluer, 2012). In addition to this, the findings and analysis are being presented in three articles produced as part of this thesis.

4.4 Selection process

After agreeing the terms with TSA leadership regarding the project as a whole and after conversations with my supervisors, a list of criteria for participating locations were made. The corps were selected because of their activities, how they organised their support locally and their location. Although they might look similar on paper, the way each corps provided support was different. These different ways to resolve and meet challenges provided the study with a broad insight into practice actions and practice development.

Table 2 below sets out the criteria agreed with TSA Norway.

Criteria	Justification
Leadership.	A leader in charge of the corps was important. This ensured approval of the process of selecting participants and having the authority to sign overall agreements with regard to the project.
Staff	As corps-leaders are not always involved directly in the social practice, I needed an employed or voluntary person with sufficient knowledge of the practical day-to-day delivery of service as well as organisational knowledge and structures.
Engagement of volunteers	Volunteer voices were an important group as they are a significant practitioner group in corps-based social practices, and they contributed with knowledge and experience that complemented the staff.

Activities	For this project, the activities directed towards people in emergency situations, such as food shortage, lack of clothing or other practical and material things were a priority. This also included practices that had an open cafee where they provided food to individuals.
Network	This criterion was important to evaluate the level of collaboration, as well as to how TSA works with other similar actors in the local community. This provided insights into the relationship between the corps and the surrounding social context.
Experience	This criterion was important to ensure practices in locations where encounters with complex social issues had happened. These experiences were important as they develop new actions and require working with other organisations and external partners.
Location	This criterion allowed me a better possibility for generalisation of knowledge as the practices included had similar structures.

Table 1: Criteria agreed with TSA Norway and Sweden for participating corps.

These criteria would give me access to material to work towards the aim of contributing to a better understanding of Christian social practice development in the context of secularized society.

Having an initial wish to do a comparative study of Norway, Sweden and the UK, the initial conversations were conducted with all relevant TSA leadership to determine appropriate participation and goals for the study.

After initiating contact with TSA leadership and research departments in the three countries, the selection of locations began. TSA leadership was involved in the selection process and their function could be described as gatekeeper for TSA. A definition of gatekeeper is “someone who controls access to an institution or an organisation such as a school principal, managing director or administrator” (Singh & Wassenaar, 2016, p. 42). These gatekeepers were part of the group I had to convince to get access to the corps. I presented my research project along with my reasons why and how the corps should be involved to get their permission to proceed. TSA leadership expressed some concern regarding staff using their time on the project instead of practice work and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in these access negotiations.

A list of possible locations was made and after some deliberations, one location in Sweden and two in Norway were selected. These three locations then agreed to be part of the project. The decision to not include corps from TSA UK was made after the initial project proposal was not agreed upon. The UK was later included in the project when interviewing administrative staff from the Territorial headquarters who work with international development work, the results of which are analysed in article 3.

Selection of locations, corps as well as employed staff was discussed with TSA leadership. To ensure enough material and background knowledge, employed staff, officers or other staff in charge of social practice, were essential as they could provide societal, organisational and historical information, as well as representing the continuum in the practice (Stake, 1995). There was one exception to this criterion of being a staff person. One of the individual interviews was carried out with a volunteer that oversaw the diaconal work. Considering my own experience of working within corps-based social practices, I suggested that both staff and volunteers should participate. I included volunteers as they are an important group in TSA corps-based social practices contributing with primarily practical work. Volunteers were included in the focus group conversations and as part of the participatory observations. The volunteers in TSA social practices have varied backgrounds across academic, health and social work with different levels of experience in those areas. On a general basis this group includes people with different political and religious views and provides experience and knowledge about target groups in the practices. External local partners contributed with information regarding the relevance of TSA in local communities. TSA leadership in Norway added organisational and structural information. TSA International Development UK and Norway were included to provide the thesis with knowledge regarding international structures and structures. Community Services UK and Norway finalised the participant list and complemented information given by the local practices regarding actions and expressions as well as expanding information regarding overarching strategies, methods and practice development attitudes held by TSA. The goal for the sampling was to ensure enough material to ascertain if what I found at corps level fit with the organisational level, hence a need to approach several parts of the organisation to take active part in the project (Polkinghorne, 2005).

I identified some important key points to ensure that participants could understand what they were participating in, and what they contributed to.

- They had to know sufficient Norwegian to be able to take part in a conversation, as all the individual interviews and focus group reflections would take place in Norwegian.
- They should have more than six months of experience in the post or voluntary engagement they were in.

In February 2020, I started my initial observations at all locations by visiting and agreeing on expectations and practical arrangements. As the consequences of the COVID 19 pandemic

became more and more severe and restrictions upon travelling and meeting were put in place, I had to decide to exclude the Swedish location, as it was not possible to travel across the border. Some discussion followed with my supervisors before going ahead with conversations at the two original Norwegian locations, whilst searching for a third location in Norway. I made the necessary changes in my project description. A further location with two corps was agreed with TSA Norway by the end of March 2020, making the number of corps participating in the research four in total and concluding the selection of locations.

Table 3 below gives an overview of the four corps involved and their characteristics. The corps have been given artificial names to keep the participation of the corps confidential. The locations are not presented for the same reason.

Corps	Description of activity
William	Food provision once a week. Other activities such as parenting guidance classes, individual guidance and activities for children provided for individuals and groups during the week. Supporting approximately 150 individuals a week in 2020.
Catherine	Food provision twice a week for different groups. Specialist support for families. Other activities for groups provided during the week. Supporting approximately 200 individuals per week in 2020.
Bramwell	Food provision every day of the week. Guidance and support given on an individual level. Supporting approximately 200 individuals per week in 2020.
Othilie	An on-site cafe open several times a week serving sandwiches and drinks. Other activities provided in limited capacity during the week. Serving approximately 50-100 individuals per week in 2020.

Table 2: overview of the four corps involved and their characteristics

Table 4 below jointly presents methods and data sources for each of the cases under investigation. I believe saturation has been met as my material points towards many of the same topics and themes emerging. Saturation is difficult to assert, however, I am confident that the information I have collected is rich in content as it contains a high number of informants and due to the different types of participants and organisational levels represented (Fusch & Ness, 2015). To classify as a saturated study, Malterud and colleagues (2016) suggest that the saturation measurement should be the quality of how the material contributes to or challenges current standards. They refer to this as “information power” and if the selected participants hold a high level of “information power” the number of participants becomes less relevant (Malterud et al., 2016).

	Participatory observation	Focus group reflections	Individual interviews
William	4 hours 2 Staff 5 Volunteers	2 Staff 3 Volunteers	2 Staff 1 External partner
Catherine	4 hours 3 Staff 15 Volunteers	3 Staff 3 Volunteers	2 Staff 2 External partners
Bramwell	3.5 hours 2 Staff 2 Volunteers	2 Staff 2 Volunteers	2 Staff 1 External partner
Othilie	3.5 hours 2 Staff 4 Volunteers	2 Staff 1 Volunteer leader	2 Staff 1 Volunteer leader
Participants and material collected outside the four cases			
Group interviews	1 Staff from UK community services at territorial level 1 Staff from UK international development at Territorial level 1 Staff from Norway corps-based social work support at Territorial level 1 Staff from Norway international development at Territorial level		
TSA leadership	1 Leader TSA Territorial level from personnel office 2 Leader TSA territorial level at organisational leadership level 1 Leader on TSA divisional level		
Document analysis	25 documents concerning TSA theology, diaconia, human trafficking, organisation and historical accounts were selected.		

Table 3: Methodological tools and sample size

4.5 Research methods: collecting data

As this project explores practice development, a participatory approach where the researcher becomes a collaborative partner for discussions was not just interesting, it created a real atmosphere of trying to find out more as a group (Tremblay et al., 2017). A case study should also include multiple sources of information (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Merriam, 1988), something I have ensured by a triangulation of data collection methods.

The data collected for this project was presented and discussed with the TSA practitioners involved to ensure that culture and values were part of the analysis (Banks et al., 2017). I have been responsible for the majority of the primary data, only collaborating with another researcher to collect data for Article 3. I have been responsible for all secondary data collection in this project.

4.5.1 Participatory observations

In this project, participatory observations were used to create a picture of the practices and as a foundation for further reflection. Through these observations I am attempting to uncover,

make accessible, and reveal the meanings and realities people use to make sense of their activities (Jorgensen, 2015).

I have carried out unstructured observations with the intention to enter the field with an openness to what occurs in a practice group. An unstructured observation allows for change as the observation happens (Mulhall, 2003), and for me that was an important allowance as I was working with the volunteers and staff. My own role as a participant at a corps-based practice emerged during the practice interviews and focus groups and therefore my experience of being part of a corps-based social practice was an important element to be aware of (Becker & Geer, 1957). My previous experience and involvement with corps-based social practices impacted on the analytical direction for the project, such as not focusing on just one area of knowledge but looking for a deeper meaning as to why the actions are being discussed. In this study, I observed staff and volunteers only, the guests and users were not a part of any recorded observation notes.

4.5.2 Document analysis

Central to my document analysis were TSA strategy and theological documents such as the “Handbook of Doctrines”, the “Platform for corps-based social work” and internal governing documents such as “The accountability movement”. The document analysis gave me an organised way to relate to the foundational structure and faith-related aspects of TSA. I was primarily searching for connections between theological concepts and practice expressions; however, historical and contextual literature gave a deeper understanding of the organisation and its mission.

In this project the topic of human trafficking has been used as an example of a complex social issue faced by TSA corps-based social practices. This topic was chosen because it is a good example of a topic requiring specific knowledge to both identify and respond to. TSA have strengthened their work against modern slavery and human trafficking in the last eight years after making it a priority issue for intervention and knowledge. International, territorial and corps work has been reorganised and material produced to guide and advise decisions in this area at all levels. “Fight for freedom” (International, 2020) is a document outlining the theological and practical response to anti-trafficking work. In 2020 the “International strategy” with its “MSAHT Action Framework” (International, 2020) was launched. The MSAHT (Modern slavery and anti-human trafficking) Action Framework consists of eight action points to guide, inspire and describe what the TSA MSAHT response should aspire to. There is also an “International statement on Modern Slavery and Human trafficking” that

describes the TSA standpoint on this issue. All these documents target corps as a practice area in which there is a potential for meeting victims of human trafficking. Initially I had planned to evaluate the effectiveness of the documents for the corps level practices. Whilst I did this up to a certain degree, my analysis also became a way to better understand how TSA integrates faith and how faith can facilitate how support is given in more informal settings, in areas that require sensitivity and professional insight.

4.5.3 Individual interviews

The nature of the interview and the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee are important for assuming which topics become important and what values are being portrayed (Brinkmann, 2016). The interviews became a way to reflect together about topics relevant to the project. In this way, the participant and the researcher create room together for reflections that will lead to new knowledge. Although I worked from a semi-structured interview (Baumbusch, 2010) guide (see appendices 5&10), I strived to create a dialogue about the experiences of the participant and in that way ensure the validity of the data (Ajagbe et al., 2015, p. 320). In this project the individual interviews contribute information about structure, what works and does not work and the feelings the participants have regarding the current support put in place by the organisation (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008). It also brings out personal motivation and points the analysis towards core elements such as competence and the different roles the participants inhabit. Using semi-structured interviews helped me to maintain a similar data gathering structure in all the interviews and will in that way secure the material for analysis. This form of interview also gave me the opportunity to explore experiences or accounts coming from the participant (Doody & Noonan, 2013). I used the same approach in the group interviews.

In total nine people were interviewed at corps level: four Officers, three Soldiers, one adherent and one person without formal connection to TSA. Five interviewees had higher education within social/health or theology and four interviewees did not have higher education but were recruited based on their motivation for the work, rather than formal qualification or relevant experience.

I did four interviews with external partners; they were all selected by the local corps as relevant for their practices.

I did four individual interviews with leaders in TSA Norway's central management. All these four interviewees have higher education in addition to being Officers in TSA. Their education varies between nursing, diaconia, theology and pedagogics.

I conducted two semi-structured group interviews with administrative staff working with community social outreach and international development. The selected staff were from TSA Norway and UK to ensure enough material was gathered and to include a comparative element to demonstrate the international aspect of TSA as an organisation. The interviewees were selected because of their professional roles in the organisation as advisors. All four have higher education within their relevant professions.

Table 1 below shows the participants in individual interviews. Their real names have not been used, to maintain anonymity.

Location	Interviewees	Position/Background
William	Laila	Officer - professional background in health.
	Silvia	Deacon - no professional background.
	Gustav	External partner
Catherine	Sonja	Officer - professional background health
	May	Deacon - no formal education or professional background
	Heine	External partner
	Eira	External partner
Bramwell	Lisa	Social worker- no professional background
	Gunn	Local social practice leader- non relevant professional background
	Leif	External partner
Othilie	Olof	Officer - professional background in education/theology
	Lars	Officer - professional background in theology
	Sara	Local volunteer leader social practice - professional background education
TSA Leaders	Corinne	Officer - professional background in education/theology
	Benjamin	Officer - professional background in education
	Vincent	Officer - professional background in health/theology
	Lucas	Officer - professional background in health

Table 4: Participants

4.5.4 Focus Group reflections and group interviews

Focus group reflections were an excellent way for me to include more participants as well as create a platform for discussion and participation (Basch, 1987; Freeman, 2006). A focus group reflection is a way to gather a group of practitioners and facilitate a dialogue and discussion between them to shed light on a given topic. Focus groups provide understanding

of people's realities and experiences based on their context and perspectives ensuring a multiple approach to the topic discussed (Freeman, 2006).

Both learning and reflecting were important aspects for consideration and the reasons why focus groups were an important methodological tool in this project.

For the first focus group reflection, I constructed a vignette based on my previous observation of the practice. Using pre-determined topics (Morgan, 1996) was a way for me to engage the participants and facilitate conversations related to the actions in the practice that were being explored (Barter & Renold, 1999). This way to organise the conversations is a change in direction for research science from a more traditional paradigm where the researcher has a high level of autonomy to the research being based in the practice field (Askheim et al., 2019). The vignettes focussed on how the practice was organised, who participated and how they related to people and situations. In addition to the observed practice, I placed a constructed case in the vignettes to spur the conversation regarding problem solving, reflective attitude and identification of new and emerging issues, in this case illustrated by the issue of human trafficking.

The conversation in the groups was at times argumentative and dynamic, but in general there was an atmosphere of overall agreement amongst the participants. Facilitating these conversations, not to a common understanding (Basch, 1987), but towards an increased understanding, was done to increase the group's knowledge and reflection (Wibeck, 2010). The facilitation was done by using the Faith-Based Facilitation model (Knecht, 2021), a tool for including spirituality in decision-making processes, thereby developing and evaluating local practice (International, Undated 1) and previously described in chapter 2. This tool encourages both discussion and knowledge input. Participant knowledge regarding human trafficking as a topic was discussed and evaluated in terms of relevance for the practice (Wibeck et al., 2007) and practice development.

Two semi-structured group interviews were arranged to supplement my material when writing my third article. The interviews were carried out online by the author of this thesis and an external professor, the co-author for an article about faith-based community-based efforts in an international development context. The selected staff worked directly with either community based and corps-based efforts or international development projects. The community-based staff were interviewed with one participant from Norway and one from the

UK, and the international development staff with one from Norway and one from the UK making the number four additional participants.

4.6 Data analysis method

All insights from the field work were included in the analysis.

On an overarching level I have analysed my material resembling the process according to Fangen (2010) and his concepts of first-, second- and third-degree interpretations. The initial stage of identifying relevant themes stays close to the empirical data and describes concrete examples of the themes found in the material, described by Fangen as the first-degree interpretation. Following the initial stage, the second-degree interpretations introduce relevant contexts and theories into the interpretation, in this thesis done by introducing the CoP core elements, to allow for a close examination, but also a more distant and overarching view of the material. This is taken further in the last and third-degree interpretation when the researcher is looking for underlying structures and hidden interests, an element that has been criticised for the potential of assuming hidden contexts and ethical considerations as this way to interpret can violate the premises of the collection of the material (Fangen, 2010).

The first analytic step, resembling the first-degree interpretation, entailed seeking patterns to describe the practices. I was looking for what they did, how they did it and why in order to gain a detailed description of the workings and relationships in the practices. This initial process of thematic analysis focused on how the selected practitioners expressed how the organisational structure as well as local actions form the identity of the practice and the consequences for their practice development and future actions. This first round of analysis generated the first order categories as described in Table 5. I used Nvivo 12, a digital coding tool to help me order and keep track of this first analysis that provided material for the articles written as part of this study. After the initial inductive approach, I applied a deductive approach by applying predetermined hypotheses exploring the material through the lens of core elements in the CoP theory: domain, community and practice, as described by Fenger (2010) as a second-degree analysis. This process generated material that helped me trace practice development with a focus on how practitioners relate to faith as they function and work together. The concepts of applying the three lenses of diaconia, social work and international development can be seen as adapting a third-level interpretation to better understand the prerequisite conditions in which TSA corps-based social practices can

develop. The findings is described in the three articles written as part of this thesis as well as in Chapter 5 in this extended abstract.

In the next sections, I describe how I processed and analysed material collected using the different methodological tools.

4.6.1 Analysis of individual interviews, focus group reflection material and participatory observation.

When I had collected all the material from individual interviews, focus group reflections and the participatory observation, I began the analytical process to find common themes that could represent findings in the material. Even though some of the focus for the thesis had changed due to the COVID 19 pandemic, my initial wish to investigate practice development steered the analytical process towards themes relevant for how practitioners communicated their motivation, how they shared knowledge and if there were any knowledge gaps presented in the material. The analytical process was done by coding the material based on initial codes, first order categories, created after reading more about and learning about professional practice development and doing my initial literature research for this study. Codes such as how they learn, who participated, how they describe their actions and how they relate to other practices and professionals. Table 5 below presents the distilled themes based on quotes to illustrate the origin of the theme, hereafter referred to as first order categories.

Distilled themes based on empirical material → First order categories
Experience based actions: “I think that because we are so many different people working here, we can meet those with various and complex issues.”
Proactive actions: “We have worked quite specifically with people, who outside of the official system and who do not have access to either work or school and given them a chance to volunteer with us and now we see the fruits of that labour”.
Reactive actions: “We meet and support according to the need and that need is often that they need food. There are possibly other needs that are not met or seen, but the informal low threshold care we give, I believe that is very good.”
Reflective actions: “I know I have to be better acquainted with the people... And after that I need to work with myself to understand how I can best assist that family to manage better on their own, I need to find more things and people around the person that can help them with that.”
Social work knowledge: “My experience is that no two situations are alike but daring to ask questions and to take on a case without making up your mind beforehand is difficult.”
Diaconal reflection: “... this holistic approach that is part of our mission can be seen as part of what is also the biggest challenges for practice development.”
Spiritual practice: “We focus on care, not just spiritual care, but to care for the whole being. Love is the driving force. To care is trying to understand the need.”

Human trafficking knowledge: “I experience to meet them here, ...they are extremely vulnerable.”

Internal networks and structures: “I have had people at Territorial Headquarters that have helped me through processes we have been through and given me the strength and courage to go ahead.”

Descriptions of belonging: “I think that by coming here you get food, but you also get contact with us. For some, I think that is more important than the food”.

Identity: “Ideologically we have a place people come to because they trust in us.”

Faith description: “Fundamentally it is about showing God’s love for the people we come into contact with,”

Practice action description: “...we are fortunate that we can build relationships and keep the contact also as we go through town.”

Value descriptions: “Values are the result of faith,”

Descriptions of meaning: “... if it is food or just a conversation, simply meeting them where they are is very important, I think.”

Table 5: Distilled themes based on quotes to illustrate the origin of the theme

After the initial coding I presented my initial findings in discussions groups and in conversations with research groups I belong to as well as through writing the first drafts of Article 2 and getting feedback on my initial findings from participants. It was through this process I distilled the second order themes as presented in the table below. These themes became key themes and led to the aggregated dimensions that allowed me to start a theorising process using the Community of Practice theory as my lens. The elements of “domain”, “community” and “practice” from the CoP theory became sorting tools to help me understand critical parts of the practice and how attitudes and actions contributed to development or not. The theory further helped to focus on the role of faith as a practice action tool for practice development by analysing how meaning and identity play a role in practice development. Article 2 presents the main findings connected to the role of faith from this analytical process, and they contribute to the understanding of practice action and how the practice is constructed as discussed in Article 3. For the overall thesis research questions, the analytical process of this material has contributed to the overall discussion of the role of faith in social work and professional practices, community development and the wider understanding of the role of FBOs as well as the development of the practice development model also presented in chapter 6.

Figure 2 below present the process of moving from first to second order themes to aggregated dimensions. The figure is also used in Article 2.

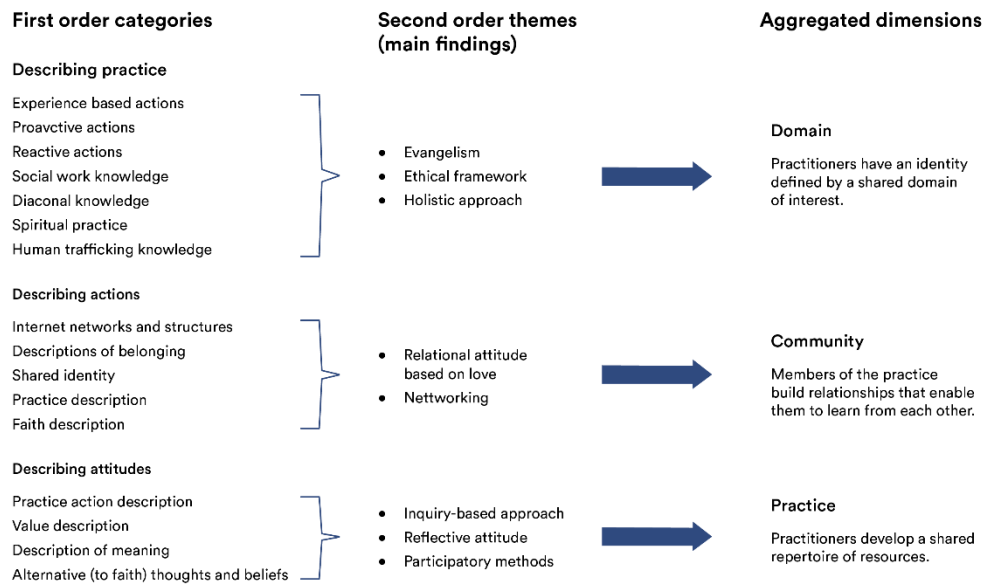


Figure 2: Present the analytical process.

4.6.2 Document analysis

Alongside the process of describing the practices and creating the first order categories I carried out a document analysis that is presented in Article 1. The document analysis was initiated because the access to the practices and to collect material was halted due to the COVID 19 pandemic, affecting the participating practices to a large extent, temporarily halting the empirical process. This gave me time to start analysing the material collected thus far, but the pause also highlighted a need and an opportunity to research the theological, organisational TSA and societal context affecting the practices. As the project at this stage was intended to have a stronger focus on how the practices gave support to potential victims of human trafficking, it was natural to look at organisational strategies and resources connected to that topic, it also provided a good focus for Article 1 and a way for me to include recent documents from MSHT. Although the topic of human trafficking is not as much in focus in this project as first planned, the document analysis generated some important knowledge and material that has been part of shaping the further process and themes for the project, including the use of the diaconal conceptual framework “Vocatio-Advocatio-Provocatio” (VAP). Elements found in the VAP conceptual framework were connected to findings from the document analysis presented in Article 1 and this contributed to the creation of a practice development tool that is part of the discussion chapter in this extended abstract. The other group of documents and material selected for the document analysis is connected to TSA theology and diaconal foundation. This was a relevant approach as the role of faith for practice action was emerging as an overall interest as I was carrying out the initial analysis of

the empirical material and contributed to findings presented in Articles 1 and 2. The document analysis took as a starting point the connection between anti human trafficking advocacy and the theological underpinning of those strategies and suggested actions. As I was interested to better grasp the foundational aspects of theology for advocacy purposes, I identified relevant diaconal, historical, theological, and human trafficking documents to shed light on and describe more specifically the TSA strategy and advocacy efforts in a larger legislative, NGO, and FBO landscape. Documents relating to TSA MSHT work on an international and national level, as well as documents describing TSA practice as they support people in vulnerable situations were selected as a starting point.

4.6.3 Analysis of group interview material

A final part of the analytical process was making the decision to enlarge the focus in order to include religion and development in a community perspective and by adding two group interviews. This became an emerging theme as the previous analytical process had pointed towards corps-based social practices being primarily having a reactive approach, and the understanding of the lack of professional development of these practices. The previous analysis also confirmed the notion of different organisational ways to relate to faith as part of a professional attitude and the need to describe the different attitudes became an interesting topic for Article 3. Realising during my studies abroad that there were correlating themes between corps-based social work and international development, this became the chosen theoretical approach for this analysis. Additional group interviews were arranged to gather more focussed material. The interviews explored faith-based organisation as relevant partners for community development.

4.7 Ethical considerations for the project

I have followed guidelines as they are presented by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). As my project started, I had a general discussion with my supervisors regarding relevant informant groups. Through these discussions, it was decided that it was enough to interview and observe staff and volunteers. There were discussions regarding guests accessing the services, but due to the complex nature of identifying potential victims of trafficking, this was ruled out due to time constraints and available resources. My project was approved by NSD in January 2020 with an updated application and subsequent approval in January 2021 due to the use of Zoom and Microsoft Teams for data collection (Appendix 4). After the initial approval of the project, I contacted the selected corps and visited them to explain and discuss the project, answer questions, and sign a contract where the roles and expected inputs

and time scale were agreed (see appendix 1). All the selected participants were asked to read and sign a consent form (see appendix 2). This was primarily done before the first observation at the first corps location. Some forms were done as participants were interviewed. The information letter and consent form was titled “Salvation Army corps as a relevant faith-based actor in human trafficking response”. This title reflected the initial focus for the project. Despite the adjusted focus for the project, due to COVID 19, NSD agreed that there was no need to gather consent using an updated form, as the adjustments to the participation and focus for the interviews stayed the same. There was additional consent gathered due to the adding of two group interviews with TSA staff on the organisational level in Norway and the UK. These interviews contributed mainly to Article 3 and the extended abstract discussion. The informed consent form was sent with an updated title “Reaction and Pro action in a faith-based justice seeking practice - a study of corps-based social practice ministry in The Salvation Army Norway” (Appendix 3). NSD did not need to approve the project again to include this information as part of the original approval. In all cases the informed consent form contained information regarding the project aims, the research questions at the time, as well as the scope, timeline and how information was to be analysed, following GDPR guidelines, and stored after the project was finished.

This project was designed to “do no harm” and I do not believe that the project exploited anyone. There is always a risk as one interacts with people that ethical boundaries are crossed or that participants find that topics become more personal or difficult as they are talked about. In this project, conversations, especially in individual interviews, were concerning faith and how people saw themselves as part of the organisation. Although there were no indications that any of the participants found this to be a sensitive topic, the way questions are constructed or asked will always trigger thoughts and reactions, good or bad.

5. Findings - Presentation of the articles

In this chapter I present the findings and contributions from the three articles written as part of this project. The articles address different aspects of the role of faith for practice development as well as illustrating different levels of analysis. The articles respond to the overall research questions:

- *“How is Christian social practice developed in a secular context?”*
- *“How do TSA corps members navigate tensions related to the double agenda of evangelization and support provision?”*

Documents and empirical findings from the case study in this project point towards a strong faith-based identity as well as a being a church. This identity of being a church has consequences for the social action taken by TSA, by including faith on all levels of action and interaction. TSA see all activity as part of the overall mission (International, 2010 p 187), the faith-based identity permeates throughout the organisation. TSA in the Norwegian territory has an organisational split between social department and programme department (see figure 1 in context chapter) that can be seen as a result of navigating the tension created by being faith-based in a secular context. The participating corps are good examples of an activity within TSA that are caught in the middle of these organisational structures and this societal tension and where the faith aspect of the social outreach is adapted and navigated due to it taking place in a secular context. The case study of the four corps-based social practices in this study demonstrates how corps-based social practices have developed a generic professionalism and support methods similar to professional social work contexts. The findings point towards an interesting practice development where faith has become a central element for professionalisation and quality control. This study further confirms the need for knowledge input regarding support provision and a need to strengthen local community networks.

Throughout the field work in this project, actions and attitudes amongst practitioners and strategies made by TSA reveal that faith is more central to some actions than others. This is illustrated by practitioners adjusting their actions and language to fit the situation and to whom they talk and relate. Practitioners also use faith to prioritise how to help and support individuals by using faith-related sources to reflect on and situations to make sense of the situations they encounter. Practitioners refer to Bible stories and the way Jesus related to people as they explain the way they meet and build relations to be able to provide support to

individuals. Further findings point towards faith limiting the scope of the practices as practitioners expect a level of scrutiny if they do not adjust their language or faith-related actions and how this self-censoring might limit their own participation as community developers and change makers.

Findings in the project point towards the development of Christian social practice in TSA evolving a conversation between three traditions; diaconia, social work and international development. These traditions contribute to how the practices navigate the tension of being faith-based in a secular society as well as the dualism of evangelisation and support work in TSA reflected in the overall mission statement. The themes have evolved out of the empirical material and from the discussions regarding findings and experiences described in the project. The themes also represent three different levels of impact, diaconia represent an organisational level, social work a practitioner/local level and international development a societal level in this thesis. The articles discuss the interaction between faith and secular society within the three themes and the levels they represent.

The articles use different material from my data collection. Article 1 is based on a document analysis, Article 2 uses empirical material gathered as part of the case study and Article 3 refers to findings from two group interviews, as well as the empirical material from the case study. The articles describe the role of faith for practice development on different organisational levels: organisational, individual and societal.

5.1 Article presentation

Each of the three articles proposes a different perspective on the role of faith and practice development and its place in the overall framework of practice development in TSA and actions to be directed towards supporting those in need.

5.1.1 Article 1 - Anti-Human Trafficking: The Salvation Army and Advocacy (Petra Brooke, Dr Hans Morten Haugen).

Research Question: How does the theological concept of “holy life” inform Salvation Army Modern Slavery and anti-trafficking work?

This article highlights the theological aspects of a TSA approach to social practice. It contributes to a diaconal discussion of the role of faith in social justice efforts as churches support people in complex and vulnerable situations on an organisational level. The article

uses TSA anti- trafficking and modern slavery (MSHT) documents as a starting point for exploration.

The article describes the theological concepts of “holy life” as a driving factor for TSA social justice actions. “Holy life” in TSA theology is how Salvationists (members of TSA) live their lives in service for others and for God. TSA merge the Christian motivation for protesting against injustice as a sign of engagement in both global issues as well as local communities (Alliance, 2015). The protest can be based on an individual facing an unjust situation, but it can also be based on experience with an unjust system that needs changing. For TSA corps-based social practices this can involve changing their practice methods to meet emergent needs or how they advocate for change in society. Working against injustices in the world is an act of faith and obedience towards God’s commandment to love your neighbour and act with hospitality towards others. As such, acting for social justice in TSA becomes a protest against a justice system that is not fair (Swan, 2017). TSA theology describes that it is a Christian duty to protest against unjust systems and practices that keep people down, and to fight for truth and a just community (International, 2011).

The biblical root for this belief is God’s understanding of justice, which often challenges the conventional ways that society perceives justice. The biblical perspective understands justice as more than just material and economic distribution. It also includes relational aspects and fairness, and how a Christian perspective on justice cannot be understood only based on material and economic distribution. God’s justice is more than just fair; it is a fairness that goes beyond material or economical fairness. This article outlines how this theological understanding frames how TSA develop their practice and guidelines for corps-based social practice. To further this discussion, the article analyses how a Christian specific approach to justice is framed in TSA. In consultation with a TSA theologian, the article focuses on “Living justly is the will to live according to the obligations of right relationship in all spheres of life: humanity to the divine, humanity amongst itself and humanity in relationship to the created order” (Swan, 2017, p. 25) as one part of this approach. Another is a right response to a wrong conduct, “righting wrong”. A right conduct in righting wrong is working towards the transformation of relationships that are unjust or broken so that those involved can live life to its fullest. “A key difference in biblical justice and classical²⁰ justice, is the understanding of what is acceptable as the norm in a community.” (Swan, 2017, p. 26).

²⁰ In Dr Swans thesis a “classical justice” is described as accounts of justice as fairness or giving each one’s due.

The article explores the use of theological concepts and faith expressions in TSA modern slavery and anti-trafficking work and how these are relevant for practice development and used to describe how faith is part of a professional practice expression. TSA social programmes, whether in a corps setting or in an institutional environment, strive to provide tools for transformation to happen, this includes work training, guidance, rehabilitation and evangelisation amongst others. From TSA early history participation for change and transformation has been a central part of any social outreach to local communities, the TSA anti-trafficking and modern slavery work is an example of that (Pallant, 2012). TSA social justice work strives to be asset-based, meaning that interventions and help start with mapping the persons own assets and talents that they can use to make change happen, by empowering the individual practitioner to be adequately as they face issues of injustices (International, 2020). Any programme reaching out to a marginalised community should include participation from the same community as part of the solution (International, 2018). Findings from the document analysis show that the rights-based perspective to ensure just and ethically sound treatment of potential victims also allows for secure services, principles and methods are theologically founded and argued for in TSA corps-based social practices. Considering the complex and highly-professionalised work identifying MSHT responses both within and outside TSA, this theologically-heavy language is somewhat surprising. The article discusses the role of the TSA theological concept of “holy life” as a way to understand both TSA motivation to respond to MSHT issues, and the theological underpinning of the work. MSHT work in TSA is a good example of a topic and issue caught between being faith motivated and the demands for professionalisation and secular approaches. The article further points out that the strategies and methods, many of them recognised from secular and professional spheres, are created to respond to MSHT issues and are directed towards all levels in the organisation, including corps. The way TSA have created the international strategy with eight pillars (prayer, participation, proof, policy, prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership), building on the four pillars identified by the UN (prevention, protection, prosecution, and partnership) creates a wider perspective and approach to anti human trafficking efforts, allowing the holistic view of TSA to become part of the strategy, adhering to a faith identity as well as understanding the need to acknowledge the secular context. The UN four pillar strategy is “ a technical assistance tool that aims to assist United Nations Member States in the effective implementation of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children” (UNHCR et al., p. 3). The UN Framework is designed to assist Member States in identifying

gaps and creating additional measures they may need, in conformity with international standards. The framework document stresses the need to adjust and complement the four pillars to better fit regional, national, institutional and legal contexts. The TSA international strategy is adjusted to fit the context in which TSA function and the level on which TSA interaction with human trafficking issues happens. The risk of expanding the framework towards a more holistic and perhaps less technical approach, in the case of TSA in the way they emphasis prayer, is that the technical parts of the framework become secondary to those parts that does not require investments or resources. Although the importance of prayer cannot be underestimated in a TSA context, the emphasis on prayer and prevention as a minimum standard for intervention can reflect how contextual focuses have gained priority in the work.

The article points out that this faith inspired response and the theologically-filled language in the documents might not have had the wanted “trickle down” effect on national and local levels and that the integrated intentions in the documents might be more invisible on lower levels in the organisation. The article further questions whether TSA miss opportunities for practice development from a professional point of view by adhering so strongly to faith principles. Although the rights perspective is not missing, it must be said to be less visible in the documents, one example is the lack of an advocacy definition, and this could reduce the capacity to be seen as a professional actor by local surrounding contexts. The article does not describe any findings that point in that direction, but is based on the overall findings as to how the role of faith is discussed being potentially limiting the scope of TSA MSHT work.

Another potential “pitfall” is the central formal requirements relating to streamlining, reporting, transparency, and accountability across the organisation. These efforts cannot be enforced at the expense of reduced creativity and preventing the deepening of both relationships and knowledge at all levels. The first article finds that the social justice framework by Nancy Fraser can be helpful to bridge the gap between formal organisational requirements and grassroots engagement. The core issue of all justice-seeking efforts must be that they are in themselves just. This aspect must be present in decision and rulemaking both locally and centrally (Fraser, 2005, 2009). Nancy Fraser’s participatory justice framework (Fraser, 2005) can be helpful in understanding how a more inclusive attitude can build a better understanding. Redistribution of economic goods is only part of the picture. Recognition is the foundation of interacting on terms of parity and representation must form an inclusive element for the marginalised voices to be heard. Combining these three elements in the local

practice as they support marginalised groups as well as incorporating learning and diaconal aspects will create a context in which a development attitude can be both recognised and helpful.

The concluding remark in the article is “... that TSA holiness theology, expressed as “holy life”, serves as guidance for overall structures and strategies, as a basis for communicating and as linkages between theology and advocacy” (Brooke & Haugen, Forthcoming 1, p. 24).

5.1.2 Article 2 - Professionalism and faith - A case study of Salvation Army congregational social work in Norway (Petra Brooke).

Research Question: What is the role of faith in social work?

Article 2 investigates the tension created as TSA corps-based social practices relate to a secular local context. The article uses empirical material from my case study of four corps-based social practices in Norway. The article addresses the role of faith in social work by looking at practice development and faith expressions in the practices.

Taking as a starting point that professional social work is marked by a hesitant attitude towards faith (Resselr, 1998; Vetvik, 2016), the article explores how TSA corps-based social practices that are primarily unprofessional, can be seen in light of social work principles. Reflecting on action taken to create a functioning practice, the article uses the “Community of Practice” (Wenger, 1998) social learning theory to trace how challenges are met and resolved by the participants. Employing elements from the theory, the role of faith is investigated in the actions taken.

The article presents faith as an important driver for learning and in improving the practice through reflective and inquiry-based methods. Diaconal work, or church-based social work are often easy to write off as a “non-evangelistic” side of the church’s work, and this is a prominent discussion in the Army and has been since the “two wings” strategy of a programme, or evangelistic, and social wing occurred (Pallant, 2012).

How the corps understands what they do as “value-based” or “faith-based” is discussed in the article. The material exposes that there is some confusion regarding the use of “values” and “faith” and the meaning attached to both these terms. I would claim that there is a difference between faith expressions and values, although they are often, especially in Christian settings, mixed and talked about at the same time. Values seems to be a “safer” word and it

communicates better to the general public than “faith expressions”. One example of this is the “Book of Values” (Norway, 2017) to make sure all services are done according to Army standards. My material points towards faith as the person’s motivation for doing what they are doing. There is a difference between doing it because it is the right thing to do (moral value) (Aadland & Skjørshammer, 2012) and doing it because of faith in God who preaches about compassion and mercy towards others. This does not mean that the two cannot work together (Howard-Snyder, 2016). The result is that describing these two concepts separately becomes difficult. It might be unfair to the respondents to analyse their answers and separate the values from the faith expressions as they talked about them as being one and the same. However, from an analytic standpoint, it is interesting to try to make a distinction between the two to find the core of a faith-based expression and the arguments for how a Christian congregation differs from a secular organisation doing more or less the same job.

The article concludes that faith has different levels of importance according to the level of collaboration with the surrounding context, and that adjusting language and expressions are ways to navigate their role as faith actors in a secular society. As shown in figure 3 below, at the heart of the practice are elements such as evangelism and holistic approaches, including relational attitudes. Bordering on the inner circle the reflective and inquiry-based methods were used to approach both individuals and issues. These actions have a high faith content as they use prayer, biblical reflection, faith-inspired attitudes and ways to explain why they do things the way they do. The article points out that many of these methods can be found in the secular context (Thrana, 2015; Folgheraiter, 2007; Williams, 2017), although with a different motivation. This creates a link between faith and secular social work principles that can be explored further to strengthen practice development. In the outer rings of the circle below actions are taken to connect beneficiaries collaborating with external partners and for building external networks. These actions have a more navigated and measured manner to relate to faith, and the practitioner’s language is somewhat adjusted as they come into contact with secular professionals and strive to be accepted.

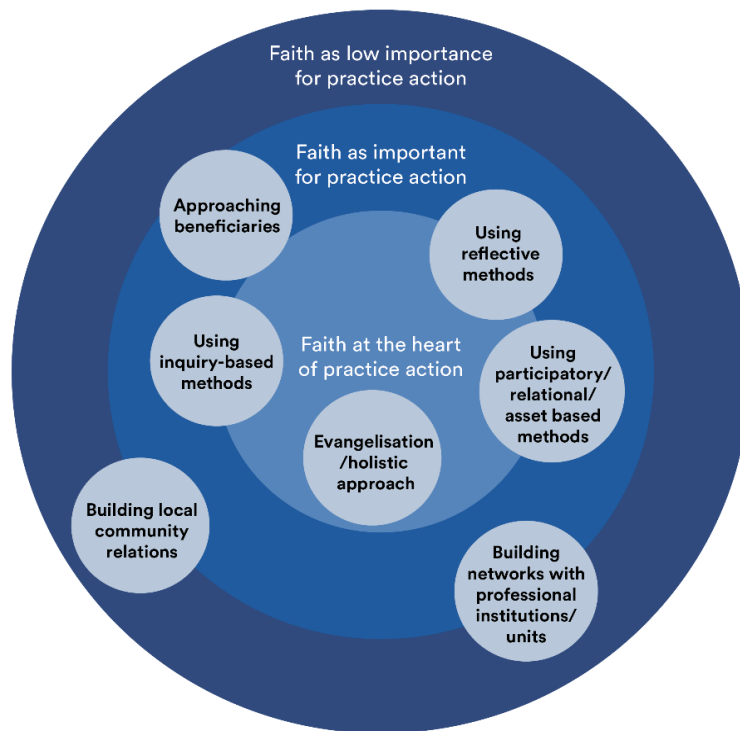


Figure 3: Illustration of the presence of faith in practice action

By presenting examples of how faith is facilitating methods to support individuals needing help, the article highlights how faith can be seen to encourage people's personal motivation for serving. The article also describes faith as an inspiration for the systemic development of social work tools, specifically those related to relational aspects of the support practices.

Placing the role of faith along a scale with the other different aspects of the practice can provide us with an indication of where it becomes crucial, and where there is room to combine faith with other aspects to strengthen the practice. On the margins, or even periphery of figure 2 above, we find what must be described as the weakest part of the practices, local community relations and networks with the professional actors. Here, TSA corps-based social practice workers' fear of scrutiny because of the faith-based practices', has created a more solitary way of functioning that limits their reach into the community, hence limiting their engagement and reach. Despite having examples in the case study material on how TSA corps-based social practices can reach out in a more structured way, the relational attitude towards external partners is in the majority reactive, only happening when needed for an individual, but rarely utilised to achieve structural change. The VAP (Nordstokke, 2021) diaconal practice development tool presented as part of this thesis, is a way for TSA practices to increase their reach and function as a relevant partner in the local community to a larger extent than what is possible today.

The article describes how core faith-based concepts are inspiring faith-based methods and actions. One of these values is the references to “love” in the material and how that impacts social practice in TSA. Despite the hesitant relationship to love as a value and expression in professional social work, it is a strong faith expression in corps-based social practice. “To realise Jesus’ radical ethics of love is to treat all our relationships as holy covenants” (Army, 2010, p. 197). This quote emphasises the radical way Jesus approached relationships, with love. Many of the participants in this study made a connection between a loving relationship giving them an opportunity to speak the truth. One example is the correction of behaviour amongst volunteers or pointing out life choices that are destructive for the individual. In Ephesians 4:15, “Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ”, 1 Peter 1:22, “Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart” and 2 John 1: 5-6, “I ask that we love one another. (6) And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love”. The connection between truth and love is encouraged in all these texts and implies that truth without love can become a harsh attitude, whilst guiding and giving encouragement for changed behaviour from a place of love opens up a space for the relational attitude to help these discussions and have implications for practice development. The Bible encourages both love and truth whilst building relations and for practice development and understanding love and truth as concepts the story in Luke 24 when Jesus encounters two of the disciples on the road to Emmaus is helpful. In this conversation Jesus points out some core issues relevant for how to approach learning through discussion (verse 14), having an inquiring attitude (verse 17), allowing for correction and clarification (verse 25-27), the importance of being a role model (verses 30-32) and how to respond to what you hear (verse 33-35). These methods echo what we find in professional social work and is how we can explain how faith inspires professionalism in corps-based social work. Even though this attitude of “love” is sometimes challenged by situations or individuals’ behaviour or comments, the material describes love as the basis and starting point for any encounter. There is both an element of the sacrifice of time and resources to support people, but also a setting of boundaries for behaviour and circumstances. One example of this from the interviews was when one of the participants described a conversation with a young, financially-challenged student, recently divorced with a child. As the person leaves the participant says, “she did not only leave with a phone number to call, but she left having also made a friend”. The motivation and energy to “go the extra mile” for individuals, is rooted in

a deeper relationship than a professional service often provides. It becomes important and meaningful to help, as the person you help is a friend or someone you care deeply about. Boundaries are not enforced in this service as they are in a professional service. The participants do not say much about how they handle being in all these relationships and this may be worth further study into whether personal faith brings increased resilience or not.

Another action inspiring methodological development is prayer. Prayer is the most central expression of faith in the corps-based social practices. Prayer is used as a tool of support for guests as well as a reflective tool. People coming into the service can ask for prayer, they can be offered prayer, sometimes there is a general prayer moment for all and not least, prayers are said both by staff and many volunteers for users and the situations they go through. One of the participants said “Prayer is my most important tool. If I worry about someone and they have not been here for a while, I pray, and often they show up not long after”. Prayer is being used to both see users as they are when present, but also as a supportive tool when they are absent. Many of the TSA corps-based social practice workers also mentioned prayer as their coping mechanism when things were difficult, or where situations had not resolved themselves as wanted. Praying together as a team was done in all participating practices before practitioners opened the doors for users and prayer requests from both staff and volunteers were prayed over. It is important to note that prayers are offered to guests, both as part of public devotion held at one location whilst handing out food, and as part of individual conversations. However, according to my material, prayer seemed to be used primarily as a source for the individual practitioners to cope, and only used with clients after consent, not being a mandatory part of the support. The use of prayer in social work is contested and at part controversial (Sheridan, 2010). Even though a holistic attitude is included in the ethical guidelines for social workers in Norway (FO, 2019), in a Norwegian setting, praying as part of any public support mechanism would be seen as pushing, if not violating the intention in the guidelines. As an expressed part of TSA social practices, prayers need to be used with care and consideration, as the power relation involved in such a practice can hinder rather than enhance the relational attitude in the practices.

Professionalisation of TSA institutional social services that started as early as the 1890’s. As described before, the professionalisation development in TSA social department did not necessarily include corps; hence the traditional faith-based ethos was maintained in corps-based social practices to a larger degree. There are indications pointing towards FBOs distancing themselves from their faith identity as they develop and professionalise (Tomalin,

2020). The reasons for this distancing are described as changing demographics of staff and volunteers, funding regulations and government regulations (Bielefeld & Cleveland, 2013). This strategy impacts the way TSA corps work with and in professional networks, compared to the wider organisational social services. Limited invitations to collaborate with structures or networks responsible for community development are experienced by the participating corps in the study. Being a faith-based actor and working within a church setting seem to place them, by the surrounding professional social work context, into a non-professional section of providers of social work. However, in the material there are contrary examples to this experience of an isolated position and a non-collaborative environment. All the practices did collaborate but one of the locations did so in a more comprehensive manner and provided a good practice example to the contrary by having a close and open dialogue with the municipality and co-working with other professional social work NGOs to provide care for some of the most marginalised groups in the community. Practising open and direct communication can make the faith-based approach more understood and become a tool for networks and society in the fight against social injustices. A deeper study of the example of how corps can become a collaborative partner described above would provide some much-needed answers as to how faith in dialogue with social issues can provide ways of contributing to community development.

There are evident gaps in attempts to ensure a growing and competence building practice. The most important is the lack of formal internal training for practitioners for staff and volunteers. There are some trainings courses, such as training sessions for TSA Officers, “Soap, soup, salvation course”²¹ and courses for staff working with corps-based social work available primarily for staff, however they are rarely comprehensive or contextual, and they are not always compulsory. The limited formal training in social work-related topics and issues, seem to hinder a professional dialogue and the practices to identify as professional. The lack of training also contributes to reflections primarily functioning as “debrief” sessions focusing on the individual experience of a given situation or happening, rather than development of practice and practice actions. Although these sessions are valuable to the individual practitioner, opportunities for practice development seem lost. Another consequence of the lack of informal learning and input is that available tools for practice development, such as the FBF model, are not implemented and used to assist reflection or development.

²¹ A basic introduction for all employees in TSA history, theology and work.

Another gap is the organisational support for the corps-based social work practices. This lack of support, or more ad-hoc support system, is prohibiting the practitioners from developing their skills. The corps which have accessed professional support show a higher degree of advocacy, proactive work and structural critique coming out of the practices. The findings also point towards the corps-based social work practices becoming a relevant community development partner, if supported in this way. This research project has found that there is a gap in communication between organisational levels in TSA. There are support systems that should bridge this gap, as seen in the anti-modern slavery and human trafficking work, however, they are few. This is also potentially hindering the cross-organisation impact that the TSA Norway overall strategy is aiming for.

The article concludes that “TSA theological understanding of God forms an essential part of how corps-based social work must be understood. An omnipresent God affects all areas of life, personal, relational, professional and emotional. Because of that, separating faith from practice or a professional attitude is not possible” (Brooke, Forthcoming 2, p. 15). These findings contribute to the overall discussion on how faith-based practices can develop their professionalism whilst staying true to the faith-based identity. The culmination of the thesis discussion is the presentation of a practice development tool. This tool is inspired by theological aspects, as well as professional methods and diaconal frameworks.

5.1.3 Article 3 - Discursive constructions of international and domestic social outreach in the Salvation Army: parallel worlds or an integrated mission? (Petra Brooke, Professor Emma Tomalin).

Research Questions: Does the discursive construction of a particular problem and intervention as community development rather than social or community services, and vice versa, point towards different practices and outcomes?

How is this question being addressed by TSA and with what effect for the task of integrating its different domains of activity?

TSA social outreach has always been a central part of the expression of its identity as a Christian church. William Booth, one of the founders of TSA, had referred to that he called an integrated mission as a goal for all TSA activity, where salvation meant; “being saved from both the misery of damnation in the next world, and of salvation from the miseries of the present world” (Taylor, 2014, p. 53). Due to this commitment of providing relief from human

suffering, TSA have built extensive social outreach across the over 130 countries they presently work in. This holistic attitude to mission and church expression has kept faith issues at the core of all TSA work whilst also professionalising their services to fit more secular demands for impartiality. This professionalisation of social services in TSA has primarily happened in the provision of its more formal and institutionalised services that are delivering on behalf of the state. By contrast, corps-based social work has kept a more informal and faith-based approach to social outreach, and although there are efforts and resources to assist corps in their outreach efforts, there is, according to empirical findings done for this article, a noticeable gap in professional development between different parts of TSA social outreach.

In addition to developing national relief services, TSA have created a comprehensive international development and relief service, making them a major participant of the international development sector. Today, TSA have developed a global network of professional development actors to manage its international development work alongside the already present corps-based social ministry across the globe. Reflecting the missionary undertakings of the nineteenth century, TSA have built up their services with “supporting” countries providing the funding and structure of the work and “implementing” countries where the outreach and social work is carried out.

The division between “supporting” and “implementing” countries in an international development context is increasingly criticised for creating “parallel worlds of research” (Lewis, 2015, p. 1) where research runs the risk of becoming so narrow that it misses vital opportunities for learning from a wider global context (Lewis, 2015). In the current state of global capitalism, the binary between Global North and Global South seems increasingly irrelevant as inequality and poverty exist across the globe and issues such as human trafficking and severe poverty, described as problems primarily belonging to a “developing” context in chapter 3, are experienced across the world. The UN Sustainability Goals (SDG) reflect this by approaching a global unified response to challenges today, meaning not targeting only certain areas of the world for intervention but requiring all the world to engage in the issues reflected in the framework. There is also an increasing critique of major actors in the developing sector and the discursive construction of social problems as “development”, masking a lingering endurance of colonial structures (Escobar, 1995; Fergusson, 1994). These observations and trends can be seen in TSA structures and in how they refer to different parts of their work. In TSA international outreach work the term “community development” would be used for both corps-based social outreach efforts as well as more formal projects and

programmes. However, in a western context, demonstrated in this article through data collected in both the United Kingdom and Ireland (UKI) Territory and the Norwegian Territory, the terms used to describe local services would be “community services” (UKI) and “corps-based social work” (Norway) and the formal social work is referred to as “service delivery” (UKI) and “social work” (Norway). In conversation with TSA staff working both within international development and community based social outreach work, the task of integrating the “church” and the “client” community as well as decolonising their approach to development questions has been raised regarding such bifurcation between the different parts of TSA work.

In the article, this is first explored by asking how the discursive construction of a particular problem and intervention as community development rather than community services and vice versa point towards different practices and outcomes. Second, the article asks how this question is being addressed by TSA and with what effect for the task of integrating its different domains of activity.

As part of TSA’s early history, the need to professionalise their social services led to an international organisational split between the “church” work and the “social work”, a split that is still seen in some TSA territories such as in Norway, whilst others have strived to reorganise their structures to mirror a more holistic approach, such is done in the UKI territory. This organisational split has however created “almost separate armies” (Hill, 2017, p. 305) where the more formal social work efforts moved further away from those engaged in more informal social outreach at corps level. Lydholm (2017) connects this development with the creation of the welfare state after the Second World War in Norway where social work in general was professionalised and lifted from the volunteer and NGO sphere to becoming a state and authority concern and task. The pressure to employ “professionals” with no other connection to TSA to meet demands and quality control efforts from the state in their service delivery became increasingly noticed in this time (Lydholm, 2017).

TSA’s involvement in international development has its roots from early TSA history and the work was done as part of the missionary aspect of their work. Although many missionaries in the early 20th century became significant social work providers alongside their “evangelistic” mission, they are also seen as part of the emerging concept of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO), a term first used in a UN charter from 1945. NGO’s emerged as part of previous efforts or as new organisations in what was to be known as international development work where work was funded by donors, including individual states or multi-

layered agencies. More and more faith-based responses began to see their efforts as part of the NGO and aid business (Bruchhausen, 2016). This created faith-based aid organisations, such as World Vision and Tear Fund, rather than the traditional missionary/church -based efforts. TSA have been part of the emerging UN environment and gained special consultative status in 1947. Expanding the international development efforts has been done by establishing an international social justice commission (ISJC) and national offices for international development affairs. These offices are part of the overall TSA structure, not separate entities and are coordinated from the international headquarters to support the formalisation and professionalisation of TSA development efforts.

The article discusses the use of different languages by TSA for its international and domestic social outreach and includes an examination of reactive and proactive approaches to social outreach in the TSA and the extent to which these indicate clashing cultures of practice or commentary paths. The article further explores the place of faith in the social outreach of the TSA and discusses of the implications if this for TSA's "integrated mission".

In Norway, the term "corps-based social work" was introduced in 2016 to partly distinguish their work from the dominant church based social work discourse of diaconia used by the Lutheran church, and to explain their faith-based roots in a secular societal context. The main reason for developing the document "platform for corps-based social work" was to bring the formalised and professional social work in TSA Norway closer to the corps-based social work located in the programme department that manages churches and their work and international development work. In the UKI territory, the community services that oversee the corps-based social outreach is situated in the "mission department" together with formal social work and international development, striving for a more holistic approach following the "fit for mission" consultation in 2015, a major reorganisation of TSA in UKI Territory. However, the crossover between the different teams in the mission service are limited, mirroring the situation between the social and programme department in Norway.

There is a difference between language used in international development and community outreach in TSA. The term "community development" is used to describe work in international development, but social work seems to be used to describe similar work in a corps-based setting in Norway and UK. Similarities in the work, such as supporting the local community with emergency needs and places to find fellowship and support in difficult life situations prompts the question to why there are language differences in the two sectors. The article suggests that Norway and the UK look at themselves as "funding" countries, i.e. they

do not identify as locations where funding for development projects would naturally go to but rather come from, in contrast to “implementing” countries where development projects and funding are traditionally directed. However, the interviewees also suggest that in TSA MSHT work these binaries became blurred as all countries are facing similar situations as well as receiving funding from other agencies outside of the country, meaning countries that have an identity as “funding” and traditionally providing the services, find themselves to be in need of “implementing” services due to recognising human trafficking as an issue in their local community.

Another aspect of the language construction is how the work is perceived. In international development, there is a focus on more long-term action, root causes are given attention (proactive) whilst the corps-based or community-based TSA work in Norway and the UK are more reactive, responding to emergent needs. This reactive nature is explained by how the work at corps-level in Norway and the UK are initiated from the local level and as an answer to the direct need that they are presented by the general public seeking support. TSA corps-based services in Norway and the UK do not explore root causes to the same degree as would happen on an organisational level or in an international development project. Another difference is that the international development space is dominated by funding that supports projects that have a focus on preventative measures, in contrast to more locally-based funding in Norway and the UK that is focussed on helping those who have been subjected to injustices or social issues such as poverty or exclusion.

Another factor for how TSA corps-based social services and international development projects relate to their contexts and use of language can stem from their different relations to faith as a core value. In international development, engaging with faith actors and religious frameworks is seen more as an asset necessary in order to be able to communicate with local communities and to access local authorities. In contrast, faith engagement is more limited in the UK’s and Norway’s contracted services and language describing projects and values are adjusted to a more secular setting. This seems to be more prominent in a Norwegian setting, as the interviewees from Norway related to how they must make faith just one of many offers in the project, it could not be described to have any prominent role or effect on the projects initiated. Although some of the same factors are found in the UK, they did not seem as prominent. In the UK, TSA was engaged in project by external funders because they were faith-based, in Norway TSA seem to be engaged despite being faith-based. This affects the corps-based social outreach to some extent, especially in connection to the few projects with

external funding that are localised in a corps context. The reasoning by the staff supporting corps and community-based services was that it is better to access funding to be able to support people, than maintaining a strong faith expression in those programmes. The issue of faith is closely connected to the issue of integrated mission and the complex work to achieve this on all levels of the organisation. The more long-term proactive elements of social outreach and social work seem to be less faith-centred, and the reactive work seems to have a more informal style and can more easily include faith and mission in their work and language construction, reflecting back to the statement above of being given funding despite being faith-based. For the international development, this is different as they relate to faith as an asset for community-building efforts and peacebuilding based on the aspect of “return to religion” discussed in chapter 3 where faith is seen as a way to relate to members in local communities. An interesting development is how TSA in Norway and UKI have taken onboard some of the methods, the Faith- Based Facilitation model (FBF) as described earlier being the best example, used in international development work to strengthen the way faith can be seen as part of a professional programme.

The article concludes by suggesting that the binary between a Global South and Global North is becoming less relevant as the work across the sectors indicate that social issues and challenges are not restricted to different parts of the world. The article further suggests that this blurring of binaries is changing the constructive language used to describe and understand work in both spaces and that TSA staff interviewed for this article indicate that international development and local efforts in the Global North context are merging, creating a new space for a more comprehensive and global understanding and response. This can lead to changed language and attitudes and will potentially strengthen work done by TSA, however this requires targeted measures and resources.

6. Discussion

This project aims to contribute towards knowledge about faith-based practice development in secular settings and focuses on congregational-based social practices in TSA. The following discussion is guided by the project research questions “*How is Christian social practice developed in a secular context?*” and “*How do TSA corps practitioners navigate tensions related to the double agenda of evangelisation and support provision?*”

The empirical material points towards congregational practices as part of a safety net for the local communities as they contribute with support to people when the public support system cannot or will not. This reactive nature of congregational practices has contributed to developing a generic professionalism, described in the introduction as qualities obtained not from formal education but through experience and emphasises communication and interactive skills, sometimes physical skills, to work autonomously. These qualities also include honesty and reliability (Green, 2009), as shown in the findings in chapter 5, with support methods that are similar to secular and professional social work methods, but grounded in biblical texts, faith actions, organisational motivation and strategies. Additional findings reveal how the TSA corps-based social practices have not been part of the professional development of social work in the organisation, and that educational and formal learning opportunities targeting social issues have not been prioritised in corps-based practices. While this has led to corps-based social practices developing a generic professionalism based primarily on experience, my research has indicated that corps-based social practices would benefit from more training and the opportunity to work with more pro-active long-term support to better address root causes for the social injustices that they encounter.

As part of the analysis of the empirical material, I have identified three main perspectives that have been helpful to better understand and describe both the challenges, opportunities and the context for practice development in corps-based social practices. The first perspective is diaconia that incorporates both theology and social work as core topics. This area of knowledge and research is an essential source for faith-based practices, and the diaconal aspect of serving the marginalised and basing social justice work on the biblical example of Jesus makes it a key resource for practice development. This perspective has guided the exploration of how TSA incorporate theological aspects in their work. Using a diaconal lens, I have traced important elements such as calling, empowerment, reconciliation and the aspect of evangelisation as part of a social practice. The next perspective used to identify how the practice works and the role of faith in practice is social work and more precisely professional

social work. Ethical guidelines for social work include caring for an individual's right to religious expression and basing my analysis on the commonalities between the generic professionalism found in the TSA corps-based social practices and social work professionalism as a rights-based perspective. The last perspective, international development, has provided the project with an overarching view of practice development by posing questions regarding the role of reactive local justice practices, such as the TSA corps-based practices, for the wider society in Norway as well as global context, acknowledging that social justice issues faced by corps-based social practices in Norway have many crossovers with projects in the Global South. This perspective also contributes with perspectives on how to define and acknowledge local faith-based work in light of a larger international development context and how practice development in local corps-based social practices can benefit from taking perspectives from an international development approach.

The following discussion will start with an overall reflection on the role of faith-based practices on findings in the empirical material. The research questions will be discussed in turn. The last section of the discussion presents a practice development model based on the conceptual theoretical framework, "Vocatio- Advocatio- Provocatio", VAP (Nordstokke, 2021).

6.1 RQ 1: How is Christian social practice developed in a secular context?

Based on the historical perspective and the current trends in the Norwegian context described earlier in this thesis, faith-based organisations dwell in a predominately secular society. There is, however, room for faith and religious expressions in this society and as mentioned earlier, the tolerance for religious views and contributions are present (Botvar & Schmidt, 2020). What is striking in the current debate, based on the situation of rising costs for living and current migratory trends, is the way voluntary organisations, including FBOs, are invited to contribute with knowledge and examples, but less present in the political and structural debate in regard to solutions. There are signs and examples of this perhaps changing, and where TSA is included in structural plans for community welfare work, but the general trend prevails, making it important to understand how faith-based actors, as part of a wider NGO sector, have the inherent qualities, such as relational, asset-based and inquiry-based approaches, to also contribute to solutions for root problems. This project contributes to this by exploring a small, but important part, of the FBO sector, local congregational-based social practices. The historic presence of corps-based social practices makes them known in the public eye for helping

people with practical issues, but less known for their knowledge of local context and social issues and their unique way to support based on relational attitudes giving them a position of trust with guests and clients seeking support. However, the participants describe how this presence also reveal the need for further change: “This place has been in action for 100 years this year, and we still see the same needs, it is still as bad.”

6.1.1 Practice development developing between a faith ethos and a professional ethos

For practice development in a faith context, a faith ethos and a professional ethos have been identified, as described in chapter 3, as important aspects for practice development together with the three themes: diaconia, social work, and international development.

Figure 3 below illustrates how TSA corps-based social practices are impacted by the societal secular context and how practitioners navigate between the faith ethos and professional ethos as they provide support. The two arrows in the illustration show how practitioners go back and forth between the two. The three themes, diaconia, social work and international development are also shown in figure 4 as impacting on practice development in different ways.

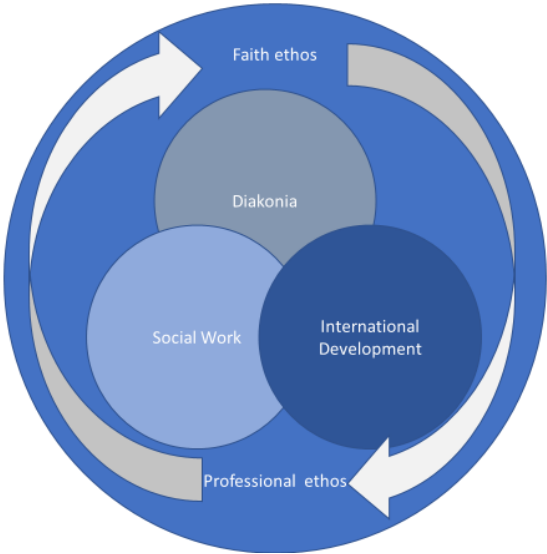


Figure 4: Illustration of the process of practice development in conversation between three traditions.

The role of faith is well integrated in TSA corps-based social practices, illustrated by both the language they use and actions such as prayer and biblical references whilst handling situations they encounter, and used in a framework to guide reflection on the question “why”, both in the perspective of why TSA practitioners take part in the work and why the people

practitioners are trapped in the situations they are in. The other aspect of the practice is the “how” by acknowledging God as the centre for the reflection and action in the practice (Nordstokke, 2021; Winship 2016). An example of how practitioners relate to faith in situations was explained by one of the practitioners:

When I meet the guys with a drinking problem that belongs to us, I tell them how I feel about what they do to themselves but I also tell them that I care and that’s why I am being hard on them, it is about helping them to make good choices. And sometimes, we do have a certain clue as to what might be the root cause when people need help and then you do have to ask the difficult questions,... Because it is not like I am up here and they are down there in this conversation, we are always equals because I can see Jesus in the person I am talking to. In the same way Jesus are in me, he is in that person and that makes us equals.

The quote indicates how TSA practitioners see their service, and how faith plays a role in all the encounters they have. The central role of faith is also expressed by both TSA leaders and local practitioners as a main contributor to how the practice develop their actions, for example by reflecting on issues by praying and reflecting on the issue from a biblical perspective, as well as how the practice perceived by their local community as they relate to individuals as friends and is preoccupied with a relational attitude. Both local practitioners and TSA leaders identified the practice as voluntary initiatives motivated by faith, and their own role as a faith-based service rather than a professional service. This is despite some of the practitioners having graduated from health, social, education and theology higher education as described earlier. “I am an officer (pastor) and my observation is as important as the professionals or specialist’s observation” is an illustration of how the professional identity seems to be secondary to their church or religious education and role, emphasising the role of faith rather than professional training as the basis or motivation for their actions. This lack of acknowledgement of their professional training can limit further development of the practices by missing important opportunities for development presented in professional frameworks and ethical guidelines. It is however important to acknowledge that practitioners with a professional background use this as a foundation for their work, but in terms of motivation and identity and professional development, it seems to be secondary to a faith perspective. TSA corps-based practitioners’ hesitant relationship to the aspects of professionalism seems to stem from the assumption by practitioners in this study that professionalism includes being distant from the people you work with, as well as not allowing for the inclusion of a spiritual

or faith perspective (Danbolt & Nordhelle, 2012; Leenderts, 2014). This attitude can be seen as not necessarily reflecting the emerging trend in society where faith and religion are included in social work policy and frameworks. But it reflects the discussion in chapter 3 relating to theory of including faith in practice found in research and policy and is not necessarily found in the practical expression of social work on a society or community level. However, despite the split between theory and practice, there is an emerging development towards a greater inclusion of faith as described in social work theory and policy. This gives reason to say that there is a need for more formal learning for TSA staff and volunteers in corps-based social practices to develop a more reflected understanding of what it means to be or become a professional practitioner and professional practice and how this is not contradictory to a faith-based attitude. It is however interesting to note that the fear of scrutiny described above, lingers despite a movement towards a more faith open society, furthering the confirmation that there is a gap between policy, strategies, research and what happens and is experienced in local practice. As this issue and gap between a structural and local level is scarcely documented, a further investigation of this indicated gap would provide important knowledge regarding the efficiency of public policy and structures. Another consequence of a hesitant relationship to professionalisation amongst the TSA practitioners is the lack of a common language and understanding between the TSA practices and external partners, which can be seen to limit reach into the local community according to my material. Part of the analysis done in Article 2 tracks the role of faith as practitioners describe the different aspects of their services. This resulted in an illustration placing networking with others as one part of the practice where they downplay and adjust their language to fit the surrounding context.

Despite a hesitant relationship towards a professional expression as described above, practitioners with professional training and internal guidelines building on professional attitudes, navigate the secular society and their faith-based attitudes by using both faith-based ethos expressions and professional ethos expressions. This duality can be explained by adhering to faith perspectives, as well as rights-based perspectives. This navigation has resulted in a pragmatic practice development in TSA. In Article 2, I describe this navigation towards a generic professionalism (Green, 2009) for all the practitioners in the TSA corps-based social practices and how faith contributes to the creation of practice tools by motivating reflection, inquiry, and a relational practice attitude. This correlates with a social constructivist way of learning where:

...learning is enhanced by social interaction; and learning develops through “authentic” tasks –constructivist learning moves from experience to knowledge and not the other way around (Cooperstein & Kocevar-Weidinger, 2004, p. 141).

By engaging people as volunteers in TSA practices, and by including and prioritising experience-based knowledge as they do in TSA corps-based practices, the “learning by doing” included in the generic professionalism concept becomes a way to bridge the faith engagement with the need for tasks related to knowledge and rights-based action. For the individual practitioner a generic professionalisation entails adhering to ethical frameworks. In developing professional practices, the increased interest in using social work ethics (Banks, 2012) beyond making rational decisions to reflect a broader more relational sense (Banks, 2016) is similar to the ethical reflection observed in corps-based social practices; “We often share thoughts and decisions or on how we have handled a situation, we are very open to talk to each other about these things.” I describe this as generic professional development and how practitioners work with and develop methods based on faith values and experiences rather than formal knowledge and education. The results are methods similar to asset-based, reflective and inquiry-based methods, perspectives known and used in professional social work settings. The inquiring attitude reflects the way Jesus related to people, practitioners describe that they say: “I always ask, what can I do for you?” contributes to a generic professionalism. An inquiry attitude builds on the inquiry-based learning (IBL): “An inquiry approach is characterized by the tendency to address general themes over a longer period with less specific content objectives” (Plowright & Watkins, 2003, p. 187). Although having developed a generic practice understanding, this quote indicates that there is a need to work towards more proactive long-term engagement to complement the current reactive attitude. The methods described above are explained and motivated by faith and expressed through a relational attitude to guests with a focus on building deep relationships and spreading God’s love (Winship, 2016). The development of methods used in corps-based social practices has happened parallel to the context of professionalisation in TSA social services programmes referred to in Figure 1. It can be assumed that some of that professionalisation has “trickled down” and shaped the development of corps-based social practices and the generic development. Another example of how practitioners in TSA social practices are more “professional” than they might think, and where the assumed distance a professional attitude brings is contested, is the concept of love also described in Article 2.

6.1.2 The role of faith in corps-based social practice development

To further understand how faith shapes and contributes to a professional identity and practice development, and to contribute to the generic practice development, I found it helpful to look at faith from a perspective of “tacit” knowledge. Polanyi’s opening statement in “Tacit dimension” is that we know more than we can tell (Polanyi & Sen, 2009). Polanyi argues that formal knowledge is not enough to perceive problems and patterns, for this you need tacit knowledge. But it is not just the level of knowledge the tacit dimension holds that is interesting, it is how this knowledge functions. Tacit knowledge is explained as a type of agency or power that steers people in their knowing and acting, and further as an internal structure that incorporates our perceptions, including values. This reasoning acknowledges the view that the non-material things in life, in this context faith, affect our lives to a higher degree than material things. In this research, tacit knowledge is understood as an inner spirit guide and activity that helps determine how we interact with the world around us, almost like a soul (Polanyi, 1966). It is easy to draw parallels between this “soul” and faith as the informants describe it, even though Polanyi might be hesitant to draw such a comparison. Taking the starting point from professional practice, Myers (2011) draws a similar picture of how the relevance of a higher power, in his case it is a clear vision of God explaining that the spiritual and divine is interested in all the levels of the world, does not just belong in a heavenly sphere. The physical world is never disconnected from the spiritual world or the God who created it. This is grounded in the biblical description of the word becoming flesh, meaning that the physical and spiritual world can never be separated. Just as Polanyi, Myers describes this part of knowing and knowledge as a higher or heavenly order that manifests itself in the lower or earthly order. Polanyi recognises that the tacit knowledge resides in understanding this higher order and that this corresponds with our knowledge. In Polanyi’s view, this leads to the realisation that the existence of a “kind of God”, although not necessarily the traditional Christian God, is essential for tacit knowledge and knowing. For Myers, the testimony of God by the combination of word, deed and signs in Christian practices creates a holistic understanding that feeds an individual’s faith and by that, an individual’s knowledge and understanding of the world. Creating methods for response based on faith, as discussed in Articles 1 and 2, from the perspective of both Polanyi and Myers, is therefore not outside a professional understanding of how to use knowledge, it is a wider and more inclusive way to approach unknown situations.

Another aspect of the practices that can be traced back to biblical hospitality that is about welcoming the stranger and including those who others might not include. TSA corps-based social practices allow people with personal experience from vulnerable situations to become participants and volunteers:

I have experienced that people who have been coming here for a long time and their situations have become better, well they feel good about being something for others as they become volunteers and at the same time being still in an environment that will continue to support them and help them succeed.

Reflected in the quote is how practitioners utilise people's own experiences as part of learning about issues and challenges and combining the experience-based knowledge with formal input from the TSA organisational levels or municipality, as described above. For example, practitioners adjust the support provision to better match current trends and show a willingness to seek out people outside of the physical building of the practice. This willingness to approach others and seeing the other and the potential to adjust practice affects the practice development by bridging the gap between what was previously practiced or understood as relevant and what is provided now (Wyller, 2016), reflecting a heterotopic ecclesiology outlined in chapter 3. As most of the learning in TSA corps-based social practices happens as they support or whilst they discuss different issues or challenges, the aspect of tacit learning is present (Polanyi & Sen, 2009). This means that making use of the TSA corps-based social practice practitioners' knowledge about their local community and how to support different individuals in different situations holds some interesting keys for organisational learning (Howell, 1996). Describing this kind of learning is challenging as practitioners do not refer to tacit knowledge in interviews and reflection groups explicitly, it is something that must be grasped by the researcher and compared to what they do in practice to make it valid. But tacit learning is a powerful way to implement knowledge and is often a root cause for change, and because of this it is important to make this learning explicit in practice development research. Going back to the definition of practice development as a change in behaviour and values (Garbett & McCormack, 2003) as described in the introduction chapter, tacit knowledge and experience-based knowledge will collectively become an important part of practice development, by being made explicit in reflection and educational efforts. By doing this, those lessons learned become available and applicable for others. Using the CoP theory is a way to make informal learning explicit and relevant to a wider community (Mittendorff et al., 2006), something I have stived to do in this project by using elements from

the theory to describe practice attitudes and qualities to make them a focus for learning and participation.

Exploring the role of faith is part of understanding how the professional and value-based methods must exist together without undermining any of the other's qualities. Being faith-based and professional can be interpreted as two heterotopic spaces that in a diaconal setting have a genuine focus on the other (Sander et al., 2016), but at the same time are not defined by the other. As they meet, both previous spaces are enveloped by the other. I would argue that TSA, despite its tradition of building church and ecclesial understanding from practical engagement, can take further learning from corps-based social practices as a way of framing what it means to be a church working against societal injustices (Wyller, 2016). I propose to look at corps-based social practices in a new way, as a space where interaction and support happens as a diaconal generic professionalism with a congregarious²² approach. In this new space, there is room for practice development incorporating faith values and expressions such as hospitality, love, relations and care, whilst serving in a secular society (Nordstokke, 2021) and contributing to a theology that again comes from the practice or carrying out local services (Sander et al., 2016), not primarily from formal learning and dogma, as discussed in Article 2. Whilst not wishing to undermine this important role of practices being an example to follow, including their important contribution to diaconal practice development, this project also recognises that there is room for more learning and improvement in TSA corps-based social practices.

6.1.3 Navigating a secular society by making faith visible or invisible in practice

As the corps navigate their local community, it is the more contextualised and less overarching trends that allow them access to participation in the local secular services. Of the four corps, the one located in a “faith friendly” part of the country could present a higher level of collaboration with external partners as well as being accepted as a strong advocacy voice for marginalised people. The other corps did not present the same level of community engagement, illustrating that despite an overall faith-open society (Stålsett, 2021), participation on a local level as a community development partner involves perhaps even more navigation than is required on an organisational level.

²² The word “congregarious” carries a missional aspect reflected in the TSA mission statement as well as the faith directed appointment to serve a suffering humanity with a joyful heart. It is a constructed word made up of “congregation” and “gregarious”.

As the corps-based social practices were observed and took part in interviews and focus group reflections, it became clear that they adjust their actions and language in the same way as the organisation does, depending on circumstances. This was illustrated by how they focus very much on the topic of injustice as they advocate for issues they encounter or change that must happen, not including the reasons why TSA are speaking up on behalf of groups or topics that need attention. It is also confirmed by partners in the local community collaborating with TSA corps about social issues, that they often could not tell that these were faith-based practices and that the service looked very much like their own secular efforts to relieve suffering. This confirms the importance for practice development, and the need for navigating the surrounding context. There is less faith permeated language as they collaborate, and more faith focus as they turn inwards, reflecting the societal secular development and challenges posted for FBOs. The latter may have a limiting effect on access to collaboration, as the fear of scrutiny, rightly or wrongly, seem to render them non-appropriate for collaborative efforts.

Observation conducted as part of the field work shows that all the practices have chosen different ways to resolve the issue of how to respond to the mission statement's part about spreading the gospel whilst serving human needs and the need to communicate and be accepted as a partner by the local community. Two locations had their social practice activity in the main worship hall, making all symbols and artefacts available to create a domain (Wenger, 2011), whilst another keeps the social provision in more neutral localities, still with some artefacts but much less evident. The fourth location has a totally separate entrance and rooms for handing out food. Only one of the four corps had public devotion as the food provision was taking place. The quote "Preach if necessary, with words" by Francis of Assisi, and on a general level, this seems to be the approach taken by TSA and a way to navigate the social context and the various needs in the group they support.

The way TSA corps adjust some of their practices to fit a secular or multi faith society correlates well with how many faith-based organisations and church-based initiatives have adopted and adjusted their values and language to be accepted in a secular context. This adjustment is visible as faith-based actors shift between secular and religious "modes of communication" (Tomalin, 2018, p. 3). As the secular society grows, the relevance of faith becomes an increasingly personal issue (Bruce, 2008; Aadland & Skjørshammer, 2012), resulting in many professions born out of a faith-based perspective neutralising their values and ethics (Habermas, 2008; Lonergan et al., 2021; Tomalin, 2018). Marginalising faith and spiritual values in social work is done to ensure that support is given unconditionally and

inclusively (Haynes, 1997; Lonergan et al., 2021). There are reasons to question this marginalisation of faith in social work, as the consequences of this approach have yielded evidence of negative scrutiny towards clients where faith is a factor in the case or situation (Skjeggstad, 2012). There are discussions within the social work profession regarding the role of faith in social work and other professional approaches (Shaw, 2018), and this project can be understood as a contribution to that discussion. Despite there being an evident adjustment to the surrounding context, there is also an evident loyalty and adherence to faith perspectives in the practices. The empirical material describes participants with a clear faith identity and an organisation that embrace it's faith distinctiveness; "The Salvation Army is soup, soap and salvation. And that is what it is to help, to show them the love of Christ by helping them with their needs."

TSA is an organisation where faith plays a role on all levels. Faith is a part of organisational structures, plans and execution of services and actions (Pallant, 2012; Pedlar, 2016). However, within this faith-positive environment, there is an ongoing internal discussion as to whether projects or actions have too much or too little faith focus (Davies-Kildea, 2017), mirroring the historical and societal narrative presented earlier in this project. The empirical material for this project confirms that despite faith filling many functions and being an important part of practice and development of new practices, the awareness of the surrounding secular context makes adjustments a necessary part of being a faith-based organisation (Habermas, 2005). One secular partner organisation explained the visibility of faith as:

You can tell that they are faith-based, by activities they do such as praying and sometimes a devotion before serving a meal. They also relate what they do to Christian learnings, but they are simply good social work actions. So, they say that they base them on Christian values, but their actions look like ours in many ways.

This quote indicates that for every step TSA take out into the public sphere in Norway, navigation of regulations, laws, ethics and current moods and trends are made.

Faith is explicit, described by participants in this study as a way to build bridges and create confidence, and by some, faith is described as one thing amongst many that TSA can offer. In TSA "valuebook" faith is rewritten into values that are less controversial, such as being relevant, demonstrate sober spending of resources, break boundaries and being practical (Frelsesarmeen, 2017), and elsewhere faith is only illustrated by the artefacts in a room

(Mathisen, 2010), as is done in institutions where people are underage and receiving care and rehabilitation. These different ways of adjusting faith expressions and the navigation of the surrounding context in which TSA exist, changes the space for expression of faith according to circumstances. Although this navigation of the tensions surrounding faith-based social service providers such as TSA happens on many levels in the organisation, the way it is done seems to differ, something confirmed by my research. One example is how secular social work principles are used to describe approaches and actions in projects initiated on an organisational level, whilst some of the same principles can be traced to faith expressions and theological concepts. On an overarching level in my research indicate that the role of faith changes the further out from the organisational core actions are, and adjustments in faith expressions are made according to the level of the expectation of the receiver of the project or message conveyed. One example of a recent organisational adjustment is the changed slogan used by TSA Norway. Up until 2022, “Soap, soup, salvation” was a central slogan, often seen printed on cars or on buildings belonging to TSA. However, this has been changed to “Strength for today and hope for tomorrow” (author’s translation), eliminating the central element of “salvation” from the slogan. The core reason for this change is not known by the author, but I can only speculate that both “soap and soup” needed much explaining to be understood, and “salvation” is a word not often used and understood by the public. However, it does provide an excellent example of the adjustment as an organisation to fit into a broader secular context at the same time as it raises questions regarding visibility of faith and if changing the slogan helps or hinder this communication with the surrounding local context in that regard. In a social context where there is a fear of being excluded due to the faith identity of the organisation, this adjustment can be necessary to communicate the organisation’s contributions on a service provider level, but on the other hand, it under-communicates the faith-based identity. One participant said: “I don’t think we can collaborate with others if they demand that we do not talk about God”, illustrating the internal differences regarding what is good enough and enough faith to still feel like a church and faith-based actor.

The Norwegian society is described earlier in the historical and contextual aspects as negatively biased towards faith institutions (Loga, 2018; Skjeggstad, 2012), especially if these institutions are based on a more “conservative” theological underpinning, a category TSA fall under. Although research and policy work regarding social work describes faith as relevant for practice attitudes, and the move towards a more “faith-open” society in addition to legislation ensures equal chances in tender competitions and procurement processes, the

informants in my project and my own experiences from the sector, tell a different story. My own experiences of situations where financial support is awarded to a secular provider despite TSA demonstrating good results and outcomes of a project or when political neutrality values stop faith-based organisations from providing a service, despite it having both economic and social results. Therefore, organisational navigation of faith expressions is necessary if TSA wish to continue to provide social services.

6.1.4 Not excluded, not included, but complementary.

Although TSA corps-based social practices are working alongside the public support system and can at times build bridges between the public and individuals or the church (Haugen,2018), they are experiencing not being an official part of the local community in some ways (Fløtten et al, 2023), for example in contributing to solutions and strategies. The public sphere is in this thesis understood as rights-based services and support given by the state or municipality. Based in the empirical material in this study, I draw the conclusion that one of the main reasons why TSA corps-based social services have been able to maintain a faith centred approach is the fact that they are not bound by external governmental funding or reporting, in contrast to work organised in TSA social services that is a formal part of the public support system and delivers services on the basis of tender contracts.

TSA have provided services in the local communities for the better part of 100 years (Stanghelle, 2002). This history, as well as a good reputation, has helped it to survive in its current form. External partners interviewed as part of this project, pointed out how TSA corps-based social practices provide support for all of society's members throughout their life and gives support to various social issues, something many other similar NGO/FBO practices do not. External community partners co-operating with the TSA corps-based social practices also relate to them as professional and good at their jobs. However, partners were often not fully aware of how TSA really work, revealing a lack of communication of practice and engagement between TSA and external co-operating partners (Haugen, 2018). This is in the empirical material in this project illustrated by the increased collaboration as corps supported their local communities during the COVID -19 pandemic. Contextualising TSA corps-based social practices as a complementary service to the public sphere (Lonergan et al, 2021) and despite a bridge-building function this complementary position can limit their scope and reach. Evidence of this contextualisation is found in the material and the case study expressed by one of the participants; "I don't think society looks at The Salvation Army as a partner to solve big structural issues, but if there is a need for a food bag, they all come running." This

illustration points towards the lack of engaging these practices in structural change and development, but it also shows that these practices are known by their local community, and the service provided by TSA complement services provided by local authorities. Many of TSA corps-based initiatives can be said to be complementary to services carried out in the public sphere (Loga, 2018). However, even when functioning as a complementary service, it becomes clear, especially in times of crisis, that local communities are dependent on services such as TSA corps-based practices as part of their “omsorgsberedskap”²³ (Arnesen & Sivesind, 2021, p. 5). A recent crisis example is how local TSA corps have responded with distributing out a higher number of food bags due to higher living costs (Fløtten et al., 2023). Another example is how TSA, together with other organisations, supported individuals with practical assistance during COVID, as the authorities did not have the capacity²⁴. To better understand the relevance of FBOs as part of a local emergency support as well as providing more long-term help, examples from an international development context are used in Article 3. This article describes how the international development theme enriches the understanding of TSA practice originating from diverse origins (Lewis, 2015). In the article, I describe how TSA’s practice experience of increased poverty resulting in food insecurity and homelessness are traditionally known from a Global South setting and are now occurring more frequently in a local context in Norway. As various crises build across Norway and Europe, churches and diaconal actors are impacted, not just as food providers, but as pastoral carers and a spiritual buffer against a harsh reality (Campbell & Bauer, 2021) .

6.1.5 A “turn to religion” aspect in community development

Despite the gap between faith-based initiatives as community actors and secular community actors, faith actors are recognised and acknowledged as important community partners to create local development (Berger, 2003) and also because of their reactive and humanitarian efforts in times of crisis. One partner organisation related to how TSA respond in times of crisis by saying: “They (read TSA) are so big that they meet needs quickly, something we do as well I suppose, but if you see a changed need, if you are big you can build something to meet that need, and that is something TSA can do, and that is about organisational size I suppose.”

²³ “Societal emergency response” (auth translation).

²⁴ For more information about TSA corona community response read <https://frelsesarmeen.no/sok?search=corona#search>

There has been an increasing interest in religious and faith issues in the public space as well as a growing awareness of FBO's as partners for resolving global problems due to their position of trust in local society and their consequent role as community mobilisers.²⁵ In research on international development and the role of religion, this process of an increased collaboration with faith-based initiatives and actors are referred to as "a turn to religion" (Tomalin, 2020; Tomalin et al., 2019). Although there are limited references to religion in, for example the SDG goals,²⁶ the described and experienced acceptance of religion has strengthened the role of local faith actors as community development partners working for justice and peace. This increased role and collaboration between authorities/local community and FBO's is due to their connection to faith as part of their understanding issues in the local community, being present to carry out the work (Clark, 2006) and for their position of trust in local communities. In this project, I am using an international development lens to describe Norwegian corps-based social work and how the work done in Norway can resemble what would be referred to as "humanitarian" efforts, and how these efforts are sometimes undervalued by the wider society. In Article 3, I describe how many of the issues previously faced in a Global South context are now recognised as issues in Norwegian society, such as human trafficking and work exploitation (Brunovskis & Ødegård, 2020). These issues are often connected to problems such as being without a passport, or legal papers for work or residence in Norway. As such, church-based social work practices are often "first responders" to individuals caught in these situations, making them important to the representation (Fraser, 2005) of these individuals as they resolve the correlating issues. Article 3 discusses how labelling the work as social work or development work is affecting the outcome of the practices and concludes that there is a potential knowledge gap of the impact corps-based social work done in a Norwegian context, and that attitudes, such as a greater focus on root causes, from an international development context could provide ways to strengthen their role in the community. Acknowledging that the binaries between the Global South and the Global North are becoming less relevant (Lewis, 2015) and looking towards global initiatives such as the SDG's, is encouraging new learning between previously very distant fields. As part of the acknowledgment of local faith actors, a stronger focus on practice development can be

²⁵ The role of FBO's as part of the civil society is taken from a seminar on the "the Role of Faith-Based Actors in Development" and specifically from the lecture given by Dr Titus Tenga on "The Role of Faith-based Civil Society Actors in Community Resilience", Oslo 13 of April 2023.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. For more information see [Sustainable Development Goals: 17 Goals to Transform our World | United Nations](#)

achieved by including relevant resources and methods found in TSA international development contexts, as mentioned before. This has already started to happen by introducing the FBF model (Knecht, 2021; Salvation Army, 2010), building on the pastoral cycle and originally developed for evaluating projects in the Global South.

Engagement is described in a TSA publication for social services in the USA central territory as understanding participant information, commitment to action and achieving goals, as well as maintaining gains (Winship, 2016). This reflects well the way TSA corps-based practices develop and enhance their response. Based on findings from this project, there is enough evidence for TSA to take steps to extend the practice development in a professional direction. This extension of practice development can build on the already existing engagement inherent in the practices combined with an increased acknowledgement of the need for more formal knowledge input, also confirmed by practitioners in the practices:

I think we need more training, especially those of us who have been in TSA for many years. TSA change and society change so we need to develop what we do and how we do it. We have been able to connect with people that knows a lot about these things, for example how to support people in need, and we must use them to get better.

Keys to make practice development happen are illustrated by practitioners using faith inspired methods, such as relational attitudes, inquiry- and asset-based approaches and including love in TSA corps-based social support repertoire. However, this learning and practice development need structure and direction, but the capacity to do this is argued to be present.

6.2 RQ 2: How do TSA corps practitioners navigate tensions related to the double agenda of evangelisation and support provision?

To better understand why there is a tension between a faith ethos and a professional ethos in corps-based social practices it is necessary to recall the context in which these practices function. As described earlier in this thesis, TSA Norway is a church in a secular society where spirituality is primarily experienced as limited to the personal sphere (Furseth, 2017; Leis-Peters, 2018). Although the secularisation theory is contested, research shows that the role of faith is diminishing in society, but it is nevertheless still relevant as an individual concept (Haynes, 1997; Aadland & Skjørshammer, 2012). This alone points towards a tension in society, where individual spirituality and faith are not necessarily diminishing, but the laws of society are restricting the importance of spirituality and faith to the individual sphere. As a contrast to secular support, where spirituality is considered a private matter, TSA do not make

that distinction, but see faith and spirituality as part of the whole, caring for all aspects of the person (Sherwood, 2002; Winship, 2016). TSA corps-based social practices are not in general funded by public money and are not an official part of the public sphere. As an organisation, TSA adhere to the international mission statement which declares;

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in his name without discrimination (International, 2010a).

The dual aspect between TSA theological concepts and social justice efforts has been discussed in Article 1 connected to this project. In this article, the aspects of “holy life” (International, 2010a) and “living right while righting wrong” (Swan, 2017) indicate ways to integrate a rights perspective (Haugen, 2014) in the faith-based TSA corps-based social practices. However, in Article 2, I discuss potential tensions between building their services on theological concepts alone without at the same time adhering to more professionalised social service principles, including advocacy and justice work, making the practices less effective than the inherent potential points towards. Although the mission statement can be seen as consisting of two separate parts with distinguished goals to spread the gospel and to meet human needs, TSA theology and core documents as well as practitioners in TSA corps-based social practices, would say that the international mission statement does not represent a split, or that there should not be a split between evangelism and social work. One practitioner explained his attitude towards the dual aspect of the TSA International Mission statement:

Our mission (read TSA mission) states that we aim to care for the whole person, so for me that include that people should have a good life, also in terms of economy and with people around them, that is also a part of our mission.

In contrast to the Lutheran view of evangelism being problematic in diaconal work described in the theory chapter, evangelism is experienced very differently in TSA corps-based social work. According to practitioners in TSA corps-based social practices, evangelism is carried out by delivering social support and offering ways to help, expressed by one practitioner “The Salvation Army is soup, soap and salvation. And that is what it is to help, to show them the love of Christ by helping them with their needs.” This way of relating to the ministry is also understood as “presence evangelism” and a “ministry of presence” (Winship, 2016, p. 13). Article 1 described the TSA theological aspect of “holy life” (International, 2010b) and how

this is understood as “living right while righting wrong” (Swan, 2017). TSA also state that a salvationist life should be a sacrament (Krommenhoek, 2011), meaning that one’s entire life is in service to God and others, expressed in attitudes such as compassion and love. Practitioners relate the way they evangelise as a way of living and a way to be present in society; they cannot necessarily separate the two. Although this is not true for all participants, with some having no personal faith or other relation to TSA than as a volunteer, all staff interviewed for this project related to this way of thinking. This is, according to my analysis, the main reason why evangelism and support is not seen as contradictory or made into an issue, it is simply related to as a whole, and a holistic way to be a Christian, similar to a lived religion approach (Ammerman, 2020; International, 2011; LWF, 2009; Miller, 2015, Winship 2016). Exploring TSA documents, they reveal that this is not necessarily a local level issue, rather the overall organisation relates to faith and evangelism is very much related to in this way by the overall organisation (International, Undated). The international mission statement creates a foundation for this by presenting evangelism and support not as a tension but as “two sides of the same thing” (Norway, 2017, p. 9). In contrast to some of the other big FBOs in the Norwegian context, one example being made in chapter 3 earlier in this abstract, being organised as a church and working from the international mission statement, TSA makes faith and evangelism a concern for all organisational levels. Following the research done by Sider and Unruh (Sider & Unruh, 2004) and the theoretical discussion regarding FBOs in chapter 3 in this thesis, TSA are a faith centred/saturated organisation, meaning that faith and religious aspects are important at all levels of the organisation, but open for participation by both staff and users and by those who do not necessarily adhere to the Christian faith. This prompts a need to perhaps define TSA as church-based organisation, rather than a faith-based to allow for a more faith-centred approach in all TSA activity.

One important key to understanding how this holistic approach is possible, is the way faith is described in TSA theology as a response to a God and trusting in the full salvation given by that God (International, 2010a). As such, faith inspires values. Several participants said that doing social support was a natural part of the overall mission statement of TSA and of their calling as Christians. Faith expressions are when faith is seen in action, either towards God, with prayer, fasting and worshipping or towards others in giving, supporting, and acting against injustice. One participant said:

Fundamentally it is about showing God’s love for the people we come into contact with. But it might not always be that that is at the front of your mind as you hand out

food bag nr 65. So, I think that showing love is also, as far it is possible, to help people in the situation they are.

TSA theology puts forward the notion that humans are more than just spirit and that people need to be saved not just for heaven, but also from suffering and pain here on earth (International, 2010a). This relationship between social work and evangelistic work, is connected to values such as care, love, respect, and equality, all mentioned by the informants involved in this research, as well as being prevalent in many of the TSA core documents such as international positional statements (Army, 2016; International, 2017). In Article 2, this is also referred to as working within a professional ethos, related to “Kingdom ethics”, based on the Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament and its signature core elements of transforming initiatives, the norms of love, justice for action and the sacredness of life (Gushee & Stassen, 2016).

6.2.1 Living right whilst righting wrong

The empirical material indicates that practitioners do not necessarily see the duality of evangelising and giving social support as a problem or an issue. However, when considering a secular surrounding and context, the issue does become important. Despite practitioners not finding the dualism of evangelism and support a problem, they are not ignorant to the possible implications it might have on the practice. Reflecting this awareness, guidance in TSA internal qualitative procedures on how the activities aimed at converting people to the Christian faith as part of the social outreach activity in the corps should be done to ensure people’s rights are protected to avoid making guests into unwilling participants in religious teaching and proselytising (Army, 2016).

The Salvation Army in Norway describes their corps-based practices as “...practising our faith as reflected in the words and deeds of Jesus. The intention is to work toward equality and diversity in our fellowships” (Army, 2016, p. 6). Although this is an attempt to describe what role the practices inhabit, this paragraph includes an overarching description of the example of Jesus. It is clear that these practices are based on religious values and expressions. To better understand both actions and attitudes a “lived religion” approach can help. By defining religion as “lived”, one includes a spiritual reality (Ammerman, 2014).

Religion is a distinct cultural product, but it is not best understood as an “ultimate meaning system” or a “sacred canopy.” It is a kind of knowledge, but knowledge understood as constituting and constituted by practice, no more nor less

comprehensive and total than other kinds of social knowledge. This is situated knowledge being used to do things, embedded beliefs implicit in action. This also means that the person who engages such practices is not best understood as inherently religious or not religious. From a practice approach, the object of study is not the person as such, but the shared patterns of action in which that person and others are engaged. (Ammerman, 2020, p. 13)

Taking the notion of practice from an individual level to a collective level, allows for an analysis and an understanding of how the corps-based practices can be said to contribute to a professional social work domain, whilst still maintaining their specific identity and faith expression. The practice becomes the collective act, what they do and how they do it together, and according to the material, it makes sense to understand these practices as faith in action or evangelisation, a way to express their beliefs and faith in God. As such, the individuals' approach to religion is not necessarily important, it is the collective actions that gives the practice its distinctiveness (Wenger, 2011). Nancy Ammerman (2020) has described seven characteristics of social practice: embodiment, materiality, emotion, aesthetics, moral judgement, narrative, and spirituality. All these approaches can help to understand how religious practice is being lived and expressed, and in a TSA context, also understood as evangelisation. Embodiment in this research is how the practitioners use their bodies and how they position themselves towards the guests to indicate that they relate and wish to build relationships. Materiality, the use of artefacts and symbols becomes evident as they are used to translate the spiritual dimension of faith and religion, and the fact that the local social work is situated in the church building gives further weight to this dimension. Emotions and aesthetics are linked and are all ways to create a sense of belonging, both for guests and practitioners. Flowers on the table, the smell of coffee, a sofa to sit down on or the offer of lunch together with an openness towards emotions and the expression of how life is treating someone all contribute to this element. The practices are governed by moral judgement, as practitioners refer to both theological truths as well as dogmatic texts and TSA core documents. The effect these morals have on these practices is great and there is a clear mantra encompassing these dogmatic lessons. As part of the theological training there is clear use of narratives to understand various situations and to reflect and debrief staff and volunteers. To make sense of what is happening and why the practices have a relevance, biblical and TSA historical narratives are actively used. This is further emphasised by the same tradition of narrative being encouraged in practice development models, such as the Faith-Based

Facilitation (FBF) used in TSA that uses Bible and prayer for reflection and to make sense of reality and challenges met by practitioners in TSA corps-based social practices. The last characteristic of the seven is spirituality, which emphasises the spiritual dimension of the work and is the part of the practice that is about transcendent and other relationships. “We focus on care, not just spiritual care, but to care for the whole being. That means that we need to act with love, love is the driving force”. The spiritual dimension is connected to all the others, and it happens along a spectrum, from those who perform the rituals of prayer or Bible readings not denying a spiritual presence to those who are guided by spiritual intervention. Spirituality is not directly connected to religion, and this perspective allows for people who do not share the religious aspect of the practices to be able to understand the spiritual aspect and be part of that. In the practices there is a strong belief in the transforming power of God, an empowerment of the individual by a spiritual power. The understanding of being in a close relationship with God dwells in this spiritual dimension and the consequences of that for a social practice is part of what this project is aiming to explore and add to (Ammerman, 2020).

6.3 A way forward – using the “VAP framework” to develop practice

According to the findings in this project there is limited advocacy against injustices in society by the participating practices. There are examples of when they used their knowledge and experience to voice their concern, but there seems to be a lack of advocacy strategies for TSA corps-based social practices. There might be many reasons for this hesitant behaviour. It might be practitioners being afraid to say the wrong thing and feeling that they are not agreeing with TSA overall statements on certain topics, something that was mentioned by practitioners. Other reasons can be structural elements such as corps-based social work practices not having had the same professionalisation and knowledge input, some of these aspects are discussed in Articles 1 and 2. The hesitation to advocate might also come from an organisational turn towards new public management and streamlining services and routines (International, 2017). Although done with good intentions, such regulations and practices leave less room for local initiatives and advocacy efforts. But these are only assumptions, as it was only implied in the empirical material and would need further investigations.

Article 1 points out that TSA have not defined advocacy. Because of TSA wanting to address modern slavery and human trafficking issues on all levels, this lack of definition can become a problem due to different approaches to the human rights agenda in the 133 counties TSA are presently working in, an aspect mentioned as part of the overall discussion in Article 3.

Article 1 point out that TSA documents also lack references to human rights as a base for the

strategies, however, this is implied in several places. This illustrates the need for better learning structures and appropriate competence advancement amongst TSA corps-based social practitioners. In the material, when asked if they felt equipped to meet and support the people accessing the services, most of the practitioners said that they were not. But they felt confident as support givers due to co-operating with internal and external networks, but primarily based on their extensive experience. The four participating TSA practices in this project had examples where they had engaged in advocacy efforts, often based on questions connected to individual cases. Participants often referred to efforts trying to support individuals to access public help as frustrating and unsatisfying, as the relationship between the guest and the public social support system was often conflicted and problematic. This is further problematised as the empirical material in this project show that there is limited contact between TSA corps-based social practices and local authorities, as well as other NGOs and FBOs. Although collaborative efforts with external partners seem to have been much improved during COVID- 19 due to the crisis created in local community of food provision, loneliness and other need for practical support, it remains to be seen if this becomes a lasting communicative relationship. Local and national authorities seem to limit their collaborative efforts with TSA corps-based social practices to times of crisis. The reactive nature of the TSA corps-based social practices might be part of the reason for this limited interaction, but there are grounds to believe that the faith-based nature of the practices contributes to the lack of cooperation, based on previous findings described in this thesis.

In Article 1, I mention a diaconal framework that includes both rights-based and faith-based perspectives. The VAP conceptual framework was initially presented as a way to frame diaconal thinking and action (Nordstokke, 2021; WCC and ACT Alliance, 2022). I have taken this further and will now suggest practice and community development action based on this framework.

As part of a diaconal response, diaconal actors and community developing projects have a focus towards building community and household resilience by empowerment, transformation and reconciliation (LWF, 2009). These aspects become keys in understanding how to act based on the dual TSA intentional mission statement that includes both evangelism and social action as described in chapter 3. Referencing the generic professionalism that includes both experience and methods based on practitioner's faith, TSA corps-based social practice development dwells within a diaconal sphere (Sander et al., 2016). In Article 2, the aim for the development is to not just better practice for the people looking for support, it also

provides TSA and TSA practitioners at the corps level a language to explain their actions and the role of faith, framed within a professional context, without diminishing the faith structure. This could help TSA corps-based social practices to navigate a secular context by defining their actions as they cooperate professional social-work, and by this preventing faith from becoming marginalised.

6.3.1 The VAP practice development tool

Based on the need for learning and key concepts distilled from the material, I am proposing a way for congregational social practices to develop knowledge and support based on the diaconal conceptual framework “Vocatio-Advocatio-Provocatio”, VAP. I am here expanding the existing VAP framework as it is presented in the theoretical part of this thesis to assist TSA corps-based social practices to define their diaconal space. I have used the original concept in the VAP conceptual framework to describe core elements of practice development in a faith-based context and how these can be expanded to include the practice development aspect and wanted outcomes. As a suggested framework, it is not intended to be a quick fix, but a way to illustrate what areas and themes could contribute to relevant practice development. Areas needing more efforts and focus, identified in my research, such as growing knowledge, more efficient co-operation with external professional partners and developing a longer-term proactive engagements and projects, can benefit from the reflective and knowledge enhancing aspects of the proposed VAP practice development tool in figure 5 below.

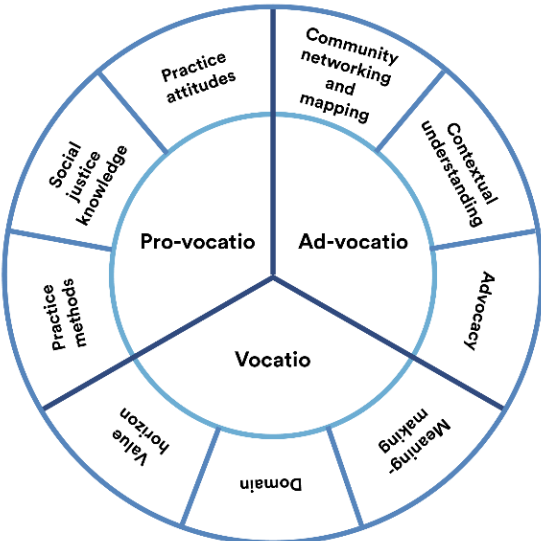


Figure 5: Inner wheel of VAP practice development circle

Placing the three original concepts “Vocatio-Advocatio-Provocatio” in the inner wheel creates the core values of the diaconal practice on which actions and response should build. In the second wheel, as illustrated in Figure 5 below I have connected findings from my research material, all areas that need developing and extending. I have connected these areas of potential practice development with the core concepts in the conceptual framework in the inner wheel. The outcomes described in the outer wheel can be seen as goals or visions for a developed practice and ways for diaconal faith-based social practices to widen their reach as community justice seeking partners.

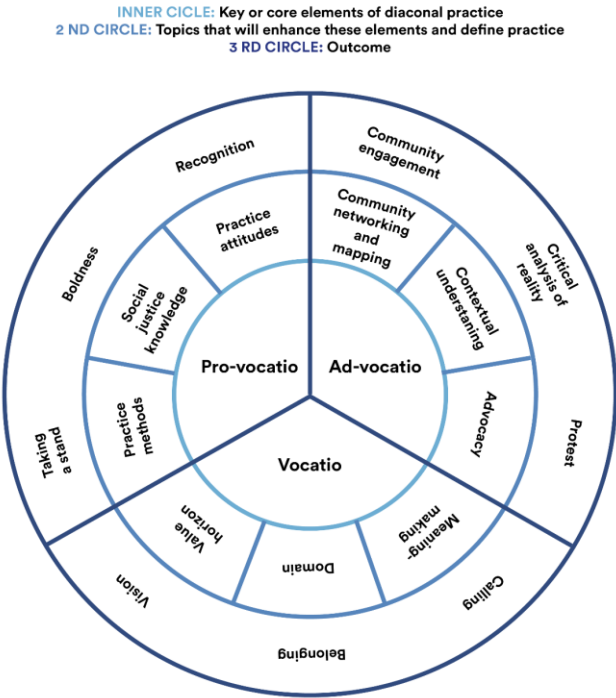


Figure 6: VAP practice development learning and outcomes

When using this model as a practice development tool, I suggest to do so in three steps. The framework described in Figure 7 should be read from the bottom, meaning that the levels build upon each other. All the levels indicate where in the practice the learning can take place to create changed behaviour and attitudes, with the last level describing a wanted outcome, rather than a fixed goal.

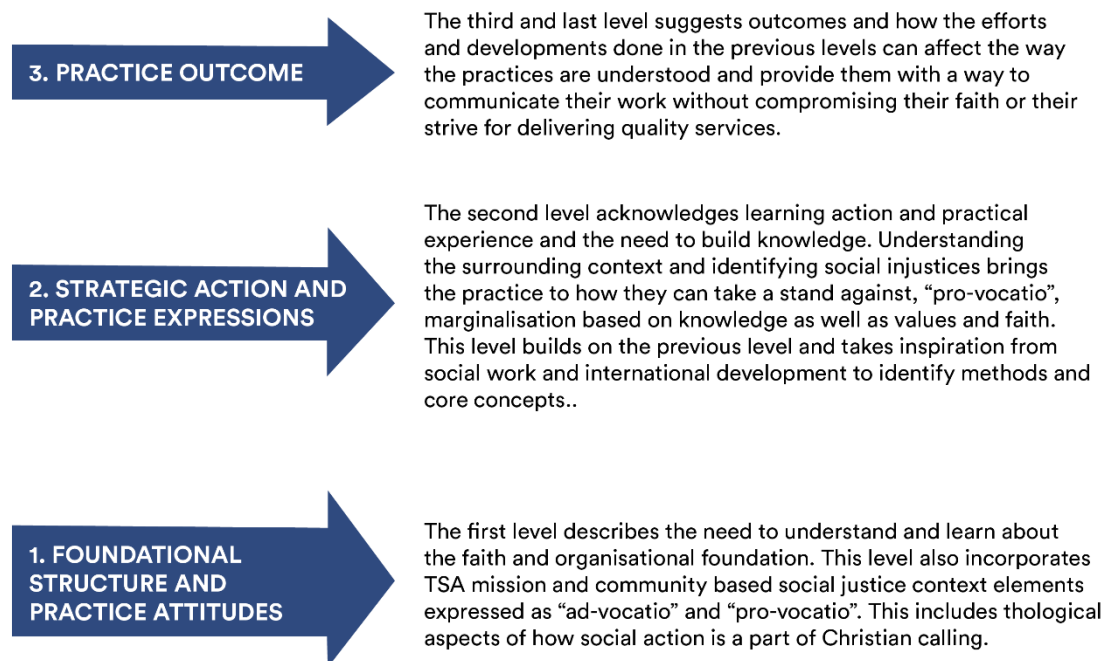


Figure 7: Learning process and levels

The first step in the framework creates the foundation for both faith and rights-based perspectives in the practice. Based on “vocatio”, a calling becomes the guiding and core principle of the practice’s development, and not just an inspiration but the motivation for the learning that is taken from the idea of support being a consequence of faith. This would imply more biblical and theological learning and understanding of how social support is part of the mission and identity of the church. This has previously been done successfully in other TSA contexts similar to the Norwegian organisation, resulting in a stronger diaconal identity for local expression as well as the overall organisation. For TSA, theological concepts such as “holy life” and sacramental living can assist such learning, as well as understanding attitudes represented by Jesus as he supported people. The rights perspectives inherent in the “advocatio” and “provocation” elements of the framework, build on the learning in the first step, but combine this with wider diaconal and social work rights-based perspective (WCC, 2022 and ACT Alliance, 2022). An increased focus on human rights and local structures (ACT Alliance, 2015; Haugen, 2014) will enhance the advocacy efforts (Alliance, 2016), as well as giving practitioners a broader language to speak when participating in conversations regarding local issues, basing their response on their specific identity and calling. The

“provocation” element will follow the advocacy efforts, as faith-based actors will find themselves wanting to respond in different ways to those in the public sphere. How to respond to the suffering of the migrating Roma population in Norway is one example where faith-based organisations and churches have taken a leading role and organised the response based on other values other than those that were represented in the public discourse, as described in chapter 3. The second level of strategic action is where external input becomes important, as well as acknowledging and building on methods already present in the practices. Having observed the four locations and how they work together and include people, the conclusion is that there is a requirement to strengthen this important aspect of representation and recognition, as recognised from Nancy Fraser’s parity social justice framework (Fraser, 2009). This means that any discussion and changes to strategic learning must include all practitioners, staff and volunteers alike in order to build a stronger practice (Wenger, 1998). As the practices demonstrate flexibility and adjusting to new and emerging themes, this learning must be ongoing and renewed to stay relevant. The last level of practice expressions is very much connected to the previous two levels and builds on that learning. This is where the practice makes conscious decisions regarding how they want to work, what methods they use and identify further needs. It is also in this step where the more secular input made possible in the previous learning can be framed and understood from a faith-based perspective by using various tools and methods available, such as the Faith-Based Facilitation (FBF) model (International, undated 1). This process will enhance the confidence of the practices to feel that their knowledge is not going beyond their capacity and the group learning stays true to their faith identity (Knecht, 2021). The wanted outcome is a local practice that feels that they have more relevant knowledge to provide more tailored support and increased confidence to support guests over time, together with their external partners. One important outcome will be how these practices can develop a language to speak to a secular society without being rejected or scrutinised due to lack of professionalism.

6.3.2 Assessing and evaluating

Practice development requires attention to assessment and evaluation of goals and targets for the service provided locally. In this dissertation, I have defined practice development as a facilitated process with an outcome of changed behaviour amongst the practitioners (Garbett & McCormack, 2002). This definition implies that if development is to become a cultural change, or a long-term commitment to change, a singular change or practice alteration on its own will not achieve this. Facilitating a process of change and reflection is key for

development to become efficient (McCormack & Garbett, 2003). Because of this aspect of development, assessing actions and evaluating outcomes becomes important to achieve change across TSA as a whole.

I am proposing that in addition to building knowledge and competence using the VAP framework levels, it is equally important to use them to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of the individual practice and to avoid goal displacement.

Instead of using the VAP framework as a step ladder for increased awareness, it can be used as a reflective circle to guide questions targeting core issues that are important to a particular practice/corps as a whole as illustrated in figure 8 below.

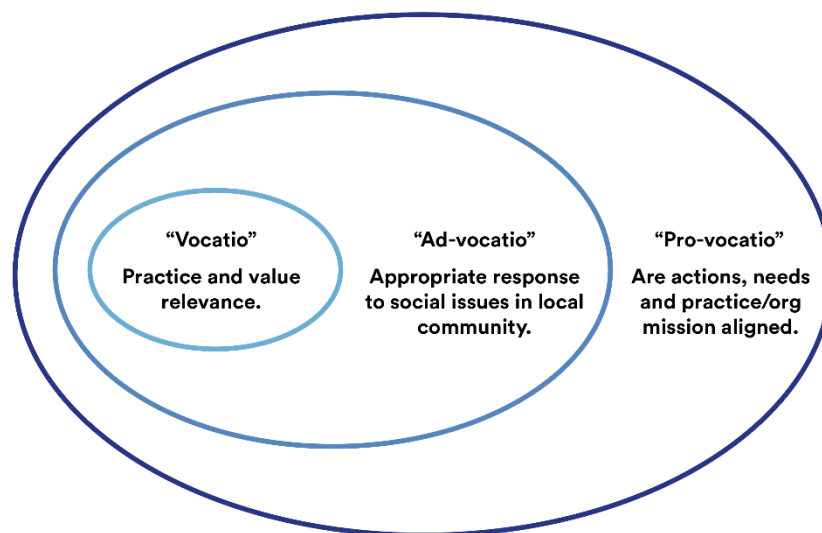


Figure 8: VAP evaluation framework

The reflective attitude already present in the practices can be helpful in these evaluating conversations. By acknowledging existing knowledge and the way that knowledge is reflected using spiritual activities and conversations, the “vocatio”, “advocatio” and “provoactio” part of the framework will become more than just words. Reflection and knowledge enhancement does not always need to come as formal input (Wenger, 1998). Reflections on issues resulting in a “learning by doing” attitude (Reese, 2011) attitude implies development is happening whilst interacting and experiencing issues and solutions. This reflection is crucial for the development of generic skills as part of any professional practice (De La Harpe & Radloff, 2000), as well as in individual cases to create new knowledge and tools to cope for practitioners, and is already prevalent, as I observed in practices. These reflections are recognisable as “double loop” reflective thinking. Professionals learn by reflecting on their

actions as the first loop. When then reflecting on issues in light of a value framework, such as using prayer and Bible stories as an inner framework (Chile & Simpson, 2004), this becomes the second loop. A double loop reflection involves values and norms and the social structure in which they are essential (Greenwood, 1998). Using “double loop reflections”, the practitioners could then see and understand both their capabilities, possibilities, and limitations. For reflection to become effective, an openness and wholeheartedness is necessary (Dewey, 1933) as well as for making sure that actions taken are “mission aligned” meaning in accordance with TSA’s overall mission. These two aspects might be what are the most discussed areas of faith-based practice, in that it may not be possible to be in a faith-based practice without it carrying preconceptions and ulterior motives. However, it can be said that openness must rely on “faith” in systems or structures and that wholeheartedness is well resonated in the Christian transformative aspect (Toh et al., 2017). The double loop reflective approach is closely linked to value inquiry. Value inquiry is a way for members of an organisation or workplace to respond when they are challenged. What triggers a value inquiry is often when the practitioners are faced with how they should act according to value framework they work within. In this way values are both negotiated and reflected upon in critical situations, revealing both possibilities and limitations (Espedal, 2019). Drawing from what practitioners expressed as values and connecting this to biblical concepts expressed in TSA core documents and theology and the diaconal core elements of empowerment, transformation and reconciliation, the ethical framework of “Kingdom ethics” (Gushee & Stassen, 2016) can be said to be the value horizon practitioners use to reflect and develop methods.

7. Concluding remarks

For an external observer TSA corps-based social work practices might look like any other charity-based practice, and you might not immediately notice that this is a faith-based practice when you enter the practice premises. The relative (in)visible topic of faith is closely connected to the Norwegian welfare historical and societal development and the role of the church and other faith-based charitable organisations. In the TSA ecclesiological tradition, the word diaconia is not widely used, but slogans such as “Soap, soup, salvation” and “Care for the whole person” and now more recently “strength for today, and hope for tomorrow” are ways to explain the diaconal tradition. In TSA tradition, faith is understood as part of a social practice; a way to cope with life on earth, to help face suffering and pain, as well as a way to glorify the Lord as creator (Salvation Army, 2010).

Using the TSA corps-based social practiced as a case, this project aims to contribute to a better understanding of practice development in faith-based social practices in a secular context. TSA corps-based social practice navigates between responding to needs in the local secular community and responding to the TSA mission statement. This study explores how TSA corps members navigate the double agenda of evangelisation and support provision, and on a more abstract level, it theorizes about how Christian social practices develop in a secular context. The first research question considered was “*How is Christian social practice developed in a secular context?*” and guided the investigation into the relationship between TSA as an organisation and the secular professional context they exist within. To better grasp how this is expressed in the practices the second research question “*How do TSA corps practitioners navigate tensions related to the double agenda of evangelisation and support provision?*” facilitated an in-depth study of the local corps-based social practices. The study argues that development of Christian social practice evolves in a conversation between three traditions; diaconia, social work and international development by contributing to how the practices navigate the tension between evangelisation and support work in TSA. The project is primarily adding to knowledge regarding the relationship between faith and spirituality (Fanuelson, 2014) and to diaconal practice development research (Stifoss-Hansen, 2014). The research questions also indicate that practice development in faith-based practices happens on several levels, individual, organisation and societal. The material collected for this thesis shows how faith both facilitates and enables development of practice methods and practice attitudes to do the support work at corps-level. It also reveals a need for more formal knowledge input to sustain quality and raise the professional approach in the practices.

It is viable to say, based on this project, that TSA corps-based social practices do navigate the tension of evangelism and giving support, but they do not compromise their faith as they do so. They see the practical support as a direct consequence of their faith, and as such, they do not limit evangelism to being only understood with spoken words, they include practical action in the term (Sherwood, 2002). TSA corps-based social practices navigate and adjust their support to the secular society according to their faith, rather than adjusting their faith to a secular society. Despite delivering social support as well as staying true to their faith identity, TSA corps-based social practices have the potential for a bigger reach and a more solid professional foundation as is discussed in all three articles.

In this thesis, I suggest that there is more to these practices than a first impression might imply. A surprising use of faith to produce learning material as well as generically develop practice methods has proven that although there is a negative bias towards religious actors serving vulnerable and marginalised individuals, this study shows that the picture is more complex than the current discussions might indicate. TSA professional social work is recognised and in part seen as contributing to structural change and policy development, but the corps-based context is currently an unused potential contributor. How to move from the reactive and emergency support structure that dominates the service today, to becoming a discussion partner for structural societal change is found in not just the need for more knowledge and professionalism, but also a recognition of faith and faith identity as relevant factors in these discussions, something I hope this project has contributed to.

7.1 Implications for practice

This study has shown that faith is not contradictory to having a professional attitude and role in society. I believe there are lessons in this study as to how the acceptance of faith as part of a multi-layered society must become more visible. Adopting a more inclusive approach to faith in societal discussions and policy creation might contribute with more relevant perspectives than is currently the case, something to which I believe this study contributes.

7.2 Limitations

Limitations in this study are primarily the relatively low contributions from volunteers in relation to employed staff. This was essentially due to the COVID 19 pandemic and the closing down of practices on and off for nearly two years, the majority of the project time allocated for this study. I believe that a more in-depth study of the volunteer role and their

relation to the faith aspect could have contributed with some valuable comparative elements due to the diversity found in that group.

Another limitation of the study is the manner in which the material was gathered. I had hoped to work with the practices over time to evaluate how knowledge input and reflective discussions affected practice development. The production of the practice development tool as part of my discussion is a result of my enduring wish to contribute with practical knowledge to the practices. The possibility to come back to the practices and present my initial findings was perhaps the most valuable part of my analytical process and doing more of that would have strengthened the study's reliability and relevance.

7.3 Future research

There is a need for more research on congregational social practices from Norwegian and European perspectives as recommended in the literature review. I am suggesting that there is an untapped potential for these practices to become more prominent community partners in times of crisis as was experienced as this thesis research work came to its conclusion. The “turn to religion” experienced in international development could be an interesting study to investigate those conclusions in this research in more detail.

More research is needed to explore the role that a faith identity at the corps level plays in social outreach and how this can be effectively channelled to support proactive responses as well as investigating the barriers to faith expression within contracted services and how this is navigated.

I would suggest that there is need for more research to be conducted with informal and non-professional social practices as they support people with complex needs, such as victims of human trafficking. As mentioned earlier, this was my original intention, but again, due to unforeseen and societally challenging times during this research time period, that topic became less prominent. However, building on this research and the findings with regards to faith as part of developing social work methods, such as study into human trafficking and the related MSHT programme could contribute important information regarding a hidden group in society with limited access to public health and social care.

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Article 1

Brooke, P. (2023). Professionalism and faith: a case study of Salvation Army congregational social work in Norway. *Journal of Comparative Social Work*, 18(1), 5–33.
<https://doi.org/10.31265/jcsw.v18i1.571>

Abstract

This article explores the role of faith in congregational social work. It investigates The Salvation Army (TSA), an international Christian church that provides social services in local communities. TSA's congregational social work represents a specific case, in which spiritual values dictated by faith and social work principles are explicitly intertwined. In this article, a community of practice (CoP) perspective is used to analyse empirical data from a multiple-case study of TSA congregations. The article concludes that faith can be part of a professional ethos, by adding important values to a holistic understanding of social work.

Article 2

Anti Human Trafficking: The Salvation Army and Advocacy

Brooke, Petra, PhD Candidate

Haugen, Hans Morten, Professor

(To be published in Diaconia- Journal for the Study of Christian Social Practice)

This article explores The Salvation Army's (TSA) faith-based modern slavery and human trafficking work by reviewing TSA's foundational and strategic documents, with a particular investigation of the TSA's theology of holy life. This article explores how TSA conducts its work and how theology and social actions, in this case anti trafficking work, are interconnected. Using document analysis on theological documents, practice guiding documents and strategic documents from the TSA, the article presents a case study on two levels: TSA as a case and TSA in Norway as a case within a case. The article enables better understanding of the link between TSA's theology and the consequences of the integrated mission of TSA.

Article 3

Discursive constructions of international and domestic social outreach in the Salvation Army: parallel worlds or an integrated mission?

Under review, *Journal Religion and Development*

Petra Brooke and Emma Tomalin

Abstract

Developing from its early roots in the poverty-stricken slums of London, taken as a whole, the contemporary TSA social outreach environment is complex and multi-layered with a wide range of ‘service delivery’/‘social work’ and ‘development’ activities, both ‘reactive’ and ‘proactive’, across different regions globally from those co-ordinated locally at the corps level to those co-ordinated centrally at the international, territorial and divisional levels. While its international development work and centrally organised contracted services involve trained professionals operating in formalised sectors and who may not share TSA’s faith identity, social work at the corps level is more informal and responsive, involving TSA officers and volunteers, most of which do not have professional social work qualifications, and many of whom wish to include a faith dimension as a central part of their outreach activities. We have identified several intersecting binaries that shape the TSA social outreach environment and which there have been efforts to unite as part of ‘integrated mission’. Two of these have been debated since the early days of TSA (i.e., social versus religious goals and reactive versus proactive approaches). Another is more recent (i.e., domestic versus international outreach) and is emerging as an important point of debate as TSA became part of the international aid system.

In this paper we focus on the binary between domestic versus international outreach since this is increasingly viewed as a relevant topic in the academic literature as well as in the TSA which is lately is beginning to consider how it decolonises its approach. We address two main research questions. First, does the discursive construction of a particular problem and intervention as community development rather than service delivery/social work, and vice versa, point towards different practices and outcomes? Second, how is this question being addressed by TSA and with what effect for the task of integrating its different domains of activity? Our empirical data illustrates that community development and service delivery/social work are not just different terms for the same thing but that they point to different practices and outcomes. Our findings suggest that as TSA develops its approach to ‘integrated mission’ that the binary between domestic and international social outreach is critically examined.

Appendix

1. Contract between researcher and research location.



Avtale om samarbeid i forskning mellom VID vitenskapelige høgskole ved Stipendiat Petra Kjellén Brooke og Frelsesarmeen i ... ved korpseleder

Avtalen omhandler samproduksjon av forskningsmateriale i forbindelse med PHD prosjektet «**Identifying forced labour victims- a Salvation Army (diaconal) response to a migration issue.**» (Se vedlegg 1)

Tidsrammen for samproduksjon av forskningsmateriale er åtte uker, med mulighet for justering på bakgrunn av sykdom eller andre uforutsette hendelser. (se vedlegg 2)

Alle deltakere i prosjektet får et invitasjonsbrev med informasjon om prosjektet og de må undertegne et samtykkeskjema som skal leveres til forsker før materiale produksjonen begynner. Samtykkeskjema skal regulere anonymitet, frivillig deltakelse, muligheter for å trekke seg samt beskrive oppbevaring av materiell under og etter materiale produksjonen. (se vedlegg 3 og 4)

Denne avtalen regulerer følgende forplikter for forsker og deltakerlokasjon.

Forpliktelse for forsker:

- Sørge for at det foreligger samtykke fra alle deltakere.
- Sørge for at korpset har nok informasjon før, under og etter materialproduksjonen.
- Legge til rette for refleksjonsgrupper og intervjuer.
- Betale for egne reiser til og fra feltstudier.
- Dele nødvendig og relevant informasjon med lokasjonen i etterkant av materialeproduksjonen.
- Legge til rette for presentasjon av funn for deltakere, for å sikre korrekt tolking og forståelse av utsagn og informasjon.
- Sørge for nødvendig kreditering innenfor anonymitetsrammen.

Forplikter for korpset:

- Sørge for lokaler for intervjuer, refleksjonsgrupper og observasjon.
- Hjelp til med praktisk tilrettelegging av gjennomføring.
- Rekruttering av deltakere til prosjektet.
- Gjennomføring av avtalt prosjektinnhold.

Sted og dato:

Korpseleder

Stipendiat Petra Kjellén Brooke

2. Consent form informant's corps level and TSA leadership.

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

”Salvation Army corps as a relevant faith based actor in human trafficking response.”

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet dels er å lære mer om hvordan Frelsesarmeen kan ta til seg kunnskap for å bedre møte nye grupper og utfordringer som dere møter i deres korpsbaserte arbeid.

I dette skrevet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Jeg ønsker med denne studien å:

- Få en bedre forståelse for hvordan korps kan møte kravet og ønsket fra samfunnet om omsorg og hjelp til sårbare mennesker ved å undersøke hvordan læring og kunnskap kan endre og styrke praksis.
- Bruke eksisterende verktøy for å øke kunnskap og kompetanse blande ansatte og frivillige på korpset for å bedre kunne hjelpe målgruppen for studien.

Dette er et doktorgradsprosjekt som er ferdig i November 2022. Din deltakelse er ønsket i løpet av vår/tidlig sommer 2020.

Min (foreløpige) problemstilling som jeg ønsker å finne svar på er følgende:

What builds competence in Salvation Army corps based social ministry?

- *Using narratives of victims of human trafficking to build a reflective and competent practice.*

Se vedlegg Invitasjonsbrev for mer utfyllende beskrivelse av prosjektet.

De opplysninger som brukes i dette prosjektet vil bli hentet inn via individuelle intervjuer, gruppesamtaler og deltakende observasjon. Opplysninger som blir samlet inn er ment for å brukes i dette prosjektet og vil bli anonymisert. Opplysninger og kunnskap som blir samlet vil også brukes i undervisning og presentasjoner som omhandler prosjektet.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

Petra Brooke er sammen med VID vitenskapelige høgskole er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Ditt korps er valgt ut da dere, ved ansatt på korpset, har beskrevet at dette er en gruppe som dere er i kontakt med gjennom deres korpsbaserte sosiale arbeid. Derfor bes du som del av dette arbeidet å bidra med dine erfaringer og din kunnskap inn i dette prosjektet. Alle ansatte

og frivillige i det korpsbaserte sosiale arbeidet få denne henvendelsen. Hvis du er interessert vil du også kunne melde din interesse for å delta i individuelt intervju.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

- Hvis du ønsker å delta vil dette innebære at jeg kommer og deltar i arbeidet ved korpset og gjennomfører intervjuer og gruppesamtaler med mål om å styrke arbeidet. Jeg vil også både observere og snakke med alle som er del av arbeidet. Jeg kommer å benytte meg av notater og ev innspilling av uformelle samtaler i denne delen.
- Som del av dette prosjektet kommer jeg å gjennomføre noen individuelle intervjuer. De som skal bli intervjuet blir spurt om å delta. Dette intervjuet vil ta ca 60 min. Disse intervjuene vil bli tatt opp på bånd.
- Alle som ønsker kan også delta i et gruppeintervju/ samtale hvor vi sammen prøver å finne noen svar på spørsmål som jeg har. Dette vil ta ca 1,5 timer. Disse samtalene vil bli tatt opp på bånd.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykke tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle opplysninger om deg vil da bli anonymisert. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

- Opplysningene som samles inn vil bli behandlet og lest av meg som prosjektansvarlig samt mine to veiledere ved VID vitenskapelige høgskole, Marta Kutra Struminska og Hans Morten Haugen.
- Alle opplysninger vil bli anonymisert, jeg vil ikke spørre om navn eller andre personlige opplysninger i intervju eller observasjons situasjoner. Det er kun din kunnskap og erfaring som er viktig for prosjektet. Det vil således ikke bli registrert noen personlige opplysninger eller stedsopplysninger om deg eller korpset.
- I den ferdige projektrapporten vil det kun presenteres funn som omhandler kunnskap og læring, ingen personlige opplysninger vil publiseres.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes i November 2022. Etter prosjektperioden vil deler av materialet arkiveres for ev videre studier. Disse opplysningene vil da være oppbevart på VID vitenskapelige høgskole.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra VID vitenskapelige høyskole har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

- Senter for diakoni, verdier og profesjonell praksis ved Petra Brooke.
Petra.Brooke@vid.no
- Vårt personvernombud: personvernombud@vid.no
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, på epost (personverntjenester@nsd.no) eller telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen

Prosjektansvarlig
(Forsker/veileder)

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet [*sett inn tittel*], og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- å delta i individuelt intervju
- å delta i gruppeintervju
- å være del av observasjons studie

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet, ca. November 2020

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

3. Consent form and information to staff community services and international development UK and Norway.

Are you interested in taking part in the research project
“Reaction and Pro action in a faith-based justice seeking practice”
- A study of corps based social practice ministry in The Salvation Army Norway.”

Purpose of the project

You are invited to participate in a PhD research project where the main purpose is to investigate the intersection between a professional social work ethos and a faith-based social work ethos and what guides Salvation Army practice development as they give support to vulnerable people.

The project will further explore how a corps can professionalise their services, and at the same time staying true to their mission.

The following three questions are currently guiding the project.

- What are the core elements of TSA congregational social practice directed towards support of human trafficking victims?
- What is the role of faith in development of TSA congregational social practice?
- How do members of TSA congregations’ manoeuvre between faith-based logic and professional logic when developing practices?

For more information regarding the project, please see the attached short project summary.

You are specifically asked to contribute to one of the articles, one of three, in the project. The working title for the article is “Development or community-based social service? Learning across international and local approaches to anti-human trafficking in The Salvation Army”. This article will examine the different use of language in TSA to refer to its international social service work as ‘development’ and its local community-based work through churches as ‘corps based social service’, with a focus on anti-human trafficking activities. What is the impact of the discursive construction of a particular problem and intervention as development rather than social service and vice versa? Are these just different terms for the same thing or do they point to different practices and outcomes? Drawing on interviews with corps based social workers in Norway, whose work can be seen as contributing the anti-human trafficking strategy of TSA, as well as key individuals coordinating corps base social service in Norway and the UK, we seek to better understand how corps based social service is defined and experienced by those participating in it. We supplement these with interviews with the individuals involved in the coordination of the international development activities of TSA in Norway and the UK, again with a focus on AHT activities, to understand how ‘development’ is understood in TSA. Finally, we examine the extent to which learning from TSA development practice could be usefully applied at the corps level, to address gaps identified in our interviews with corps based social workers.

The findings presented in the articles will contribute to a discussion in the extended abstract with an aim to suggest development strategies for faith-based informal social work practices.

The discussion will include topics such as faith and values as well as professional practice social working tools, and how these aspects and approaches contribute or hinder practice development. The discussion will include approaches and aspects of my findings that facilitates a reflection how corps-based practices could benefit from being seen in an international development and religion perspective and if this can provide valuable insight and tools for an appropriate practice development. The discussion will conclude with a faith inspired diaconal development framework for corps based social work practices building on the findings and analysis of the material in the study.

Which institution is responsible for the research project?

VID Specialised University in Oslo is responsible for the project (data controller).

Why are you being asked to participate?

You have been purposefully selected to participate in this study based on your current role in the Salvation Army. There are 21 people selected to participate in in depths interviews, another 9 to participate in focus group reflection. People selected are either working as officers or social workers at corps level, are volunteers at corps level, part of Salvation Army leader group in Norway, advisors and specialist in community based social outreach and employees working with development work in Norway and United Kingdom and Ireland Salvation Army Territory. The inclusion of a UK perspective have come as a need for a partly comparative analysis of organisational structures and strategies has become clear as the project has developed.

What does participation involve for you?

- You are asked to take part in a semi structured group interview with two people present, your self and a person in a equivalent position in either UK or Norway Salvation Army.
- The interview will take about 1 hour and will be conducted by myself and Dr Emma Tomalin from Leeds University, the language will be English.
- The interview will be conducted via Zoom online.
- The questionnaire will be attached to this letter to inform you of the questions we would like to ask you.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified here and we will process your personal data in accordance with data protection legislation (the GDPR).

- The collected data will be stored on a secure VID research server, locked away/encrypted.
- The recording will be deleted after transcription. Transcription will be done by a recommended person used by VID specialised University.
- The project leader (Petra Brooke) will have access to the data during the whole project period. Supervisors will have access to transcribed data only by demand.

- I will replace your name and contact details with a code. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data»
- No personal data regarding any participants in the study will be published in any form or publication.
- Salvation Army departments will be named in the material published in connection with this project.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The planned end date of the project is 1 of December 2022. Recordings will be deleted after this date. Some of the material collected for this project, such as anonymised transcribed interviews and analysis of material will be stored in a secure research database at VID specialised University for potential further use.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with VID specialised University, Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project meets requirements in data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Petra Brooke- projectleader (petra.brooke@vid.no)
- Marta Strumiska Kutra- Main supervisor (marta.strumiska-kutra@vid.no)
- Our Data Protection Officer: personvernombud@vid.no

If you have questions about how data protection has been assessed in this project, contact:

- Data Protection Services, by email: (personverntjenester@sikt.no) or by telephone: +47 53 21 15 00.

Yours sincerely,

Petra K. Brooke

Project Leader

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project “Reaction and Pro action in a faith-based justice seeking practice” - A study of corps based social practice ministry in The Salvation Army Norway.” and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate in group interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end of the project.

(Signed by participant, date)

4. NSD approval



[Meldeskjema](#) / ["Reaction and Pro action in a faith-based justice seeking practice" - A s...](#) / Vurdering

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

Referansenummer

632797

Vurderingstype

Standard

Dato

03.04.2023

Prosjekttittel

"Reaction and Pro action in a faith-based justice seeking practice" - A study of corps based social work in The Salvation Army Norway.

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

VID vitenskapelige høyskole / Fakultet for teologi, diakoni og ledelsesfag / Fakultet for teologi, diakoni og ledelsesfag Oslo

Prosjektansvarlig

Petra Brooke

Prosjektperiode

01.09.2019 - 01.07.2023

Kategorier personopplysninger

Alminnelige

Lovlig grunnlag

Samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 01.07.2023.

[Meldeskjema](#)

Kommentar

Data Protection Services has assessed the change registered on 03.04.2023

The period for processing personal data has been extended until 01.07.2023.

If it later becomes necessary to process personal data for a longer period, then it may be necessary to inform your participants.

We will follow up the progress of the project at the new planned end date to determine whether the processing of personal data has been concluded.

Contact person: Gry Henriksen

Good luck with the rest of the project!

5. Interview guide individual interviews corps level.

Appendix 5

Interview questions for semi structured individual interviews with practitioners in corps-based social practices

Aim: To gather enough material for analysis of the local salvation army social ministry I wanted to talk to staff employed by the Army to do such work. I shode to talk to employees rather than volunteers to ask about internal structures that support or hinder their work and practice development. Their role as diaconal leaders are also of importance for the project.

Invitation letter: The participants receive an invitation by e mail with description of the project and consent form attached. They are asked to contribute because of their position in the organisation as well as their experiences.

Interview starts with informal conversation regarding the project, questions the participants may have and establishing an end time for the interview.

- What is your relation to the project/ initiative/service?
- How long have you been doing this? (volunteering or working)
- What is your work background?
- What is your motivation for participating in this project/initiative/service?
- What are your tasks as you are part of this project/initiative?

- Can you identify different groups that are coming in?
- Can you say something about if the different groups have different needs?
- How is your services sensitive to different groups?

- Can you tell me what you know about modern slavery/ forced labour/exploitation at the work place?
- Do you have any information or thoughts about the people coming in here and if they are vulnerable to (modern slavery) forced labour/ work exploitation in any form?

If yes:

- Can you tell me more about who they are?
- How do you identify this group?
- Why do you think they are vulnerable?
- (For what form of modern slavery/exploitation do you think they are vulnerable?)
- If you understand that someone is exploited, do you do anything special/give any special services?

If no:

- Do you think that there are victims in your town/local area?
- Why do you think you do not see this specific group?

- How does the Salvation Army provide you with information and support regarding your work?
- Have you had any specific training or courses relating to working with vulnerable people?
- How do you recruit volunteers?
- What do you look for as you recruit?
- Can you describe a “good volunteer”
- How do you train your staff and volunteers today?
- If you are faced with a problem that you do not know the answer to, how do you solve that?
- What “tools” or guidelines do you use in training and in your daily work as you meet with guests?
- What knowledge do you use to do this work?
- What knowledge would you like to better support the target group?
- In your opinion, what services do you think is necessary to help this group?
- Do you feel that you do enough to support this group?
 - o If yes- elaborate
 - o If no- elaborate
- What is your experience of how you learn as a group?
- Do the group you work with ask for knowledge about the people they meet?
- Do you feel equipped to deal with issues like human trafficking in your service?
- Do you ever find your self in situations where you get a feeling of hopelessness?
 - o If yes- when and why?
- How many people use this service?
- How often do you provide this kind of service?
- What is your general thoughts about the service provided?

Closing the interview.

1. Interview guide Focus Group Reflections 1 corps level.

6. Focus group reflection 1, conversation guide

Appendix 6

Focus group reflection conversation 1 (Snapshot K)

Focus group reflection conversation using the Faith Based Facilitation model:



Practice snapshot: (30 min) (ta ned til 5 til 6 spørsmål)

1. Event or issue:
 - a. Have I understood the situation correctly?
 - b. What have I missed? Explain
 - c. Is there anything in the snapshot you react to? Why?
 - d. Are every time the same or is this snapshot of your work not representative?
2. Describe and analyse
 - a. Thinking about this snapshot of your reality and your work, is there anything that stand out as an issue for you as you see it here? (be sure not reflect over this just yet, limit to two or three issues) (in case of silence, mention possibilities for privacy, conversation and identification)
 - b. Can you identify faith expressions in this snapshot?
3. Reflect and evaluate
 - a. The issue that was mentioned in the last question- could you elaborate on that, why and how is this an issue?
 - b. Is there anyone that can think of how this can be done differently?
 - c. Can anyone say why you should do it differently.
 - d. What would Jesus think about this issue?

AHT narrative: (30 min)

1. Event and issue
 - a. What do you see as you read this narrative?
 - b. Is there anything in the narrative you have encountered before?
2. Describe and analyse
 - a. What are the main issues here according to you?
 - b. Would you want any additional information, and if so, what?
 - c. Can you tell me how you perceive this person?
3. Reflect and evaluate

- a. If this man came in here, to your café, what would you do?
- b. Is this a victim of trafficking or something else?
- c. Why is he/is he not a victim?
- d. How do you feel when you read this narrative?
- e. What can you do?
- f. What can The Salvation Army do?
- g. What would Jesus do?

Action plan: (30 min)

4. Decide and plan

- a. How can the practice, as we looked at it earlier, be helpful to the person in the narrative?
- b. If you were to change anything, what would you change?
- c. Can you decide to make this change or is there another structure that need to be involved to make the change?

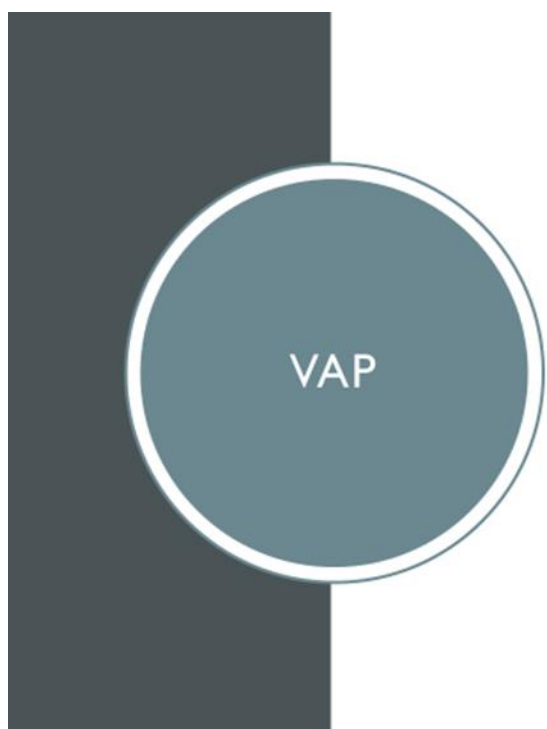
5. Act

- a. Who need to be part of the change?
- b. What do you need to do to make the change happen?
- c. When should the change happen?
- d. When will you evaluate the change?

7. Focus group reflection 2, conversation guide

Appendix 7

1. Reflections regarding central elements of the VAP model.



A dark grey vertical bar on the left contains a light blue circle with a white border. Inside the circle, the letters "VAP" are written in white.

- **Vocatio**- kall og motivasjon
- **Advocatio**- å snakke på vegne av andre
- **Provocatio**- ta stilling og arbeide for langsiktig endring

Analysen viser at KSA er **sterkt** i fht til Vocatio, driver advocatio **til viss del** men er ikke veldig bevisst på hvordan dette kan brukes, og driver provocatio i **en form av** stille protest.

Hvorfor er det slik og hvordan bidrar de fire sentrale elementene til dette?

Dette blir egentlig hovedbolken av min oppgave og de tre artiklene skal være med å belyse dette samt beskrive og til viss del foreslå endringer eller endringsmønstre.

2. Reflection regarding intital findings from participatory observations, individual interviews and focus groups.



A dark grey vertical bar on the left contains a white-bordered box with the text: "FLERE TANKER UT FRA ANALYSEN AV INDIVIDUELLE INTERVJUER OG FOKUS GRUPPER".

Gjæstfrihet og medfølelse og relasjonsbygging som dominerende faktorer	Praksisen er forankret i tro og kall	Generelt tilbud til alle som kommer, ingen blir avvist
Møter behov der og da (reaktivt arbeid)	Erfaring som viktigste kompetanse bygger	Sammensatt gruppe som arbeider, sammensatt kompetansenivå
Få formelle læringsarenaer for praksisen samlet	Begrenset samhandling med nettverk om tema, mer om praktisk gjennomføring (finnes unntak i materialet)	Begrenset proaktiv aktivitet, dvs langsiktig arbeid (finnes unntak i materialet)
	Begrenset bruk eller medvitende om egen kunnskap og relevans (finnes noen få unntak i materialet)	

3. Further need for knowledge and clarifications

3TEMA JEG TRENGER MER INFORMASJON/REFLEKSJON OM

- Hvordan jobber dere i nettverk med andre i lokalmiljøet?

Hvem, hvorfor og i hvilke situasjoner jobber dere med andre?

Hvilke situasjoner kunne vært gjort i samarbeid med andre?

Hvordan, hvem og hvorfor bygger dere nettverk?

Hva er de største utfordringene men å jobbe i lokale nettverk?

- Stemmer det at det er en overvekt av de reaktive (umiddelbare/kortsiktige) handlingene i deres arbeid?

Hvis ja, hvorfor er det slik?

Hvis nei, fortell!

Hadde det vært mulig å gjøre noe mer?

- Beskriv forskjellen mellom hvordan dere jobber med felts sårbare familier og personer i sårbare situasjoner som utnyttelse eller kriminelle handlinger?

8. Interview guide group interview Community directors UK and Norway.

Appendix 8

Interview questions for Directors of Corps based social outreach: TSA Norway and UKI Territories.

1. Introduce our project and explain why we want to talk to them 2.

Ask them to clarify their roles and where they sit within TSA

3. What is corps based social work and how does it fit with the global remit of TSA, sociological and theologically?

PROMPTS

- Probe the different terms used to talk about 'corps based social work'. - Is there a coordinator of corps based social work at the international HQ? Does every country have this role?
- What does corps based social work look like in the global south? - Is corps based social work in the global south more likely to be called 'development'?
- What does 'development' mean in The Salvation Army? How is it defined? Sociologically? Theologically?

4. Understanding the nature of corps based services in UK/RI and Norway, and where anti-human trafficking work is located:

PROMPTS

- Can you explain how anti-human trafficking work operates at the corps level? How are the corps in your territory involved with anti-trafficking work? Do you know if there is a national anti-trafficking strategy in your territory? If yes, how is this affecting how the corps are working?
- What do you know about the international MSAHT anti trafficking strategy?
- Can you describe if and how the population accessing corps-based services has changed in the last ten years? Do they share the faith position of TSA?
- Can you describe who the users are (gender, ethnicity, age) and what social challenges they face.
- Can you describe the actions taken at corps-based level to meet the needs you described?
- What role does faith play for those providing services and those receiving them?

- How do corps based services fit with TSA mission?
- Can you describe what two actions are mostly used by the corps to meet emergent needs?
- Can you describe two actions taken to meet needs in a long-term perspective?

5. Probe differences between the language used to describe corps based social work and activities in the Global South, and the ways in which applying a development lens could make a difference to corps based social work:

PROMPTS

- In what ways is corps based social work predominantly reactive and charity based rather than long term and proactive, and why?
- To what extent does corps based social work involve advocacy and policy building, and why?
- What is motivating, provoking, and governing the advocacy efforts done by the corps? (local knowledge, TSA strategies, collaborations ...?)
- Why do you think the work done in the global south by TSA is referred to as development (it aims to be long term and proactive, and to engage in advocacy/policy)?
- Why do you think local level work and international work is viewed differently by the TSA?

6. Are any methods or approaches being used at the Corps level that you would consider to be 'development' approaches?

PROMPTS

- To what degree is the FBF method used in your territory and on corps level?
- Can you describe how this model is currently being implemented? - Are there any efforts done by TSA to enhance knowledge or competence in the corps based social work?

9. Interview guide group interview international development staff UK and Norway.

Appendix 9

Interview guide international development staff Norway and UKI

- Introduce our project and explain why we want to talk to them
 - Ask them to clarify their roles and where they sit within TSA
 - How is the anti-human trafficking response organized?
- Ask them to clarify how the anti-trafficking response is organized domestically and internationally in their country and how this sits within TSA international development work.
- Ask if they played a role in designing TSA international AHT strategy. - How does the international strategy affect what happens at the local level? - I noticed on the website for UK/Ireland that AHT is not listed as a community/corps level activity. Is it viewed as such in Norway?
- Ask about the Fighting Freedom documents (2020) and who they directed at (local and international?)
- Ask them if they played a role in designing this strategy.
4. What does 'development' mean in The Salvation Army?
- How is it defined? Sociologically? Theologically?
- How is TSA 'development' response organization?
5. What does it mean for TSA response to AHT to be classified under 'development' when it applied to Global South projects and for other language to be used to describe it at the Corps level?
- In what way is the work done in TSA Global South AHT projects seen as 'development' and how is the approach here similar or different to work at the corps level?
- Probe the distinction between reactive and proactive/advocacy, and links to broader social justice framings.
- Does the 'action framework' apply to both levels?
- Do 'development' activities in TSA differ from other approaches (e.g. faith based community social work)? Or is it just the term used to refer to TSA work in the Global South? What do they think the implications of this are (i.e. does it change what is done)?
- Does the NRM contract ever use the term development?
- Is the corps level response to modern slavery ever termed 'development'? - What language is used to talk about AHT work at the Corps level?
6. Are there any aspects of the 'development' approach taken by TSA that could improve outcomes at the corps level?
- E.g. Faith based facilitation

10. Interview guide Leaders TSA Norway.

Appendix 10

Semi-strukturert intervjuguide FA Ledelse Norge

- Hvor lenge har du jobbet i Frelsesarmeen
- Hva er det, hvorfor jobber du i frelsesarmeen?

- Hvilken rolle har et korps i frelsesarmeen?
- Hva definerer et korps?
- Hvem definerer hva et korps skal gjøre?
- Hva ville du sagt er primæroppgaven til et korps er?

- Hvordan kan du eller ønsker du å definere sosial rettferdighet?
- Hvilket ansvar har et korps for å utføre rettferdighetsarbeid i sitt lokale miljø?
- Hvordan tenker du at et kops kan respondere på et sosialt rettferdighetsspørsmål som menneskehandel?

- Hvordan jobber frelsesarmeen med praksisutvikling? Utvikling av ansatte eller fagområder osv.
- Kan du si noe om hva du tenker er det viktigste for praksisutvikling i frelsesarmeen?
- Vet du om noen utdanninger eller utviklingsredskaper som brukes i praksisutviklingen?
- Hva er den største hindringen for praksisutviklingen i Frelsesarmeen slik du ser det?

- Frelsesarmeen har lansert hva de kaller en «Accountabilty movement». Hvordan synes du dette har påvirket korpsenes arbeid? Eller har det påvirket korpsenes arbeid?
- Hvorfor er dette viktig for frelsesarmeen?

- Frelsesarmeen har lansert en nasjonal strategi for sin virksomhet. Kan du beskrive hvordan denne strategien er utviklet?

- Kan du nevne de ifølge deg viktigste verdiene for frelsesarmeen?
- Ifølge deg, er det noen verdier som har mindre betydning?

- Hvordan tror du en fra utenfor frelsesarmeen vil beskrive hva som er en viktig verdi for frelsesarmeen?

- Kan du beskrive hva tro er?
- Hvordan kommer dette til uttrykk i korpsenes arbeid?
- Kan du beskrive for meg hva som er forskjellen mellom verdier og trosuttrykk?

