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**Evaluating Contemporary Protestant Missions to Children
at Risk in South India: Investigating Foundations and
Principles for Future Christian Mission**

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**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
School of Divinity,
The University of Edinburgh**

October 2018

Abstract

The 2011 Indian Census indicates that children under the age of 18 constitute more than 400 million, and most of them are Children at Risk (CAR). This study suggests that the care and protection of children at risk is not a twentieth- or twenty-first-century secular enterprise but has precedents in Protestant missions in India from the late eighteenth century.

In the first section, the study focuses on evaluating contemporary Protestant mission contexts in India and a brief historical survey of Protestant missions to CAR in India through case studies. The evaluation concentrates on the implications of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) for the predominant Protestant models of mission in contemporary India – which may be summarised as child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy. The thesis argues that child care and protection is increasingly becoming secularised and professionalised. Moreover, with the emergence of new laws and with increasing vigilance from international and national agencies, and from Hindu fundamentalists, Christian mission to CAR is itself at risk. Under these circumstances, the study also investigates whether there is a transition from ideas of ‘saving’ CAR to ideas of protecting the human rights of CAR.

In the second section, this hypothesis is further substantiated by case studies of select Protestant churches and Christian NGOs engaging with CAR in the cities of Bangalore and Chennai. Using empirical data, it then claims that the predominant Protestant approaches of evangelism, compassion, and advocacy are still underdeveloped and inadequate primarily because the majority of caregivers working with children still perceive CAR as objects of their mission – an assumption that may be contrary to UNCRC (Articles 14 and 30). Further, it argues that the churches and agencies most active among CAR are from a ‘conservative’ background, who are often exclusively ‘spiritual’ and otherworldly in their concerns.

The final and most constructive section, based on the evaluations of the empirical data, seeks to recommend a preliminary theology of mission in and through the idea of ‘childness’ based on Matthew 18: 2-5, an idea developed by

Adrian Thatcher in the context of a theology of child participation. Based on these foundations, it suggests that UNCRC can be integrated as a set of principles for contemporary Christian missions with CAR in South India through a missiological process called 'dialogue,' emerging from a pluralistic Indian context. It further proposes that adults and children are to be perceived not as either independent (liberational) or dependent (paternalistic) agencies, but as interdependent agencies working together in God's mission. This thesis finally proposes basic principles for Christian mission to/for/with CAR – a multi-dimensional approach integrating CAR as subjects of God's mission and not just as objects.

Lay Summary

The 2011 Indian Census suggests that children under the age of 18 constitute more than 400 million, and most of them are Children at Risk (CAR). This study suggests that care and protection of children at risk is not merely a twentieth- or twenty-first-century secular enterprise, but has precedents in Protestant missions in India from the eighteenth century.

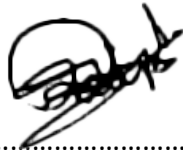
In the first section, the study focuses on evaluating contemporary Protestant mission contexts in India and a brief historical survey of Protestant missions to CAR in India through case studies. The evaluation concentrates on the implications of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) for the predominant Protestant models of mission in contemporary India – which may be summarised as child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy. The thesis argues that child care and protection is increasingly becoming secularised and professionalised. Moreover, with the emergence of new laws, vigilance from international and national agencies, and Hindu fundamentalists, Christian mission to CAR is itself at risk. Under these circumstances, the study also investigates whether there is a transition from ideas of ‘saving’ CAR to ideas of protecting the child rights of CAR.

In the second section, this hypothesis is further evidenced by case studies of selected Protestant churches and Christian NGOs engaging with CAR in the cities of Bangalore and Chennai. Using empirical data, I then substantiate that the predominant Protestant approaches of evangelism, compassion, and advocacy are still underdeveloped and inadequate primarily because the majority still perceive CAR as objects of their mission – an assumption that may be contrary to UNCRC (Articles 14 and 30).

In the final section, based on the evaluations of empirical data, I recommend a preliminary theology of mission in and through the idea of ‘childness’ based on Matthew 18: 2-5, in the context of a theology of child participation. Based on these theological foundations, I suggest that UNCRC can be integrated through proper dialogue as a set of principles for contemporary Christian missions with CAR in South India. I further propose that children and adults are to be perceived not as either independent or dependent agencies but as interdependent agencies working together in God’s mission. This thesis finally proposes basic principles for Christian mission to/for/with CAR – a multi-dimensional approach integrating CAR as subjects of God’s mission.

DECLARATION

I confirm that this work submitted for assessment is my own and expressed in my words. Any uses made within it of works of other authors in any form (e.g. quotation, ideas, figures, text and tables) are duly acknowledged at their point of use. A list of the references employed is included. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. S. S.', written over a dotted line.

Signed

Date: 30th October 2018

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Dedication

I

dedicate this thesis

to my wife Merlin Juliet Premila Phillips and my son Arpith Pratham Phillips

for their sacrificial support

and my 'special' youngest brother John Prabhu Phillips

for his love.

Abbreviations

ACLF	: Anti Child Labour Force
AG	: Assemblies of God
BJP	: Bharatiya Janata Party
CAR	: Children at Risk
CCCYC	: Churches' Council for Child and Youth Care
CNGO	: Christian Non-Governmental Organisation
CSI	: Church of South India
CWC	: Child Welfare Committee
ECI	: Evangelical Church of India
EFI	: Evangelical Fellowship of India
FAG	: First Assembly of God
FMPB	: Friends Missionary Prayer Band
GLC	: Grace Learning Centre
ICDS	: Integrated Child Development Programme
INGO/s	: International Non-Governmental Organisation/s
JJ Act	: Juvenile Justice Act
KCD	: Karnataka Central Diocese
KNH	: Kindernothilfe
MDG	: Millennium Development Goals
MCIP	: My City Initiative Project
MWCD	: Ministry of Women and Child Development
NGO/s	: Non-Governmental Organisation/s
NCPCR	: The National Council for Protecting of Child Rights
OL	: Operation Liberation
POCSO Act	: Prevention of Child Sexual Offenses Act
RSS	: Rashtriya Swamyamsevak Sangh
SDG	: Sustainable Development Goals
SPG	: Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts
SUI	: Scripture Union India
UNCRC	: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNDHR	: United Nations Declaration on Human Rights
VBS	: Vacation Bible School
WCC	: World Council of Churches
WVI	: World Vision India
YMCA	: Young Men's Christian Association

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Chapter 1. Introduction

According to the 2011 Indian Census, children under the age of 18 constitute more than one-third of the population, which is above 400 million children. Most of them are children at risk (CAR). This study recognises that, even though the category of 'Children at Risk' is a twentieth-century invention, the care and protection of children at risk is not a twentieth- or twenty-first-century secular enterprise but, rather, existed earlier. One example among many is the Christian work with CAR in India from as early as the eighteenth century.

This chapter first briefly explains the research context and defines the categories used in this research. It then describes the research questions undergirding this thesis and defines a few key terms used in this research. Finally, the structure and the scope of this thesis are briefly described.

1.1. Context and Aim of this Research

From the early eighteenth century, Protestant missions to CAR in India can be traced mostly through the involvement of missionaries in educational institutions. These institutions were seen to be providing a safe place in which various objectives of missionary work could be achieved, namely, imparting 'western' education, teaching moral values and promoting conversion to Christianity. These institutional forms of Christian mission to CAR are still prevalent in India.¹ However, with several new approaches emerging in the last decade, there is a clear need for the development of Christian principles and practices for CAR.² The existence of many Christian institutions such as orphanages, schools, and homes in India highlights these engagements. Hitherto, there has been a lack in the development of foundations and principles for Christian missions to CAR, and of a theological

¹Samuel Jayakumar, *Mission Reader: Historical Models for Wholistic Mission in the Indian Context* (Oxford, Delhi: Regnum International, ISPCK, 2002), 18–20.

² Some examples include community development by World Vision India (WVI) and Churches' Council for Youth and Child Care (CCCYC); child development centred projects through Compassion International India (until March 2017) and Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB); child advocacy such as in VIVA India and Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI); global partnerships and government; and Christian monitoring agencies, such as National Council of Churches of India (NCCI), EFI and Indian Missions Association (IMA)

critique of the role and validity of international and national monitoring agencies, as they engage in the contemporary Indian context.

Generally, contemporary Christian missions to CAR in India and in particular Protestant missions can be classified according to three models –

- child evangelism
- child compassion work
- child advocacy

In child evangelism, the primary motive is related to conversion. In child compassion work, mission is often focused on social engagements for holistic development. In child advocacy, issues concerning children are often related to lobbying on behalf of the oppressed and the marginalised at various levels. These approaches are obviously not mutually exclusive.

This thesis uses these models for a structured and appropriate evaluation and hence seeks to study why and how these approaches are negotiated and what possible motivations lie behind them. This study also attempts to identify some of the factors that are presenting new challenges for contemporary Christian mission to CAR.

In the last decade within the Protestant Christian groups, the considerable interest in and focus on CAR has also initiated a need for theological and missiological reflections, globally and in India.³

The aim of this research, therefore, is to seek to identify the factors that have eluded and truncated Christian mission to children at risk in India and then to investigate possible foundations for a theology of mission and appropriate principles for present and future Christian practice to engage with CAR. It is, of course, possible that there may be a theology or theologies of mission undergirding contemporary practices. However, there is not yet evidence of this in the existing surveys of Christian missiological reflections and practice, whether generally or

³ Since the year 2000 in India, several consultations and forums on Holistic Child Development (HCD), Child Theology Movement (CTM) and Children at Risk (CAR) initiated by VIVA India alongside CTM and Compassion International were conducted in India. This resulted in developing curriculums and programmes at various levels focused on HCD and CAR. For example, Ravi Tiwari, *New Initiative in BD Curriculum 2010*, accessed February 17, 2014. <http://senateofseramporecollege.edu.in/new-initiatives-bd-curriculum.pdf>; HCD Education, Curriculum Book for MA, MTh and PhD, accessed February 20, 2014 <http://www.hcd-alliance.org/programs/by-region/sa>.

specifically in the Indian context. This absence of theory seems to have characterised the critical-creative space where a theology of mission is needed, in Christian missions to CAR in India.

David Bosch, the renowned South African missiologist, in his book *Transforming Mission*, introduces three critical principles developed from Max Stackhouse, an American public theologian, and argues for the importance of keeping theory, praxis and *poiesis* in 'creative tension' to develop a contextual theology of mission. For him, *theoria* is the essential foundation that motivate any mission practice. Praxis is an action-reflective concept that demands a reflection-based action. The third category is a development of Stackhouse's concept of being creative; *poiesis* describes the human and spiritual essence of creative engagements that proceed from joy, love, peace, and hope. This thesis consequently envisages keeping a 'creative tension' between *theoria*, praxis and *poiesis*, seeing them, not as mutually exclusive, but as complementing principles that can assist in contextually evaluating contemporary Christian mission to CAR in India.⁴

As there is a gap in existing literature in all the three principles – *theoria*, praxis and *poiesis* – on Christian missions to CAR, this thesis attempts to fill this gap in a small way by focusing on the work of Protestant groups in South India. While trying to find some answers, the thesis will also grapple with the challenge of simultaneously being Christian, Indian and loyal to Central and State governments. In order to be indigenous Christians, to have an authentic Christian witness, Christian caregivers need to understand the power of the Gospel that works within their cultural context. To study churches, in particular, four guiding principles used by American practical theologian, Richard Osmer, are employed in this research: What is going on in a given context? Why is this going on? What ought to be going on? And how might we respond? As a practical theologian, he asserts that

⁴ See David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 431- 32. Tiina Ahonen, *Transformation through Compassionate Mission : David J. Bosch's Theology of Contextualization*, Schriften Der Luther-Agricola-Gesellschaft (Helsinki: Luther-Agricola-Society, 2003), 150 - 57. Max L. Stackhouse and Nantawan Boonprasat-Lewis, *Apologia : Contextualization, Globalization, and Mission in Theological Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 84-85.

answering these questions is the core task of practical theological interpretation.⁵ These guiding questions serve as a framework to address the challenges posed by caregivers or childcare givers working among CAR in the Indian churches. Andrew Walls, a British theologian, says that the Gospel empowers Christians to be both a prisoner and a liberator of culture and theology and, in places such as India, this will be creative because it is concerned with doing things, that deeply affect the lives of large numbers of people.⁶ If so, it will be important to investigate how creative theology can contribute to authentic Christian missions for CAR in contemporary India.

This thesis presumes that the contemporary Indian context presents two challenges to Christian mission to CAR. The first arises from the status of CAR within India, who need immediate attention. The second arises from the United Nations Commission on Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)⁷ until 2015, now Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)⁸ until 2030, which the Indian government has ratified and is implementing.⁹ The presence of international (UNCRC, MDG, SDG) monitoring interventions, and national ones such as the Indian government's Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)

⁵ He calls these four questions the descriptive-empirical task; the interpretive task, the normative task, and the pragmatic task. Richard Robert Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 3,4.

⁶ Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History : Studies in the Transmission of Faith*, Kindle edition (Maryknoll, N.Y. : Orbis Books Edinburgh : T&T Clark, 1996), <http://ezproxy.lib.ed.ac.uk/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=cat0234a&AN=edinb.583040&site=eds-live.9,11>.

⁷ Namely, eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality rate, improve maternal health, eradicate HIV AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensure environment sustainability, and global partnership for development. See "Millennium Development Goals," The United Nations, accessed April 2, 2014. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.shtml>.

⁸ On September 25th, 2015, many countries adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over the next 15 years, that is by 2030. For these goals to be reached, the UN needs everyone to do their part: governments, the private sector, civil society and people. See United Nations, 'Sustainable Development Goals', *Sustainable Development Goals -17 Goals to Transform Our World*, accessed 20 May 2017, <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>.

⁹ These two international policies have significantly impacted the accountability of the Indian government to the outside world. India ratified UNCRC in the year 1992 and the eight MDG were set to be accomplished by the year 2015.

and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS),¹⁰ have increased the levels of monitoring and accountability. Nonetheless, there have been issues in disseminating and implementing these rights and policies at the grassroots level; moreover, there have been conflicting understandings of childhood, as they emerge from the Indian context and as proposed in UNCRC.¹¹ A valid question that can arise is, if national and local state governments face such challenges, then what challenges do these international and national monitoring agencies present to Christian institutions in India?¹²

Several interventions through government funding, policies and programmes for child welfare and protection intersect significantly with Christian engagements. However, it seems that these secular international and national interventions have still not been taken on board in a serious way within Christian thought and practice. On the other hand, some Hindu groups and the present Indian government¹³ have targeted Christian organisations by accusing them of using these welfare schemes and projects as a means to proselytise many vulnerable children and their families¹⁴ through ‘force,’ ‘fraud’ or ‘allurement’.¹⁵ Within this new scenario of political,

¹⁰ The Department of Women and Child Development was set up in the year 1985 as a part of the Ministry of Human Resource Development and in 2006, this department was upgraded to a Ministry. For child development, the ICDS was first initiated in 1975 to provide services such as, supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-ups and referral services, and pre-school non-formal education. See Ministry of Women and Child Development, ‘Integrated Child Development Services Scheme’, accessed 6 May 2017, <http://icds-wcd.nic.in/icds/icds.aspx..>

¹¹ See Archana Mehendale, ‘Children’s Rights: Lessons on Monitoring’, *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 16 (April 2004): 1568–70; Vasanthi Raman, ‘Politics of Childhood: Perspectives from the South’, *Economic and Political Weekly* 35, no. 46 (2000): 4055–64, doi:10.2307/4409956.

¹² Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 4.

¹³ Ellen Barry and Suhasini Raj, ‘Christian Charity Shuts amid Govt Crackdown’, *New York Times*, 3 July 2017, accessed 3rd August 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/07/world/asia/compassion-international-christian-charity-closing-india.html?_r=0.

¹⁴ See Rowena Robinson and Sathianathan Clarke, *Religious Conversion in India : Modes, Motivations, and Meanings*, Oxford India Paperbacks (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007); Centre South Asia Human Rights Documentation, ‘Anti-Conversion Laws: Challenges to Secularism and Fundamental Rights’, *Economic and Political Weekly* 43, no. 2 (2008): 63–73, doi:10.2307/40276904; Sebastian C. H. Kim, *In Search of Identity : Debates on Religious Conversion in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003).

¹⁵ ‘Church Pastor Detained For “illegal Conversion” of School Kids’, *The Indian Express*, last modified 20 April 2012, accessed 3rd March 2014, <http://archive.indianexpress.com/news/church-pastor-detained-for-illegal-conversion-of-school-kids/939305/>; Arvind Narrain and Clifton D’Rozario, ‘The Bogey of Forced Conversions’, *The Hindu*, last modified 20 April 2012, accessed 3rd March 2014,

religious, social, judicial and international accountability, the practice of Christian mission to CAR in India has multi-dimensional obligations and needs to demonstrate its validity.¹⁶

Having identified some critical gaps in research on contemporary Christian mission to CAR in India, this thesis will attempt to fill some of the gaps by answering the following fundamental questions.

1.2. Research Questions

1. What models of mission or ministry and underlying theological motivations can be discerned through the study of past and current Christian work among children at risk in India?
2. To what extent does the study of these models reveal a transition from ideas of 'saving' children at risk to ideas of protecting the rights of children at risk, or do models of saving the child still run alongside or even eclipse ideas of child protection in the Indian Christian context?
3. What theological considerations have been underdeveloped or missing in previous engagements with children at risk in India, and what theological resources can be useful to inform and strengthen Christian work with children at risk in India?
4. In the light of this research, what recommendations can be made for the development of foundations and principles for Christian missions to children at risk in the Indian context?

1.3. Definition of Key Terms

This thesis uses several new terms which may be unfamiliar within the theological discipline, and hence those terms and phrases are defined and explained in the

<http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-sundaymagazine/The-bogey-of-forced-conversions/article15402131.ece>.

¹⁶ Rama Lakshmi, 'India Cracks down on Foreign Funding of NGOs', *The Guardian*, last updated 5 November 2013, UK edition, accessed 3rd March 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jun/11/india-crackdown-foreign-funded-ngos>; Yogita Roa, 'Over 350 NGOs May Lose International Aid', *The Times of India*, last updated 9 April 2012, accessed 3rd March 2014, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/Over-350-NGOs-may-lose-international-aid/articleshow/16241966.cms?referral=PM>.

relevant sections of this thesis. The key terms and phrases repeatedly used in this research are defined as follows.

Children at Risk: According to the Lausanne Consultation, “Children-at-risk are persons under 18 who experience an intense and/or chronic risk factor, or a combination of risk factors in personal, environmental and/or relational domains that prevent them from pursuing and fulfilling their God-given potential.”¹⁷ The above definition provides a very general description and does not address particular issues that CAR face in India. In India, the at-risk situation begins even before the birth of a child because of the high infant mortality rate, and this continues until the age of 14 as identified by the Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986. It is estimated that around 172 million or 40 percent of India’s children are vulnerable to or experiencing difficult circumstances, children without family support, children forced into labour, abused or trafficked children, children on the streets, children affected by substance abuse, by armed conflict or civil unrest or natural calamity etc. as well as children, who, due to various circumstances, have committed offences and come into conflict with law. Generally, children are perceived at risk when they do not receive basic needs of food, health, education and shelter; at risk of prejudice and inequity, if they are abused, exploited and live in unsafe environment.¹⁸ It is important to underscore the full age range of children, that is, from before birth to 18 years, which includes, unborn to nursing to toddler to teenager and adolescent. Each of these stages also links to the degree of their vulnerability, dependency and capability to face a risky environment during the various stages of life; and the risk factors increase if children are differently abled. Although there are theological and practical implications in defining them as one category, this thesis brackets them for practical reasons as

¹⁷ Lausanne Consultation on Children at Risk, ‘Who Are Children-at-Risk: A Missional Definition’, Lausanne Movement, accessed 15 June 2018, <https://www.lausanne.org/content/statement/children-at-risk-missional-definition>.

¹⁸ See Ministry of Women and Child Development, ‘Report of the Working Group on Child Rights for the 12th Five Year Plan (2012 –2017)’ (New Delhi, 2011), accessed 6 May 2017, http://planningcommission.gov.in/aboutus/committee/wrkgrp12/wcd/wgrep_child.pdf. See Glenn M. Miles and Josephine-Joy Wright, *Celebrating Children: Equipping People Working with Children and Young People Living in Difficult Circumstances around the World* (Authentic Media, 2003), 357–410.

CAR. Hence, throughout the thesis, the phrase 'Children at Risk' (CAR) is used to describe a demographic group in India who are below the age of 18 and are 'at risk' from poverty, ethnic marginalisation (i.e. Dalit and tribal children), infant mortality, curable diseases, child labour, sexual and physical abuse, exploitation and crime against them, and lack of access to primary education, social services and healthcare.

Mission, Missions and Missional: 'Mission' in this thesis refers to '*Missio Dei*' or 'God's Mission' and can be defined as God's work in the world to bear witness to the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ.¹⁹ 'Missions', on the other hand, refers to the Church's particular involvements in the world in God's mission as commissioned by God. Here in this thesis it refers to actual missionary practices happening in churches and NGO's. Here, wherever the term 'Christian mission' is used in this thesis, it refers to the conceptualisation and practice of the outreach of Christians in God's mission; in other words, it expresses the essence of Christian missionary work. In contrast, 'Christian missions', in the plural, refers to particular activities done by either an indigenous or foreign agency or a church. Here the word missional is defined as being missionary by its very nature, engaging in mission from the starting point of God's grace, and that which is on the move, joining God in God's work in the world.²⁰

Since the focus of this thesis is contemporary Protestant mission to CAR in South India, the use of the term 'Christian' will generally refer to Protestant Christianity, but may apply more broadly, while 'Protestant' will be used to underscore discussions that are explicitly related to that group. Hence, the phrase 'Protestant mission' will be used to refer to the concept and practice of mission

¹⁹ James A. Scherer, *Gospel, Church & Kingdom: Comparative Studies in World Mission Theology* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Pub. House, 1987), 37. The idea of mission comes from the Latin word *mission*. Jan A. B. Jongeneel says that this word has the meaning of *mittere* which in Vulgate is used for Greek verbs *apostellein* and *pempein*, meaning to send (out/forth). The word conveys the meaning of being 'going' and doing 'the tasks' in the place sent. See J. A. B. Jongeneel, *Philosophy, Science, and Theology of Mission in the 19th and 20th Centuries: A Missiological Encyclopaedia, Part I: The Philosophy and Science of Mission* (P. Lang, 1995), 58–59.

²⁰ See Mary Schaller Blaufuss, 'From Mission to Church to Missional Church' (Seminar Paper, Theological Education for Missionary Formation, Karnataka Theological College, Mangalore, India, 27 April 2004), 7,8,12.

among Protestant Christians as a whole, while 'Protestant missions' will be used to refer to particular missionary activities done either by a church or NGO.

Similarly, when the term 'India' is used, the primary but not exclusive reference will be to South India. However, wherever 'South India' is used, it will apply to issues specific to the South Indian context. The context of Christian mission in North India differs because, there, the Christian population is small, except for the states in North East India where the percentage of the Christian population is considered very high. South India has a higher percentage of Christians, especially in the cities, than is the case in Central and North India.²¹

1.4. Literature Review

Besides reports²² and research materials produced by the government and non-government organisations (NGOs) on issues relating to children at risk,²³ recent PhD researchers have made some inroads into this area. Examples are Grace Bae Bahng's study of caregivers to vulnerable children from an Ethiopian context;²⁴ Greg W. Burch's study of the problem of street children in Bolivia;²⁵ Patrick Kihui's research on Children and AIDS in Kenya;²⁶ William Carter Prevet's study of the relationship between faith-based NGOs and their engagement with institutional

²¹ According to 2011 Indian census, there are around 27 million Christians and of them around 12.9 million live in SI and around 6.9 million live in North India and 7.8 million live in North East India. See, Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, accessed 2 January 2018, http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/population_enumeration.html

²² See Government of India Ministry of Women and Child Development, accessed April 1, 2014, <http://wcd.nic.in/>.

²³ See Dorothy Lalneizo and Sunita Reddy, "Health Status of Children in North Eastern States of India," *Indian Anthropologist* 40, no. 2 (2010): 37-52.; Christopher Sattler and John M. Shandra, "Do Health Nongovernmental Organizations Improve Child Mortality?," *International Journal of Sociology* 42, no. 2 (2012): 28-46.; Indrani Gupta and Arup Mitra, "Economic Growth, Health and Poverty: An Exploratory Study for India," *Development Policy Review* 22, no. 2 (2004): 193-206; Mithu Alur, "Invisible Children: A Study of Policy Exclusion" (Published PhD Thesis, University of London, 1998).

²⁴ Grace Bae Bahng, "Collaborating to Provide Micro-Finance to Caregivers of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Ethiopia" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Southern California, 2009).

²⁵ Greg W. Burch, "From Empowerment to Protagonismo Infantil: Christian Responses to Street Children in Latin America with Emphasis on the Early Encounter Project in Cochabamba, Bolivia" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2010).

²⁶ Patrick Kihui, "The AIDS Orphan Crisis in Kenya: Caring for Kikuyu Children in Escarpment", (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2007).

children and youth at risk in the Romanian context;²⁷ David Hope Scott's study of context-based models of motivation-talk to work with CAR;²⁸ and Rosalind Y. Lim's research on faith formation of children in the Malaysian Baptist denomination from the discipline of Christian education.²⁹ These researchers deal with the problem from within a non-Indian context. Also, they neither focus on developing a theology of mission to work among CAR nor do they address a wider scholarly audience; they concentrate more on practical issues concerning CAR. Marcia Bunge asserts that Christian missions and churches have engaged with both children in general and vulnerable children, but that missiological reflection on childhood and the needs of vulnerable and needy children have been minimal. In her view, contemporary theologians and ethicists have devoted significant attention to issues related to children such as abortion, gender issues, human sexuality, marriage, family, etc., but the Church has not been directly involved in these matters relating to children nor has it developed missiological understandings of children.³⁰

Nevertheless, in the last decade or two, some western practical theologians have shown significant interest in a theology of children and childhood.³¹ From an

²⁷ Bill Prevette, "Faith-Based Organizations and Evangelical Churches in Romania: An Investigation of Partnership in Reference to Children and Youth in Crisis between 1990 and 2004" (Published PhD Thesis, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies and University of Wales, 2008).

²⁸ David Hope Scott, "How We Talk About Why We Work with Kids: Developing a Cultural Model of Motivation-Talk for Work with Children at Risk" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Intercultural Studies, 2011).

²⁹ Rosalind Yeet-Wah Lim, "Faith Formation of Children in the Malaysian Baptist English-Speaking Congregations: A Vygotskian Approach" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Asia Graduate School of Theology, 2009).

³⁰ Marcia J. Bunge, 'The Dignity and Complexity of Children: Constructing Christian Theologies of Childhood', in *Nurturing Child and Adolescent Spirituality: Perspectives from the World's Religious Traditions*, ed. Karen Mary Yust et al. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 53.

³¹ See Roy B. Zuck, *Precious in His Sight: Childhood and Children in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996); Marcia J Bunge ed., *The Child in Christian Thought* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001); Marcia J. Bunge ed., *Children, Adults, and Shared Responsibilities Jewish, Christian and Muslim Perspectives* (Cambridge University Press, 2012); Joyce Mercer, *Welcoming Children : A Practical Theology of Childhood* (St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press, 2005); Karen Marie Yust et al. ed., *Nurturing Child and Adolescent Spirituality : Perspectives from the World's Religious Traditions* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006); Don S Browning, *Equality and the Family : A Fundamental, Practical Theology of Children, Mothers, and Fathers in Modern Societies* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2007); Marcia J. Bunge, Fretheim Terence E., and Gaventa Beverly Roberts eds., *The Child in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2008); Edmund Newey, *Children of God : The Child as Source of Theological Anthropology* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Pub. Ltd., 2012); Bill Prevette et al.,

Indian context, Sudhir Kakar's psychoanalytical study of childhood is an important piece of research, but it focuses on a Hindu upper-caste tradition only.³² In fact within India and writing on the Indian context, there seems to be a significant gap in Christian missiological reflections on issues surrounding CAR and in developing a theology of mission to CAR living in the Indian context. A recent study by Rohan Gideon of the agency of children from a liberation theology perspective³³ is one attempt in the field of child theology from an Indian viewpoint. However, it neither deals with the topic from a missiological or practical theology perspective nor does it represent the caregivers working among CAR, on whom this research attempts to focus. The edited book by Glenn Miles and Josephine-Joy Wright for Christian caregivers working with CAR, called 'Celebrating Children,' deals with wide-ranging practical topics; however, unfortunately, neither does it address many contemporary challenges faced nor does it interact with issues relating to child rights from an Indian context.³⁴ A recent article by a German scholar, Christoffer Grundmann, provides a brief but useful historical survey and primarily reflects on some of the missiological challenges concerning Christian mission to children.³⁵ However, it does not pay attention to the actual practices and challenges emerging from UNCRC and Hindu fundamentalists in South India, which this research attempts to emphasise. Hence, this research is the first systematic attempt to investigate foundations and principles, after interacting with relevant ideas and existing praxis on Christian missions to CAR, and is hence a pioneering attempt to

eds., *Theology, Mission and Child : Global Perspectives*, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series 24 (Oxford: Regnum, 2014).

³² Sudhir Kakar, "Childhood in India: Traditional Ideals and Contemporary Reality," *International Social Science Journal* 31, no. 3 (1979): 444-56; *The Inner World: A Psycho-Analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India*, 3rd ed. (New Delhi ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

³³ Rohan P Gideon, 'The Agency of Children in Liberation Theologies in India and Children Related Theologies: A Contrapuntal Liberative Analysis' (Unpublished PhD, University of Manchester, 2015).

³⁴ This is one book which directly helps Christian caregivers working for CAR; however, it has not become popular in India. This book has six parts: Understanding the child in the context, Key issues in listening to children, Risk and Resilience, holistic mission to children, working with children: practical issues, development, evaluation and monitoring of programmes, development of self and staff and case studies from around the world. See Miles and Wright, *Celebrating Children: Equipping People Working with Children and Young People Living in Difficult Circumstances around the World*. There is an online training course. 'Celebrating Children Training', accessed 25 June 2017, <http://www.celebratingchildrentraining.info/>.

³⁵ Christoffer Grundmann, 'Children and Christian Missions: Historical Aspects and Missiological Challenges', *Mission Studies* 33, no. 2 (2016): 163–86.

study Christian mission to CAR in contemporary India and to explore a preliminary theology of mission to engage with CAR.

1.5. Structure of the Research

This thesis has three parts and focuses on evaluating various models and motivations of Christian mission to CAR in India to investigate possible future Christian missions. The first part provides foreground and background information on Protestant missions to CAR in India. It contains two chapters; the first chapter provides a foreground by mapping the contemporary terrain in which Protestant missions exist by looking at the concepts, contexts and a few contested issues in Christian mission to CAR. The second chapter uses selected case studies to identify the continuity and discontinuity in the history of Protestant missions to CAR in India from the eighteenth century to the present. For an appropriate evaluation, in this thesis, Christian missions to CAR are analysed in relation to their emphases on the three dimensions of child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy.

The second part of the thesis then evaluates the contemporary Protestant mission to CAR using the tools of qualitative empirical research. To provide some breadth and variation, case studies are drawn from three sub-groups of the Protestant community, which may broadly be represented as the Ecumenical, Evangelical and Pentecostal sub-groups. This section has three chapters. The fourth chapter explains and argues the validity, scope and limitations of the methods and methodology used in the research. For a comprehensive evaluation, the fifth chapter presents a study of churches that have some ministry to and for CAR in the cities of Bangalore and Chennai. Three churches, each representing one of the three major sub-groups were studied. The sixth chapter deals with Protestant NGOs working for CAR. Although seven NGOs were included in the research, for in-depth evaluation the three NGOs that represent the widest variations in their approaches, each representing one of the sub-groups in the Protestant denomination, are given greater prominence, and the remaining four NGOs are sub-categorised under denominational representations.

The third and final part of the thesis follows from the previous two parts. After evaluating Protestant missions from a historical and contemporary

perspective, the seventh chapter attempts theologically to address the practical realities faced by caregivers while engaging in contemporary Christian mission to CAR. After this, a preliminary theology of mission to CAR and basic Christian principles for future Christian practice with CAR are proposed. The eighth and concluding chapter argues for the place of this research in the field of Christian Mission and Practical Theology and highlights the limitations of this research. This part also provides a preliminary theology of mission to CAR and proposes some important principles to strengthen Christian practice in missions to CAR in the Indian context and elsewhere.

1.6. Scope of this Research

Scope and limitations: CAR in India constitute a significant number of children, ranging from those living in poor and marginalised societies to those living in middle and upper-class communities, from those living in cities and towns to those living in rural areas. This thesis recognises that Christian mission to CAR also ranges from those who are inside the Christian community to those who are outside the Church and may be objects of its mission. To study this entire range of CAR would be vast and unmanageable. Hence, this thesis focuses on mission to CAR living in impoverished urban environments. This category of children is at risk from abuse, exploitation, marginalisation and deprivation. They suffer from physical, mental, drug and sexual abuses and live in or are from slums, streets and dysfunctional homes in impoverished urban environments; they are exploited for cheap labour in unorganised and unsafe work environments and sent to beg on the streets; they are marginalised as they are poor, sick and are 'unclean'; they are deprived of basic health care, education, food, shelter and protection from 'family' and society. However, for ethical and practical reasons this research has not engaged with CAR directly. Rather it has focussed on the attitudes and responses of adults in churches and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that work for CAR.

The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) in India also has a significant amount of work among CAR, in contrast to the Orthodox churches, even in Kerala.³⁶ However, to broaden this study to include Catholic mission to CAR would make the project unrealistically vast, and it would require additional local language skills, for example in Malayalam, and would need special institutional access for research. Hence, this thesis will confine the investigation to the Protestants.

³⁶ The RCC has engaged with CAR through its missionary orders, mainly through educational and vocational training institutes. Within RCC, there are two orders that need attention as they are well accepted by the Indian people and government; *Shishu Bhavan* by the Missionaries of Charity, started by Mother Teresa and the Don Bosco institutions. Similarly, the Indian Orthodox Church or generally referred as the St Thomas Christians with their base in the state of Kerala and having their branches in other parts of India also have institution-based interventions for CAR through their orphanages/children's home, hostels, schools and colleges.

**Part One - Mapping the Context and History of
Protestant Missions to Children at Risk in India: A
Survey from the Late Eighteenth Century to the
Present**

CHAPTER 2. Children at Risk in India - Concepts, Contexts and Contested Issues in Christian Mission

2.1. Introduction

A world fit for children is one in which all children get the best possible start in life and have access to quality basic education, including primary education that is compulsory and available free to all, and in which all children, including adolescents, have ample opportunity to develop their individual capacities in a safe and supportive environment. We will promote the physical, psychological, spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive and cultural development of children as a matter of national and global priority.¹

This resolution, drawn from a document entitled 'A World Fit for Children' and adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 10th May 2002, reflects optimism and poses a challenge at a global level. It assesses the progress made since the adoption of the UNCRC by the UN in 1989² and also records the voices of children demanding their right to live in this world.

Nevertheless, the very title suggests that this present world is not yet 'fit' for children who are at risk because they live in vulnerable contexts and this is no less true in India than elsewhere. Additionally, when the United Nations (UN) introduces new concepts of welfare and protection to CAR at a global level, these new concepts have implications at a local level in the Indian context. While these concepts may vary, they still shape and define the notion of CAR in India. When implementing them, several contested issues arise. Keeping these factors in view, this chapter attempts to identify who these CAR really are in India, why they are at

¹ 'A world fit for children' was adopted by the United Nations at the twenty-seventh special session on children, held on 8-10 May, 2002. This is the 14th resolution and the first on the Plan of Action section: 'Creating a World Fit for Children'. See The General Assembly, 'A World Fit for Children' (The UN, 10 November 2002), accessed 22 March 2015, http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/docs_new/documents/A-RES-S27-2E.pdf.

² For more details see The United Nations, 'Millennium Development Goals', accessed 22 March 2016, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.shtml>.

risk, what is being done for them and, finally, in what way Protestant churches and mission agencies are relating to them.

Consequently, it is imperative to have some foreground knowledge of how Protestant missionary approaches to CAR interact with these concepts, contexts and contested issues surrounding CAR, in order to identify various models of Protestant mission work among CAR in India and the motivations that underlie them.

The Indian child rights activist, Archana Mehendale, argues that it will take years to disseminate and implement the many UN resolutions on CAR at the grassroots level in India.³ A significant reason is the divergent socio-political, religio-cultural, linguistic and economic contexts in India. In the last decade, the government of India has initiated several schemes under the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), mostly as a consequence of UNCRC.⁴ While the Indian government is finding it a challenge to disseminate and implement the UNCRC and other resolutions, such matters are totally absent from the agenda of many Indian churches. Nevertheless, the presence of many Christian mission schools, boys' and girls' hostels, and hospitals indicates that the Christian mission to CAR in India has been primarily through mission-based education. However, there seems to be a significant gap between rights-based intervention initiated by the Indian government and contemporary Christian missionary practices for CAR.

As outlined previously, the current chapter has three major sections. First, it defines some relevant key **concepts** used in this research, applying them to the contemporary Indian Christian theological context. Secondly, it maps and defines the scope of the **contexts** within which this research is located. Finally, the key **contested issues** are described and briefly discussed here, a discussion which is continued in later chapters. The focus of the thesis will not be on CAR in India themselves but on the motivations and methods of the Protestant Christian

³ Mehendale, 'Children's Rights: Lessons on Monitoring', 1569–70.

⁴ Some of the schemes initiated are, ICDS, and the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), under which the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and a twenty-four-hour 1098 helpline by Childline India Foundation operates. For more details see Government of India, 'Ministry of Women and Child Development', accessed 1 March 2015, <http://wcd.nic.in>; Nirmala Rao, 'Children's Rights to Survival, Development, and Early Education in India: The Critical Role of the Integrated Child Development Services Program', *International Journal of Early Childhood* 37, no. 3 (2005): 15–31.

caregivers working among CAR in South India. At the outset, it must be noted that this research does not claim to deal with all the issues relating to CAR in their social, political, religious and economic contexts, but instead explores the most relevant issues relating specifically to Protestant missions to CAR in South India and to contextualise them for a theological critique of them from an Indian Christian context.

2.2. Concepts and Definitions Surrounding Children at Risk

Research on children and childhood in academic circles has come into prominence since the 1960s⁵ and has evolved to be a multi-disciplinary enterprise. Some of the disciplines that have engaged with the subject of children and childhood are medicine, sociology, education and childhood studies, cultural studies, gender studies, human geography, anthropology, religious studies and politics. This research draws ideas from some of these disciplines to build a theological framework for Christian mission in India to CAR. However, a few scholars on childhood, such as, Hardman, deMause and Miller-McLemore, are in agreement that the challenge we face is not just because of the recent attention given to children and childhood studies from these fields, but also due to the varied understanding that comes from different cultures and generations.⁶ Further, Bowman and Spencer, both childhood scholars, state that it is hard to find agreement in the scholarly literature about the definition of the terms ‘children’ and ‘childhood’.⁷ Yet, it is important to attempt to understand some of these concepts broadly to interact with some pertinent issues arising here.

⁵ See Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*, Vintage Giant (New York, London: Knopf, Jonathan Cape, 1962); L. S. Vygotsky, ‘The Development of Scientific Concepts in Childhood’, in *Thought and Language*, ed. L. Vygotsky E. Hanfmann and G. Vakar, Studies in Communication. (Cambridge, MA, US: MIT Press, 1962), 82–118; Lloyd DeMause, *The History of Childhood* (London; New York: Psychohistory Press, 1974).

⁶ See Charlotte Hardman, ‘Can There Be an Anthropology of Children?’, *Childhood* 8, no. 4 (2001): 505; DeMause, *The History of Childhood*, 11; Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, ‘Children and Religion in the Public Square: “Too Dangerous and Too Safe, Too Difficult and Too Silly”’, *The Journal of Religion* 86, no. 3 (2006): 385.

⁷ Vibiana Bowman and Laura B. Spencer, ‘Toward a Definition of Children and Childhood Studies’, in *Scholarly Resources for Children and Childhood Studies: A Research Guide and Annotated Bibliography*, ed. Vibiana Bowman (Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 3.

2.2.1. Children:

The definition of children is commonly associated with age. The UNCRC defines anyone under the age of 18 to be a child.⁸ However, this varies between cultures and communities, and this is no different in India. Seymour's anthropological studies document that, in some Indian families, a girl child becomes an adult when she attains puberty.⁹ In contrast, the ceremony of *upanayana*, the sacred thread ceremony among the upper Hindu castes for the twice-born, can take place for boys between the ages 8 and 12.¹⁰ Nevertheless, within the Indian constitution, the age limit differs and depends on the issues addressed. For example, children under the age of 14, have access to free and compulsory education under Article 45, and they cannot be employed under the Labour Prohibition Act of 1986, the Apprentice Act of 1961 and the Factories Act of 1948. In India, children above fourteen can be employed in places that are not considered dangerous. A recent amendment in 2016 in the Child Labour Act has given room for adolescents to help their parents run their family businesses.¹¹ Moreover, the Child Marriage Act of 2006 stipulates 21 years for males and 18 years for females as the minimum marriageable age. The Juvenile Justice Act, 2000, amended in 2006, 2010 and 2015, defines anyone of 18 years and under as a child. Under the Indian Penal Code, a child under the age of 7 cannot be prosecuted for any offence and anyone older than 12 years needs to admit criminal responsibility to be prosecuted.¹² Hence, due to these differences in India, the vulnerability of children cannot be equated with age. This research,

⁸ UNICEF, 'The Fact Sheet: A Summary of the Rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child', accessed 4 August 2015, http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf.

⁹ Seymour's anthropological studies document that the event of a girl coming to puberty, is normally a family and community celebration. Susan C. Seymour, *Women, Family, and Child Care in India: A World in Transition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 88.

¹⁰ Melukote K. Sridhar, 'Sacred Celebrations: The Role of Festivals in Nurturing Hindu Children's Spirituality', in *Nurturing Child and Adolescent Spirituality: Perspectives from the World's Religious Traditions*, ed. Karen Marie Yust et al. (Rowman & Littlefield Lanham, Maryland, 2006), 224–25.

¹¹ Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, 'Child Labour Act - 2016', *The Gazette of India - Extraordinary*, accessed 9 April 2016, <http://www.labour.nic.in/sites/default/file>.

¹² *Children in India: 2012 A Statistical Appraisal* (Social Statistics Division, Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, 2012), http://mospi.nic.in/mospi_new/upload/Children_in_India_2012.pdf.

however, accepts anyone below the age of 18 as a child, as defined by UNCRC and ratified by the Government of India.

2.2.2. Childhood:

According to American Cultural Anthropologist, Ronald Dworkin, childhood is a post-eighteenth century construct before which children were seen mostly as ‘little adults’ or as miniature adults who did what adults did.¹³ This concept has been challenged by Cunningham and Morpurgo, who argue that this may not be true within the British context, as church teachings in the middle ages recognised that children needed special care in their upbringing.¹⁴ In the year 2008, the World Health Organization (WHO) published a document to train health caregivers entitled, ‘Children are not little adults’,¹⁵ perhaps with the intention of challenging health caregivers about pre-existing notions about children.

‘Childhood’ may most simply be defined as ‘the state or period of being a child’.¹⁶ A consensus on the understanding of childhood is, however, a challenge, as ideas of childhood differ from one culture, society and religion to another.¹⁷ To a large extent, this understanding defines the way one thinks and acts on issues surrounding children and perhaps inevitably influences global politics. According to Chris Jenks, writing from a British context, the ‘modern child’ is an Enlightenment construction in which children are the principal concern of parents, while for the ‘post-modern child’, child welfare and protection are made limitless by ‘detraditionalisation’.¹⁸ His argument implies that the concept of welfare and protection remains as a constant in both eras, but in the post-modern world,

¹³ See Ronald William Dworkin, *The Rise of the Imperial Self: America’s Culture Wars in Augustinian Perspective* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1996), 83–84; see also Jenny Huberman, *Ambivalent Encounters: Childhood, Tourism, and Social Change in Banaras, India* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012), 79–85.

¹⁴ Hugh Cunningham and Michael Morpurgo, *The Invention of Childhood* (London: BBC, 2006), 28–34.

¹⁵ World Health Organization, ‘Children Are Not Little Adults’, accessed 11 April 2014, http://www.who.int/ceh/capacity/Children_are_not_little_adults.pdf.

¹⁶ ‘Childhood’, *Oxford Dictionary*, accessed 22 March 2017, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/childhood>.

¹⁷ Bowman and Spencer, ‘Toward a Definition of Children and Childhood Studies’, 11.

¹⁸ Chris Jenks, ‘The Postmodern Child’, in *Children in Families Research and Policy*, eds. Julia Brannen and Margaret O’Brien (Washington D.C., London: Falmer Press, 1996), 14.

besides parents, multiple agencies exist to provide welfare and protection. These agencies, set up to monitor and protect CAR, take many forms, such as wider family, social or religious and political communities or international standards such as UNCRC and MDG, SDG, or constitutional provisions and schemes in India such as MWCD or ICDS. These agencies in contemporary India play a key role in order to provide holistic development, welfare and protection of CAR. Looking back at the UN resolution at the beginning of the chapter will help us to understand this concept of the holistic development of children, as expressed in the goal of promoting the 'physical, psychological, spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive and cultural development of children'. However, the question that needs to be addressed by Indian Protestants is whether the validation of their mission to CAR derives from such resolutions or from a theological basis of 'understanding God's heart for children', and how Christians should interact with such resolutions. Should they evaluate them as complementary or as contradictory to their understandings? This contested issue will be dealt with later in the chapter.

This universalisation of the concept of childhood can be perceived as the 'globalisation of childhood'. While the hope to provide a world that is fit for children in all the continents is certainly a noble effort, enough space should be provided for the existing role and status of children as defined by local communities with their societal, religious or cultural customs and practices. A comparative and critical study such as what this research is attempting, will help to identify who these CAR are and from what they are 'at-risk'.

According to Indian psychoanalyst Sudhir Kakar, contemporary Indian childhood is a construct of the dominant Hindu culture. According to him, although children are perceived as the lowest and weakest segment of society, they are portrayed as special and in need of protection and nurture in Indian literature such as the laws of Manu, traditional Indian medicine (*Ayurveda*), epics (such as *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*) and folktales. According to Kakar, a child in this tradition is understood as being nearer to the perfect, 'divine' state, and it is the adults who need to understand the child's world.¹⁹ A similar notion could be found

¹⁹ Sudhir Kakar, 'Childhood in India: Traditional Ideals and Contemporary Reality', *International Social Science Journal* 31, no. 3 (1979): 451.

in the Bible, where Jesus says in Matthew 18:3 ‘...unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.’ [NRSV] – a theme explored later in this research. However, Kakar recognises that this notion is predominantly for boys, and girls are generally not mentioned in these texts. In an Indian family, if the girl is the only child, she may enjoy nurture and protection, but otherwise, a girl joins with her mother to do domestic work and is nurtured to be a good wife.²⁰ But current anthropological studies and practices show that even this may not be the case for girls, especially among many Hindu sub-castes and lower groups.²¹

Children of the marginalised Dalit and tribal groups in India still struggle for existence due to poverty and lack of facilities accessible to them, thus making many of these families and children at risk. A study by the Indian anthropologist Srinivas shows that lower castes collectively try to adopt upper-caste practices and beliefs to acquire higher status as a process of social mobility, which is often termed ‘Sanskritization’.²² This cultural and social mobility is a common phenomenon in the Indian context, and it may be that parents from marginalised families would like to emulate these practices of child care and nurture. But in reality, the question is whether they can afford it or not, and hence this notion cannot be generalised. Also, even if the marginalised achieve these mobility practices, they would not be accepted by the upper-caste Hindus, and many adults from this group, the providers of protection and nurture to children, would be at risk themselves and unable to give adequate help to their children. Therefore, the missiologist Frampton Fox argues that in India, if one seeks to address the issue of CAR, it has to include parents and families at risk too.²³

These arguments suggest that the concepts of children, child care and childhood may have always existed, but the specific content of these concepts was very much localised. So, with the emergence of the modern concept of the rights of

²⁰ Ibid.: 454-55.

²¹ Ibid.

²² M. N. Srinivas, ‘A Note on Sanskritization and Westernization’, *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 15, no. 4 (1956): 481–83, doi:10.2307/2941919.

²³ Frampton F. Fox, “‘Eating the Flesh of Our Sons and Daughters’ Mission to Children-at-Risk through Parents Who Risk’, *Missiology: An International Review* xxxvii, no. 4 (October 2009): 509–10.

the child and the proliferation of studies on children and childhood, any attempt to construct a universal or global statement on childhood will certainly conflict with local or national childhood constructs in India.²⁴ Furthermore, in many parts of India, this modern concept of childhood is relatively new, both in ideology and in practice, which can result in disagreements. Many Indian ideas on childhood may appear normal to those involved in Protestant mission to CAR. Hence, it becomes necessary to have a Christian theological critique of both the UNCRC and Indian tradition on child care, which will be attempted in Chapter Seven.

2.2.3. Children at Risk²⁵

The phrase 'children at risk' became popular in the mid-1960s and was used initially by medical doctors, educationists and psychologists to represent children who are at risk of health and mental issues.²⁶ An early attempt to define the meaning of the phrase 'children at risk' can be traced to the *British Medical Journal* in 1968, to a paediatric physician named Mary Sheldon. She commented that the purpose of 'at-risk' registers maintained in the British hospitals was to identify at the earliest opportunity infants at risk, so that medical treatment and supervision, parental guidance, training and ultimately placement could be provided at the most advantageous stage of a child's development.²⁷ It may be suggested that this notion of identifying and intervening has always been part of 'at-risk' issues. The phrase 'children at risk' is now popular among social scientists and child rights advocates. This phrase was at first not much used within British or even in Indian government documents. Instead, phrases, such as 'vulnerable children' or 'children from disadvantaged backgrounds' were and are more familiar. Within the Christian

²⁴ William A. Schabas, 'Reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child', *Human Rights Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1996): 472–91, doi:10.2307/762512.

²⁵ For a definition of CAR see section 1.3.

²⁶ Some of the early literature that uses the phrase CAR are, Peter R. T. Wood, 'Children at Risk', *British Medical Journal* 2, no. 5356 (1963): 561; L Kellmer Pringle, 'Children at Risk and Educational Deprivation', in *Children at Risk*, ed. A. H. Denney (Oxford, England: Church Information Office, 1968), 9–20; Mary D Sheridan, 'Children at Risk', *The Lancet* 292, no. 7577 (1968): 1077–78, doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(68)91548-1; Grace McClellan, 'Children at Risk', *The Slow Learning Child* 17, no. 1 (1970): 3–7; Diane H. Browning and Bonny Boatman, 'Incest: Children at Risk', *The American Journal of Psychiatry* 134, no. 1 (1977): 69–72.

²⁷ Sheridan, "Children at Risk," 1077.

groups, the phrase CAR has become popular since the 1990s and has been used to define children whose holistic life and development are at risk, e.g. physically, mentally, socially and spiritually. Luke 2: 42, is seen as the scriptural text taken from Jesus' child development, "for Jesus grew in stature (physical) and wisdom (mental), finding favour before God (spiritual) and men (social)."²⁸

In 1937, psychologist Carl Rogers wrote his book *The Clinical Treatment of the Problem Child* after fifteen years of daily clinical experience with all varieties of 'maladjusted children' in American society.²⁹ Though such children are still the focus of our attention, many decades later our perceptions of children and their problems have substantially changed. Now children are not seen as the primary problem but rather, in many situations, children are seen as victims of society's problems and therefore living 'in vulnerable conditions'. This paradigm shift has affected the way in which children and the issues surrounding children are now perceived and has also extended the scope of the problems and solutions.

Today children are seen to be 'in crisis'³⁰ or 'at risk' from factors that are mostly external and now only to a lesser extent from within a family. The risk factors are many and usually context-based. In India, the at-risk situation begins even before the birth of a child. The emphasis on early childhood (0-6 years) in India's MDG and statistics recognises that the first few years of the child are especially crucial because of the high Infant Mortality Rate.³¹ These factors lead to several implications for current and future Protestant mission to CAR in India and may require reshaping existing or developing new foundations and principles.

2.2.4. Intervention:

Intervention is not generally perceived positively in the context of mission, as the term can often be linked to motives of coercion and manipulation and acting imperiously without consent. However, the need for intervention emerges in times

²⁸ See Dan Brewster, *Child, Church and Mission* (Penang, Malaysia: Compassion International, 2011), 1,31-52.

²⁹ Carl Ransom Rogers, *The Clinical Treatment of the Problem Child* (Boston, USA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1939), vii,3.

³⁰ Glenn Myers and O. M. Publishing, *Children in Crisis*, Briefings (Carlisle: OM, 1998).

³¹ See footnote 18 in chapter one.

of crisis, and this can happen globally. Interventions have been closely linked with military and rescue missions on humanitarian grounds.³² However, in medicine, this word is used for clinical and non-clinical interventions on patients for their overall wellbeing. From children's point of view, intervention is made because of their vulnerable and dependent status. Children are born weak and need interventions in the form of care and protection by 'adults' with the aim of minimising risk until they are grown up. For Christians, interventions begin not just on humanitarian grounds, but because the God of the Bible intervened in the human predicament and intervenes even now because of love, compassion and justice.

2.3. Rights and Development-Related Concepts Regarding Children at Risk

2.3.1. Child Rights

The UN adopted the UNCRC in 1989, and on 2 September 1990, it was sent for ratification by national governments. India ratified it on 12th November 1992. Since then, it has become one of the major driving forces for UNICEF, many international NGOs and various national governmental and non-governmental bodies related to children. The articles of the Convention may be grouped into four categories of rights. The four categories are: guiding principles, survival and development rights, protection rights and participation rights. The first 42 articles are on child rights, and articles 43 to 54 describe implementations of these articles and two protocols. Besides UNCRC, another international UN-initiated monitoring scale was the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), which influenced India significantly and focused on the development of children between the age of 0-6. The United Nations MDG were eight goals that the UN Member States had agreed to achieve by the year 2015 and all of these goals directly or indirectly affect children.³³ However, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) list 18 goals that the UN Member States have agreed to achieve by the year 2030 focusing more on the development of the community, wherein children are to be cared and protected.

³² Andreas Krieg, *Motivations for Humanitarian Intervention: Theoretical and Empirical Considerations*, Springer Briefs in Ethics Series (Dordrecht, New York: Springer, 2013), 7.

³³ See "Millennium Development Goals."

Karen Wells, a scholar in childhood studies, observes how charitable institutions, philanthropists and governments have formed several policies and practices regarding children's issues in national and international circles. She identifies an evolutionary shift in ideologies and practices on children from 'child-saving' to 'child rights'. However, Wells argues 'child-saving' and 'child rights' are not alternatives to each other, but rather co-exist in an 'uneasy tension' with one another in principle and practice.³⁴ If this argument can be extended to Christian missions to CAR in India, it would be interesting to discover whether such a shift from child saving to protecting child rights and also from child protection to child participation has happened or is beginning to happen. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and UNCRC now serve as monitoring agents to evaluate the performance of national governments on children's welfare through various commissions. This has also given scope to government organisations and NGOs for lobbying and politicising issues concerning crimes, unethical behaviour and draconian actions on children, women and marginalised communities. However, although Dalit theology and their movements in India have taken help from UDHR, a similar interest and awareness in UNCRC seem to be lacking among Dalit theologians and their movements.

2.3.2. Child Development

Following the emergence of child rights, new child-focused policies have been developed to help children and CAR. Among them, two need some attention which will be further explored in this section; capability and education. Amartya Sen, the Indian Nobel prize winner in economics and the one who propounded the 'capability theory', argues that the wealth and health of a nation cannot be measured monetarily, but should rather be seen from the perspective of Human Development Index, which seeks to measure the human and social well-being of people within a society, through the presence of social goods. Described also as 'green economics', the UN has adopted this measurement scale to see the growth of a country. In 2008, the Save the Children NGO initiated the Child Development

³⁴ Karen Wells, *Childhood in a Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009), 29–45.

Index that monitors child well-being in 141 countries, aggregating data on infant mortality, primary school enrollment and being underweight.³⁵ This concept is not yet fully accepted within academic circles. Philosophers and social economists, such as Martha Nussbaum,³⁶ Amartya Sen and Jean Drèze,³⁷ see the role of freedom, education and child welfare as major scales for development. According to them, these scales empower the capability of people for social and political reasoning and participation, which is needed for the development of a just society. If so, it is vital to examine, if Protestant missions were able to provide child development through education and by empowering capability of children.

The experience of modern childhood is increasingly defined by education and formal schooling, where children spend their childhood in schools and also at home studying. In India, this shift is seen in families both in urban and, to some extent in rural areas. But, stiff competition and lack of access to quality higher education for instance in South India, has resulted in problems such as low-quality education, increased fees, competition for a small number of seats, privatisation of colleges, unemployment, emotional and financial stress and much more.³⁸ With a considerable child population and few private schools and a craze for professional courses, there is severe competition to achieve higher status through education among these sections of the Indian population. Hence, many of these children are at risk from peer pressure, and pressure from parents and teachers to record high achievement in education from a very young age, possibly resulting in mental and even physical abuse. (Many of these children are also in danger of exposure to violence and sex through social and mass media.) The childhood experience of

³⁵ The CDI reports India as having a very low index. Save the Children, 'The Child Development Index', accessed 4 November 2015, <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/the-child-development-index>.

³⁶ Martha C. Nussbaum, 'Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach and Its Implementation', *Hypatia* 24, no. 3 (2009): 211–15, doi:10.1111/j.1527-2001.2009.01053.x; Martha C. Nussbaum, 'Reinventing the Civil Religion: Comte, Mill, Tagore', *Victorian Studies* 54, no. 1 (2011): 7–34, doi:10.2979/victorianstudies.54.1.7.

³⁷ Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, *An Uncertain Glory: India and Its Contradictions* (London: A. Lane, 2013), 83–86.

³⁸ Pawan Agarwal, *Higher Education in India: The Need for Change*, 2006, <http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/20971/1/Higher%20Education%20in%20India%20The%20Need%20for%20Change.pdf?1>, accessed on 24th April 2014.

these children at risk will obviously be very different from that of CAR living in poverty, but is itself not free of risk. Although, through affirmative action, children from the scheduled castes and tribes have access to government and a few private schools and colleges, for the majority education is still an afterthought even now.³⁹ More on this topic will be dealt with and discussed in later chapters.

2.4. Contexts of Children at Risk in India: Status and Role

The 2011 Indian census suggest that children in India under the age of 18 presently constitute more than 39 percent of its population,⁴⁰ whereas, in South India, it is around 32 percent.⁴¹ The number of children in India amounts to 472 million, which is over seven times more than the total population of the United Kingdom.⁴² The child sex ratio (0-6 years) in India is alarming, with the national index averaging at 914 girl children to every 1000 male children, a decline from 945 in 1991. This enormous imbalance predicts risks for girls, not only for this generation but for future too. However, since 1991, the overall birth rate in this age group has shown a decline of more than 10 percent, which is a good sign for population and poverty control. Interestingly, the statistics based on religious demographics from the 2011 census show that, within the Christian community,⁴³

- the ratio of females to males is high, that is 1009 girl children against 1000 male children; the national average is 946.

³⁹ Geetha B. Nambissan, 'Equity in Education? Schooling of Dalit Children in India', *Economic and Political Weekly* 31, no. 16/17 (1996): 1011–24, doi:10.2307/4404063.

⁴⁰ There are 471,986,622 children under the age of 18 as against the total population of 1,210,569,573 according to the 2011 Indian census.

⁴¹ Children under the age of 18 in four states constitute 31.5 percent of the total population in SI, which includes the union territory of Puducherry (Pondicherry). In Tamil Nadu and Kerala, it is 30 % while Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh constitute 34% of the total state population. These records are from the analysis done with the help of the statistics given by the government of India, for more information, see The Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 'Population Enumeration Data: Primary Census Data', accessed 15 December 2015, http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/population_enumeration.aspx.

⁴² The total Population of UK in 2011 census was 63,285,100. See "Data-Sets and Reference Tables," The Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom, accessed January 15, 2014. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/datasets-and-tables/index.html?pageSize=50&sortBy=none&sortDirection=none&newquery=2011+Uk+Population&content-type=Reference+table&content-type=Dataset>.

⁴³ See "Distribution of Population by Religions", Drop-in-Article on Census - No.4, accessed 2nd January 2018, http://www.censusindia.gov.in/Ad_Campaign/drop_in_articles/04-Distribution_by_Religion.pdf

- most Christian children, that is above 80 percent, are in schools – a higher proportion as compared to the national average of 72.9 percent.
- Literacy rate among Christians is high. That is, 80.3 % of Christians are literate (male 84.4 % and female 76.2%) as compared to other major religious communities (Hindus – total 65.1%, male 76.2%, female 53.2%; Muslims - total 59.1%, male 67.6% and female 50.1% and national average is just - total 64.8%, male 75.3%, female 53.7%)

These statistics portray a challenging context for India and for those involved with the welfare and protection of CAR, especially Christians who can help transform and challenge other communities in India by what they have achieved for them.

Therefore, it is imperative to understand that Christians in India are not just a minority, but they are a significant minority influencing contemporary India in several ways. Since independence, India has witnessed growth in welfare and protection of CAR. A pertinent question then arises: what is the role and status of children in the Indian political, social, religious and cultural context today?

Understanding these contexts will enable this research to be grounded in the realities in which CAR live in India, and to become a resource that will allow churches to place mission to CAR in India in a more secure position.

2.4.1. Children at risk in Socio-political Discourse and Action

The place of children today is prominent in socio-political discourse both at international and national levels. This significant shift can be traced back to two sources – industrialisation and war. Industrialisation, besides bringing economic growth, also displaced many families and children due to migration. Further, the twentieth century sadly earned the name the century of wars. The two world wars, subsequently the Korean and Vietnam wars, and several ethnic conflicts involving child soldiers have compelled many nations to think seriously about issues concerning such children. The emergence of the League of Nations in 1921, the

formation of NGOs such as Save the Children and their fight for 'child rights'⁴⁴ in 1924, the emergence of UNICEF in 1946, and finally the adoption of UNCRC in 1989, are all evidence of the same trend.⁴⁵

In India, in the late nineteenth century, Christian missions pioneered efforts to rescue CAR from social evils and natural calamities.⁴⁶ The Zenana Mission Society of the Church of England mainly focused on women and child widows for their upliftment.⁴⁷ Besides them, medical and educational institutions built by various mission agencies such as Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG) and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge helped several CAR and their families.⁴⁸

The formation of international Christian NGOs in the mid-twentieth century such as World Vision and Compassion International were some of the significant Christian responses through 'charity' and 'welfare' to the many children killed, orphaned, displaced or placed at risk as a result of wars.

Within India, the social and political ownership of children by bodies outside the family has become an emotionally contested issue. Families or parents in India are not at liberty to make as many decisions as they did a few decades back. Decisions now increasingly have social and political implications. This has resulted in a variety of interventionist legislation on matters such as sex determination test due to increased female infanticide, minimum age of marriage due to child marriage practice, or compulsory education and age to work in regard to child labour, and the

⁴⁴ Deborah Gaitskell, 'Mission by Other Means? Dora Earchy and the Save the Children Fund in the 1930's', in *Protestant Missions and Local Encounters in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Unto the Ends of the World*, ed. Marc R Spindler and Heleen L. Murre-van den Berg, vol. 40 (Lieden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 233–58.

⁴⁵ Paula S. Fass, 'A Historical Context for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 633 (2011): 17–29, doi:10.2307/27895958.

⁴⁶ Pandita Ramabai through Mukti Mission, Pandita Ramabai and Meera Kosambi, *Pandita Ramabai through Her Own Words: Selected Works* (Oxford, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000); Eric J. Sharpe, 'The Legacy of Amy Carmichael', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 20, no. 3 (1996): 121–25.

⁴⁷ Hugald Grafe, *History of Christianity in India: Tamil Nadu in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, vol. IV, Part 2, (Bangalore: Church History Association of India, 1990), 205–6.

⁴⁸ See Ibid. Grafe, IV, Part 2:188–205; John A Sharrock, *South Indian Missions: Containing Glimpses into the Lives and Customs of the Tamil People*, Revised edition (Westminster: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1910), 102-112,220-231,261-269.

number of children in the family for population control. International advocacy work and state legalisation against such undesirable social and cultural practices have to a large extent become a deterrent to many such practices now in India.

In India, importance has been given to education since ancient times. Before Lord Macaulay introduced the British system of education through a resolution in 1835, there were Indian education systems such as *Ashram-alaya* or *Gurukul* for the Hindus and *Madrasas* for the Muslims. Language and basic arithmetic were taught by local teachers in villages according to the requirements of caste and trade in Sanskrit and Arabic respectively.⁴⁹ According to Scharfe, there was a significant place for education in ancient India, and this was for upper-caste Hindu, Buddhist, Jain (medieval) and Muslim children, which was religious in nature.⁵⁰ On a different note, in India, there were and, in rural India, still are, several indigenous games played by children during their childhood.⁵¹ Hence, it can be understood that there were concepts of childhood and child-rearing in ancient, medieval India and even now, but the more formal ones were and are still continued to be aimed at the privileged. For the marginalised, as Raman says, generally childhood comprised learning the trade and skills of their father for boys, and for girls to learn domestic works of the mother to help their parents at the earliest opportunity.⁵² She further states that, within some tribal cultures in the North East (Nagas) and Central India (Mundas and Ho), childhood was spent in youth dormitories, separate for boys and girls, which was an important place for training and socialisation. So, according to her, this concept of childhood in India is very different from that of the West, where fragmentation of first extended families and now even of nuclear families is on the increase.⁵³ In such cases, her argument is valid, that UNCRC and other western constructs of child care and welfare emerging from their contexts may not be directly understood or even accepted by Indian people. As mentioned above,

⁴⁹ See 'Minute by the Hon'ble T.B. Macaulay, dated the 2nd February 1835', accessed 24 April 2016, http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00generallinks/macaulay/txt_minute_education_1835.html.

⁵⁰ Hartmut Scharfe, *Education in Ancient India*, vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 71–193.

⁵¹ Paul G. Brewster, 'A Collection of Games from India, with Some Notes on Similar Games in Other Parts of the World', *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 80, no. 1 (1955): 88–102, doi:10.2307/25840313.

⁵² Raman, 'Politics of Childhood', 4061–62.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 4056.

although childhood is a socio-cultural construct, it is now a political and economic construct too. Therefore, a Christian response to CRC by Indian Protestant missions to CAR is warranted in the contemporary context.

2.4.2. *Religio-cultural Context of a Child at Risk - Family and Community.*

From the previous section, it is evident that modern India does possess both ancient and more recent traditions of thinking about childhood. However, the diversity found in faith and practices within the Hindu religion, let alone other religions, confounds the ability to identify a single Indian construct of childhood.

Nevertheless, the overarching theme that emerges is the importance of parents, family and community for a child's protection and nurture during childhood. This is irrespective of what religion or caste or tribe a child belongs to. The Constitution of India provides a special provision, through education and employment for religious minorities, scheduled castes and tribes, so that children of these categories of people can make use of this provision, resulting in implications for their social and religious behaviour.

As seen earlier, during childhood, the need for formal or informal education was undoubtedly important in Indian society. But the competing demands of the struggle for subsistence and the need for education have always been the dilemma of the underprivileged. M.N. Srinivas, an Indian anthropologist, says that English education was seen as an essential tool for social mobility for the Brahmin class who mostly ruled alongside the British Raj through a process of westernisation.⁵⁴ However, one cannot ignore the fact that even the depressed class had access to education through Christian missions in India. This decentralisation of education to the masses and empowering and encouraging the marginalised for education became the harbinger for Christian mission and churches in India.

Recent anthropological studies emphasise that, in India, children are usually prominent members of the family, who are traditionally longed for, loved and lived for by many parents.⁵⁵ According to Kakar's analysis, for most Indians, the inner

⁵⁴ Srinivas, 'A Note on Sanskritization and Westernization', 486–96.

⁵⁵ Seymour says, "...for a woman to be childless is a tragedy. To bear children not only is personally rewarding for a woman, but it also helps cement her position in her husband's family for

world is framed within Hindu culture, which has traditionally structured the beliefs and behaviour of its members. In this traditional Indian identity, the maternal cosmos of infancy and early childhood constitutes the inner world.⁵⁶ Kakar's argument that dominant Hindu religious and cultural practices have influenced others in India has implications for the identity of Indian Christians too, who may be carrying some Hindu cultural influences and yet have no Hindu religious affiliation. This Indian concept of childhood of CAR then needs a theological critique keeping a 'creative tension' between being Christian and Indian simultaneously. This critical and creative dialogue process is necessary to develop a contextual theology of mission for CAR that helps develop a Christian identity.

In developing this Indian Christian contextual theology of mission for CAR, another religio-cultural factor needs addressing. For many parents and children from this marginalised section of Indian society, Christianity has given space for their upward social and spiritual mobility. As a result, many from the marginalised sections of society have accepted Christ and Christianity as a way to be liberated from their former oppressive religious and social structures. This has provoked certain Hindu groups to accuse Christians of converting many of these 'naïve' and innocent people through coercion and allurements.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, Christian reflection on the conversion of CAR from this section of the population is only beginning to emerge. This reflection becomes necessary for two reasons, first for the welfare and protection of children within the church, and secondly for the missional activity of the church and Christian NGOs directed towards children outside the church who are 'at risk'. This issue becomes particularly relevant as many government policies and international programmes now impose political and social obligations on Christian churches and missions influenced by the UNCRC. In such a context, the pertinent question of how prepared the churches and missions in India are to meet these requirements needs a Christian enquiry, especially in

it is she who produces the next generation of patrilineal heirs – sons." Nonetheless, all the women in her study in the city of Bhubaneswar, capital of Orissa state whom she has known have welcomed their daughters as well as their sons. Seymour, *Women, Family, and Child Care in India*, 70.

⁵⁶ Sudhir Kakar, *The Inner World: A Psycho-Analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India*, 3rd ed. (New Delhi; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 18,219; Kakar, 'Childhood in India: Traditional Ideals and Contemporary Reality', 454.

⁵⁷ See Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 2003; See footnote 15 in chapter one.

South India. If churches see themselves as part of nation-building and the political community, then are they not compelled to take these laws, policies and programmes seriously both in their dissemination and implementation? Alternatively, will the churches still fall prey to the many accusations that already exist within India, that Christianity is foreign and that Christians are only interested in promoting the interests of their own religion and church denominations? These, alongside many other questions, need theological answers.

2.4.3. Economic Context

Today a portion of the Indian national budget is dedicated to the welfare and protection of children. Children have now become the biggest economic focus and the primary target of even many commercial enterprises, from basics to luxury items. It is ironic to see that many NGOs, in their efforts to lobby and to raise funds, use sensitive and sentimental photos of vulnerable children to grab attention or emotionalise their cause and work and, in doing so, also objectify children and potentially put them more at risk.⁵⁸ These child-based NGOs can be in conflict with government or families if they work only with families or only with governments. Nevertheless, one cannot deny the essential role of NGOs in welfare, social work and child development in the world today.

Poverty is widely understood as the primary cause for children to be at risk in India. Hence, overcoming poverty has become a major global and national agenda in the last quarter of the century by the UN and the International Monetary Fund. Hageaars and Vos classify definitions of poverty in three categories. First, poverty is seen as having less than an objectively - defined absolute minimum; secondly, having less than others in society; and, finally, as a feeling that you do not have enough to get along.⁵⁹ Laderchi and others suggest four possible approaches to understand poverty in relation to the poverty line:

⁵⁸ See Shawn Teresa Flanigan, 'Paying for God's Work: A Rights-Based Examination of Faith Based NGOs in Romania', *Voluntas* 18 (2007): 156–75; Kate Manzo, 'Imaging Humanitarianism: NGO Identity and the Iconography of Childhood', *Antipode* 40, no. 4 (2008): 632–57, doi:10.1111/j.1467-8330.2008.00627.x; Lakshmi, 'India Cracks down on Foreign Funding of NGOs'.

⁵⁹ Aldi Hageaars and Klaas de Vos, 'The Definition and Measurement of Poverty', *Journal of Human Resources* 23, no. 2 (1988): 212.

- the monetary approach looks from an economic point of view and proposes the solution of economic growth.
- the capability approach looks at the expansion of human capabilities and proposes the solution of provision of public goods.
- the social exclusion approach looks at the marginalised people, primarily in developed countries, and proposes the solution of comprehensive welfare policies; and finally,
- the participatory approach attempts to define poverty from participation of the public and proposes the solution of contextual policies.⁶⁰

A similar struggle can also be found within the New Testament thought on how to understand poverty, whether in monetary terms as expressed in the gospel of Luke or spiritual as expressed in Matthew's gospel. Kyrelo, quoting J. H. Nouwen, insightfully states, "Poverty is so much more than lack of money, lack of food, or lack of decent living quarters. Poverty creates marginal people, people who are separated from that whole network of ideas, services, facilities and opportunities".⁶¹ Hence one can see that the notion of poverty is broad and goes beyond monetary understanding – so also when it comes to understanding CAR in India. Consequently, most children are at risk because they are caught up in the cycle of poverty, deeply affecting their families and environment. Hence, for a sustainable intervention for CAR, their family and community may also be included.

For child welfare, protection and policies, another concept related to children that has emerged recently is 'child poverty'. Child poverty specifically looks at the status of children living below the poverty line, as defined primarily in economic terms, in any country.⁶² This concept of 'child poverty' is more popular in western

⁶⁰ See Caterina Ruggeri Laderchi, Ruhi Saith, and Frances Stewart, 'Does It Matter That We Do Not Agree on the Definition of Poverty? A Comparison of Four Approaches', *Oxford Development Studies* 31, no. 3 (2003): 243–74, doi:10.1080/1360081032000111698.

⁶¹ James D. Kirylo, 'Preferential Option for the Poor. Making a Pedagogical Choice', *Childhood Education* 82, no. 5 (2006): 267.

⁶² Alberto Minujin et al., 'The Definition of Child Poverty: A Discussion of Concepts and Measurements', *La Definición de Pobreza Infantil: Un Discusión de Conceptos Y de Medidas*. 18, no. 2 (2006): 481–85, doi:10.1177/0956247806069627; Gerry Redmond, 'Child Poverty and Child Rights: Edging towards a Definition', *Journal of Children and Poverty* 14, no. 1 (2008): 63–82, doi:10.1080/10796120701871298.

developed countries, and in studies adopting a social exclusion approach, considering children living in poverty. This term is not commonly used in emerging economies like India, because it is their parents, not primarily the children, who are seen as being in poverty. However, one should note, identifying child poverty can be a social indicator of a country's budget, welfare and protection policies and programmes for children. In this context, Couture says that church and theology can be part of the social structural ecology of poor and tenuously-connected children. She argues that churches and theological schools can play a part in shaping the environment of children through compassionate work and in advocacy for children.⁶³ The idea of child poverty can also be taken up by churches, seminaries Bible colleges, and mission agencies: What is the place of CAR in their mission – in their budget, policies and programmes? In other words, is it a child-friendly church or agency? Is the church or Christian mission fit for children? If not, what efforts have to be made?

2.5. Contested Issues on Children at Risk in India

After looking at different concepts and contexts, this chapter has identified many contested issues. However, for our immediate attention, three main contentious issues are worth looking at, which connect to some extent with other contested issues. These issues are of central relevance to the argument of the thesis and hence will be explored and analysed in the coming chapters of this thesis.

2.5.1. Children as 'Future Citizens'

The idea of citizenship, of children within national and Church identity, is the first of these debated issues. Moreover, the subject of childhood and child rights initiates this rather important but difficult discussion. This arises from the basic understanding that children are vulnerable and dependent; thus, they need to be protected for the future until they achieve maturity and independence. Children are frequently perceived to be future citizens, and therefore they are to be nurtured,

⁶³ Pamela D. Couture, *Seeing Children, Seeing God: A Practical Theology of Children and Poverty* (Abingdon Press, 2000), 23,46-47.

protected and prepared since they are the ‘future’.⁶⁴ This understanding is familiar to many, in India and in many other countries. The debate on politicisation and citizenship of children is very recent and sees children taking an important role both directly and indirectly in society and politics. Children are typically placed amongst the lowest strata of society, and among these, CAR suffer the most with no real identity but only an improvised status and role, often perceived as a liability. A related notion is observed within the Christian understanding of childhood and children wherever children are seen merely as objects – rather than also as subjects – of God’s mission. This perception then leads to an understanding of childhood that emphasises the future over and against the present child’s role in the life and ministry of the church, as subject of God’s mission. To separate the future from the present is a reductionist approach that belittles the child, children and childhood and, most of all, CAR.

It is self-evident that children are commonly perceived as objects of love and hence needing adult protection and nurture. However, there is a high possibility of misrepresentation and abuse by not giving them the necessary and due space to participate in their development and growth. But, when they are accepted as subjects, they can be recognised as already being citizens of a nation and members of the church, albeit in a particular and unique way. However, it has to be understood and also articulated at various levels – among children and adults – that there have been fundamental misconceptions on this issue. One of the ways of addressing this problem could be by integrating topics of childhood and CAR in schools, churches and seminaries by integrating topics such as child rights and creating awareness on how children are at risk. Through this, the idea of citizenship of children can help children be better represented in all aspects of public and private life. This can feasibly support children’s participation and decision-making in the church and nation. This will help to develop their idea of Christian stewardship and their role in national and church building. A similar feeling was expressed by Wendy Strachan, a caregiver working with Scripture Union International, UK, at the

⁶⁴ See Margaret V. Old, *Today’s Children, Tomorrow’s Church* (London: Scripture Union, 1974). Ancient Jewish tradition and early church tradition had a similar notion too. See W. A. Strange, *Children in the Early Church : Children in the Ancient World, the New Testament and the Early Church* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1996), 9–11.

2010 Edinburgh Conference, who pleaded for a place for children in many Christian conferences. Is there a place for children to be subjects of mission after so long being only objects of mission? If there is a place, something that needs to be considered and worked out is how it can be negotiated.⁶⁵

This can also lead to a theological discussion, about whether children are included within the scope of the 'Great Commission' as found in Matthew's gospel, both as objects and subjects of God's mission. A theological investigation on this theme needs further exploration, in juxtaposition with the words of Jesus on children 'unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven' (NRSV, Mathew 18:3). For example, how can they be accommodated into the Great Commission, or how are they to be welcomed into the Kingdom of heaven? We will return briefly to this point in chapter seven.

2.5.2. Rights versus Duties: Child, Family, Society, Church and Government

Rights-based intervention has become prominent now. There may be several reasons for such a shift in perspective and in actual missionary work. This significant change applies to most Christian NGOs, irrespective of denomination, in the post-Christian era in the West, where, despite the decline in church membership, charity and missionary work has still not reduced. As seen earlier charity and missionary work persists in the twenty-first century, but it is done in new ways and methods, because of the evolving systems of regulation by the state of the voluntary sector. One of the most significant motivating factors to help the vulnerable and at-risk communities is now empowerment through human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has become the document that has crossed the most political and geographical boundaries to justify charity work in countries which would otherwise have been difficult to work in for political and religious reasons. Secondly, child rights, which have been ratified by most countries in the world, are equally influencing new policies in countries like India. In such, situations, many NGOs have found this a way to continue their Christian work of

⁶⁵ Wendy Strachan, 'Welcoming Children: Reinstating Children in Our Theological Reflections on Mission', in *Edinburgh 2010: Mission Today and Tomorrow*, eds. Kirsteen Kim and Andrew Anderson (Oxford, England: Regnum Books International, 2011), 287.

serving and protecting the poor, vulnerable and marginalised sections of the society, empowering them by right-based intervention. On the other hand, such operations require significant human and financial resources, and, with the decrease of church membership in the West, these agencies can make an appeal to the wider public based on human rights violations. Therefore, Christian agencies may naturally be considered by both the government and the public to be best placed to carry out such activities because of the advantages that they possess, having a long history of serving the needy and a reputation for serving with good [Christian] values in their work.⁶⁶ This is indeed possible in some other countries, but in India, with the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) government currently in power, such interactions are difficult, although not impossible.

The role of adults in the development, protection, nurture and care of children is a necessity, and, as mentioned above, numerous agencies consisting of adults influence the lives of children. Child rights, afforded by UNCRC, and the notion of duties of adults, as understood traditionally, brings us to the second contested issue, concerning the debate over rights versus duties. For adults to intervene in the lives of others' children is to challenge the traditional role of parents or family as the primary caregivers of children in India. Nevertheless, the UNCRC does recognise the importance of family and parents in many of its Articles.⁶⁷ American scholar Don Browning not only argues that Christian tradition helped to shape both UDHR, and UNCRC, but also spends much space on the rights of the wider family, rather than individual parents.⁶⁸ The UNCRC also asserts the role of the government in implementing, support and protecting these children from exploitation. Besides family and UNCRC, two other groups have a significant influence on CAR for Indian

⁶⁶ Flanigan, 'Paying for God's Work: A Rights-Based Examination of Faith Based NGOs in Romania', 158–60. See next chapter.

⁶⁷ Such as Article 5 – parental guidance; 7– legally registered and cared by parents, 10–family reunification, 14 – rights of children in guiding their freedom of thought, belief and religion, 16– privacy of child's family and home, 18 – parental responsibilities and state assistance, 20 – deprived of a family, 26 – social security by government, 29 – education and encourage respect for their parents, and 37 – in detention keep in contact with family, the value of family. "The Fact Sheet: A Summary of the Rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

⁶⁸ Don S. Browning, 'Christianity and the Rights of Children: An Integrative View', in *Christianity and Human Rights: An Introduction*, ed. Frank S. Alexander and John Witte, Jr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 285, doi:10.1017/CBO9780511761713.016.

Christians – namely, the *society* in which the child is born and the *church* in which the child is also nurtured.

Traditionally and today, parents, family and community are seen as the primary guardians of children in India. Human rights, UNCRC and (for Christians) the Bible⁶⁹ all presuppose the existence of such multiple systems for childcare. The majority worldview from various socio-cultural and religious contexts in the Global South perceives the family as providing the primary source of child welfare and protection. Nevertheless, when children are at risk, intervention is undoubtedly needed. A child's natural environment happens to be a family. But many times, families themselves are at risk or the lack of a family in a child's life necessitates intervention for the child's sake. Here, the debate lies in how these interventions should be made. Should they be made by families or local communities only, as has been traditionally assumed within the Indian context, or should they be achieved by the state, considering the government's mandate, as well? For Christians, what role can the church, or Christian missions play in work among CAR? If they have a role, further questions arise: Why should they get involved? Should they consider government mandates, especially since these originate from those who might not have any religious or doctrinal affinity? These questions get magnified in the Indian context because usually Christianity is portrayed as 'western', 'foreign-funded' and 'other worldly'. Under these circumstances, a theological apologia is required, not just for defence but also for an authentic Christian witness. This idea of being authentic is in contrast to the methods used for proselytism, such as coercion, force and allurements or the practice of non-holistic mission. This thesis suggests that authentic Christian mission to CAR in India is that which is simultaneously truly Christian, and continuously in dialogue with the Indian and global contexts; it will be obligated to national and international monitoring agents with motivations that are transparent and models that are sustainable and holistic.

Intervention commonly happens in moments of crisis, whereas in normal conditions security or protection is dependent on the social and constitutional safety net. When these safety nets are breached, only then are interventions

⁶⁹ See John T. Carroll, 'Children in the Bible', *Interpretation* 55, no. 2 (2001): 121–34; Zuck, *Precious in His Sight*.

demanded. However, many times these interventions are done pre-emptively because concern for welfare and protection is mixed with strong emotions, such as sympathy, anger and frustration, which can cloud judgment. These motivations can lead to positive and negative results. In such circumstances, constructing Christian interventions with a human face is a challenging task. Moreover, multiple interventions from various agents and agencies can repeatedly disillusion the family or community which has been the primary caregiver. In other words, will ‘everybody’s baby’ become ‘nobody’s baby’? This research will need to address this important issue of multiple ownership and welfare within the Indian context and seek a viable option that keeps in tension the age-old existing kinship welfare schemes and new ‘imported’ welfare schemes in the spirit of interdependence. The old Nigerian proverb, “It requires a whole village to raise a child”, reiterates that it is not just an individual affair, but rather a community effort that is needed for child development. Every member of the community has a role to play. But the ‘why’ and ‘how’ are questions that need to be answered.

The Indian churches and Protestant missions in India need to recognise the plurality in culture, religion, languages and denominations within which God’s mission continues. Hence, the question may arise, can churches work alongside others who do not have similar doctrinal or even religious affiliation? As Mouw says, it is here that Christians must find new ways to work under a culture of common grace not employing a ‘hermeneutic of outright suspicion’, but a ‘hermeneutic of caution’ for a common task and witness, in this case, the welfare of CAR.⁷⁰

2.5.3. Children at Risk, Christian Mission and Conversion

Christian mission in India, in the context of dominating influence of the UNRC in India, is a contested issue especially in relation to the accusations made by some Hindu groups of conversion made through ‘coercion’ or ‘allurement’. The third contested issue relates to the conversion debate, especially when it is connected with children. In India, Christian missions through education in schools and colleges are not only seen as a way to impart knowledge but also as a means to convert

⁷⁰ Richard J. Mouw, *He Shines in All That’s Fair : Culture and Common Grace : The 2000 Stob Lectures* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2001), 93.

children to Christianity. As children are perceived to be vulnerable, Christian mission, either by propagating the gospel (word) or through welfare schemes (deed), can be interpreted as manipulation or allurements when it is associated with CAR.

The three most identifiable approaches are child evangelism, child compassion work and child advocacy. This research uses these three approaches as a methodological framework to evaluate Christians' missions to CAR in contemporary India. As this issue is delicate and critical, churches and mission agencies have negotiated a variety of syntheses between these three approaches. A probable safe zone that most mission organisations practise is to adopt all these approaches towards those who have come into the Christian fold. However, it is challenging and critical as the problem becomes sensitive if children from outside the church are involved. Nevertheless, the controversy is not just seen in the mission to those outside the church but even within, especially as Christians negotiate with each other to define their mission approaches based on the plurality of doctrinal stances. Hence, it becomes necessary to identify what motivates some Christians to choose a particular approach, controversial and creative, rather than the others. What are their theological or missiological foundations or, in modern parlance, what are the 'Christian missional drivers' that lead Christians to choose one or more of these methods? Are there preliminary guidelines for a theology of mission developed for Christian mission to CAR in India that can help to define a right practice? If there are, what are they and how can they provide principles for future Christian mission? It is imperative that the Indian churches face these questions while engaging in holistic mission for CAR in India.

Christian missions to children, based on some combination of the three approaches of child evangelism, child advocacy and child compassion have long been a reality in India. Figure 1 seeks to present these various approaches in diagrammatic form:

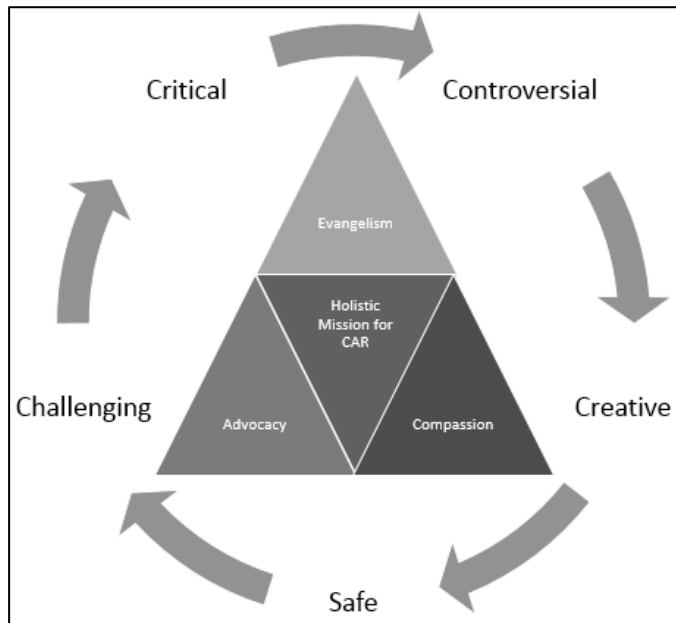


Figure 1: Issues surrounding Christian missions to children at risk in India

The history of Christian mission to children in India has mostly focussed on mission-based education, which has traditionally included elements of all three approaches. It was evangelistic in intent, was very much informed by compassion for the plight of the children in poverty and advocated against practices that were deemed evil and inhuman. Samuel Jayakumar argues that the modern missionary movement in India was holistic, in that it stood for the poor and outcast communities and also stood against many oppressive social practices. This Christian heritage, he says, continues in present-day missionary work.⁷¹ However, the challenges discussed above suggest that a simple continuation of past models and motivations is impossible in the current Indian context. It becomes imperative now to evaluate first existing models and motivations and then investigate possible new creative approaches for sustainable Christian missions to CAR for the future.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has argued that studies on concepts such as childhood, child rights and CAR are very recent and that the concepts are still developing locally within

⁷¹ Samuel Jayakumar, 'The Work of God as Holistic Mission: An Asian Perspective', in *Holistic Mission: God's Plan for God's People*, ed. Brian Woolnough and Wonsuk Ma (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2010), 87–90.

cultures, religions and societies in India due to global influences on national politics. In India, notions of children, childhood and childcare are significantly influenced by the Hindu religion, and these traditional cultural beliefs and practices are being challenged and shaped continually due to interventions arising from different sources. We can conclude that the majority of CAR in India live amidst the marginalised poor community, who are deprived of physical, social, emotional and spiritual holistic development and lack comprehensive care from their families and communities, who are at risk also.

Hence, it is central to investigate how Protestant missions have engaged with the socio-political discourse and economic and religio-cultural realities concerning CAR raised in this chapter. While involved in child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy work, what at kind of theology of missions for CAR has been developed to equip churches and NGOs while working with CAR? Do Protestant missions to CAR in the Indian context address issues concerning families and communities that are also at risk? This chapter clearly indicates that Protestant missions need a Christian anthropology and ecclesiology for CAR, but, if so, what do these look like? In the contemporary Indian context, have 'child rights' hindered or strengthened Protestant missions to CAR? Finally, to work alongside others (Christians and non-Christians), what possible approaches or methods have Protestant churches developed for a holistic mission to CAR in a pluralistic Indian context, without losing their Christian identity? These investigative questions are key to evaluate Protestant missions to CAR in this research to find possible foundations and principles for future Christian mission in India.

To engage with these themes and new developments surrounding CAR, it will be necessary to map existing approaches, issues and challenges in Protestant missions to CAR in India. This will be undertaken in two parts and will entail two methodologies: the first part locates elements of continuity and discontinuity in the history of Protestant missions to CAR in India on a broader national scale; and the second part consists of contemporary empirical research confined to two cities in South India – namely Bangalore and Chennai.

Chapter 3. Continuity and Discontinuity in the History of Protestant Missions to Children at Risk in India

3.1. Introduction

Ever since August Hermann Franke's orphan school at Halle during the late seventeenth century, Protestant missions have had a significant place for children in their missionary work. This school influenced not only the Danish-Halle missions in South India as early as 1706, but also other Protestant churches in the West and their missions.¹ Hence, to cover the history of over three centuries of missionary work to children in India would be a challenging project of its own. Yet, children and ministries related to them are under-represented in missionary documents and mission history, compared to the extensive coverage of other mission activity. Even looking at the indexes of any mission history and theology books would provide ample evidence of this neglect. However, some primary missionary documents in the form of letters, reports, and journals demonstrate that Christian missions to children were significant in many foreign missionary programmes.

The primary purpose of this chapter is to locate elements of continuity and discontinuity in the history of Protestant missions to CAR in India. To achieve this, some selected case studies from Indian mission history are briefly analysed, in order to show the various ways in which the three models and motivations introduced in this research, namely, child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy, have intersected throughout modern Indian Protestant history. Subsequently, crucial challenges are identified, which are demanding a change in contemporary Christian missions to CAR in India by discontinuing from the past missionary practices. As this research dwells on contemporary Protestant mission to Children at Risk, this chapter primarily borrows from the meagre emerging secondary literature,

¹ Heinrich Ernst Ferdinand Guericke, *The Life of Augustus Herman Franke* (London: Henry G. Bohn, York Street, Covent Garden, 1847), 144–47.

supplemented by some archival resources at New College, Edinburgh and at United Theological College, Bangalore to develop some of the historical case studies. Before mapping the Protestant mission history on CAR, I will first define what models and motivation mean in this research, explain the methodological framework used to unravel history and finally define the scope and limitations of this chapter.

3.1.1. Defining Models and Motivations in Christian Mission to CAR

A *model* is a theoretical construct of an empirical reality. In the last few decades, several theological books and articles have used the term *model* in their title or method of approaching a particular theological subject. But, no one model can fully capture the reality.² A model is metaphorical in nature, and as models are constructs, they cannot entirely reflect the reality 'out there': they are to be taken seriously but not literally. Nevertheless, models do disclose actual features during investigations. Hence, using models is a way of dealing with complex, highly differentiated reality. In other words, it is a creative way to better understand empirical evidence objectively.³ This research uses this term to provide realistic representation in theological research to explain and explore complex realities.⁴

On the other hand, *motivation* is a theoretical concept that accounts for why people chose to engage in a particular way in a given context. Motivations are the drivers that shape any operations, in this case, the models in a particular context.⁵ These motivations have both the pull and push factors that are shaped by external or internal forces such as anticipating some reward or avoiding unpleasant outcomes. Understanding motivations will provide explanations for variability in the approaches even though individuals or groups may work in virtually identical external circumstances.⁶

² Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, Faith and Cultures Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 29.

³ Bevans uses the phrase 'critical realism'. *Ibid.*, 30.

⁴ Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church* (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1987), 16.

⁵ Robert C. Beck, *Motivation: Theories and Principles* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.; London: Prentice Hall, 2000), 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 2–3.

3.1.2. Methodological Framework

As mentioned earlier the primary objective of this chapter is to identify continuity and discontinuity in various models, and their underlying motivations, of contemporary Protestant missions to children at risk in South India, while tracing the precursors of such models in Protestant mission history. In this research, to understand various models of Christian mission to children at risk, three models are constructed for representation – Child Evangelism, Child Compassion and Child Advocacy. The initial findings of the empirical research (July 2014 to November 2014), suggested that various combinations of these models seem to exist in these contemporary Protestant missions in India.

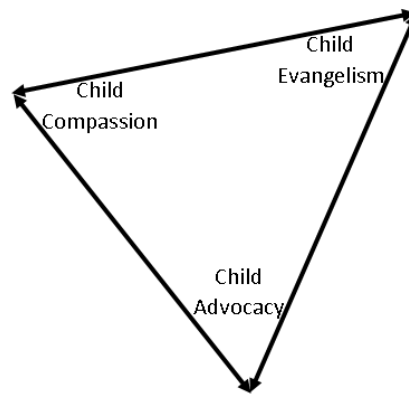


Figure 2: Triangle depicting Christian missions to children at risk ⁷

The meaning of the triangle

In the triangle, the lines between the points have arrows at both ends, illustrating a position or journey that can take place between these three points – Child Evangelism, Child Compassion, and Child Advocacy. On this basis, any particular instance of Christian mission to CAR can be located somewhere within this triangle representing the possible mix of the three models. The slight tilt in the triangle is meant to suggest that all three models have their place in Christian mission with no one of them necessarily set above the others – although, in practice, this may not always be true.

⁷ Willmer explains a similar triangle but with mission, child and theology as the three points. Haddon Willmer, 'The Triangle: Theology, Mission and Child', in *Theology, Mission and Child: Global Perspectives*, ed. Bill Prevette et al., Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series 24 (Oxford: Regnum, 2014), 11.

Each constructed model has a particular goal, which motivates engagement in a given context. The purpose of the child evangelism model is to evangelise children with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to disciple them in the Bible and in a local church for Christian living.⁸ The focus in a child compassion model is on child development through such means as child sponsorships and partnerships. The child advocacy model as practised in recent times is a rights-based approach in which individuals, professionals, and advocacy organisations speak out in the best interests of children. Although the goal of each of these models listed here is distinct, in practice agencies may operate with an overlap or mixture of them. In these models, even motivations may differ. Although personal faith in Christ and personal commitment to Christian mission are great motivating factors, there are particular primary motivational factors in each model. In evangelism, church growth may be the primary motive; in compassion, desire for child development; and in advocacy, the defence of ‘child rights’ becomes their primary motivating factor. Agencies involved in evangelism and compassion work can be categorised as agents of transformation, whereas agencies involved in advocacy identify themselves as a catalyst so that children themselves become agents of change. This research uses these categories as a framework and then with the help of select case studies attempts to identify various models and motivations used in the history of Protestant missions to CAR to understand if they still continue to exist in contemporary Protestant missions to CAR, especially in South India.

3.1.3. Scope and Limitation

While considering these models, it is essential to recognise that there are many shades of their understanding and interpretations of their practices, with perhaps several sub-models within each of these models. This chapter will show how these three models have closely intertwined throughout the history of Protestant missions in India and in practice they are not mutually exclusive alternatives.

In order to map the development of these three models, a survey will be done in this chapter with some in-depth study through a snapshot of selected Protestant

⁸ ‘Child Evangelism Fellowship’, *About Us*, accessed 19 May 2014, <https://www.cefonline.com/about-us-100032>.

missions and the forces that have shaped Christian mission to CAR in India. Alongside this are reported studies of particular churches and mission agencies, to provide examples and demonstrate variation. Finally, insights are drawn from available historical research on educational Christian mission and ideas surrounding childhood in the colonial and post-independence periods in India.

3.2. The Child Evangelism Model

Protestant missions from their beginning in the early eighteenth century, focused primarily on evangelising the ‘heathen’ adults, to establish churches or Christian congregations in India. However, missionaries invariably found themselves integrating social work while evangelising many Anglo-Indian abandoned children, children of the converts, and abused children. This model of child evangelism that commenced during the colonial period, continues into twenty-first-century Protestant missions. In what follows, we will observe some selected missionary endeavours where this model was, and is still, practised for Christianising and planting churches, through education and mass movements.

3.2.1. Christianising and Planting Churches: Case Studies

Tranquebar Missions: In the year 1706, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg (1682–1719) and Heinrich Plütschau (1677–1752), two German missionaries from Halle, were sent to the Danish colony of Tranquebar (now Tarangambadi) to evangelise. In the very first year after his arrival, Ziegenbalg saw many Catholic Christians living as beggars, and their children abandoned. The families of the converts had excommunicated them for embracing a foreign faith. Hence, driven by these circumstances, Ziegenbalg reported,

[W]e also began to set up a charity school for the . . . Malabar boys; not only providing . . . food, but also instructing them in their language, but chiefly in the fundamental principles of Christian knowledge, in the hope they will be useful, if not for us, perhaps to those who are likely to come after us and engage in [the] same work.⁹

⁹ Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plütschau, *Propagation of the Gospel in the East: Being an Account of the Success of Two Danish Missionaries, Lately Sent to the East-Indies, for the Conversion of the Heathens in Malabar; in Several Letters to Their Correspondents in Europe; Containing* (London: J. Downing, 1709), Letter V, 37. These missionaries adopted orphan children

For Ziegenbalg, this was not a new venture, as he had already worked for a short time at Franke's 'charity school' in Halle, a school meant for the poor in society. The Tranquebar missionaries, besides evangelising these children, also displayed Christian compassion and love by rescuing some children sold in the market and rehabilitating them under their care. Although these 'educated' children did not find any jobs under the Danish government, they migrated to different towns taking their new faith with them, becoming the first indigenous Protestant missionaries, as desired by the missionaries.¹⁰

The Tranquebar missionaries provided medical care and treatment¹¹ and education to empower children for their future role in society. However, their advocacy work to protect children was not particularly prominent, as they lacked the power to influence governments. Nevertheless, these German missionaries in the service of the King of Denmark, working alongside the Danish and the English East India Companies and even the Tanjore state, influenced these three institutions/agencies to start schools and orphanages for children. Their impact on partnership and networking at local, national, and international levels is remarkable. Indeed, models based on their work are still discussed, for application in contemporary settings, despite the fact that they have often been criticised for allowing caste practices in the church.¹²

Serampore and other Anglophone Missions: William Carey (1761–1834), the pioneering English Baptist missionary in Bengal, started two elementary schools for the local boys in 1793 in Malda. Later, in the year 1800, Carey along with William Ward (1769–1823), Joshua Marshman (1768–1837) and his wife Hannah (1767–

often by purchasing them from their guardians. Cyril Bruce Firth. *An introduction to Indian Church History* (Delhi, India: Published for the Senate of Serampore College by ISPCK, 2011), 132.

¹⁰ Daniel Jeyaraj, 'Lutheran Churches in Eighteenth-Century India', *Lutheran Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (2003): 84.

¹¹ Christoffer H. Grundmann, *Sent to Heal: Emergence and Development of Medical Missions*, Indian edition (Bangalore, India: Centre for Contemporary Christianity, 2014), 40.

¹² Henriette Bugge, *Mission and Tamil Society: Social and Religious Change in South India (1840-1900)*, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series: No 65 (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1994), 61.

1847) opened a private school, primarily for children of Eurasians, Europeans and missionaries, and two boarding schools in order to support their missions financially. In addition, in the same year, they opened a vernacular school for forty native children. All three, often referred as the 'Serampore Trio' had prior exposure to being teachers in charity or village schools in England.¹³ These "schools rose in the public estimation and soon became the most flourishing and remunerative in the country".¹⁴ In the process, they built up a group of local gentry who had a favourable attitude towards the missionaries.¹⁵ Later, in 1818, to support higher education, these missionaries opened a full-scale Arts and Science College in Serampore, including a department in Divinity.

Through Carey's position at Fort William College, he influenced George Udny, who would later be elevated to the Supreme Council in 1801. John Clark Marshman explains that Carey's influence on Udny helped bring the Hindu religious practices of child sacrifice at Saugor, in Bengal, to the attention of the British Governor-General. Carey, Ward and Joshua Marshman also produced pamphlets and distributed them to the public and the British officials to create awareness of such practices. These efforts resulted in a detailed study by the Presidency government and later prohibition of such practices in the region.¹⁶ This kind of intervention is perhaps one of the first Protestant advocacy efforts to protect children and their rights in India, which was later continued by many other missionary agencies. For example, Christians pioneered in abolishing slavery, abolishing human sacrifices, serving the poor, organising family relief, introducing modern medical science and opening dispensaries, infirmaries and hospitals, founding leper asylums, orphanages and

¹³ Michael Andrew Laird, 'The Contribution of the Serampore Missionaries to Education in Bengal, 1793-1837', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental & African Studies* 31, no. 1 (1968): 94.

¹⁴ John Clark Marshman, *The Life and Labours of Carey, Marshman and Ward: The Serampore Missionaries*, Popular edition, Cambridge Library Collection (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 61.

¹⁵ Michael Andrew Laird, *Missionaries and Education in Bengal, 1793-1837* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), 122–124.

¹⁶ Marshman, *The Life and Labours of Carey, Marshman and Ward: The Serampore Missionaries*, 77.

others.¹⁷ Such interventions not only brought social change, but were a catalyst to start counter-movements by Hindu and Muslim reformers.¹⁸

Meanwhile, in South India, the Wesleyan Methodist movement in the Tanjore district, although established to evangelise, like most of the other missionary agencies, continued building institutions for the welfare not only of the poor and marginalised Christian community but also for the non-Christian people.¹⁹ However, by the beginning of the twentieth century, most missionaries were involved in the dissemination of knowledge and Christian teaching, in order to have a 'leavening' effect upon the whole of society. This called for an active role to work for the welfare of all, to transform the community, to change political opinion, and to be involved in social reforms.²⁰ Protestant missions to children during this period were predominantly subsumed in education and institutions related to it.²¹ The following section will look at this in some detail.

3.2.2. Evangelism Through Education: Charity Schools and Shaping Future Generations

For the missionaries in India who started schools and charitable works, the influences of the charity school and the Sunday school movements in Europe in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries are noticeable.²² These charity schools were to deal with poverty, to instil good moral standards,²³ and to display piety by a life devoted to the rescue of neglected and godless children.²⁴ Hence, in many

¹⁷ See James S. Dennis, *Christian Missions and Social Progress: A Sociological Study of Foreign Missions*, vol. Vol II (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1897), 282ff.

¹⁸ Grafe, *History of Christianity in India: Tamilnadu in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, IV, Part 2:154–68.

¹⁹ Sundararaj Manickam, *The Social Setting of Christian Conversion in South India: The Impact of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries on the Trichy-Tanjore Diocese with Special Reference to the Harijan Communities of the Mass Movement Area 1820-1947*, Beiträge zur Südasiensforschung (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1977), 197.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 221–61.

²¹ John Pritchard, *Methodists and Their Missionary Societies 1760-1900*, Ashgate Methodist Studies Series (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), 109–113; C. F. Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S.P.G.: An Historical Account of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1701-1900*. (London: SPG, 1901), 468–630.

²² M. G. Jones, *The Charity School Movement: A Study of Eighteenth Century Puritanism in Action* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1938), 2–3.

²³ *Ibid.*, 215–61.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.

ways, the missionary activities carried out in India for 'neglected' children were a continuation of these philanthropic models in Britain and Europe.

The beginnings of Protestant missions in India in the eighteenth century were indeed small and not effectively supported by the East India Company. However, things developed following the revision of the Company Charter in Acts of 1813 and 1833, which granted the missionaries a new but still restricted liberty to start schools.²⁵ Later almost every Protestant mission that came to India started schools for children.²⁶ After the 1857 revolt, when India came directly under the British crown, evangelism through education became even more aggressive. According to the 1910 *Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions*, in India, there were 122 mission agencies having altogether 10,872 Sunday schools with 422,135 membership of teachers and pupils.²⁷ This combination of education and religious teaching was not a novelty brought by these missionaries. In India, education and religious instruction already went alongside each other in the village schools for the Hindus (*Patshala*, *Thenai*) and Muslims (*Madrassas*).

When the Scottish missionary statesman Alexander Duff endorsed the use of education as a means to evangelise, the evangelists in the form of missionaries and some in the government seized this opportunity to help their missionary endeavours.²⁸ By the early twentieth century, Protestant missionaries were using missionary education to build native churches and to train spiritual leaders and teachers to bear Christian witness. In 1931, the Lindsay Commission on the role of

²⁵ Penelope Carson, *The East India Company and Religion, 1698-1858* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 151–79, 183–202.

²⁶ Rudolf C. Heredia, 'Education and Mission-School as Agent of Evangelisation', *Economic and Political Weekly* 30, no. 37 (September 1995): 2333.

²⁷ World Missionary Conference, *Statistical Atlas of Christian Missions: Containing a Directory of Missionary Societies, a Classified Summary of Statistics, an Index of Mission Stations, and a Series of Specially Prepared Maps of Mission Fields* (Edinburgh: The Conference, 1910), 69–70.

²⁸ Protestant missionary education specially changed after Macaulay's minute of 1835 made English as the official language and later, after the resolution of Lord Harding made English as the preferred qualification for government service. Wood's dispatch of 1854, which consolidated the English education through grant-in-aid, provided partial support to not only public run schools but also private run schools too. However, this required a shift from mass education to quality higher education. Moreover, after the Education Commission of 1882, primary education was deemed necessary and a greater need for higher English education was propounded. This resulted in Protestant education institutions such as Madras Christian College in 1839, Christian Medical College at Ludhiana in 1894, and Vellore in 1918. Heredia, 'Education and Mission-School as Agent of Evangelisation'; Carson, *The East India Company and Religion, 1698-1858*, 241–42.

the Christian colleges in India concluded that education had never proved to be an effective tool for evangelism, as intended by the missionaries. Nevertheless, it argued that education fostered Christian leadership for the Indian Church and the nation.²⁹

Access to higher education was offered to Christians and Hindus (especially those of higher caste), so that, in colleges and hostels through concentrated Christian presence, evangelism could be done through the diffusion of Christian faith and influence.³⁰ However, this higher education was for children who had access to quality primary education. Very often, it was confined to the upper-caste Hindus or affluent Muslims and a few Christian converts who were supported by the missionaries. For the majority, underprivileged children, access to any education was difficult, primary education a luxury, and higher education a dream. In general, it takes at least one or two generations for a child coming from a depressed community to have access to education.

The majority of Protestant missions established day schools, boarding schools, industrial schools, Sunday schools, and orphanages for children.³¹ For Danish scholar Karen Vallgård, one of the key motivating factors to start these institutions was to 'shape the next generation.' For this, it was vital to target children before they became entirely corrupted by 'heathen' religious and cultural practices. Hence, missionaries allowed minimal contact with their 'heathen' parents and their environment and kept these children in day and boarding schools. For her, this was a form of 'subtle coercion.'³² Most missionaries believed such interventions to be necessary in many cases, due to famine or practices such as the *Devadasi* system (temple prostitution), child sacrifice, child labour, and child-marriage. Providing education in schools proved a deterrent to such practices. Even today, similar

²⁹ Brian Stanley, *The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910*, Studies in the History of Christian Missions (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2009), 199.

³⁰ Eric J. Sharpe, *Not to Destroy but to Fulfil: The Contribution of J.N. Farquhar to Protestant Missionary Thought in India before 1914*, Studia Missionalia Upsaliensia (Lund: Gleerup, 1965), 81.

³¹ Karen Vallgård, *Imperial Childhoods and Christian Mission: Education and Emotions in South India and Denmark*, Palgrave Studies in the History of Childhood (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 1–2.

³² Moreover, parents were 'coerced' to submit their children to boarding schools for their better future, which Vallgård calls a procedure 'that straddled the murky boundary between consent and coercion'. *Ibid.*, 42ff.

notions continue. Such interventions through education, nurture, care, discipline, punishment and character moulding have been part of a process of reconfiguring 'Indian' children. Very often institutionalised children struggled to adapt, once sent back to their 'homes.'³³ Hence, now, any kind of institutionalisation of children is discouraged, and such institutions are strictly monitored by the state and those found guilty violating the law are shut down; instead, interventions through family and community are encouraged. Yet, this practice continues in contemporary India even now in several churches and institutions, resulting in several challenges in administering such models by churches and Christian NGOs. These will be critically analysed in this and later chapters through a few selected case studies.

3.2.3. Christian Mission to CAR in Mass Conversion Resulting in Social Change

Mass conversions through Protestant missions happened among the outcast and tribal communities of Indian society from the later part of the nineteenth century and continued into the twentieth century. These converts from the depressed classes wanted missionaries not only to help them spiritually but also to liberate them from caste practices resulting in social change. These mass conversions brought in a new challenge for Protestant missions for, in such a context, they had to help adults and children. Hence, Christianity brought to these communities a kind of socio-spiritual liberation.³⁴ For these missionaries, one of the best ways to intervene was seen as being through educating these children and freeing these families from depending on the missions, empowering them to be independent and self-supporting communities that would grow to take care of their families and the church.

³³ Pickett writes "Boys and girls educated in boarding homes and schools, challenged their parents to buy things that made economic conditions more difficult for the parents. Asking them to buy western clothes, due to which many parents had to pay at the cost of their food and diet, resulting in diseases like tuberculosis. Educated boys and girls found manual and domestic work too mean for them and hence became a burden to their family." J. Waskom Pickett, *Christ's Way to India's Heart: Present Day Mass Movements to Christianity*. (London: United Society for Christian Literature, 1938), 152.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 125–27.

Looking at the benefits of education provided by the missionaries, many parents sent their children to schools and colleges, in some cases paying fees by sacrificing their needs.³⁵ To help their children in their education, parents built homes with separate rooms, which usually did not exist in such communities. These changes slowly enabled many parents to live a life that was in contrast to their lifestyle for generations past. Educated children helped raise the living standard of their parents and new jobs resulted in changing from their traditional caste-based professions. Besides this, loans with a lower rate of interest through co-operative societies started by missions involved less risk than having to pay back money to commercial moneylenders.³⁶ Hence, for missionaries, these social settings compelled them to get involved in compassion work, which required educating future generations who would be at lesser risk of societal and religious exploitation.

Today organisations such as Vacation Bible School (VBS), India Sunday School Union (ISSU), and Scripture Union India (SUI) primarily work with churches and Christian schools in India to evangelise children. However, there have been shifts in thinking, especially following the 2004 Tsunami that hit the Indian Ocean. For example, SUI started 'Children in Crisis,' a project to help Tsunami-affected children in the state of Tamil Nadu. To understand this transition, an in-depth study on SUI will be done in Chapter Five.

3.3. The Child Compassion Model

As noted earlier, while pursuing their primary aim of evangelising, missionaries were drawn to help their converts in practical and material ways. One of the main reasons was the exclusion of the converts and their families, including children, from their traditional community benefits. Hence, Protestant missions from the beginning in India have always integrated evangelism and compassion work. However, in the 1920s, controversy arose between modernists and fundamentalists, in part because of the Social Gospel Movement, primarily in the United States but also elsewhere, causing the conservatives to retract by asserting

³⁵ Ibid., 164–65.

³⁶ Ibid., 150.

the singular importance of evangelism, a position they then retained for almost fifty years until it was substantially modified by the Lausanne Movement.³⁷

Nevertheless, the compassion model remained predominant in Protestant missions in India. The three significant ways in which this model operated in India were by starting rescue homes for children, undertaking Christian social service for children suffering from famines and plagues, and initiating social programmes to help children and their families as pre-evangelism work.

3.3.1. Rescue Homes and Institutions for CAR: Selected Case Studies

This section will consider two women who were especially prominent for their work with CAR in India. One was an indigenous Christian, and the other was a foreign missionary. These two examples reflect the influential role women played in Christian mission to CAR here, especially to girls – one of the most vulnerable groups in Indian society then and even now.³⁸

'Pandita' Ramabai and the Ramabai Mukti Mission in Kedgaon

'Pandita' Saraswati Ramabai (1858–1922), a Brahmin convert, seeing the miserable plight of Indian high-caste widows, wanted to help these women through education. Her early encounters with Indian reformers, Brahmin Christian converts and missionaries convinced her to accept Christ as her Saviour. Her association while in England with Dorothea Beale, and her work as a suffragist, educational reformer, and author, gave impetus to her work. In 1887, she wrote a book called *The High-Caste Hindu Woman*. This book aroused interest, raised funds for her ministry and countered the positive teachings and propaganda on Hinduism produced by Swami Vivekananda and other local Brahmins who eulogised Hinduism.³⁹ By this, Ramabai not only created awareness of the plight of child

³⁷ Bryant L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*, Revised and Expanded Edition (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2011), 48.

³⁸ Aparna Basu, "Missionary Women and the Indian Response," in *Women and Missions: Past and Present - Anthropological and Historical Perceptions*, Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Women: V. 11 (ed. Fiona Bowie, Deborah Kirkwood, and Shirley Ardener; Oxford: Berg Providence, 1993), 191–202.

³⁹ Robert Eric Frykenberg, *Christianity in India: From Beginnings to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 398–341.

widows, but also created opportunities to speak as an advocate for vulnerable children at various social, political, and religious gatherings in India and abroad.

In the year 1890, she shifted Sharada Sadan (the home of learning) from Bombay (now Mumbai) to Poona (now Pune). It was a rescue home to protect high-caste women and to provide basic literacy to them with an unsectarian agenda.⁴⁰ This religious neutrality did not last very long. Conversions of girls in the Sharada Sadan resulted in her facing false allegations, animosity and excommunication from the Hindus. Such persecution and challenges from Hindu fundamentalist has existed against Protestant missions to CAR in India from the beginning. In the year 1890, she shifted her rescue home to Kedgaon, a Christian stronghold, as compared to Pune. She called her new settlement Mukti, meaning 'salvation,' or 'liberation.'

In the years following 1896, when severe famines struck India, she rescued and provided relief for many depressed and outcast famine victims.⁴¹ Pandita Ramabai's model of work was in response to her personal experiences and challenges.⁴² She rescued children who were sold by their parents in exchange for very little money and grain. These victims were nursed to physical and moral health, trained and fitted into a useful life in agriculture, horticulture, carpentry, masonry, tailoring, printing, nursing, teaching and education.⁴³ Indigenous missionaries were taught in Bible classes, and intelligent ones were encouraged into further training. By 1900, Mukti cared for nearly two thousand girls with sixteen paid teachers, eighty-five staff, ten matrons, and forty-two workers in industrial works.⁴⁴ In 2015, Mukti Mission provided a full range of services to nearly 650 children residing on the main campus and in the satellite extension homes. Also, close to 700 community children attended Mukti's different schools and day-care programs.⁴⁵ Currently, several such indigenous missions continue to serve in India, but with new

⁴⁰ Ibid., 397.

⁴¹ Padmini Sathianadhan Sengupta, *Pandita Ramabai Saraswati: Her Life and Work* (London: Asia Pub. House, 1970), 231–41.

⁴² Ramabai and Kosambi, *Pandita Ramabai through Her Own Words*, 253.

⁴³ Ibid., 11–12.

⁴⁴ Nalini Arles, 'Pandita Ramabai and Amy Carmichael: A Study of Their Contributions towards Transforming the Position of Indian Women' (Unpublished Thesis (M.Litt.), University of Aberdeen, 1985), 77–78, edinb.703928 (New College, Edinburgh).

⁴⁵ 'Ramabai Mukti Mission', *Our Ministries*, accessed 15 June 2015, http://www.mukti-mission.org/mukti/Our_Ministries.htm.

childcare policies such as the Juvenile Justice Act (JJ Act) 2000/2015 and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO Act), emerging from a rights-based intervention method, they are coming under constant vigilance by the Child Welfare Committee (CWC). These changes arising from childcare laws are new to many churches and Christian NGOs in India and are demanding some kind of discontinuity from the past missionary practices. These laws will be further discussed later in this section.

Amy Carmichael and the Dohnavur Fellowship

Amy Carmichael (1867–1951) had spiritual roots in Ulster Presbyterianism. The evangelical Keswick movement and her involvement with mill girls through the Belfast City Mission influenced her later ministry to children in India. After a brief ministry in Japan and then in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), she moved to India to work as an evangelist in a hospital in Bangalore.⁴⁶

The birth of the Dohnavur Fellowship, on 6th March 1901, is often traced to a seven-year-old girl named Preena, who escaped from life as a *devadasi* in a Hindu temple and requested Amy to accept her. Hearing this and other stories shocked Carmichael who began to search for a model to rescue these children. Canon Margoschis of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) and Mrs Hayson of the American Madura Mission were already doing similar work. Although they both encouraged Carmichael to embark on a rescue operation, they had no ideas on how to go about it.⁴⁷ These encounters compelled her to set up a shelter for such girls, which she began in a place called Dohnavur, which was about thirty miles from Tirunelveli. Besides rescuing girls, she also accepted invitations to challenge the practice of temple girls and the tyranny of the temple priests committing abuses on small girls.

Carmichael was unhappy with the government intrusion into the education system. She wanted her children to learn a moral life and skills rather than build careers. Hence, she did not send her children to the local village mission school but

⁴⁶ Arles, "Pandita Ramabai and Amy Carmichael," 119–128.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 139.

instead taught her children in her school in Dohnavur.⁴⁸ Her dissatisfaction also extended to the police and judiciary of the British system, and she consistently fought against their careless attitude towards temple girls and boys. Seeing that wealthy men were making profits by selling boys to temple women (they could adopt them), and to drama and cinema companies, she later started a boys' home.⁴⁹ Many of these children who grew up in Dohnavur continued Carmichael's work. In the year 2015, about 130 girls were provided with education and training, around 125 senior citizens were looked after along with physically or mentally challenged women and girls. They also run a hospital with the help of a team of doctors.⁵⁰

Similar models of rescue and rehabilitation continue to exist even today. Homes, hostels and orphanages are run by organisations such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Council of Churches Care for Youth and Children (CCCYC), International Justice Mission and many churches and Christian NGOs. However, with the emergence of new laws after evidence of child sexual abuse cases in some institutions, new government bodies such as the CWC now regularly monitor these agencies. A detailed study of the children's homes run by YMCA's street children project, CCCYC, and St John's CSI to understand the challenges emerging from the discontinuity in Bangalore will be undertaken in chapters five and six.

3.3.2. Christian Responses to Children Suffering from Natural Calamities

We have already noted from Ramabai's Mukti Mission that the experience of famine often compelled Christians to help people and children affected by it. However, such Christian missionary activity in famine conditions brought some negative impact on the work of Christian missions. Many were accused of converting people through allurements and coercion, and the name 'rice Christians' was often used to refer to such converts. Hence, this theme of famine and its impact on Christian mission merits attention, particularly since many children were

⁴⁸ Ibid., 149.

⁴⁹ Frank Houghton, *Amy Carmichael of Dohnavur: The Story of a Lover and Her Beloved* (London: SPCK, 1981), 209.

⁵⁰ 'Dohnavur Fellowship', *About Us*, accessed 15 June 2015, <http://dohnavurfellowship.org.in>.

rescued, and orphanages constructed to house them. Protestant missionaries always had to decide whether to continue their mission to convert people in poverty or whether to help people in their situations of poverty. During these negotiations, missionaries continued their work despite opposition from various sources.⁵¹

For example, in a place called Sikandara, near Agra, during the famine years following 1837, Christian villages or communities were established for orphaned Hindu and Muslim children. By 1857, it is said that most of these children had become Christians. Girls were trained in sewing and boys in printing, with the hope that these children, when grown up, would be self-supporting. However, things changed, and tensions increased following the distribution of tracts printed by the 'Orphan Press' in Urdu and Persian, commenting negatively on Islam. During the riots associated with the 1857 revolt, the Christian-Muslim conflict escalated, resulting in the destruction of the printing press, and this severely affected the Christian community.⁵²

These interventions were made for three reasons. First, for the missionaries or Christian workers, it was an opportunity to demonstrate their Christian love and social justice in action. Secondly, for some, this also provided an opportunity to share the Gospel with these needy people who came to them for help. Finally, during the colonial period, when colonial observers saw the suffering of many poor during the famine in the 1830s, exacerbated by the *Mahajans* (local moneylenders) making excessive profits on loans, they saw missionary societies as natural allies in famine relief work. More recently, churches and mission agencies have continued to serve Dalit and tribal children through many social development programmes. Hence, even today, much goodwill continues to exist among non-Christians in India. They support and finance Christian institutions, not for their religious bent but because they see them fulfil community and social obligations.⁵³ However, when

⁵¹ Sanjay Sharma, *Famine, Philanthropy and the Colonial State: North India in the Early Nineteenth Century* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), 212, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195653861.001.0001>.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 213–14; Avril A. Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre-Mutiny India*, London Studies on South Asia: No. 7 (London: Routledge Curzon, 1993), 161–64.

⁵³ Sanjay Agarwal, *Daan and Other Giving Traditions in India: The Forgotten Pot of Gold* (New Delhi: Account Aid India, 2010), 10.

Christian interventions are done to children who are considered ‘vulnerable’ and ‘innocent’ in India, some political activist or religious fundamentalist groups interpret such interventions as attempts at conversion through coercion or allurements. Although conversion debates in India have predominantly been about the adults in the religious and political context,⁵⁴ they have challenged Christians to be sensitive to accusations that they are trying to convert ‘vulnerable’ children.

3.3.3. Social work as a Form of Pre-evangelism Model and as an Element in Church Planting Strategy

The watchword ‘the evangelisation of the world in this generation,’ popularised by the New York Missionary Conference in 1900, epitomises Protestant mission at the dawn of the twentieth century. Hence, missionaries used every possible method of social work as a form of pre-evangelism. In a similar vein, the majority of evangelical indigenous and foreign mission agencies continue to practise this model even today. For example, social work as a form of pre-evangelism is used by: the Indian Evangelical Mission (IEM), formed in 1965; the Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB), established in 1969; the Indian Evangelical Team (IET), founded in 1972; and the Gospel Echoing Missionary Society (GEMS), established in 1979. Among them, GEMS, in particular, has adopted education as a medium of demonstrating God’s love and ‘Christianising.’ At the time of this research, they had several projects, including three children’s homes, a home for 100 children of stonecutters and a home for sixty polio-afflicted children.⁵⁵ They were working in 27 Districts of Bihar and had established about 11 English-medium schools, 118 Hindi-medium schools (including day care centres), and over 50 homes for children, influencing more than fifteen thousand children.⁵⁶ With the presence of “anti-conversion” laws in some states in India, and the present BJP government planning to make such prohibitions as part of the domestic legislation, this is undoubtedly a threat to these forms of Christian missions and churches in India. Hence, Protestant missions to

⁵⁴ Sebastian C. H. Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 2003), 192.

⁵⁵ Roger E. Hedlund, ‘Indian Expressions of Indigenous Christianity’, *Studies in World Christianity* 10, no. 2 (2004): 194.

⁵⁶ ‘Gospel Echoing Missionary Society’, *History*, accessed 25 April 2015, <http://www.gemsbihar.org/index.php/aboutus/history>.

CAR need to come to terms with these challenges. If they continue to use social work as a form of pre-evangelism, then they need to develop a theology of mission that legitimises and provides sufficient reasons for their work to the various monitoring agencies established by the government.

3.4. The Child Advocacy Model

According to the Danish historian Henriette Bugge, British, Danish, and American missions took a firm attitude against caste and other practices in India, a stance which she interprets as a result of the eighteenth-century evangelical revival. This, she argues, is due to the core conviction that individuals had to live according to the word of God as revealed in the Scriptures, that is, the experience of conversion, being 'reborn,' needed external manifestation in one's personal life and for the benefit of the community as a whole. This resulted in the establishment of several altruistic societies, working for the abolition of social evils such as slavery, prostitution, intemperance and much more.⁵⁷ Hence, Protestant missions from the eighteenth century to the first quarter of the twentieth century were in practice more 'holistic', 'transformational', and 'integral' in their approaches to mission than their admitted theoretical rationale. Their approach can be described as the ***classical missionary intervention method*** to CAR and included not merely evangelism, but also the demonstration of Christian compassion and even when necessary, elements of advocacy when they lobbied against structures that dehumanised people. Hence, it could be concluded that all these three models have been overlapping from the beginning of Protestant missions to CAR in India.

Around the late twentieth century, two factors reshaped Christian mission to CAR:

- a. the secularisation and globalisation of childcare;
- b. the professionalisation and specialisation of childcare;

The combined impact of these four factors was to create a paradigm shift in the understanding and caring of children, raising the profile and broadening the scope

⁵⁷ Bugge, *Mission and Tamil Society: Social and Religious Change in South India (1840-1900)*, 62.

of advocacy. Currently, most childcare intervention models are entrenched in social science methodology and are influenced by modern management principles and practices.⁵⁸ This has given birth to *modern scientific intervention methods* to CAR. Protestant thought and missions were not immune to these developments. Hence, while some have embraced this trend, others are still in transition, and many are still unmindful of it. We will now examine these two factors in more detail.

3.4.1. Secularisation and Globalisation of Childcare: Universal Responsibility for Children

Protestant mission in India was impacted by a whirlwind of political and social changes in the twentieth century. If the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries marked the height of imperialism and colonialism, then, as the twentieth century proceeded, socio-political change in Europe increasingly affected Christian missions. Some of these factors are: the two World Wars, the great depression of the 1930s, the post-war decline of the European colonial powers, and the emergence of the Soviet Union and the United States as ideologically opposed superpowers, which resulted in the Cold War for several decades, dividing the world in two, until the dismantling of the USSR between 1989 and 1991. With the proliferation of wars and proxy wars in many parts of Asia, Africa, Middle East, and Latin America, engendering flows of refugees on a scale never before seen, humanity saw new dimensions of suffering, especially for children.

Fighting against these global problems required a comprehensive solution and a global effort. Evidently, Christianity as a religion in many parts of the West was losing its influence to secularism and humanism. The religious life became meaningless for many and was, for others, confined to the private sphere. However, Christian motivation still played a significant part in global humanitarianism. When Save the Children International Union organised a conference to deliberate on the rights of African children way back in 1931, it was a convergence of humanitarian and missionary interests. However, after the war, funds for evangelistic missionary work by Western agencies were dwindling, and missionary recruitment in the West

⁵⁸ Bill Prevette, *Child, Church and Compassion: Towards Child Theology in Romania* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2012), 38–41.

was decreasing. With the rise of secularism and humanism in the West, the eighteenth-century concept of Christian charity and benevolence now continued through secular humanitarian effort. A gradual shift towards secular missionary work such as medical and relief work found more sympathy and support from the public in the West.⁵⁹ Secular (such as UNICEF) and Christian (such as World Vision India, Compassion International) organisations were able to rekindle public interest by internationalising child-related conferences and movements. These conferences facilitated new avenues for some missionaries to politicise and participate in helping CAR, mostly in Africa and Asia.⁶⁰ In other words, children and their issues gained increasing prominence in Christian internationalist sentiment, and religious neutrality was slowly beginning to be the preferred option within some Protestant agencies.⁶¹ After the Holocaust, many Christians turned their attention to making this earth a better place to live for the future generations. This new attention focussed on children and studies on childhood gave impetus to child-related humanitarian work. Children were now perceived to be victims and at higher risk than ever before; hence their adequate nurture, care, and protection were prioritised. Another reason for this paradigm shift towards childcare during the second half of the twentieth century was the increasing role of the state in the care and protection of children. One of the major forces driving this change was the emergence of the idea of the rights of the child.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the United Nations (UN), in an endeavour to impose a worldwide prohibition on the exploitation of vulnerable humans, first instituted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. Although Articles 25 and 26 of UDHR directly deal with the rights of children, an exclusive category of child rights was not finalised until the formulation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989. This ratified Convention has now become a dominant force that shapes child welfare and protection policies and

⁵⁹ Dominique Marshall, 'Children's Rights in Imperial Political Cultures: Missionary and Humanitarian Contributions to the Conference on the African Child of 1931', *The International Journal of Children's Rights* 12, no. 3 (2004): 279.

⁶⁰ Deborah Gaitskell, "Mission by Other Means? Dora Earthy and the Save the Children Fund in the 1930's," in *Protestant Missions and Local Encounters in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Unto the Ends of the World*, eds. Marc R Spindler, Heleen L. Murre-van den Berg, vol. 40 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 243.

⁶¹ Marshall, 'Children's Rights in Imperial Political Cultures', 275–79.

programmes globally. However, this homogenising of childcare has raised various problems, in a pluralistic context like India, in understanding and implementing these policies and programmes. Nevertheless, the Indian government, having ratified the UNCRC, is making every effort to achieve them. With the formation of the Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2006, new laws and schemes have brought awareness to the public on childcare and protection. Such laws as the JJ Act 2000, further amended in 2015, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO Act), are challenging the existing institutions built for CAR by Christian missions. The JJ Act was amended in 2015⁶² when a juvenile was found guilty in a notorious rape and murder case in Delhi. Through this amendment, any juvenile between the age of 16 and 18 committing serious or heinous crimes could be tried as adults, but no death penalty or life imprisonment should be given. The JJ Act 2000 also provided for the formation of a Juvenile Justice Board to deal with children in conflict with the law, and the CWC was set up to provide for the care and protection of children at a district level. Hence Christian agencies now need to abide by the requirements and the standards laid down by these government bodies. Failure to do so has resulted in the closure of many institutions.

The UNCRC is reshaping old programmes, developing new policies and monitoring agencies to provide adequate provision and protection for children and to encourage child participation for their holistic development. Under these circumstances, theological reflection on the rights of the child in relation to Christian mission to CAR in India is more than ever necessary to make changes for a sustainable Christian presence and missionary work. This theme will be further explored in Chapter Seven.

⁶² JJ Act 2015, is “an Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to children alleged and found to be in conflict with law and children in need of care and protection by catering to their basic needs through proper care, protection, development, treatment, social re-integration, by adopting a child-friendly approach in the adjudication and disposal of matters in the best interest of children and for their rehabilitation through processes provided, and institutions and bodies.” See Ministry of Law and Justice, ‘Juvenile Justice Act 2015’, *Ministry of Women and Child Development*, accessed 1 January 2016, http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/JJ%20Act%2C%202015%20_0.pdf.

3.4.2. *The Professionalisation and Specialisation of Childcare*

After 1948, with the emergence of ideas of universal human and child rights, and the growth of the social sciences and related disciplines much-needed attention has been given to human misery and approaches for alleviating it. Disciplines such as child psychology, child rights and child development studies, anthropology, social work, political science, human geography, and the new perspectives of post-colonialism, have not only diversified research but also brought in specialisation. Specialisation gave rise to a new breed of specialised theorists and caregivers, who contested the adequacy of 'amateur' Christian (missionary) practices. These new professionals, trained in management principles and practices, brought new skills to bear in their operations. This specialised professional attention to the condition of children drastically influenced thought and practice in work with CAR world-wide, even in India. With the emergence of several agencies such as UNICEF, Child Relief and You and *Bachpan Bachao Andolan* (Save the Childhood Movement), Protestant organisations increasingly found that they were not alone in working with CAR in India. Today, government, faith-based, and non-faith-based NGOs are all involved with humanitarian work among CAR. Hence, for this reason, it seems that many Indian churches have become unfortunately less concerned to work for CAR in general. Even if they do some work with CAR, they confine their work to their own members. These new developments and changes in Protestant missions are indeed a discontinuity from the past.

In addition to several government interventions in India, currently, private enterprises are participating in humanitarian work for children. The Indian government with its conservative social policies until the 1980s initiated several child-focused programmes, such as the ICDS. After the liberalisation of the Indian economy in 1991, several private national and multi-national companies were required to devote some of their profits to take part in corporate social responsibility (CSR). Recently, in India, CSR is governed by the new Companies Act 2013 clause 135, which requires big companies to spend two percent of their profits on CSR. Hence, with the growing influence of international NGOs and the increased participation of private business enterprise, the trend towards specialisation (in social policies, community development, capacity building, community involvement,

child rights engagements and several others) in social work is becoming a problem for many grass-root level caregivers and indigenous NGOs. This includes a large number of indigenous Protestant churches, mission organisations, and NGOs. There seems to be a struggle to negotiate and navigate between the various requirements and to transition from the classical intervention methods with which they are familiar, to more 'modern' methods to work with CAR. It must be noted that the concept of philanthropy existed in India, both before and during the British colonial rule.⁶³ Alongside the colonial government and the missionaries, some Indian businesspersons, and royal families and religious and social reformers also endorsed philanthropic work by starting several educational institutions and hospitals.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, Christians, through churches and organisations continue their social engagements even today; they are often the first to respond during times of calamity and hence have their niche.

The rise of such political and professional interventions not only demands the public accountability of Christian mission among CAR but also questions the relevance of Christian mission to CAR in the twenty-first century. These considerations require compatible models that are globally acceptable (e.g. by conforming to the terms of the UNCRC) and rooted in the Indian constitutional and religious context. Indian churches and missions are obligated to these laws and monitoring agencies. Hence, the question of what changes and what level of awareness can be seen in contemporary Protestant mission to CAR in India is an important area of inquiry.

3.5. Challenges in Christian Missions to Children at Risk in Independent India

With classical missionary models of Protestant missions to CAR in India being challenged, these models as a whole are in a state of crisis. At the same time, one should note that much of Indian Christianity has ties to the colonial legacy. In both colonial and independent India, the majority of theological reflection has come out

⁶³ Sharma, *Famine, Philanthropy and the Colonial State: North India in the Early Nineteenth Century*, 233.

⁶⁴ Mathieu Cantegreil, Dweep Chanana, and Ruth Kattumuri eds., *Revealing Indian Philanthropy* (London: Alliance Publishing Trust, 2013), 18–43.

of the context of religious plurality and endemic poverty related to entrenched structures of injustice built into the social fabric. Large sections of the people have been oppressed on the basis of class, caste, ethnicity, and gender. Despite political liberation from the colonial powers, India in the twenty-first-century still faces significant problems arising from social, religious and economic exclusion.⁶⁵ Two significant factors that challenge Christian missions to CAR in independent India are

- a. Indian Christian identity in Protestant missions to CAR;
- b. The fragmentation within the Indian Protestant community and missions.

The following section will briefly examine these factors.

3.5.1. Indian Christian Identity in Protestant Missions to CAR

The Indian churches in the post-colonial era continue to negotiate their distinct identity in the context of their colonial past, in Christian mission or humanitarian service. Hence, the churches in India are involved in efforts to re-discover themselves and define their indigenous identity in ways that engage with Indian spirituality and poverty. The Indian church is getting involved in a limited way in programmes and activities to promote justice and reconciliation, accompanied by theological reflections on issues arising from the revolutionary changes, social upheavals, wars and inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts. In the Protestant ecumenical movement, matters relating to justice, human rights and religious liberty have been given increasing articulation theologically. Since the 1970s, among the evangelicals, theological reflections on the place of social action have been given new prominence in their missionary work.⁶⁶

A major challenge that Christian mission work in India is facing arises through the positive and negative impacts of the globalisation of economic and financial markets. Radical changes brought by the communications revolution, the

⁶⁵ S. Wesley Ariarajah, "The ecumenical movement in Asia in the context of Asian socio-political realities," in *Christian Theology in Asia*, ed. Sebastian C. H. Kim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 228–230.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 244.

demographic effects of the massive movements of population in India through migration, and changes in family life in rural and urban India, are some of the major factors. The growth of the economy has brought jobs and money to many Indians, with a surge of the middle class and the imposition of consumeristic materialistic ideology, but also widespread and ever-deepening poverty and economic dependence. The emerging new geopolitical reality, in which India is likely to emerge as one of the major economic and political powers of the twenty-first century, also has significant implications for churches in India. However, despite post-independence growth in India, children are still at risk as much as ever. The concern is even greater due to the increasing number of children who are forced into labour, trafficked, abused, and exploited. Living with such complex conditions and issues, the Christian Church in India needs to develop a new religious consciousness in the midst of growing individualism and consumerism. The churches in India need to move ahead in building better relationships with each other for the sake of a newer and wider ecumenism.⁶⁷

Presently, several child-based Christian NGOs, such as Kindernoithilfe (now the Churches' Council for Child and Youth Care (CCCYC)⁶⁸ in India, since 1959, World Vision India since 1962, and others, are working alongside churches and communities. Since the beginning of this millennium, Indian Christian missions to CAR have witnessed a gradual increase in creating awareness and in involvement in community development. The National Council of Churches in India (NCCI) and Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI)⁶⁹ are *networking* agencies, involved in creating awareness primarily among churches. The former represents the ecumenical movement and the latter, as the name suggests, accounts for the evangelical group. EFI has recognised the need for a mission to CAR but seems to be unclear in defining their underlying motivations and what models of Christian work are

⁶⁷ Ibid., 249.

⁶⁸ In the year 2016, the name CCCYC was again changed to Church of South India Child Care (CSICC) by the CSI synod. However, in this thesis the old name is retained (CCCYC) as it was the official name during the time of the empirical research done for this thesis during the years 2014 and 2015.

⁶⁹ "Evangelical Fellowship of India," *Children at Risk*, accessed January 17, 2014, <http://www.efionline.org/network/eficar>.

appropriate while engaging with CAR. There appears to be a lack of clarity on how, to whom, and where to advocate the needs of CAR. Interestingly, the British Council of Churches did a study in 1984 on how the ministry among children needs to be conducted for Christian nurture in the changing pluralistic context of Britain. A similar initiative is still missing in India to do ministry and missions among children inside and outside the church by NCCI or by EFI, especially among CAR.⁷⁰ More recently, VIVA India, a networking advocacy international non-governmental organisation (INGO) for CAR, based in Delhi, with a forum in Bangalore (Asha Forum),⁷¹ and another indigenous network movement called the Christian Forum for Child Development (CFCD), have been working exclusively on behalf of CAR in South India.

Indian seminaries and Bible colleges have only very recently started giving attention to the issues surrounding CAR.⁷² Among the INGOs, the roles played by CCCYC, International Justice Mission and World Vision India (WVI) are significant. Many of their interventions seem to be shaped by the UNCRC.⁷³ However, similar kinds of interactions with UNCRC seem to be missing from Indian churches, indigenous NGOs and other mission agencies. To identify the dynamics, a qualitative empirical study of contemporary Protestant mission to CAR in India is required, but for practical reasons, this study confines itself to South India. Case studies on CCCYC, WVI, and ACLF⁷⁴ will follow in Chapter Six, to shed light on the dynamics involved in their contemporary work among CAR.

The ecumenical churches in India have been engaging in relief and rescue missions, either directly through the churches or in partnership with NGOs such as CCCYC. The CCCYC is very child-focused and has developed many intervention

⁷⁰ See Consultative Group on Ministry Among Children, *The Child in the Church and Understanding Christian Nurture.*, New combined edition, fully revised.. (London: British Council of Churches, 1984).

⁷¹ 'VIVA India', accessed 19 January 2014, <http://www.viva.org/where-we-work-asia.aspx>.

⁷² During the last five years, efforts have been taken to introduce courses on CAR and Holistic Child Development (HCD). Some colleges offer MA in HCD and one private institute even offers a PhD in HCD. Four books as readers on CAR/HCD have also now been published in India. The Senate of Serampore College in its new curriculum has included a compulsory course on CAR for BD students.

⁷³ 'Area Development Programmes', *World Vision India*, accessed 17 January 2014, <https://www.worldvision.in/Development>.

⁷⁴ Pseudonym

strategies at different levels. It has a comprehensive approach to rescue and relief, working with institutions, community-based projects, advocacy, and institutes for differently abled children.⁷⁵ The approach to help CAR taken by Evangelical and Pentecostal independent churches and organisations is usually through institution-based interventions. Some claim to have indigenous support, but others have international funding, either directly or through some international NGOs through partnerships. To understand these relationships, specific case studies of three churches – ECI Annanur (Chennai), First AG church (Bangalore) and St John’s CSI – (Bangalore) – will be reported in Chapter Five analysing their work with CAR. In Chapter Six, the focus will move from churches to Christian organisations, namely CCCYC, ACLF, OL, YMCA in Bangalore and WVI, SUI, and FMPB in Chennai.

Following the discussion from the previous chapter, it is appropriate to underline that the greatest challenge in contemporary India is the growth of fundamentalism among radical religious groups within Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, which is putting a strain on inter-faith relations. Most relevant here is focused persecution by Hindu fundamentalists on Christian missions generally, and especially to CAR.

3.5.2. The Fragmentation of the Indian Protestant Community and Missions

Around mid-twentieth century, theological differences gave birth to three broad Protestant streams – represented respectively by the World Council of Churches (WCC), the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), and by a variety of Pentecostal bodies. Hence, these three groups – ecumenical or conciliar Protestants, Evangelicals, and Pentecostals – broadly represent the contemporary Protestant community in India, though these categories are to some extent overlapping. This research identifies these sub-groups for the purpose of studying their missions to CAR in India. A second factor challenging Protestant work among CAR from the mid-twentieth century has been the increasing theological fragmentation of the Indian Protestant community and missions. One possible result of such fragmentation is that there is

⁷⁵ ‘Children at Risk’, *Council of Churches for Child and Youth Care*, accessed 17 January 2014, <http://cccyk-knh.org/children-at-risk>.

neither cooperation nor consolidation of Christian missions for CAR in India. It seems that most churches and NGOs work in isolation and have not worked towards sharing their knowledge and best practices. Very often, it has led to duplication of work, unnecessary conflict in work, especially with their limited resources. In short, most churches and organisation don't seem to be interacting, communicating, dialoguing between each other to consolidate their work for CAR.

Mainline Protestant Churches

Beginning with the Jerusalem (1928) and Tambaram (1938) meetings of the International Missionary Council, and coming to fruition in the wake of the 1961 New Delhi Assembly of the WCC, there was in mainline ecumenical circles a move from the classical missionary paradigm of 'church planting' to a new way of understanding Christian missions in the light of religions and cultures. In doing so, three leading Indian Protestant theologians gave new impetus to ecumenical Christian thought from the Indian context. P. D. Devandandan (1901-62) pioneered Indian Christian thought on nation-building; M. M. Thomas (1916-96) highlighted humanisation as the goal of Christianity, and S. J. Samartha (1920-2001) articulated Christianity in the context of India's religious pluralism. These three persons responded to three separate realities – the challenge of building an independent nation; the challenge of socio-economic change and the growth of the secular ideas; and the challenge of establishing understanding and acceptance among India's different religious communities. From the 1970s, liberation theology influenced several indigenous theologies that privileged the Dalit, Feminist, and Adivasi (Tribal) contexts within the ecumenical churches in India. Moreover, the WCC document "Towards Common Witness: A Call to Adopt Responsible Relationships in Mission and to Renounce Proselytism" (1997) is a progressive and practical document that encourages churches to develop stronger intra-church relationships and to do mission in unity.⁷⁶ Although ecumenically orientated churches have interacted

⁷⁶ World Council of Churches, *'You Are the Light of the World' : Statements on Mission by the World Council of Churches 1980-2005* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005), 39–58.

considerably with human rights issues⁷⁷, unfortunately, within these reflections, the place of CAR and UNCRC in Protestant missions was and is insignificant.

Evangelical Churches

After the merger of the International Missionary Council with the WCC in 1961, conservative evangelicals increasingly looked for alternative global structures of fellowship, such as the World Evangelical Fellowship, formed in 1951. In the evangelical camp, the Lausanne Congress (1974) became a watershed moment, initiating a re-shaping of evangelical social thought in response to the socio-political challenges of the modern world. The evangelicals, after fifty years of sabbatical, gradually regained their enthusiasm for social action. The Lausanne Covenant triggered a series of consultations in India. The Devlali Congress (1977) and the Madras Declaration (1979) on Evangelical Social Action interacted with issues that devalue human rights and the need for social action as a Christian witness.⁷⁸ These trends had a direct impact on evangelical thinking about children at risk, moving evangelicals also in the direction of child advocacy. In 1997, for the first time, around 51 representatives from 30 different organisations came together in Oxford to discuss their work with children at risk.⁷⁹ After that, the Cutting-Edge conferences organised by VIVA – UK, created awareness among churches and brought Christians working with children together. The training book developed by them is by far one of the best for Christians working with CAR.⁸⁰ The dawn of the twenty-first century was also the start of a great awakening towards Christian missions to CAR globally. Since then, several consultations coordinated by Compassion International led to the formation of the Global Alliance for Holistic Child Development in 2008 under the leadership of Dan Brewster.⁸¹ Recently in 2009, the 4/14 Window network was created under the guidance of two American missiologists Dan Brewster and Luis Bush, primarily with an evangelism-focused

⁷⁷ See Jr Witte John and Frank S. Alexander, eds., *Christianity and Human Rights: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), doi:10.1017/CBO9780511761713.

⁷⁸ See Jayakumar Christian, *God of the Empty-Handed: Poverty, Power and the Kingdom of God* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1999), 60–73.

⁷⁹ 'Children at Risk: Statement of an International Consultation at Oxford, January 1997', *Transformation* 14, no. 2 (1 April 1997): 1, doi:10.2307/43070437.

⁸⁰ See footnote 34 in chapter One.

⁸¹ Strachan, 'Welcoming Children', 282.

approach to CAR.⁸² The 4/14 window aims to evangelise children between the age of four and fourteen. This is in a similar vein to the earlier 10/40 window network popularised by Bush to focus Christian mission in the least evangelised countries and people groups located between 10 degrees South to 40 degrees North of the equator. This strategy of converting a particular group can lead to perceiving children as targets to be reached and treat them only as objects of mission rather than subjects in Christian mission also. In the conference of the Lausanne Movement in Cape Town (2010), particular attention was given to issues about children at risk and the much-needed work among them.⁸³

In India, the majority of Evangelicals and Pentecostals are affiliated with the EFI, the regional representative of the World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF). These two are the most rapidly growing groups all over India, but especially in South India. Most of the indigenous churches and mission agencies are represented here. For example, the Evangelical Church of India (ECI) was formed in 1976 and has established more than 2,500 churches, many schools and homes and is involved in healthcare and relief works. One of their key childcare projects is the Grace Learning Centre (GLC), a community-based daycare centre for underprivileged children, in most cases using their church to run this project.⁸⁴ The work of this Centre will be further studied and analysed in Chapter Six. Some of the other prominent indigenous churches are Gospel for Asia's Believers Church, the Maranatha Full Gospel Church, and the New Life Fellowship Church, which have similar childcare projects.

Some of the NGOs, such as WVI, YMCA, International Justice Mission, and Oasis India that have an international presence, seem to base their work strongly on a rights-based advocacy approach, interacting with UNCRC and JJ Act. They work alongside local government agencies and conduct child rescue operations with local support from the government and community. While being involved in such work,

⁸² Dan Brewster, 'The 4/14 Window: Child Ministries and Mission Strategy', *Transformation* 14, no. 2 (1 April 1997): 18–21, doi:10.2307/43070442; '4/14 Window Movement', accessed 25 June 2017, <http://www.4to14window.com/>.

⁸³ 'Children at Risk', *Lausanne Movement*, accessed 26 May 2015, <http://www.lausanne.org/networks/issues/children-at-risk>.

⁸⁴ 'Evangelical Church of India', accessed 25 April 2015, <http://www.ecionline.org>; Jayakumar, 'The Work of God as Holistic Mission: An Asian Perspective', 237.

although their Christian faith motivates them, they do avoid direct evangelistic work. These agencies also actively participate in rights-based advocacy work by lobbying with the government, communities, and local churches for the cause of CAR. However, similar rights-based advocacy interventions among indigenous evangelical churches and mission agencies working with CAR are yet to be identified. Further study through empirical analysis in Chapters Five and Six will provide information to locate their model of work with CAR in the contemporary context.

The Pentecostal Churches

The one sector of the Indian Protestant community that remains largely resistant to a child compassion and advocacy approach is the Pentecostal churches. The beginnings of Pentecostalism in India are traced to the first decade of the twentieth century, in particular through the events in the Khasi hills and at Mukti Mission. In Kerala, the majority of Pentecostal movements began from individuals from the Orthodox Syrian Malankara background, who were influenced by the Western Protestant missionaries. However, after 1950, when Pentecostal pastors went as ‘missionaries’ from Kerala to plant churches in neighbouring states, especially in Andhra Pradesh, they witnessed the growth of many churches. Many of these churches operated children’s homes, schools, widows’ homes, and several other relief and welfare projects.⁸⁵ Recently, ethnographic research and historical studies have given clear evidence of the growth and influence of Pentecostal churches and some of their involvement in social work.⁸⁶ However, research on the various methods of work among CAR and their underlying motivation is still pending from the Indian context, and this study attempts to fill this gap.

In his monumental book on South Indian Pentecostalism, Bergunder talks about their social work in less than four out of 310 pages. This not only displays the limited space given by Bergunder to this subject, but perhaps also represents the

⁸⁵ Roger E. Hedlund, ‘Indigenous Pentecostalism in India’, in *Asian and Pentecostal: The Charismatic Face of Christianity in Asia*, eds. Allan Anderson and Edmond Tang, Second edition, Regnum Studies in Mission (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2011), 189,191-197.

⁸⁶ Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement*. (Berkeley, London: University of California Press, 2007), 72–74.

minimal space provided by Indian Pentecostals for social work. He identifies a significant presence of orphanages in comparison to other social projects managed by South Indian Pentecostals. However, he sees a change in the trend in social work perceived as such, in contrast to the traditional attitude of rejecting social engagements – an attitude that he suspects is due to a conscious distancing from established churches and what Pentecostals see as their over-indulgence in social ministry at the cost of evangelism.⁸⁷ In the contemporary scene, this kind of attitude seems to be diminishing, resulting in the opening of several social projects. However, Bergunder observes that many Pentecostals have faced challenges since starting their orphanages. Many have begun because of foreign donors who were willing to support them because, on visits, they were shocked to see the poverty in which many families and children live in the Indian society. Consequently, many pastors have been drawn into questionable practices, partly because of ‘insufficient theological reflection about the social responsibility of the church,’ giving rise to ‘notorious abuses’ in social work among them.⁸⁸ Adding to this, he says, as many foreigners can support the ministry through social projects and can get a visa based on social projects, they do not mind using such money for church purposes. According to him, such a pragmatic view is approved of and supported by the foreign sponsors, and here the line to open abuse is blurred. Most pastors find the task of managing an orphanage appropriately a challenge, and a few succumb to the temptation to divert part of the money for private ends.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, besides insufficient theological reflection, unprofessionalism and ignorance of new laws have resulted in substandard care and protection for children in many of these institutions. The proliferation of such practices is another reason for many Pentecostal pastors to discredit social work and keep themselves away from such malpractices, instead of proactively developing new theological thinking for their social engagements in society.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, social projects by selected Pentecostal pastors and the younger generation are showing new quality and

⁸⁷ Michael Bergunder, *The South Indian Pentecostal Movement in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 212.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

potential within South Indian Pentecostal movements.⁹¹ Increasing consciousness of their social responsibility is thus evident in some sectors of the Indian Pentecostal family.

Most notably, the Assemblies of God (AG) Church in India, with a presence from the early part of the twentieth century, has now grown into a major Pentecostal denomination. Their programmes in Kolkata, which began in 1960, have diversified the range of AG ministries. They have departments ranging from feeding the poor, running English- and Bengali-medium schools, providing mid-day meals for the poor street children, hospital-based health care and theological training through a Bible college. A similar pattern is found in New Life AG Church in Chennai and First AG church in Bangalore. For this research, the First AG church in Bangalore will be studied in Chapter Five to explore their work with children at risk as part of their missions. However, it seems that, for most Pentecostals, social engagement with CAR is still viewed as a form of pre-evangelism.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter has identified some of the continuities and discontinuities in Protestant missions to CAR in India. It has been argued that during the colonial period even though the evangelism model dominated, compassion work was integrated, and advocacy for CAR existed in its incipient form; and all three models substantially overlapped in Christian missions to CAR. In contemporary India, it seems that all three models continue to overlap, however, it also seems that one of the three models dominates in operation while the others take peripheral roles. One major discontinuity between previous and contemporary Christian missions to CAR is the predominance of the advocacy model which in a way is influencing and reshaping the other two models in principle and practice, namely – the child evangelism and compassion models. Currently, it seems that at least in principle the advocacy model is recognised globally by mainline ecumenical Protestants, conservative evangelicals, and even some Pentecostals as a way forward. However, what seems to be lacking, is an adequate reflection on how the advocacy model based on rights-

⁹¹ Ibid., 215.

based intervention can influence and reshape the work being done at the grass-roots level by Indian churches and Christian NGOs working for CAR.

It seems that Protestant missions today are negotiating a tough terrain on how and what to continue and discontinue in Christian work to CAR. In practice, it seems that Protestant missions to CAR are negotiating in three broad ways – most follow the classical missionary intervention method, some have adopted the modern rights-based intervention method, and few are negotiating by having a hybrid intervention method, where they have a mix of both traditional saving based methods and contemporary rights-based methods in their practices. Moreover, with the escalation of problems that children face and with the continued marginalisation of the Christian converts even today, Protestant missions continue to support converts and their children. To support and empower them, education and institutional forms of interventions continue to be the harbinger of Protestant mission in India. Additionally, high quality and transformative education supplied by Christian missionaries continues to attract many non-Christians to send their children to Christian mission schools, thus validating the future role of Christian missions in India.

The majority of the educational institutions established during the colonial period continue to have a good name and reputation a legacy of continuity from the past still cherished by both the Christian and non-Christian communities. However, what remains unexplored is whether there remains a defensible basis for continuing the evangelism model in India today. It seems that the place of evangelism, which was so central during the colonial period, has become either secondary or is non-existent due to religio-political challenges in the contemporary Indian context. Nevertheless, many Evangelical and most Pentecostal institutions seem to continue to use social work as a form of pre-evangelism. Chapters Five and Six will seek to discover how these broad findings are reflected in the actual practices of selected churches and Christian NGOs working with CAR in the contemporary Indian context.

Protestant mission history shows that missionaries did create awareness about some of the social and religious practices that were deemed 'evil' and were advocates for vulnerable children. It would be important to investigate whether

similar practices continue to exist in indigenous churches and missions today. Also, it seems that rights-based interventions are less prominent among indigenous agencies and that most are 'unaware' of them. Currently, as the government has now become the predominant monitoring agent for the welfare of CAR, this seems to be challenging traditional notions of missions to CAR. In many cases, this seems true that uncertainty over the use of the evangelism model continues to linger in contemporary Evangelical and Pentecostal churches and missions, whereas churches and missions that are ecumenical in their affiliation have largely abandoned this model altogether.

In the history of Protestant mission to CAR very often, children were given a constructed childhood in which they were seen as objects of the Church's evangelism and welfare agenda, where children had very little space to participate in their development. Many institutions functioned as nursery beds to nurture future Christian communities (Church Planting) to be self-sufficient, having a relatively dignified life in the society. This has created an image of suspicion among non-Christians. As identified in this and the previous chapters, the current religiopolitical contexts and problems faced by children in India and the factors influencing, governing and shaping contemporary Protestant mission to CAR in India demand a critical analysis so that the relevance of such ministry in India can be assessed and, if necessary, reshaped.

Contemporary Protestant mission to CAR in India also challenges the classical notion of the primacy of evangelism over social work. It seems that evangelicals and even some Pentecostals are more holistic in their practices than their pietistic theological convictions might suggest. This idea will be further evaluated in the coming chapters through empirical research to search for any patterns of continuity and discontinuity identified in this chapter in actual mission practices in India today.

After evaluating the Protestant mission history to CAR in India, an investigation is demanded into existing models and theological motivations of Protestant churches and NGOs. The following chapters will seek to investigate whether new or reformed ways of Christian engagement with CAR, alongside international and national social, political, economic, and religious monitoring agents are emerging in contemporary India. This chapter has recognised the

existence of a long history of Protestant Christian involvement with CAR in India and its continued significant presence even today. However, to locate the relevance and scope of Christian missions to CAR for the future, an empirical study through selected case studies is warranted to address, in the next part of the thesis, the **four fundamental questions** raised earlier:

1. How are the three models – Evangelism, Compassion, and Advocacy – embodied in current practice and what are their underlying theological motivations in contemporary Christian work among children at risk in India?
2. To what extent does the study of these models reveal a transition from ideas of ‘saving’ children at risk to ideas of protecting the rights of children at risk, or do models of saving the child still run alongside or even eclipse ideas of child protection in the Indian Christian context?
3. What theological considerations have been underdeveloped or missing in these engagements with children at risk in India, and what theological resources can be useful to inform and strengthen Christian work with children at risk in India?
4. In the light of this research, what recommendations can be made for the development of principles for Christian missions to children at risk in the Indian context?

**Part Two - Analysing Contemporary Protestant
Missions to Children at Risk in South India**

Chapter 4. Empirical Research Methods and Methodology - Process, Design, Data Analysis, and Interpretation

4.1. Introduction and Overview

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, this research is located within the field of World Christianity and focuses on Protestant mission among CAR. It uses an interdisciplinary approach by incorporating principles and methods used in missiology, practical theology and social sciences. Primarily a theology of mission is constructed using David Bosch's principles of theory, praxis and poesis in creative tension. According to Scottish practical theologian John Swinton, this type of study should involve critical, theological reflection on the practices of the church, as Christians interact with the practices of the world to be faithful to God's redemptive practices in, to, and for the world.¹ With this scope, this research employed qualitative methods to gather ideographic data to answer the research questions. This involves identifying various models and motivations of Christian mission to CAR, issues concerning the rights of the child and the challenges that Indian Christians face and perceive while working with CAR. The objective of the research and its parameters ultimately determined which of the collected data was deemed useful for analysis.

The function of this chapter is to substantiate the use of particular methodology, methods, and research subjects in this research. Also, an attempt is made to explain how some of the challenges faced while employing these methods, collecting various data and finally analysing them were mitigated. To do this, first, an overview of the research terrain is provided together with reasons for choosing it. Secondly, the choice of methodology used in this study is explained. Thirdly, the scope and limitations of being an insider and outsider are discussed, and how some

¹ John Swinton and Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM, 2006), 9.

of these limitations were neutralised or minimised is described in detail. Finally, after briefly explaining the research context, the field research phases and subjects are illustrated at length.

4.2. Choice of Qualitative Methodology and Methods

To gather required qualitative data, this research adopted a triangulation method with sampling design. To do this a 'qualitative dominant mixed method approach'² suited best and included three distinct qualitative research methods for two reasons: first, to identify the various models practised in Protestant missions involved with CAR and to discover their underlying motivations; second, to understand the interaction of Protestant missions with UNCRC and to identify the various challenges faced in their practices. The three qualitative methods were in-depth interviews, questionnaires that predominantly contained open-ended questions with few closed questions, and focus group discussions (see Appendices 2, 3, 4, and 5 for samples).

All these methods focused first on a single case. In-depth interviews gave participants the opportunity to share their views freely and for the researcher to elicit qualitative data (professional and personal) about their work with CAR in the Indian context. Following the interview, participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire. All interviews were audio-recorded with brief notes taken whenever necessary, except one who preferred not to be audio recorded. Out of the thirty-four participants who were interviewed, four questionnaires from caregivers were collected during the second field visit (August - November 2015) while all others submitted them during the first field visit (August – November 2014). To triangulate the data questionnaires were given to interviewed participants and to others for additional data and variability. The collected data were carefully labelled.

The idea of using mixed methods was to triangulate their intuitive knowledge through the interview process and reflective knowledge in the questionnaire.

² Qualitative dominant mixed methods research is the type of mixed research in which one relies on a qualitative data..., while concurrently recognizing that the addition of quantitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects. R. Burke Johnson, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa A. Turner, "Towards a Definition of Mixed Methods Research," *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 1, no. 2 (April 1, 2007): 124, doi:10.1177/1558689806298224.

Participants for the survey represented the top, middle and grassroots-level caregivers within an organisation and represented both sexes wherever possible. This approach allowed the researcher to draw accurate information and to crosscheck it for its validity. Data collected from caregivers working at different management levels and through multiple methods also helped to verify received data and create a link between various levels in an organisation and with other case studies. The use of different methods enabled the researcher to compare and make cross-reference during his analysis for authenticity.³ Before carrying out the bulk of the research, the consent of the leader was sought and gained, which built trust and enabled me to access data from participants who were otherwise mostly busy with their work (see Appendix 1 for a sample consent form). Approval from the organisational head also freed participants to share their views candidly.

For a church context, an additional research method was used to collect data. Given that church work with CAR mostly involves volunteers, a focus group method was best suited for collecting data because it provided an informal setting for volunteers to discuss and share their views. The rich data produced through discussion with a panel of people having a similar burden and work gave needed space for interaction. The focus groups were conducted in the respective churches so as to provide participants with a familiar setting for a relatively free flow of discussion and debate.⁴ Following the focus group sessions, in-depth interviews were carried out with selected participants who could narrate qualitative information on the 'why' and 'how' questions of their involvement with CAR through personal reflection.

This field research was confined to Karnataka and Tamil Nadu states in South India and selected participants from two state capitals, namely Bangalore and Chennai. The reasons for choosing these two cities are: firstly, these two growing cities have a reasonably large Christian and CAR population, which allows the possibility of Christian involvement in mission to CAR and secondly, they also serve as headquarters for many churches and NGOs. Further, these two states, especially

³ Uwe Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2014), 30–31.

⁴ Sue Wilkinson, "Focus Group Research", in *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, ed. David Silverman (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 178-182

Tamil Nadu, have witnessed a growth in child care and development based projects nationally.⁵ Hence, the researcher was able to identify how far these childcare and development schemes influenced Christian work with CAR or vice-versa.

Next, even though the Christian community in South India includes the Syrian Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, as well as various Protestant churches, this research was limited to the Protestant groups for two reasons. First, to study the entire Christian community in a limited time was impractical and secondly, during the literature review stage gaining consent and having access to the Orthodox and Catholic churches in India posed challenges. While there are many churches and NGOs within these groups in South India, this research only focused on those with strong associations with CAR. The selections were finalised after an initial process of mapping to ascertain the access provided by the churches and NGOs for this research.

4.3. The Role, Scope, and Limitations of the Researcher: Insider or Outsider

The insider-outsider perspectives of the researcher play a significant role in shaping access and analysis of data during research. Particularly in theological and religious research, debates on minimising misrepresentation as an insider and outsider are well accounted.⁶ Personal experiences can lead to subjectivity, which in turn can compromise the necessary objectivity in the research for an insider. On the other hand, being an outsider accessing qualitative data can prove challenging. Although my previous work with CAR provided some advantages for this research, it could also potentially have proved a disadvantage, making it difficult to do this research in an unbiased manner. Having recognised the possible disadvantages, the researcher adopted some strategies to counteract and minimise these drawbacks. I will now present in detail, what strategies were used, and how negotiations were made to do an objective evaluation.

⁵ Child care judged by rates of literacy, infant mortality rate, sex ratio and child development through their mid-day meal, which was first started in Tamil Nadu, and many health care schemes, especially for girl children. See Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, *An Uncertain Glory: India and Its Contradictions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 162-81.

⁶ Wade Clark Roof, 'Research Design', in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, eds. Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler (London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2014), 76.

My interest in this topic has both a professional and personal dimension. Professionally, there is a need for a clear understanding of the role of the churches in caring for children within the current socio-political context of contested ideas about childcare. Personally, I have observed and experience the intricacies of caring for children and reaching out to children because I have a brother with Down's Syndrome, and I have been involved in child evangelism for many years. More recently, from 2006 until 2009, I was involved with Christian Forum for Child Development (CFCD) in child advocacy work. This forum was constituted of volunteers from various NGOs that were either directly or indirectly involved with children's work. Through CFCD, I have been afforded many contacts with Christian agencies involved with CAR that began in the year 2006 after attending a conference conducted by VIVA – India. During this period, I served as the founding honorary secretary of CFCD. This forum did not work with children, but instead, worked directly with agencies working with children. Additionally, while volunteering in this forum, from 2005, I was a full-time staff member of an organisation called The Association for Theological Education by Extension (TAFTEE) in India that provided theological education by extension collaborating with various churches and NGOs in India and the neighbouring countries. Working in this organisation provided opportunities to connect with several churches and NGOs particularly in South India within the Protestant groups. In the year 2009, due to the increased responsibility that required a lot of travel and administrative work, the need arose to quit my honorary post at CFCD. Nevertheless, I continued to help as an outsider in their advocacy campaigns as and when required.

The motivation for this research grew gradually and to some extent was shaped by these experiences and exposures from the past. Direct experience as motivation for research topics and methods is widely recognised as important in religious or theological studies. This can include empathy developed from personal contacts with people interviewed and observations made during fieldwork.

However, to maintain a critical distance and objectivity, research has to involve a process of self-reflection and critique.⁷

In this research, the following steps were undertaken in order to facilitate an objective evaluation and a deliberate critical stance. First, although I was previously involved with CFCD, I am no longer part of that organisation and have never had any direct affiliation with any other agencies during the research period. This provided ample space to maintain that needed critical distance required in this research. Secondly, in this research, CFCD is not one of the organisations taken as a case study; nevertheless, a few office-bearers of CFCD have participated in filling up the questionnaires as representatives of other organisations. Finally, to minimise subjective reflection, multiple case studies and methods were used to access data. Nonetheless, the researcher recognises the boundaries between the two are not that clearly delineated, and there are possibilities of slips and fluidity between these two positions.⁸

Previous experience as an insider provided sufficient knowledge about the constituency of Protestant missions to CAR in South India and the majority of the leaders of organisations contacted for this research work were from personal acquaintance. Most were willing to be interviewed and to provide access to their work and organisation proved advantageous for this research. Hence, even though I was an outsider to all of these NGOs, I was not a stranger to the leaders. To ensure further objectivity other participants besides the leaders whom I did not know were also included within each organisation in this investigation. While conducting interviews with these people, a friendly environment was created to gain the confidence and consent of the participants to share their ideas concerning their work with CAR frankly. Some leaders of NGOs consented with caution, whilst officials in some other new NGOs that I approached hesitated and did not participate in this research as they expressed their apprehension. Most of these organisations represented the Pentecostal group. For example, in spite of frequent

⁷ See Bahira Sherif, 'The Ambiguity of Boundaries in the Fieldwork Experience: Establishing Rapport and Negotiating Insider/Outsider Status', *Qualitative Inquiry* 7, no. 4 (1 August 2001): 436–38, doi:10.1177/107780040100700403; Prevette, *Child, Church and Compassion*, 2012, 93–94.

⁸ Sharan B. Merriam et al., 'Power and Positionality: Negotiating Insider/Outsider Status within and across Cultures', *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 20, no. 5 (1 September 2001): 405–6, doi:10.1080/02601370120490.

reminders, one agency gave reasons such as, 'we are too small an organisation to be researched'. Another leader of a children's home, who was also a friend, never found time to fill in the questionnaire. Despite these challenges, a good number of organisations came forward to fill in the questionnaire, many of whom were institutional founders or current leaders of NGOs. This required searching for broader participation in this investigation. A list of the organisations that participated in this study is given in Table 1 and 2 of this chapter. (The selected churches and NGOs did not give or promise any financial or personal incentives to this researcher.) However, some leaders had concerns due to the sensitivity of their work. I was, therefore, careful to get a proper consent from their national or international office for their NGOs to be studied. Two of the NGOs taken as case studies for this research, in particular, required anonymity. Generally, leaders of churches and organisations demonstrated their interest in my project and provided help knowing that I was sincere and keen to contribute to their area of work in a scholarly fashion.

On some occasions, while collecting data from these caregivers, most participants invited me to observe their activities in the field and their work with children. During those occasions, I had to explain that the focus of this study was limited to the agencies working with children. Another challenge I faced was my comparative lack of expertise and knowledge of social work and management skills. Therefore, it was found necessary to acquire some relevant knowledge on social work and administrative phrases used by the agencies, and child rights issues, especially while conducting in-depth expert and elite interviews.⁹ This prior learning gave me sufficient knowledge and skills to conduct interviews. Also, my previous experience conducting qualitative research for my Masters in Theology dissertation provided additional help in this investigation.¹⁰

Before carrying out interviews, additional information about the organisations and churches on their vision, goals, and operations was collected from their

⁹ It means, interviews with organisational heads and professionals, who are well acquainted with field experience and knowledge. See Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 227–28.

¹⁰ Prasad D R J Phillips, 'Reconstructing Management Principles for a Relevant Missional Model for the Indian Church' (Master of Theology, United Theological College, Senate of Serampore College, 2005).

website. However, most NGOs did not have any specific literature mentioning their model of work and describing their motivations for document analysis. Therefore, narrative interviews were conducted to gather information from some of them. Access to data was restricted to a few promotional and published documents that were provided by the leaders or participants. Access to organisations' datasets in most cases was unavailable or limited for research purposes due to a sense of apprehension that prevailed due to the fear of government interventions. For example, a particular organisation which I had initially planned to include in this research was going through a difficult period as the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, had frozen their bank account and sealed their office. Consequently, I was unable to include it in my research.

4.4. Research Context and Design

During the data collection period in Bangalore, much awareness of at-risk children was being demonstrated in the news media following a child sexual abuse case in a prominent school in the city.¹¹ Also, a much-publicised murder and rape case in Delhi involving a young woman, *Nirbhaya*, in which a juvenile was convicted,¹² created much nationwide agitation and news talk, even provoking a change in the Juvenile Justice of Children Act of 2000.¹³ Also, the 2014 Nobel Prize for peace given to the child right activists Ms Malala Yousafzai of Pakistan and Mr Kailash Satyarthi from India gave recognition globally and in India on work related to CAR. Kailash Satyarthi's *Bachpan Bachao Andolan*, 'Save the Childhood Movement' has gained

¹¹ '3-Yr-Old Girl Sexually Abused at School', *Deccan Herald*, last modified October 2014, <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/437289/3-yr-old-girl-sexually.html>.

¹² Shubomoy Sikdar, 'Gang-Raped in Moving Bus, Girl Fights for Life in Delhi Hospital', *The Hindu*, 17 December 2012, New Delhi edition, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/gangraped-in-moving-bus-girl-fights-for-life-in-delhi-hospital/article4208833.ece>; Press Trust of India, 'Delhi Gang-Rape: Women, Students Protest in Bangalore', *The Economic Times*, last modified 22 December 2012, Bangalore edition, accessed 3 March 2014, http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-12-22/news/35969361_1_students-protest-women-crimes.

¹³ Press Trust of India, 'Juvenile Justice Amendment Bill Passed in Lok Sabha', *Deccan Herald*, last modified and accessed

7 May 2015, New Delhi edition, <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/476191/juvenile-justice-amendment-bill-passed.html>.

attention and also brought into the limelight the problem of child labour, child sexual abuses (CSAs), child rights and protection in India.

This empirical research design was in two phases, which will now be described in detail.¹⁴

4.5. Phase One: Field Data Selection and Collection Methods

In the first phase of research, from July 2014 to February 2015, primary data was collected from selected churches and NGOs in the cities of Bangalore and Chennai to build multiple case studies. The initial phase of field research in India from July 2014 to November 2014 had two objectives. The first was to reach organisational leaders for consent to consider their organisations and then to select participants and prepare interview schedules. While the scheduling process was underway, field-testing of qualitative methods was also done to validate if the planned methods used in this research would meet the research goals.

4.5.1. Selection Methods:

Selecting the churches and NGOs for this study was a crucial task, so during the sampling decision, three steps were maintained to keep variation and balance. First, a selection of churches and NGOs engaging with children at risk was identified after careful searching. Secondly, leaders of these churches and NGOs were contacted for their consent. Thirdly, during the research period in India through personal meetings as a snowball sampling method, using references provided by the leaders, participants for the study were contacted to schedule interviews.

4.5.2. Field Research Findings

As indicated earlier, selection of churches and NGOs began before the visit to India. While collecting data, it was found that the number of churches and organisations working for CAR were very few, and most NGOs did not clearly represent any particular Protestant group. The majority of these organisations were independent

¹⁴ Prevette uses a qualitative research methodology but also employs grounded theory and participation observation as main methods to collect data for a study on faith-based NGOs and church collaboration in Romania, as there was no existent study on it. See Prevette, *Child, Church and Compassion*, 2012.

enterprises, and their staff came from various Protestant denominations. Hence, in some cases, the founder leaders of the organisation attending a particular church represented their organisations' affiliation. Initially, three churches and six NGOs were selected for this research. However, during the researcher's first phase of fieldwork in India, several leaders of the organisations contacted for this research suggested the addition of another International NGO (INGO) that was involved in rescuing child labourers, and this was therefore added. Each of the seven NGOs selected represented or identified with one of the sub-groups within the Protestant groups. While searching for and contacting NGOs, it was noted that the number of Evangelical NGOs was high in comparison to the Ecumenical or Pentecostal NGOs. In total three churches and seven NGOs were selected to develop multiple case studies using a cross-case synthesis technique to analyse contemporary mission to CAR by them.¹⁵ While studying multiple case studies, a replication method of inquiry was used.¹⁶ The goal of this representation was to acquire information with 'maximum variation cases' for a 'stratified sample' and to identify literal and theoretical data from a replication method of inquiry.¹⁷

While mapping the research terrain, it was found that few Protestant churches were working for CAR and the number of Pentecostal churches and NGOs were comparatively underrepresented. Another issue to overcome was to distinguish between NGOs that are evangelical and Pentecostal, whereas the CSI diocese ran the CAR projects in the Ecumenical group. Moreover, most indigenous and international NGOs were either inter-denominational or non-denominational. In these institutions, caregivers from ecumenical, evangelical, charismatic, and Pentecostal church backgrounds work together. For the majority of caregivers, issues relating to CAR take precedence over church affiliation. It soon became apparent that to categorise Protestant mission into three neatly distinct theological traditions would not be viable. Nevertheless, as this research required the use of

¹⁵ See Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research : Design and Methods*, Fourth edition., Applied Social Research Methods Series (Los Angeles, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2009), 59-64,156-60.

¹⁶ Replication method while using multiple case studies is somewhat similar to replicating experiments but here it is done to either consolidate any one finding or to discover new findings from other case studies. Ibid., 54-57

¹⁷ See Bent Flyvbjerg, "Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research," *Qualitative inquiry* 12, no. 2 (2006).

representative case studies and variation, although few, only those NGOs that had a reasonable measure of affiliation to a particular theological tradition were identified and considered.

4.6. Overview of Research Participants

4.6.1. Churches

All focus groups were scheduled in the month of October 2014. Since the ECI church at Annanur is predominantly a Tamil-speaking congregation, I sought help from an expert, a Tamil-speaking volunteer social worker, to moderate the focus group discussion in the Tamil language, where I became the observer. In the other two churches, St John's CSI Church and the First AG Church, the focus group discussion was moderated by me, where I received the help of a volunteer who became the observer taking important notes of the discussions. These three churches are distinct in their origin and theological traditions (Evangelical, Ecumenical and Pentecostal respectively) and have different affiliations with broader religious bodies (Evangelical Fellowship of India, the World Council of Churches and the Assemblies of God respectively). The selection of these three churches was thought likely to reveal three contrasting models of mission to CAR. The three churches all have work with CAR which may be summarised as follows (and is recounted in detail in Chapter Five):

- i. **Evangelical Church of India, St. Andrews Church, Annanur, Chennai** has a project called Grace Learning Centre (GLC) under the supervision of Vision Trust, an INGO for children living in a nearby slum called *Anjugam Grammam*.
- ii. **First Assembly of God Church, Bangalore**, started their project for residents of the nearby slum, comprising many CAR. A project called Little Lambs was initiated to help these children.
- iii. **Church of South India, St. John's Church, Bangalore** has primarily supported CAR through a boy's hostel for the last four decades. The church also has an active Sunday school with more than a hundred children and runs a higher secondary school for about three thousand children from the nearby community, where the hostel boys study.

4.6.2. Non-Government Organisations

The seven NGOs selected for study were as follows: **Council of Churches in Child and Youth Care** have their headquarters in Bangalore and operate in all the four states in South India in collaboration with Ecumenical churches. They have some projects for children through institutions, in the community through sponsorship programmes and for children who are physically and mentally challenged.

ii. **Young Men's Christian Association**, Bangalore has a Street Children Programme in Bangalore called 'Children in Crisis Project'.

iii. **Scripture Union India** have their headquarters in Chennai and have five projects named *Shuashay* (positive laughter) for child victims of the Tsunami along the Coromandel coast in Tamil Nadu.

iv. **Friends Missionary Prayer Band** with their headquarters in Chennai is an indigenous missionary organisation that initiated a child sponsorship programme around the year 2000 and runs hostels, homes and schools for CAR.

v. **World Vision India** with their headquarters in Chennai have operations all over India. For this research three participants from the headquarters in Chennai, and one Area Development Project Manager for My City Initiative in Bangalore took part in this investigation.

vi. **Operation Liberation *** is a new organisation based in Bangalore. However, the leader before starting this agency was working for another INGO for several years. Having an established presence for many years in conducting rescue operations where children were used for begging and as labourers, they also continue to work with slum children by using football as a means to care and nurture. The leader of this organisation and many of its members represent the Pentecostal and Charismatic groups.

vii. **Anti-Child Labour Force** ^{*18} an international organisation with one of their offices in Bangalore focuses on rescuing and rehabilitating child labourers with the help of local government officials and the judiciary.

4.7. Data Collection Methods

¹⁸ * These NGOs wanted to keep their identity anonymous; hence a pseudonym is used to identify them in this research.

As the first step in data collection, five broad themes based on the research questions were identified to prepare probing questions to engage churches and NGOs involved in CAR using focus group discussions, interviews, and questionnaires. The five categorised themes were:

- i. The meaning and understanding of the phrase ‘children at risk’;
- ii. An understanding of the various contemporary models of missions to CAR currently being practised;
- iii. Important underlying motivations to engage in Christian mission to CAR;
- iv. The meaning and scope of the rights of the child in relation to their Christian mission to CAR;
- v. The main challenges faced by participants while engaging in mission to CAR in India.

4.7.1. Field Testing

Before actual data collection, it was thought best to field test the research methods used for this research. In the month of July 2014, field-testing disclosed that guiding questions prepared for in-depth interviews and focus group were adequate to ask probing, in-depth questions and elicit answers from the participants for this research. In total four in-depth interviews were conducted and audio-recorded. Most often, it was observed that the first few minutes of the interview created a degree of uneasiness among most participants, but they quickly became more comfortable during the session. While conducting the sample focus group with Believer’s Church in Chennai, a familiar environment and informal setting (with some drinks and snacks created) an atmosphere that made the participants comfortable. Also, the researcher noticed that during the focus group an additional person to observe and to take notes would prove valuable. By doing this, the moderator was able to concentrate on leading the discussion and not simultaneously be required to take notes. Additionally, providing some chart papers and sketch pens to note down the discussed points and to describe the ideas through diagrams proved helpful in facilitating discussions.

The data generated through these charts proved invaluable for further interaction during analysis. During field-testing, it was discovered that most

participants (both caregivers and beneficiaries) displayed their unfamiliarity about UNCRC and on some of the laws and programmes concerning children in India. To practically help and create a platform for discussion, an A3 size chart displaying UNCRC and a handbook prepared by NCPCR were planned to be shown to the participants during the discussion.¹⁹

While field-testing, the completed questionnaires revealed that one or two questions were left unanswered, and some questions were partially answered, thus requiring a modification of those particular questions. Despite these precautions, a few participants during actual research failed to respond as instructed in their questionnaire. This was resolved by again inviting the participant to share their ideas. Another aspect that emerged was that of the ten questionnaires initially handed out, only seven filled-in questionnaires were returned, indicating the need to distribute around seventy-five questionnaires to receive at least 50 completed questionnaires. Participants for interviews and questionnaires were given explicit instructions on the purpose and scope of the study. I realised that any additional questionnaires would prove beneficial for the research. Most participants needed a regular follow-up to complete the questionnaire. It also proved necessary to use multiple methods to collect data with similar broad probing questions. Using multiple methods provided the participants with ample opportunities to articulate and develop their ideas. Moreover, similar answers then authenticated the validity and accuracy of their responses and the collected data.

4.7.2. In-depth Interviews and Questionnaires

Based on the five major themes mentioned earlier, two to three probing open-ended questions on each theme were prepared to collect data for in-depth interviews and questionnaires. Three to four in-depth interviews were then conducted with Christian caregivers from each of the selected churches and NGOs associated with programmes or projects related to CAR at various levels. As noted earlier, these representations brought variations. However, in the questionnaire,

¹⁹ UNICEF, 'Summary of the UNCRC', *Publication*, accessed 17 January 2014, https://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/betterlifeleaflet2012_press.pdf; NCPCR, Government of India, 'Child Rights Manual - 1', *Research and Reports*, accessed 17 January 2014, <http://www.ncpcr.gov.in/showfile.php?lang=1&level=2&&sublinkid=302&lid=741>.

some multiple-choice questions were given to guide the participants to choose certain options, which otherwise may have been missed by them. Finally, a questionnaire with six closed and nine open-ended questions was prepared and given to Christian caregivers engaged with CAR for at least five years or more. Even here, attempts were made to have equal numbers representing the two cities and to bring out variations within the group.

Additionally, questionnaires with one closed question with multiple-choice options and one open-ended question were given to non-Christian parents or guardians of CAR, who have benefitted through Christian mission in each city. The aim of this was to provide a non-Christian perspective on Christian mission to CAR and as a means of testing how far the Christian perceptions of their work are correct. However, in actuality, some organisations were exclusively helping the children of their church members or converts. Hence, in actual data collection, a mixed group of Christian and non-Christian beneficiaries was represented in this research.

4.7.3. Focus Groups

Three focus groups, one for each church under a sub-group with six to eight participants associated with CAR, were selected. Data collected helped to analyse and categorise concepts and categories that relate to models and motivations of their missions to CAR, and issues relating to rights of the child. The discussion was based on the major themes through probing questions, visuals, and activities to elicit required answers for this research. Table 2 shows the numbers of caregivers and beneficiaries who participated in the ten case studies selected for this research:

Table 1: The ten case studies used in this research in Bangalore (B) and Chennai (C).

Participants	Christian Caregivers			Beneficiaries
	Focus Groups	In-Depth Interviews	Questionnaires	Questionnaires
Ecumenical				
CSI St. John's Church (B)	1	4	4	3
YMCA (B)	-	4	4	3
CCCYC (B)	-	4	4	5
Evangelical				
St Andrew's ECI Church (C)	1	3	3	5
World Vision India (C)	-	4	4	3
Scripture Union India (C)	-	3	3	3
FMPB (C)	-	3	3	-
Pentecostal/Neo-Charismatic				
'Anti-Child Labour Force'* ²⁰ (B)	-	4	4	-
First AG Church (B)	1	3	3	3
'Project Rescue'* (B)	-	2	2	-
Total	3	34	34	25

In total thirty-four interviews and three focus group discussions were conducted. Besides the 34 in-depth interviews, five narrative interviews included data on selected organisation's history and their work with children at risk. Of a total of 79 questionnaires handed over to caregivers working with CAR, 73 were returned. 72 questionnaires were distributed to beneficiaries, and 33 of these were returned. Besides these, four interviews with caregivers, one focus group discussion, and seven questionnaires filled by caregivers were collected during the field test.

In order to broaden the field of inquiry, questionnaires were distributed to caregivers from other churches and NGOs working in two cities. Table 1 above and Table 2 below display the concentration of Ecumenical and Pentecostal participants in the city of Bangalore, and of Evangelical participants in Chennai. This imbalance

²⁰ * These NGOs wanted to keep their identity anonymous; hence a pseudonym is used to identify them. *: Chennai; B: Bangalore

was not intentional but was a result of the pattern of consent and access given for this research. Secondly, Asha Forum, a networking forum of VIVA India based in Bangalore city, provided help through their network and for this reason, there are more participating NGOs from Bangalore than from Chennai. This also demonstrates the importance of such forums that provide the opportunity to bring many NGOs together to share and learn from each other. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the majority of these NGOs also operate in other parts of India but have their headquarters in these cities. Some independent NGOs also have their own church where the children also participate in the worship. Table 2 shows the seven other organisations which participated by completing questionnaires to broaden the field of inquiry:

Table 2: Staff and beneficiaries of NGOs participating in this research

Chennai	Staff	Benef.	Bangalore	Staff	Benef.
Oasis India	2	-	Accept and Access	3	4
KIDS Learning Centre	2	1	Urban India Missions	3	-
Believers Chapel	2	1	Karnataka Evangelistic Association	2	2
Christian Caregivers in Government homes	2	2	Living Hope Children's Home	1	1
Shelter	1	-	Bethesda Children's Home	2	-
Chennai INGO	3	1	Scripture Gift Mission	1	-
Hindustan Bible Institute	1	-	Vacation Bible School	1	-
			INSA/Visthar	3	-
			Asha Forum	1	-
			Home of Hope	1	1
			Prison Fellowship	1	-
			An independent child evangelist	1	
			Jubilee Institute/ CFCD	1	
Total	13	5		21	8

4.7.4. Transcription

For collecting qualitative data, field notes were taken whenever required during the survey, and the transcription work was later done after the interview. The audio data was transcribed verbatim, and linguistic changes to the spoken discourse were made only to make it coherent. Although the transcription was a time-consuming process, transcribing the data helped to develop greater familiarity with the data (audio and written text) as well as helping me to identify themes and do an initial manual analysis.

4.8. Phase Two

4.8.1. Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation

In phase two of this research, from July 2015 to October 2015, the researcher was located in India again for four months. Hence, a total of nine months were spent in India. While interpreting and analysing the data, the researcher chose to be located in the research context to fill any gaps if needed and to collect some pending questionnaires in person. As indicated earlier, this phase also included combining missiological and practical theological analysis to evaluate and formulate new practices for Christian missions with CAR.

For quality data analysis and interpretation, coding as a method was used to systematise qualitative content analysis. During this process as a first step in the analysis, data were categorised and labelled to sort and compare excerpts from the data.²¹ The thematic coding followed the five key themes identified earlier (see page 99) based on which the data were collected, with each code having sub-codes to enable a thorough qualitative analysis of data. These themes also became the analytical tool to develop codes (see Appendix 6) and themes during analysis. Similarly, data acquired through questionnaires was transferred to an Excel sheet under the various models and themes to be analysed to generate data for more findings. Finally, to manage and interpret the data, two processes were used, first a manual approach using charts, board and hard copies of the transcripts and then

²¹ See Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 373.

software. The idea of using both methods was to confirm and not to miss the themes by either one of the methods.

4.8.2. NVivo Software for Data Management and Analysis

NVivo software was employed as the primary tool to manage the extensive data generated from the interviews and questionnaires. The versatility of this software to manage and analyse text, audio, photos, the internet and Excel spreadsheet files proved valuable for this research. For a comprehensive interpretation and categorisation, emerging from thematic coding, a multi-stage procedure was used in this research. First, an initial short description of each case was produced, which then was continuously checked and modified as necessary during further interpretation of a case or as additional data emerged. Case descriptions included several elements of information about the case in relation to the research questions. Based on the five central themes, parent and child nodes (codes and sub-codes) were developed to make queries for analysis from the data collected through interviews and questionnaires. As evidenced earlier in Chapters Two and Three, the three identifiable models of mission to CAR – child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy models were coded, so that the presence, divergence and prominence of these models in contemporary Protestant mission contexts in India could be monitored. Based on the emerging data from the case studies of churches and NGOs, models of Protestant mission and their underlying motivations were collated and categorised. These motivations were then identified as drivers that propel contemporary Protestant missions for CAR in India. As this research employed multi-case studies, comparisons based on the thematic structures were juxtaposed to analyse and interpret emerging categories. While analysing, the information generated became the findings and contained some recommendations.

4.9. Summary

The methods described in this chapter were adopted to explain and analyse complex socially embedded phenomena and to answer the questions: What are the various models of mission currently evident among Christians working for children

at risk in India, and what are their underlying motivations? What is the relationship between child rights and Christian mission and the different challenges faced in the religiopolitical context? This research employed a qualitative dominant mixed-method to collect data to build multiple case studies and to explore the questions mentioned above. Predominantly this study relied on cross-case synthesis for representation and variations using social science methods. This was then integrated with a missiological analysis and practical theological reflection. Having now defined the methodology employed, the next two chapters will attempt to identify models of Protestant missions to CAR in South India and their underlying motivations to work for CAR from the multiple case studies on churches and NGOs respectively.

Chapter 5. An Analysis of Contemporary Protestant Missions to Children at Risk in Three Congregational Case Studies from Bangalore and Chennai

5.1. Introduction

As demonstrated in Chapter Three, Christian mission organisations working with CAR in contemporary India are required by international and national monitoring agencies¹ to undertake a paradigm shift from the nineteenth-century classical Christian missionary model of saving children to a new secular modern paradigm characterised by rights-based intervention and legislation. As this external thrust through rights-based intervention is to some extent new to the Indian context and churches, such a transition does not seem to be very smooth. Therefore, to understand the contemporary context of Christian missions to CAR in India it becomes necessary to identify the actual position of these missions on this transition. Are they resisting it, if so why? Are they still on the way towards it, or have they taken it entirely on board?

To locate and examine these dynamics, this chapter is the first of two chapters that attempt to investigate contemporary Protestant work with CAR in South India, looking specifically at the mission efforts of local Protestant churches. Even though the three churches selected for this research are not representative in every respect, they may help in giving an impression of the respective approaches that similar churches in each category are likely to have while engaging in their work with CAR. This chapter analyses each church by considering the following four topics:

¹ International agencies bodies such as UN, UNICEF, MDG (until 2015) and nationally through the Ministry of Women and Child Development in India and legislations. In 2015 a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) replaced the Millennium Development Goals. The SDGs focus on the three aspects of sustainable development – the economic, environmental and social, consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets applied to all countries, with 2030 as a deadline to be met. Please look at chapter three and seven for more details.

- Summary, analysis and challenges of the work with CAR undertaken by the church.
- Analysis of the motivations of the workers and church members to work with CAR
- The church's understanding of children, child rights, CAR and their contextual realities concerning them.
- Evaluation of the model of mission to CAR illustrated by the church.

First, the individual churches will be studied in depth. Secondly, a brief consolidative analysis of the theologies of mission informing these churches to work with CAR will be undertaken. This will be supplemented with data collected from four other churches from which six participants shared their views through questionnaires. A short section on the interaction of the three selected case study churches with the rights of the child will be included in this chapter to identify some major themes and to have a more thorough discussion and analysis of this issue in Chapter Seven.

5.2. The Church of South India's St. John's Church, Bangalore

St. John's Church began in 1853 in a small building as an Anglican chapel on Sundays and on weekdays as school and as a library in the evenings for local retired people. In 1854, the current church was constructed, and in the same year, a school was built to help the poor and marginalised Anglo-Indian boys and girls, which was later extended to other people of the community, mostly for Christians.²

In 1947, St. John's Church became part of the Mysore Diocese, now called the Karnataka Central Diocese (KCD) of the Church of South India (CSI).³ In 1963, it became a Presbytery. Under the leadership of Rev. Joe Mullins (1963-1974), an Australian missionary, the Sunday school was reorganised, youth and women's fellowships were started, an old age home for women (Asha Nivas) and later the

² 'Pulse', *Parish Magazine of St. John's Church, Bangalore*, 2010, 14–16.

³ The Karnataka Central Diocese runs 11 hostels, 4 for girls and 7 for boys, including two new life centres, one for boys in Kolar Gold Field (town close to Bangalore) and one for girls in Memorial church, Bangalore. Daniel (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, CSI St John's Church, Bangalore, 29 October 2014. 'Change of Guard at CSI Institutions', *Deccan Herald*, last modified 9 May 2010, <http://www.deccanherald.com/content/68434/F>.

boys' hostel were constructed within the church compound. Afterwards, under Rev. Vinay K Samuel⁴ (1975-1985) who had served as assistant pastor under Mullins, the church developed its engagement with the community.⁵ The church at the time of the research had a strength of about 865 families, with around 3000 church members including children, with an average Sunday congregation of 700.

The St John's school now serves more than 3000 students from a broad cross-section of society. Christian children from CSI churches are given priority for admissions. The diocese directly manages the school, and currently, St. John's Church has limited representation in its administration.⁶ Hence, for our study, we particularly focus on the hostel ministry of the church, as the church entirely runs the hostel.

5.2.1. Summary, Analysis and Challenges of the Working with CAR Undertaken by St. John's Church

The St. John's boys' hostel was constructed in 1959 for boys of Tibetan refugees with the help of *Kindernothilfe* (KNH), now called The Churches' Council for Child and Youth Care (CCCYC).⁷ These boys went to St. John's school for their education and participated in the ministries of the church. In the 1980s, when representatives of the Tibetan diaspora, with the aid of the Indian government, established an independent hostel and centre for the Tibetan community near Bangalore, the Tibetan children were shifted to that hostel. After this, boys from poor rural CSI churches, mostly from a Dalit background, were accommodated in the hostel.

⁴ He is also the founder director of Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, was a prominent Evangelical Anglican leader in the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) and is one of the key promoters of holistic Christian mission. See Chris Sugden, 'Vinay Kumar Samuel: The Man and His Works', *Transformation* 24, no. 3/4 (2007): 129–33.

⁵ 'Pulse', 7.

⁶ Until December 1962, the school was managed by the Pastorate Committee of St. John's Church but, from January 1963, it functioned under a constitution framed by the Pastorate Committee. In 1999, management was transferred to the Diocese and the new constitution came into effect from 1st May 2000. 'The School Is Born', *St John's High School, Bangalore*, accessed 3 March 2016, <http://www.johnshighedu.com/history.php>.

⁷ This NGO will be studied in greater detail in the following chapter. In the year 2016 the CSI Synod decided to change the name of CCCYC to Church of South India Board for Child Care. However, in this thesis CCCYC will be continued to be used as this was the name that existed at the time of research. The new website is still in construction, more details on any changes is still pending for investigation.

Around the year 2000, CCCYC slowly began to withdraw support for hostel (institutionalised) children as a policy all over India, including St. John's hostel. But the then bishop strongly felt that these hostels should continue to help children coming from a Dalit background within the diocese and challenged the churches to help run these hostels. Since then St. John's Church members have been supporting and running the boys' hostel.⁸ St John's Church has thus seen a definite shift in their mission to CAR – from a refugee community to one serving the neediest children within the Christian community. In the broadest sense, there has been a shift from Christian mission to pastoral care.

The hostel is run and entirely supported by the church members. Every month a requirement chart is placed outside the church for members to contribute either in kind or cash for the running of the hostel, which includes monthly toiletries and provisions. Recently, the church took out a health insurance policy for the hostel children. The campus school provides free education and some of the retired schoolteachers and members of the church help in providing extra tuition on weekday evenings. Some qualified members of the church, often selected by the minister, conduct counselling sessions for these children and their parents. In some ways, this model emulates the classical missionary model as identified in Chapter Three of this thesis – it is analogous to a mission compound or an institutional form of intervention. The church has now become the primary caregiver and can be characterised as paternalistic in its approach with minimal intervention from the parents or the government. Apart from the pastor and the warden of the hostel, the staff are all volunteers from St John's church. The diocese appoints the pastor and the warden for a limited period, and they are periodically posted to another church or hostel respectively. An analysis of the findings suggests some prominent practices that are distinct to this case study highlighted briefly in what follows.

Education and Development in Child Care: As indicated, the hostel children are predominantly from a rural background. Now, having lived in a hostel in the city, these children become strangers to the problems faced by their families and rural

⁸ 'Pulse', 13,17,36,71.

communities and do not want to return to their villages. These challenges are not just for the children or their caregivers but are faced by their parents as well. A caregiver reported that the parents do not want to send their children away from home to the hostel, but poverty and the lack of opportunities for the children to acquire a quality education compel them to send their children to hostels.⁹

As children come from a rural context, the use of the English language as a medium of instruction makes most children underachieve in academics, they appear to show more interest in sports. Such interest demonstrated by the children is understood to be unhealthy by many of the caregivers. This extract is an interesting example of such a view:

Hostel children have great difficulty in coping with demands of the school – medium of instructions in English and different syllabus. Hence, [the] majority [of] students struggle to excel in their studies and instead find much interest in sports. They usually have less ambition and career choices that are less focused due to their limited experiences. This has required the church to have sessions with boys to widen their horizons and dream big and [to have] wider career choices.¹⁰

Majumdar, an Indian educationist, says these are common complaints from teachers, especially concerning children coming from underprivileged backgrounds.¹¹ This idea was dominant because the majority of those who were involved with these children were teachers. The notion that academic achievements bring transformation in a person is a firm opinion not only among Christian caregivers but also among parents from Dalit and Tribal backgrounds. Moreover, as most parents from such backgrounds are illiterate (their children are the first generation to have access to education/high school education) and as they are unable to give adequate instruction themselves, they are willing to send their

⁹ Mary Paul, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, Vatsalaya Office, Bangalore, 3 November 2014.

¹⁰ Sathianathan Paul, Focus Group, Digital Audio Recording, CSI St John's Church, Bangalore, 24 October 2014.

¹¹ Mooij and Majumdar, *Education and Inequality in India*, 96.

children to a school or hostels where they believe this problem can be mitigated.¹² However, institutionalising children has its own challenges.

Proxy Childcare Centres: The boys' hostel that began in partnership with an NGO is now predominantly run by the church. However, only a few staff members such as Mary Paul, a social worker, founder and Director of a child-based NGO known as VCT¹³ are active members of the church. She reported that her organisation is currently running a day-care centre for poor migrant construction workers through the Trust, where their children can be dropped and picked up. A few other church members have established, or work in, child-centred NGOs and are involved with CAR in society. In such instances, although these NGOs do not have any direct contact with the church, the members are involved in Christian mission to CAR and serve as proxy childcare centres of the church. An interesting finding that emerged from the analysis is that church-based caregivers who do not have a connection with child-based NGOs were unaware of constitutional provisions for children. Only professionally qualified people such as Mary Paul articulated their views using child rights-based language. One of her comments illustrates this notion further: "Christians believe that they do not have to engage seriously with laws because they have a higher rule to obey because they look at the Bible as their index."¹⁴ Hence, associating with child-focused faith-based NGOs such as hers which are aware of child rights in their ethos and operation can perhaps change this scenario in churches.

¹² Ibid, 71.

¹³ VCT is a trust and is a registered adoption agency which also runs a day care centre for children of migrant workers, conducts seminars and workshops on counselling, family and childcare. 'About VCT Bangalore', *Vatsalaya Charitable Trust*, accessed 3 June 2016, <http://www.vctblr.org/about-us.html>.

¹⁴ Mary Paul, Interview, 3 November 2014.

5.2.2. Understanding CAR: Contextual Survey in the Region of St. John's Church

For the majority of the participants, a child was perceived to be someone who is under the age of fourteen or fifteen, which directly corresponds to the age determined by the Child Labour Act of India. Only one person, a founder-director of a child-based NGO, identified with the UNCRC definition of children being anyone under the age of eighteen.¹⁵ The phrase CAR was relatively new to many participants. Hence, this clearly indicates that for them the understanding of a specific ministry to CAR was very new.

To investigate further, the group was prompted to identify children at risk in their context. The responses from the participants were put into three categories. The first two categories emerged from the environment in which the participants lived around their church, and they were first, child labourers, and second, street children. It was reported that, often, rural girls were employed as domestic servants by urban educated and employed couples. One participant also commented that some of the church members had similar arrangements to look after their children and household chores.¹⁶ It was also said that hostel boys were protected from these risks due to the church's intervention. The third group identified by the participants are the children neglected by their parents, which directly relates to one of the problems identified by church members. Within the traditional Indian family context, extended families play a significant role in childcare. With urbanisation and the increase in nuclear families and migration, such care is lacking. Hence, such children are routinely left alone at home by working, often middle-class parents under the care of older siblings, neighbours or even by untrained maids (which may include children also). Recently, rural migrant workers come to cities to work in construction sites during non-farming months. They migrate with their families and children, who are either left at makeshift shelters under the care of older siblings or neighbours or brought near construction sites, leaving them vulnerable to various abuses and accidents.

¹⁵ Sathianathan Paul, Focus Group, 24 October 2014.

¹⁶ John Manoharan, Focus Group, Digital Audio Recording, CSI St John's Church, Bangalore, 24 October 2014.

5.2.3. An Analysis of Motivations of the Workers and Church Members of St. John's Church

Three major themes emerged from the analysis of this church's motivation. The first major motivation derived from their theological understanding of Christian love and compassion. Many caregivers shared that they loved to work with children. However, when probed further, they described themselves as demonstrating God's love; they want to make a difference in the world where love is not often found. In response to an inquiry from the researcher seeking theological reasons for their involvement, the minister of the church quoted Matthew 18:10, affirming that children belong to God and are guarded by angels.¹⁷ Similar quotations from the Bible were provided by a good number of caregivers. This indicates that while there may be a lived theology as part of their religious Christian faith, a reflectively formulated theological framework is missing. For some participants in the St John's Hostel, shaping the lives of the children was important because they were considered as the future leaders of the church, community and country.¹⁸

The second theme that emerged was the predominant role of professional women volunteers in caring for CAR. The research suggests that occupations such as social workers, teachers and pastors, naturally attract volunteers to work with children and especially with CAR. It is predominantly women who play a significant role in the church context. Men are mostly involved in administrative tasks, whereas women very often directly care for children.

The final finding that emerged from the data suggests that previous personal experiences with CAR are a key motivating factor for an individual to work among CAR. During the focus group discussion, it was identified that negative or positive influences in their own childhood or family life shaped many of the caregivers' motivations. For example, the help and support received during their own childhood appeared to compel most of the caregivers to give something back to children living in similar circumstances. Another person who did not have children

¹⁷ Sathianathan Paul, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, CSI St John's Church, Bangalore, 29 October 2014.

¹⁸ Mary Paul, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, Vatsalaya Office, Bangalore, 3 November 2014.

of her own for some years was encouraged by her husband to work with the kids to fill the void.¹⁹ Another person who lost her son recently found comfort and strength while working with hostel children.²⁰ Strangely one can identify a mutual transaction happening, the church while benefiting these CAR is also getting benefited. Besides all this, one needs to recognise that motivation to run a hostel is contingent on the already existing infrastructure and resources, and in many ways, it follows the missionary paradigm from the past through institutions such as hostels, schools and church.

5.2.4. Evaluation of Mission Models Illustrated by St. John's Church Ministries with CAR.

Churches that have a colonial heritage (such as St John's) continue with their engagement with CAR in the already existing infrastructure within the church premises. New engagements, although there are several possible, are seldom explored. There could be three reasons for this lack of new approaches to help other CAR in the community:

The first reason is the dwindling autonomy given to the minister and the church committee to run the ministries of the church. Ever since Karnataka Central Diocese /CCCYC began to manage the school, community centre and to some extent even the hostel, the church has continued to maintain its existing work and has not been actively involved in the ministries beyond the church compound.

Secondly, a comment by Mrs Colleen Samuel (Rev Samuel's wife) about St. John's Church's motivation to engage in Christian mission can give some insight into the shift. According to her, the shape and direction of St. John's remained in the "hands of the theological thinking of the clergy to a large extent."²¹

Thirdly, St. John's belongs to the CSI and is predominantly influenced by the perspectives prescribed by the National Council of Churches of India (NCCI) and World Council of Churches (WCC). These Councils have increasingly focussed since the late 1960s on much broader and important theological issues of social justice,

¹⁹ Jayanthi Manoharan, Focus Group, Digital Audio Recording, CSI St John's Church, Bangalore, 24 October 2014.

²⁰ Daisy (Pseudonym), Focus Group, CSI St John's Church, Bangalore, 24 October 2014.

²¹ 'Pulse', 21.

such as marginalisation of Dalits, women's emancipation, ecological concerns and the impact of globalisation on Indian society. The statement produced by WCC's Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) in 1982, 'Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation,' expounded the mission of the church in very broad key themes but did not give specific direction for local churches to participate in God's mission.²² However, the recently revised statement made at the 10th WCC Assembly at Busan (2013) gives a new impetus to local churches' participation in God's mission. The title of the statement, 'Together Towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes,' gives a fresh dimension to churches in their local context.²³ This 2013 WCC statement challenges churches to learn from other new emerging churches for new and bold initiatives, for example:

While cherishing the unity of the Spirit in the one Church, it is also important to honour how each local congregation is led by the Spirit to respond to its own contextual realities. Today's changed world calls for local congregations to take new initiatives. For example, in the secularising global North, new forms of contextual mission such as "new monasticism," "emerging church," and "fresh expressions," have redefined and revitalised churches. Exploring contextual ways of being Church can be particularly relevant to young people.²⁴

The above statement may be relevant to churches like St. John's that seek to diversify their ministry and impact society in response to God's mission in the world and address its contextual realities, such as issues concerning CAR.

In conclusion, it is evident that St John's Church represents an institutional and paternalistic form of intervention. In such intervention methods, there appears to be minimal scope for partnership and child participation in God's mission to CAR as children are generally perceived merely as the objects of the church's mission and in no sense as subjects of the mission of God.

²² See 'Mission and Evangelism - An Ecumenical Affirmation', *International Review of Mission* 71, no. 284 (1982): 427–57.

²³ See 'Together towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes', *International Review of Mission* 101, no. 2 (2012): 250–80, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1758-6631.2012.00126.x>.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 269.

5.3. Evangelical Church of India's St. Andrew's Church, Chennai

St. Andrew's Church, in Annanur, Chennai, is one of the many churches planted recently by the Evangelical Church of India (ECI), with more than eighty families, where about 200 to 250 people worshipped on Sundays when the research was conducted. Most of them come from middle-class backgrounds and are employed in the nearby private companies, while some own small shops and businesses. The history of this church can be traced back to 1997 when a small group gathered for prayer and Bible study in a house. In the following year, a few people began to worship on Sundays led by Rev. Selvin Durai in a place bought by ECI. In 1999, it was named St. Andrew's Church and in 2001, a church building was built and dedicated.

This Church in Annanur runs the Grace Learning Centre (GLC) in the church premises for selected non-Christian children of the Dalit community living in a small settlement called Annai Anjugam Nagar, earlier known as *Mupathe Goodesaigle* (literally meaning 30 huts) which is not far from the church. Inhabitants of this settlement migrated thirty years ago, from the nearby state of Andhra Pradesh and the district of Thiruvannamalai in Tamil Nadu. Most adults here work as labourers on construction sites. In the earlier days of the project, they lived in thatched-roofed huts with no access to basic amenities like clean water, electricity and sanitation. As they are in a lowland area, during monsoon season this region gets flooded with sewage water from a nearby drainage canal. Until recently, most adults and children in this community were illiterate and had never shown any interest in education. Due to their poverty, poor hygiene, Dalit (*Adi-Dravida*)²⁵ identity and a high crime rate, they were marginalised and discriminated against by the locals, and often oppressed by the local police. However, after St. Andrew's Church's intervention through the Grace Learning Centre (GLC), gradual changes have been taking place within the community, especially among children and some adults.

²⁵ In Tamil Nadu, *Adi Dravida* ideology is a depressed class political construction predominantly led by the Paraiya community during early twentieth century. This was a political movement resisting the hegemonic rule of Brahmins within the Congress (National) and Justice party (Regional). The category asserts an anti-Brahmanical rule with an identity rooted in being Dalit and Indigenous (*Adi*) – the people of the soil. See Raj Sekhar Basu, 'The Making of *Adi Dravida* Politics in Early Twentieth Century Tamil Nadu', *Social Scientist* 39, no. 7/8, July-August (2011): 9–41.

In 1998, Rev. Selvin Durai and an evangelist were the first to identify these children and the church's mission to them began through a Vacation Bible School (VBS), held during the school summer holidays for ten days.²⁶ However, their poor hygiene and uncleanness led some church members to question whether they should be accommodated alongside other community children. This initial discrimination challenged some women of the church to organise a separate VBS for these children. After the VBS, issues concerning these children and requests from them to continue a similar programme inspired these VBS teachers to continue their work. A regular Sunday school was started with the help of a few church volunteers.²⁷ Whenever children or their parents expressed some need, church members provided used clothes and medical care as and when they could. Apparently, as the church was small and financially not very strong, they were unable to provide all the needs expressed by the children, yet in this limited way, they continued to help the children and their families through the years.

In the year 2004/5, under the leadership of Bishop Ezra Sargunam, the ECI launched a specialised childcare and sponsorship programme in partnership with an international NGO, Vision Trust. In India, through child sponsorships²⁸, Vision Trust runs 27 Grace Learning Centres (GLC), and St Andrew's church is one of these Centres. The Centres provide uniforms, school supplies, food and a safe place to go after school for the children. GLC provides additional out-of-school hours tuition classes for the children, in addition to moral and spiritual teaching and an evening meal from Monday to Saturday throughout the year to help pupils get through their school exams with an aim to integrate them into society.²⁹ These Centres are usually within the church premises, but some are temporary shelters that are rented. Nonetheless, the primary goal of the programme is explicitly evangelistic, namely to share the hope of Jesus Christ with these children and see them grow up

²⁶ Charles Wesley, 'History of ECI St Andrew's Church - A Report', 10 February 2014.

²⁷ Susan (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, ECI St Andrew's Church, Chennai, 4 October 2014.

²⁸ Further discussion on child sponsorship will be studied in the next chapter on NGOs where we will also explore their relationship with churches.

²⁹ D Mervin Joshua, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, ECI Office, Chennai, 10 September 2014.

to live for God and love others through Grace Learning Centres.³⁰ At the time of this research St. Andrew's Church was serving around forty-two children from this community and is administered exclusively by the minister of the church and few volunteers from the church. However, tuition teachers and a cook are employed by GLC to run the weekly work of the centre.³¹ Women again seem to be the most active and dominant actors in church-run programmes for CAR; a theme that was identified in all the case studies in this research.

5.3.1. Summary, Analysis and Challenges of the Work with CAR Undertaken by St. Andrew's Church

Child Evangelism and Education: This church sees its mission to this community of children as a dual one: to transform their lives and future and to bring them and their families to the kingdom of God. An excerpt from an interview with Mervin Joshua, the Director of Vision Trust, India, who is not himself a church member of this ECI Church, demonstrates the intermingling of evangelism and rights-based language:

For me, to give them the hope in their life is the main thing.... So, if I don't give Jesus to the child, the future of the child is shaken. It is important to serve them and teach them their rights, but if we have failed to give the real message and the hope ... then I will be failing....³²

As the above statement suggests, much emphasis is given to the children's spiritual life and education, which is understood to be the key element for their upward social mobility.³³ I was informed that, at the beginning of their work, not one child from this community went to school. Rather, their parents never bothered to send their children despite free education being provided by the government. But now almost sixty percent of children in the community attend school.³⁴ The continued

³⁰ 'Work in India', *Vision Trust International*, accessed 29 October 2015, <https://www.visiontrust.org/where/country/id/india>.

³¹ Charles E. Wesley, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, ECI St Andrew's CSI, Annanur, Chennai, 4 October 2014..

³² Joshua, Interview.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Susan (Pseudonym), Focus Group, Digital Audio Recording, ECI St Andrew's Church, Chennai, 4 October 2014.

work of GLC in this community has transformed the mindset of many parents, who now want their children to be educated and do not want their children to suffer like them. One should note that these activities are not done by professional counsellors, but by church members, who usually provide general advice on health, hygiene and family matters within the context of spiritual nurture through teaching from the Bible and prayers at the end of their meeting.³⁵

Child Rights and Advocacy: Qualitative research done by Ramachandran and Naorem in India shows that, although the majority of Dalit and tribal children are attending schools, there are some blatant and some subtle and hidden mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination – in cleaning classrooms and toilets, mid-day meals (cooking, sitting, serving), access to water, toilets, space in the classroom and even in participating in school activities. Discrimination based on community, gender and caste are not uncommon in state-run schools in India.³⁶

Children from such backgrounds often need to fight against the odds, and places like GLC provide the necessary support and encouragement that builds resilience within them. One such incident shared during this research identified how GLC had made a difference in the lives of these children at risk. In 2012, the local school exploited these Dalit children by forcing them to clean the classrooms and toilets. After listening to reports of this exploitation, the GLC teachers gathered the parents together and encouraged them to go together to the school Principal to share this concern. The parents then informed the school authorities that a church was helping in educating their children and would support them on this issue. To illustrate this point, let us look at the statement made by a prominent church leader involved in this project. “The parents, who usually do not question such authorities, now with the support of GLC were able to put a petition and warned the school officials, that if the necessary actions were not taken, they would take their concerns to the local District Collector.”³⁷ Following this, the school officials issued an apology and assured the parents that their children would not again be

³⁵ Susan (Pseudonym), Interview, 4 October 2014.

³⁶ See Ramachandran Vimala and Naorem Taramani, ‘What It Means to Be a Dalit or Tribal Child in Our Schools’, *Economic and Political Weekly* 48, no. 44 (2013): 44–51.

³⁷ Susan (Pseudonym), Focus Group, 4 October 2014.

discriminated against in this manner. This piece of evidence shows the role the local church can play on issues of justice and being an advocate for CAR. Since then, the school has stopped such practices. Although there was clear evidence that the focus group participants were unaware of UNCRC, they still acted as advocates for their GLC children. This indicates that advocacy work does not directly depend on familiarity with UNCRC, even though such awareness would undoubtedly equip the caregivers to do their work more efficiently.³⁸

Recently these children, through GLC support and their talents, have not only excelled in studies but have won prizes in inter-school and inter-church competitions. These children from St. Andrew's GLC, who were once excluded, are now included in representing the school and church in local competitions. This shift demonstrates that the communal boundaries are not strict – when proper opportunities are given to children, they do see themselves as included because of their achievements. Agents such as St Andrews Church and GLC have played a significant role in helping to transform the attitude of the public, church and children by including them in the mainstream of education. Such work does not happen overnight, and there are still challenges to overcome.

Gaining Trust: Mervin Joshua, Director of Vision Trust, commented, “When we start creating awareness [among children and their parents in the community] it takes much time to understand that our teachings and involvement is for their [children at risk] betterment.”³⁹ Such experiences are common in any CAR enterprise, whether an NGO or a church. Often such works of charity are looked at through a lens of suspicion by those who receive and even among those who give. Hence gaining the trust of the people and community becomes a priority for any programme to be a success. One of the reasons is the possibility of compassion work being exploited for vested interests. Susan, a senior volunteer and member of this church, narrated in her interview how parents living in the slum responded when requested to send their children to Sunday School or VBS. They would ask,

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Joshua, Interview, 10 September 2014.

‘What will you give me if we come to the church?’⁴⁰ This question compels one to interrogate the motives of at-risk people requiring benefits for their presence in a project. Vulnerable people have been recipients of various charity acts and, in such circumstances, there are possibilities of abusing such compassion work. Some beneficiaries – namely, beggars, drug abusers, and the homeless – tend to abuse such operations by the church.⁴¹

Secondly, it was reported that there was a general fear among parents of the possible conversion of children in these Christian centres. One senior caregiver stated:

We had many oppositions in the initial stages of our work. They thought, by sending their children, we would ask the children to remove Bindi [a small dot of vermilion or coloured dot in the middle of the forehead of girls], take out all the images in the home and wear white clothes.⁴²

The minister of the Annanur Church, at the time of the interview, reported that parents have a genuine fear that their children would be converted to Christianity: “Parents warn them [children] that they will make them Jesus children and hence many children fear to come because of their parents.”⁴³ However, the questionnaires from the beneficiaries revealed a different recurring theme among the parents. The church provides excellent care, food and education to these children. Moreover, interviews with selected parents suggested that they do not want their children to undergo similar hardships as they have undergone and hence they are willing to take the risk and appear not to mind the possible Christian influence on their children.⁴⁴ The hope for mutual respect and acceptance grows gradually. However, it was apparent that a transparent and open relationship with

⁴⁰ ‘Susan’ (Pseudonym), Interview, 4 October 2014.

⁴¹ McConnell shares, “I could always find places that would give me breakfast, clean clothes, a shower, and some food.... Churches were particularly good targets because the people were generally nice..., all we had to do was sit through some God-talk and maybe take a booklet. Then we could be on our way.... What looked like a thriving mercy ministry was really just an easy mark for selfish people.” He further shares it can be paternalistic and self-serving. Mez McConnell and Mike McKinley, *Church in Hard Places: How the Local Church Brings Life to the Poor and Needy* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2016), 176–79.

⁴² ‘Susan’ (Pseudonym), Interview, 4 October 2014.

⁴³ Wesley, Interview.

⁴⁴ Lakshmi Gurunathan, Questionnaire, ECI St. Andrew’s Church, Chennai’, 4 October 2014.

proper consent from parents does bring positive notions and resolves some of the misconceptions.

5.3.2. Understanding CAR: Contextual Survey in the Region of St.

Andrew's Church

Similar themes were identified to those in St John's church, except that this church focused its attention on non-Christian children living in a slum community. Two prominent themes came across strongly from the respondents of St Andrew's Church.

Girls at High Risk: For these participants, the biggest problem identified was the practice of child marriage, primarily among girls. Safety concerns for female children increase when girls reach puberty. Parents discourage them from going to school and instead arrange to get them married. The reason usually provided is that it would be difficult to find a suitable educated boy to match an educated girl and that her dowry would be much higher.⁴⁵ The reasons often expressed were the potential for sexual abuse in the community and the fear of dowry. Although by Indian law, the payment of dowry is illegal, the practice continues in subtle ways among wealthy, middle- and lower-class families in rural and urban India. The issue of dowry is directly linked to several other problems concerning female children – female foeticide and infanticide resulting in an imbalance of the sex ratio, illiteracy of female children and child marriage. The reasons for such fear are that they live in adverse poverty and in an unsafe neighbourhood. Furthermore, studies show that early marriage in slums also increases the risk of domestic violence, besides other medical risks, making girls more vulnerable.⁴⁶ This highlights, how girl children are unsafe in society, more so in slums. The recent incident of rape and murder of young children in the national capital of India has elicited rising concern.⁴⁷ To

⁴⁵ Joshua, Interview.

⁴⁶ See Shahina Begum et al., 'Socio-Demographic Factors Associated with Domestic Violence in Urban Slums, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India', *Indian Journal of Medical Research* 141, no. 6 (June 2015): 783–88, doi:10.4103/0971-5916.160701.

⁴⁷ Mahender Singh Manral, 'Uproar in Delhi after Toddler, 5-Year-Old Raped; 3 Arrested', last modified 18 October 2015, New Delhi edition, <http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/delhi/gangrape-of-delhi-5-year-old-girl-three-men-sent-to-judicial-custody/>.

compound the problem rape cases are under-reported by victims and their families due to shame and harassment.

Neglected Children: Neglected children are a concurrent theme in the urban context. As indicated in the previous case, here also participants reported that parents living in the slum often work as construction workers on a daily wage system leaving their children at home unmonitored. As children are unmonitored by adults, peer groups pressure them into gambling, stealing, fights, gangs and addictions. On the other hand, some children are taken along with their parents to hazardous construction sites. Young girls are often not sent to school but encouraged instead to accompany their mothers to work as domestic maids in nearby homes. Some participants also commented on the 'poor' moral standards and sexual behaviour among children, often influenced by extra-marital relationships by parents and in their community. Such conduct in Indian urban slums is related to the poor parenting styles adopted, which affects the mental growth of a child.⁴⁸ Under these circumstances, children succumb to such practices very early in their lives and engage in pre-marital sex which leads to teenage pregnancies. These justifiable fears force some parents to get their girls married well below the marriageable age of eighteen.

5.3.3. An Analysis of Motivations of the Workers and Church Members of St. Andrew's Church

As was identified in the case of the St. John's Church, the caregivers' personal experiences in the past continue to motivate some of them. The pastor himself was a sponsored child through KNH (CCCYC) and ECI. Hence, in turn, he wanted to give similar opportunities to underprivileged children. Such motivations are common among child caregivers giving in return for what they have received.⁴⁹ However, there remains a question: how many of such children become child caregivers later?

⁴⁸ See Samir D. Bele et al., "An Epidemiological Study of Emotional and Behavioural Disorders among Children in an Urban Slum," *Psychology, Health & Medicine* 18, no. 2 (March 1, 2013): 223–32.

⁴⁹ Wesley, Interview, 4 October 2014.

Issues of Justice and God's Compassion: As mentioned earlier, a few women church members started a separate VBS for the children when they were marginalised from participating in the VBS programme with other children. Although this seems to be an evangelistic motive, the need to provide equal opportunity for these children also involved the notion of compassion and justice for the CAR. The VBS provided space for CAR to share their concerns and for the teachers to listen to the problems and struggles in their community. This compelled the teachers to address some of the issues, giving an opportunity for the church to engage in compassionate work in this community. Two subsidiary themes emerged from the interviews and focus group which were strongly linked to Christian faith and expression of justice and compassion of God. First, participants perceived children as the future of society, church, and nation and so concern for their wellbeing and care motivates others to work for them. Second, being in a position where one could make a change in the lives of people, drives and sustains the caregiver and brings a sense of satisfaction.⁵⁰

The data apparently indicated that these participants were not clear about the concept of CAR and were unaware of UNCRC or even the child helpline provided by the government. Despite this, they could identify exploitation where they saw it and acted as advocates for these children. These caregivers were vaguely aware of some concepts surrounding fundamental rights – as expressed in the Right to Equality (Article 14), Right against Exploitation (Article 15), Right to Freedom (Article 19), and Cultural and Educational Rights (Article 21A).⁵¹ Nevertheless, towards the end of the focus group discussion, when the moderator made suggestions, many participants agreed that awareness of these new laws and constitutional provisions would empower them to act appropriately and protect children from abuses, discrimination, and exploitation.⁵² This indicates the willingness that child caregivers show to be aware of new developments. It is hoped that this research will contribute to creating awareness among caregivers and providing the necessary tools to engage with these new developments.

⁵⁰ Joshua, Interview, 10 September 2014.

⁵¹ Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, 'Constitution of India', accessed 9 November 2015, 6–14, <http://indiacode.nic.in/coiweb/welcome.html>.

⁵² Susan (Pseudonym), Focus Group, 4 October 2014.

5.3.4. Evaluation of Mission Models Illustrated by St. Andrew's Church's Ministries with CAR

NGO versus Church Involvement: One senior worker reported that, after GLC was started, the church members slowly minimised their participation. It seems that when a church-based children project is run in partnership with another NGO, the church members tend to play a lesser role, as they do not appear to have shared ownership anymore. The NGO becomes the primary actor, requiring regular updates and reports for their accountability to the donors. In these places, the church finds itself in a very weak position being unqualified professionally. It is a challenge if the members do not have sufficient resources to run a project. As in the case of St. Andrew's Church, although the church members initiated this project, it is now appropriated by the GLC. Now the church members are working on another slum and have started a small Sunday school.⁵³ Hence, it becomes evident that although GLC embodies a holistic model of mission to CAR, their work focuses on children enrolled in the centre and not directly to the community. This is one of the possible ways for a church that has limited resources to act as pioneer in child-related work – by partnering with an NGO. In conclusion, it can be said that St Andrew's church is a child-focused partnership model.

5.4. The First Assembly of God Church, Bangalore

The First Assemblies of God (FAG) Church in the city of Bangalore is the oldest AG Church in the state of Karnataka and was established in 1935. The church is not very far from the Cantonment Railway Station. This church primarily began to cater to the Anglo-Indian community and was run by several short-term 'non-Indian missionary pastors'. On the same premises, Southern Asia Bible College, now a premier AG Bible College in South Asia, was founded in the year 1951. From then on, the principals and faculty of this college also helped in conducting the church services until the college was shifted to another location in the summer of 1970. In the year 1971, the church got their first full-time minister, when Rev. Ovid A

⁵³ Wesley, Interview, 4 October 2014.

Dillingham and the family moved to Bangalore from North India. Under his leadership, several ministries began, especially among children, such as Sunday school, and a day-school. The school grew from nursery to grade eight with about 150 children until it was closed and the building demolished in 2005 to build the new existing church. Similar work by AG churches can be found in other cities such as Kolkata and Chennai, where they run primary and high schools, and hospitals helping children and their families.⁵⁴

This growing church is now under the leadership of Rev. Gavin Cunningham, a native of Bangalore and his wife, Rev. Amenla Cunningham, a native of Nagaland (one of the North-East Indian states), who heads the women's ministry. Cunningham began his ministry as an assistant pastor a few years before becoming the lead pastor in 2004. The church under his leadership has built a large new church building and developed new ministries. Among them, two projects deal with CAR – the 'Little Lambs Club,' which focuses on children living in the slums, and an annual awareness programme against human trafficking, networking with representatives from the government, non-government agencies, schools and colleges from various Christian denominations. However, for this research, the Little Lambs' Club is of interest, as it directly focuses on children at risk living in the slums of the city of Bangalore. At the time of this research, they had around four projects running in different slums in Bangalore.

5.4.1. Summary, Analysis and Challenges of the Work with CAR by FAG Church.

The Bamboo Bazaar slum, according to the 1991 records, had a population of around 850 in an area of 0.5 acres where people lived for more than fifty years⁵⁵ until they were relocated between 2013 and 2015 by the Bangalore Slum Development Board, to two-room apartments outside the city limits. The FAG church's mission to this nearby slum began when a few women church members visited this slum when the colony was flooded due to a torrential downpour in the year 2004. This predominantly Tamil-speaking Dalit community had a high crime

⁵⁴ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 74.

⁵⁵ Schenk, *Living in India's Slums*, 292.

rate and addiction to drugs and alcohol and thus was always the object of discrimination. The church knew some of these women as they had been used unfortunately to clean the church premises and toilets. Nevertheless, many of these women and their families were benefited through the church's work and some are even members of the church now.

The FAG Church's work with CAR began as part of the outreach ministry of their women's group who called themselves the 'Elizabeth Fellowship.' It all began when they invited the women and children of the slum to the church on a weekday following their first visit to the slum. Such visits became a weekly institution. During these weekly meetings, they were provided with a hot dinner, counselling, prayer and Christian teaching. Consistent visits and regular fellowship meals for over 100 women and children of this slum strengthened this relationship. Following the concerns shared by the parents living in the slum on their weekday visits to the church, some church members under the church leadership started giving the children free tuition, counselling and care, besides conducting a Sunday class for the children. They also provided necessary assistance in the form of food, clothes, fees for children's education, and charity sales. Now, through their project called 'Little Lambs,' slum children are benefitting. Having witnessed first-hand the transformed lives of some of the people living in the nearby slum, the Elizabeth Fellowship has now initiated similar projects in four other slums in Bangalore.

However, the work in the slum was not smooth. In the beginning, there was resistance to the slum work by some church members, but the pastor and the women's group continued their work. The church embraced this work after some children and women became Christians and started attending the church. Being a primarily English-speaking congregation, they were unable to cater to these Tamil-speaking converts. Hence, the converts were initially encouraged to participate in a nearby Tamil-speaking Pentecostal church but, unfortunately, they were not made welcome there. This kind of attitude indicates that discrimination based on caste and social status still continues to exist in churches in contemporary India. This compelled the FAG Church to start a Tamil worship service to help these new

converts, under the leadership of a pastor, who comes from a similar background.⁵⁶ Although church volunteers began this project, it has expanded and now has a paid staff of pastors and evangelists, in addition to church volunteers working alongside them.

Christian Mission, Conversion and Persecution: As work commenced and people slowly began to be converted, very often project centres had to move when opposition to their work increased. The community pastor described their work with children that started in a small room: "...the local people asked us [the pastor and the church volunteers] to vacate because they feared that we would convert their children."⁵⁷ Another participant observed:

such concerns are genuine, as the conversion is certainly the motive, but what the church and the people fail to see [is] the change happening not only in religion, it is a transformation of the whole being. Many times, these oppositions are given religious overtones by the local people who have oppressed these people for years.... Providing new life and education directly counters their agenda of making these people slaves and dependent.⁵⁸

Cunningham commented on the difficulties of their mission in slums. This kind of pioneering work is a ministry of convergence of pain and preference: "When a church starts engaging in the community, it is not a matter of convenience – it is a question of love," says the pastor.⁵⁹ An analysis of this theme in the other case studies strongly suggests that Christian work among CAR in slums often arouses local resistance. Hence, it is evident that churches that are committed to doing evangelistic work are often accused of conversion, but that does not deter them from engaging with non-Christian CAR. Very often, as they encounter the appalling

⁵⁶Alice (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, First A G Church, Bangalore, 18 October 2014; Gavin Cunningham, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, First A G Church, Bangalore, 18 October 2014.

⁵⁷ Antony (Pseudonym), Focus Group, Digital Audio Recording, First A G Church, Bangalore, 18 October 2014.

⁵⁸ Rekha (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, First A G Church, Bangalore, 18 October 2014.

⁵⁹ Cunningham, Interview, 18 October 2014.

conditions of CAR during their evangelistic work, they are compelled to participate in the holistic mission in the community. Nevertheless, once they began to engage with a community, they were able to raise human and material resources from the church members to run and sustain the work on an adequate basis. However, it requires tenacious and robust interventions that are relevant to the community.⁶⁰

5.4.2. Understanding Children at Risk: Contextual Survey in the Region of FAG Church.

As in the previous case studies, an opportunity was given to the selected participants directly engaging with children at risk to identify the risk factors they perceived that children face in their community. The participants identified the biggest problems that children face in the city slums as being poverty, severely unhygienic conditions, limited access to basic facilities, and improper shelter. Parents do not have a stable job or incomes as most men work as labourers and women as domestic servants. Unemployment and poverty often lead to depression among men, who then become addicted to alcohol and consequently have a short lifespan. Children living under these conditions are perceived to have dysfunctional families and are exposed to extra-marital affairs of their parents, domestic violence, inadequate monitoring, drunk and abusive fathers.⁶¹ Participants argued that due to the lack of good role models, boys especially often end up becoming drug addicts and alcohol abusers, and commit small thefts and crimes. Besides these internal problems, external factors such as exploitation by the rich and the vast gap between the rich and the poor in urban contexts give children no hope for the future.⁶²

These findings suggest that slum children live in an endemic at-risk environment. Hans Schenk, a Dutch researcher, vividly describes this situation: “Slum in the Indian context would refer to cramped, squalid, poorly endowed living

⁶⁰ Rekha (Pseudonym), Focus Group, Digital Audio Recording, First A G Church, Bangalore, 18 October 2014.

⁶¹ Alice (Pseudonym), Focus Group, Digital Audio Recording, First A G Church, Bangalore, 18 October 2014.

⁶² Gavin Cunningham, Focus Group, Digital Audio Recording, First A G Church, Bangalore, 18 October 2014.

areas, with substandard housing, found in economically, socially, psychologically and politically deprived urban regions, usually in an untitled land.”⁶³ The majority of these children (and even their parents) have a mindset that confines their lives to the slums and its problems by never giving them a chance to make an effort to break the cycle of life of poverty and at-risk conditions. So, in conclusion, one can say that urban slum children are at risk not just because of lack of facilities, such as, toilets, proper shelter and drinking water, but the crux of the problem is that they are living in an environment where it is accepted by the inhabitants and the interventionists that they have a sub-human life of absolute uncertainty. These children are discriminated against and marginalised because they belong to a community called a slum, they do not wear neat clothes, they are dirty, and are vulnerable to abuses not only by the urban public and civil servants but also by their immediate neighbours in the slum.⁶⁴

5.4.3. An Analysis of the Motivations of the Workers and Church Members of FAG Church.

Two major motivations emerged from the analysis of the data from this case study. The first was the determinative role of the minister of the church. The second was the importance of their sense of doctrinal obligation to plant new churches and evangelism as a source of opportunities for such churches to engage with society. These two motivations will now be considered in some detail.

The Pastor’s Vision and the Role of Church Leaders: One of the key findings from the data was the role of the minister in all three case studies in inspiring and directing work for CAR. In this case, the function of the pastor was crucial, in identifying the need and then encouraging the congregation to work for children. Several participants gave credit to the pastor and certain key leaders for their involvement in the church’s mission to the slum community.⁶⁵ The finding suggests

⁶³ Hans Schenk, *Living in India’s Slums: A Case Study of Bangalore* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors, 2001), 17.

⁶⁴ Gavin Cunningham, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, First A G Church, Bangalore, 18 October 2014.

⁶⁵ Antony (Pseudonym), Focus Group, 18 October 2014; Rekha (Pseudonym), Focus Group, 18 October 2014.

that a vision and burden of a leader can also encourage the church members to move outside the church. This does not mean that for any engagement a leader's support is a prerequisite, but with it the ministry becomes active. The church's website states that "we [as the church] see the desperate, urgent need that fits our purpose statement, we exist to be God's instrument of change because the church is the greatest entity of hope in the world."⁶⁶ This indicates that the leaders of the church have a vision and encourage the congregation to get involved to engage in the community. However, one cannot imply that they fully recognised CAR as a special category needing focused and special attention as compared to their own Sunday School children. Perhaps this may not be true with child-based NGOs.

Hence, the role of ministers, leaders and elders is very crucial in motivating a church to work with CAR. Encouragement provided by the leaders of the church is a motivating factor and a running theme among many church-based caregivers. Various ministries of the church provide opportunities for church members to participate based on their skills, time, and talents. Although there was resistance, the women's group and a few church leaders, including the pastor, supported this project right from the start. As the church entirely runs this project, the church members actively participate in the work.

Planting Churches and Starting New Worship Groups: The motivation to plant churches or start new congregations leads church members to go outside the church premises and into the community. Pentecostal churches have numerous strategies to plant new churches, such as 'friendship evangelism' and the 'role of miracles among illiterate people who may not be able to read or otherwise intellectually engage with the Christian story.'⁶⁷ But to get greater support and church involvement, visible fruits of the ministry are needed – that is, when families get converted and start attending the church, according to the church pastor, it is then that "they begin to see the fruit; now everybody needs a piece of the fruit.

⁶⁶ Vision of the Church - Reaching, impacting and influencing our community' and values; Mission of the Church - We seek to build a church that would Impact locally, influence regionally and reach globally. 'Who We Are', *First Assembly of God Church, Bangalore*, accessed 29 October 2015, <http://www.firstagchurch.in/whoweare.html>.

⁶⁷ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 197.

Until we get the fruit, it is a struggle.”⁶⁸ Initially, when the church began work in the community, most in the community were non-Christians; today close to fifty people are baptised, and they currently have seven worshipping groups, where the church runs projects for children and women. Thus, for Pentecostal churches, a desire to see the growth of the church through conversion and baptism are key factors motivating engagement in the ministry to CAR. An interesting statistic needs to be placed on record here. The church has an official membership of about two hundred and fifty people, but around six hundred people come to worship on Sundays.⁶⁹ This kind of phenomenon was not seen in either St John’s church, where only about sixty percent of their members attended in one of all the three services on Sundays, or in St Andrew’s Church, where ninety percent of the members attend the Sunday worship. Hence, it would not be incorrect to suggest that churches that have a strong evangelistic agenda naturally get engaged with non-Christian CAR and once they begin their evangelistic work, holistic mission becomes integral in which they help not just the spiritual aspects but also the physical, mental, social and economic dimensions of the individual living in a community. The British mission theologian Kirsten Kim considers Pentecostalism as the “most successful *social* movement of the last century” because of the benefits it has brought to its members regarding “personal and community development.”⁷⁰ FAG church’s mission to CAR is one evidence of this movement.

First-hand Experience of Witnessing a Community at Risk: Findings from the data suggest that the appalling living conditions of the community often seen by church members open their eyes to the harsh realities for families and children who live in slums, persuading them to get actively involved. A senior leader of the church described her first-hand experience when she entered the slum for evangelistic purposes during the 2004 rains in Bangalore:

⁶⁸ Cunningham, Interview, 18 October 2014.

⁶⁹ Alice (Pseudonym), Interview, 18 October 2014.

⁷⁰ Kirsten Kim, *Joining in with the Spirit: Connecting World Church and Local Mission* (London: Epworth Press, 2009), 219.

Looking at the conditions [of the slum dwellers], we had no answer, and we just stood there, because it involves much money and we were unsure of the people, and it looked impossible as they had multiple issues – the people looked like robbers and murderers, having bad influences. But the support we received from the church was the strength of this ministry.⁷¹

Similar experiences were expressed by the caregivers of St Andrew's Church. Another finding that FAG church members recognised was a sense of mutual transformation. The participants of this church emphasised that through these engagements they were benefitting equally. The pastor of the church testified that "for me, the biggest contribution is not from us to them, they taught us to be better human beings. Moreover, the churches are missing a ministry that comes from across [outside the church boundary]."⁷² The finding suggests that transformation happens not only in the lives of children and families living in the slum but also in the lives of church members engaging in such mission – it is a process of reciprocal or mutual transformation. In theological terms, it can be affirmed that God transforms all who are involved in God's mission. Hence, while recognising this reciprocal and mutual transformation, the notion of independence and dependence cease to exist; instead, the idea of interdependence takes prominence. This is a theme which we will explore further in Chapter Seven.

5.4.4. Evaluation of Mission Models Illustrated by the FAG Church's Ministries with CAR.

The FAG Church in Bangalore is one of the few churches in the city that are engaging with CAR. This project that began first with work in the nearby slum community by the Women's Ministry team has now expanded to six other slums in Bangalore. There are many churches in Bangalore, but only a few of them have some work for CAR. This might suggest that South Indian urban churches generally do not work for CAR. There may be several reasons for this, one among them being the prominence of child-based NGOs that work among CAR. Perhaps, a fuller explanation for this phenomenon can be identified in the next chapter, which

⁷¹ Alice (Pseudonym), Interview, 18 October 2014.

⁷² Cunningham, Interview, 18 October 2014.

concentrates on NGOs. The data in this research clearly suggests that churches such as FAG and St Andrew's with an evangelistically focused strategy are doing the most for CAR.

The primary objective of the AG church is to evangelise, but this does not mean that they use compassionate work as a means to this end. This church had to grapple with the realities that the children and their families are facing in the society. It is apparent that the church did not show a divided mindset by only catering to the spiritual, and not the physical, social and emotional needs of the people. Rather, they were compelled to address these challenges in practical ways, in their engagement with CAR. One such theological motivation for their work demonstrates the *justice and love of God*: One of the participants in her questionnaire response asserted:

God says that, when there is an oppressor in the land, it offends him [God], so the battle for me is that God is a God of justice. That motivates me. He's father to the fatherless, husbands to the victims; he cannot stand oppression and basically when I look at the words that Jesus read, I have to 'preach the good news, bind the broken hearted, heal the wounded, and set the captives free.'⁷³

For her, God stands alongside the poor because he is understood to be a just and loving God. Engaging with such motives and agendas transforms the ministry of the church. Ministries are then designed to meet the needs of the people; this attracts people to the church because the church is directly addressing issues confronting them⁷⁴ and their social actions are from the perspective of the victims.⁷⁵ Moreover, the notion of justice was very seldom spoken of in any other church-based child care project, and it may appear surprising that a member of a Pentecostal church should identify this theme. The notion of perceiving that the very existence of CAR in the society is a result of injustice and that doing just actions is part of the mission of the church in the world does not seem to be a conventional part of the Pentecostal mission.

⁷³ Rekha (Pseudonym), Focus Group and Interview, 18 October 2014.

⁷⁴ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 198.

⁷⁵ Marco Frenschkowski et al., 'Pentecostalism/Charismatic Movements', in *Religion Past and Present* (Leiden, Koninklijke: Brill, 2011), 9:691b.

The FAG church first identified the need and began working with the community, and the children's project, 'Little Lambs,' emerged as part of a bigger project of the church, primarily run by women, for the families living in the nearby slum. This is entirely supported by the church and its members. In conclusion, the case of the FAG church can be described as a pioneering and community-based holistic model.

5.5. Consolidated Analysis of the Theologies of Mission in their Work with CAR.

This study understands the limitations of constructing general theologies of mission from a small sample; however, to fill the gap in this area and motivate future research this attempt is being made. In this section, three major themes required to construct theologies of mission within the church context are explored. First, the understanding of CAR within a church context is highlighted. Secondly, critical gaps in the missional practices of these three churches are addressed. Finally, some key factors required to construct a theology of mission for Christian mission to engage with CAR in contemporary India are proposed.

5.5.1. *Children at Risk, Church and Christian Mission*

While consolidating the analysis, this research revealed that for most participants in the church context, the phrase CAR was unfamiliar. For most participants, their ideas of children and childhood were constructed in churches within Indian cultural settings and in the context of Sunday schools, Teens, and Youth Fellowships. The majority of participants were unfamiliar with the language of the rights of the child. Instead, the focus was on the obligations children have towards their parents and society. Some participants even argued for the importance of *duties* of children and were cynical about this whole idea of 'rights of the child'.⁷⁶ Therefore, we can conclude that for my informants the predominant understanding of a child is constructed within the religious and social context and very seldom from a 'child rights' perspective. Further exploration of this finding will be discussed in Chapter Seven. The analysis also confirmed that the role of the family, which includes both

⁷⁶ Manoharan, Focus Group, 24 October 2014.

father and mother, is directly linked to children at risk. In other words, a child is at risk when the child is out of the family context or if the child's family is itself at risk. Surprisingly, within the church context, the notion of sexual exploitation was less significant. However, most of my informants were aware through the media of children being sexually abused.⁷⁷

The following data, summarised from the questionnaires completed by thirteen church-based caregivers, demonstrates how they understood the phrase 'children at risk' in their context.⁷⁸ The number denotes the rating provided by respondents about the different sources of risk to which children are exposed, one being the highest risk factor and four being the lowest.

Table 3: Risk factors that children face, identified by caregivers working in the church

Abuse		Deprivation		Marginalization		Exploitation	
Physical	1	Basic Education	1	Poverty	1	Child Labour	1
Mental	2	Home /Family	2	Dysfunctional Family	2	Street Children	2
Social	2	Basic Food/ Shelter	3	Sickness	3	Begging	3
Sexual	3	Health Care	4	HIV+/ AIDS	4	Sexual Exploitation	4

5.5.2. Missional Approaches to CAR in the Selected Protestant South Indian Churches.

The three congregational case studies represent three different approaches to intervention with CAR. Elements of each of the three models identified in Chapter Two – namely evangelism, compassion, and advocacy – can be identified in all the three churches. However, their approaches seem to be different. One has an institutional approach; the other two work with children in the community. Two of them were child-centred while the third, the FAG, was directed to the whole family and community. One had a paternalistic approach; another partnered with an NGO

⁷⁷ Susan (Pseudonym), Focus Group, 24 October 2014.

⁷⁸ See the list of the participants in Appendix 7.

to run their ministry, and for the third, children were one part of their whole ministry to the community. Although they were divergent in their work with CAR, they all converged in their goal – to care and protect CAR – and this ministry has become an integral part of each church’s mission. All three churches have some measure of involvement in ministry to children whom this research categorises as CAR. However, for St Andrews and FAG churches, to evangelise these children and their families is an overriding goal. Hence, in this context, the idea of ‘saving the children’, on the one hand, can mean rescuing from poverty and exploitation and on the other can also mean to spiritually save them and bring them into the kingdom of God.

Various Models of Mission to CAR in Selected Protestant Churches:

The selected Protestant churches have engaged in different ways as part of their mission to CAR. Their work can be represented under these three models:

Table 4: Various activities under each Christian model of mission to CAR

	Evangelism	Compassion	Advocacy
Daily	Devotion	Nutritious Food	
		Education in school	
		Shelter in homes or hostels	
		After school tuitions	
Weekly	Sunday School		
Occasionally	Christian literature	Healthcare	Teachers/ Principal
	Vacation Bible School	Counselling	Community leaders
	Church events		Parents
			Church
			Donors

Looking at these churches’ engagement with CAR, much of their work seems to focus on the compassion model. However, for churches such as St Andrew’s Church and FAG Church, compassion forms an integral part of their mission of evangelising non-Christians. Institutional approaches follow the traditional churches such as CSI

St John's Church that have an existing infrastructure. This kind of work attracts less resistance and allegations from Hindu fundamentalists. However, such an approach is a form of marginalisation and discrimination against children of other faiths.

Among the Pentecostals and evangelicals, intervention to help children and their families is often linked to prayer, counselling, and the seeking of miracles.⁷⁹ The idea of deliverance is not confined to delivering people from poverty and its structures, but also from Satan and his principalities, involving spiritual interventions. These intervention methods have a strong evangelistic concern and include compassionate work as an integral part of the holistic mission. The Pentecostals and evangelicals assert that any intervention cannot be holistic if it involves no mandate for evangelism – they insist that Christian mission needs to address the spiritual, as well as the physical, mental and social aspects of a person. Therefore, my findings suggest that for a holistic engagement with CAR, aspects of evangelism, compassion and advocacy models all need to be inherent as part of God's mission.

The findings further revealed that all the three churches seem to have all the three models of mission within them, but each emphasises either one or two of them. For example, St John's highlighted compassion and advocacy types of work as compared to evangelism. St Andrew's maintained a balance between evangelism and compassion but less advocacy. Finally, for the FAG church, evangelism took priority; although compassion work is not neglected as compared to the other groups, there was less emphasis on advocacy. The data revealed that the ministry of advocacy on behalf of CAR appears to be in its incipient stage in all three churches. The findings suggest that most participants are unaware of advocacy work. Secondly, there seems to be no serious theological inquiry on child rights to equip the church leaders. Further analysis on how churches that work alongside Christian NGOs engage with CAR will be explored in the next chapter.

⁷⁹ Alice (Pseudonym), Interview, 18 October 2014.; Susan (Pseudonym), Interview, 18 October 2014.

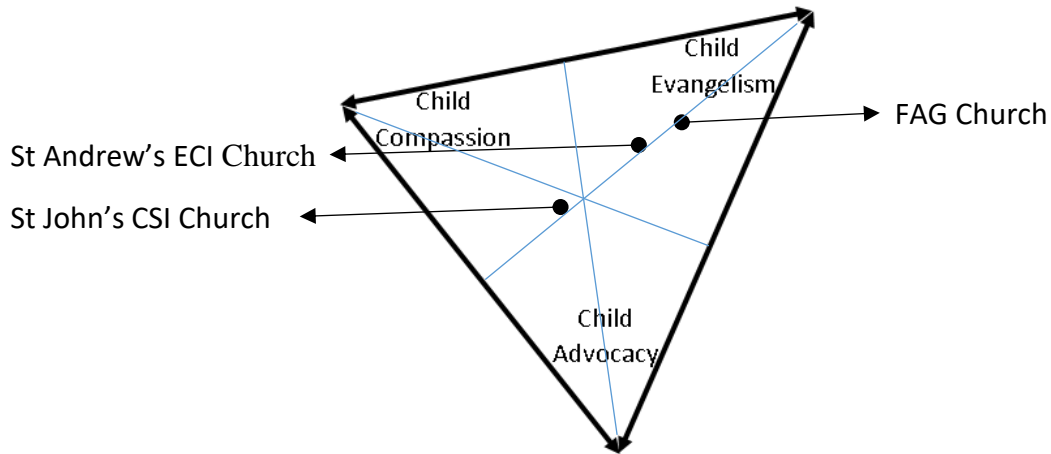


Figure 3: Locating three Protestant churches' missions to CAR

Locating the missions of these three Protestant churches to children at risk as represented in the diagram introduced on page 49, gives an idea of how diverse the groups are in their missions for CAR. One can note in this diagram that although the three locate close to the centre, they are all some distance from the advocacy side of the triangle. This gap in the advocacy camp suggests that churches are struggling to articulate child rights in their work with CAR. Nevertheless, the model accepted by all is the compassion model. These differences are directly related to their underlying motivations to work for CAR. This brings us to the next topic of this section, namely the motivations underlying Christian mission to CAR.

5.5.3. Motivations Underlying Christian Mission to CAR in the Selected Churches.

According to Steve Bartel, an American working among CAR in Colombia, South America, several types of motivations encourage or compel people to work with CAR. They are centred on the person giving the care, on the child who is suffering, or on God's honour.⁸⁰ What Bartel mentions seems to be at the micro-level of engagements with CAR. However, looking at macro-level, twentieth-century Protestant missions to CAR, as seen in Chapter Three, witnessed significant divergence on doctrinal issues, which then resulted in a broad spectrum of

⁸⁰ Steve Bartel, "Motivation, Spiritual Refreshment, Encouragement and Rest," in *Celebrating Children: Equipping People Working with Children and Young People Living in Difficult Circumstances around the World*, eds. Glenn Miles and Josephine-Joy Wright (Cumbria, UK: Paternoster, 2003), 336.

perspectives on Christian mission. Secondly, with the emergence of specialisation in child care and childhood studies, Christians have found it increasingly difficult to associate themselves with many new 'scientific' intervention methods and continue to work with their own understandings and exposures. The motivating factors are diverse – deriving from within (internal) and without (external) factors. Internal motivating factors are those which are formulated from within a person, through self-reflection or spiritual experiences. The rest can be categorised as external. However, these cannot be so neatly divided; as external factors can sometimes also trigger internal factors and vice-versa. One of the motivating factors is doctrinal – the beliefs or dogmas which a church represents. On occasions, there is a requirement to align internal factors with such external motivating factors and vice-versa. This alignment makes a caregiver choose a church or an organisation within which to work for CAR.⁸¹

One can conclude from the findings and analysis of the three case studies that St. John's Church has a comparatively high commitment to displaying Christian compassion in love and action; for St Andrew's Church, although compassion ministry has a significant role, it is either equalled by or superseded by evangelism. Moreover, St. John's Church has had a strong evangelical past, even though it can be described as an ecumenical church. It needs to be remembered that a church can have a range of ecumenical associations and yet be evangelical in its beliefs and practices. This research recognises that one case study cannot represent all other similar cases. However, the three case studies suggest that churches with a lively evangelistic concern seem more likely than ecumenical or mainline churches to get engaged with CAR. In other words, for the evangelicals and Pentecostals, compassion work may be a means to achieve the end of conversion, but it is an integral part of their mission to CAR. This is not to say that all evangelical and Pentecostal churches have such an agenda, where evangelism precedes all other priorities. However, given a choice, for them, the high priority would be to save the 'soul' of the child, which requires saving their body and spirit as well. For them, saving children is not confined to rescuing them from the evils of this world, but

⁸¹ Titus John, Questionnaire, Bethesda Baptist Church, Bangalore, 11 November 2014.

includes rescuing them from spiritual darkness also.⁸² As discussed earlier, church denominations and their doctrinal affiliations influence the choices of the minister, church leaders and caregivers between any interventions in which the church would like to become involved.

As identified in Chapters Two and Three, owing to the impact of UNCRC and the MDGs and SDGs, India is becoming accountable at a global level, resulting in the creation of new policies, programmes, and projects in the field of child protection. However, these interventions are still unknown to many church-based child care workers. Most seem to be engaging not because children have rights, but because children need immediate care and protection. Hence, Christian missions appear to lack foundations and even rights-based understanding. Surprisingly, two of the three churches were unaware of the child helpline 1098 in India and the recent JJ and POCSO Acts. The research identified that a majority of participants were aware of the constitutional provisions such as access to free education, child marriage laws and child labour laws, but their knowledge of UNCRC was minimal. The case studies indicate that the Indian Church is still wedded to a saving and rescuing model of intervention and has not yet seriously become involved in the rights-based intervention. Their care and protection are still strongly linked to the classic missionary models of saving and rescuing children from poverty and providing rehabilitation. Reasons for this minimal engagement with child rights include both ignorance and failure to see their importance in their missionary work.

India is, constitutionally, a secular country and as such acknowledges and claims to protect minority religions. However, according to the majority of the respondents, Christian mission to CAR continues to exist in an environment of suspicion. There is suspicion from many people – from beneficiaries, from the community, from Hindu fundamentalist groups, from church members and even from sponsors or donors. This environment of suspicion exists at various stages of the work, but especially in the earlier stages of Christian mission. Nevertheless, one cannot characterise it as the only suspicion; on many occasions, Christian work for

⁸² See Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 154–59; Allan Anderson, 'Pentecostalism in India and China in the Early Twentieth Century', in *Global Pentecostalism: Encounters with Other Religious Traditions*, ed. David Westerlund (London; New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2009), 119.

children is directly confronted by Hindu fundamentalist groups. Christian caregivers are threatened, and violence is committed against them. Due to this environment, some caregivers are not able to freely practise and have to adapt using different means to reach out to CAR. As a senior church leader observed:

We may not be able to apply biblical principles; rather, we just use 'Christian principles'.... Even to use Christian principles we have to be very careful because the larger community out there thinks... we are ... converting them or turning their faith. So ...we have to be careful; so, that is the challenge.⁸³

All the three case studies firmly indicate that despite limited resources they are providing necessary help to the CAR under their care. Their works indicate a genuine display of God's love and compassion and one of the best ways is by providing CAR with quality education. As one participant shares, "Education is critical because, these people have been brainwashed into their situation, especially because of our past heritage with the caste and class system that continues even today."⁸⁴ Education provides a means for upward social mobility for many children and their families. Lack of education means lack of access to information about their fundamental rights and privileges; and, even though one may be educated, one may still be ignorant of the many laws and its machinery. Although many participants were able to identify the problems that these CAR are facing and though their practices have helped the majority of CAR, they still struggled to articulate a coherent theology of mission undergirding their work for CAR.

Another major concern that churches have is their limited resources. Christians are a minority in India – but a significant minority. As indicated in Chapter Three, the Protestant churches represent only a minority of those Christians and are often fragmented due to doctrinal issues. When churches partner with faith-based NGOs, such as CCCYC, Scripture Union, Friends Missionary Prayer Band, ACLF (Pseudonym) and World Vision India, to run their childcare projects, despite the churches having limited resources, these partnerships can achieve tasks which otherwise would have been unmanageable. However, churches in partnerships with

⁸³ Peter (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, 19 September 2014.

⁸⁴ Cunningham, Interview, 18 October 2014.

NGOs in the running of church-based child care centres face the challenge of how to integrate their church members in their project. In the next chapter, we shall look in more detail at how the NGOs are working alongside churches in India for CAR.

5.6. Conclusion

From the case studies, we have established that each of these churches has their distinct models and motivations for their work for CAR often driven by certain theological influences. Nevertheless, elements of child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy are intertwined in their models and motivations. The role of ministers and church leaders and first-hand encounters with problems faced by CAR are key drivers for a church to get involved in Christian mission to CAR. This analysis suggests that the church with the most evangelistically focussed strategy is – perhaps surprisingly – the one doing the most for CAR and which tends in practice to be holistic in approach, since the church’s compassion work is integral to its evangelistically driven Christian mission. As indicated in the previous chapter, these churches continue to use some of the classical missionary models and motivations such as establishing institutions (hostel and school) as in the case of St John’s Church, while the other two churches used education and compassion work as pre-evangelism methods. In general, most churches have engaged in some level of advocacy work, but this is not as a result of their awareness of child rights, UNCRC or childhood studies. Going back to the question raised in the introduction of this chapter – have the Indian churches moved to the new rights-based intervention? – it seems they have not yet moved. Although there is a requirement from the government and a few INGOs to have this transition to teach and implement UNCRC – there is either ignorance or reluctance. Many are just not aware of UNCRC. Others are aware of it, but suspect child rights to be a secular and western agenda which is enforced on a Christian and Indian context. Unfortunately, the majority of Christians appear to form their opinions and judgments without interacting with UNCRC by looking at the various rights provided to children.

For city churches, slums are a common place to work, but the challenge is to look at other possible ways of engaging with the children in the light of their limited

resources that they have. One of the ways is by partnering with NGOs. This research validates that churches can engage with children who are outside the church and for additional resources can partner with faith-based NGOs to help CAR. In the next chapter, we shall look in more detail, how selected Protestant NGOs work for CAR and how even some do it alongside churches and other agencies in contemporary India.

Chapter 6. An Analysis of the Contemporary Protestant Missions to Children at Risk of Selected Non-Governmental Organisations from Bangalore and Chennai.

6.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on locating contemporary Protestant mission practice to CAR in India by analysing selected Protestant non-governmental organisations from the cities of Bangalore and Chennai. As mentioned in earlier chapters, two global events have brought in a new shift within missionary work to CAR: the Korean War (1950-53) brought the plight of orphans in Korea to the attention of Christians in the United States and elsewhere, and agencies focusing on care and welfare of children multiplied in the West to support CAR in the Global South. Secondly, with the formation of UNCRC, which has global implications, further impetus was given to child protection and rights. After decades of work by Christian NGOs (CNGOs), questions are now being raised about their validity, and how to address the many new challenges they face in their work in the Global South. Questions include: Is this creating a new kind of dependency or paternalism? Who defines the ideas of development and poverty? Can CNGOs partner with secular government and with local churches simultaneously? To whom are the NGOs accountable?¹ And finally: How is the transition happening within NGOs as required by the UNCRC for a rights-based intervention? This chapter will address some of these questions while evaluating Protestant missions to CAR in twenty-first century India mainly focusing on the four research questions listed in section 1.2.

¹ Brian E. Woolnough, 'Christian NGOs in Relief and Development: One of the Church's Arms for Holistic Mission', *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 28, no. 3 (2011): 200–205.

Some research on child-based C/NGOs has been done in the past, for example, on the implications of child rights in the Romanian context,² partnerships of CNGOs with local churches in Romania,³ risk-based intervention in the Indian context⁴ and rights-based intervention to care and protect children in India by secular NGOs,⁵ the role of agencies having ecumenical associations,⁶ and several studies by secular child rights activists of NGOs in the Indian context.⁷ But nothing has been done specifically to evaluate the relevance of CNGOs and their work with CAR in contemporary India. Hence this research, and particularly this chapter, attempts to fill this gap. This study also identifies that, in comparison with the relatively small number of local churches engaging with CAR in South India, the presence of CNGOs is unusually large and diverse. Hence, though this study has a broad and selective representation, it yet recognises the limitation that any attempt to describe and analyse will not portray a complete picture. Nevertheless, this thesis tries to fill this gap by creating an interest in carrying out further theological reflection on Christian missions to CAR.

As compared to the previous chapter, this chapter will not be dealing with individual agencies due to the number of cases incorporated in this study for their representation. Instead, the case studies are grouped into three broad models for analysis on the following three basic themes:

- Summary, analysis and challenges of the work with CAR undertaken by the NGOs.
- Analysis of the motivations of the NGO workers to work with CAR.
- Evaluation of the models of mission to CAR illustrated by the NGOs.

The primary level of analysis will be from the data collected through in-depth interviews and questionnaires from seven agencies that are directly engaging with CAR. However, for a thorough analysis, the focus will be on one agency from each

² Shawn Teresa Flanigan, 'Paying for God's Work...', 156–75.

³ See Bill Prevette, *Child, Church and Compassion*, 2012).

⁴ See Rohan P Gideon, *Child Labour in India: Challenges for Theological Thinking and Christian Ministry in India* (Delhi, India: ISPCK/NCCI, 2011).

⁵ See Asha Bajpai, *Child Rights in India*.

⁶ Michael H. Taylor, *Not Angels but Agencies*, 1995).

⁷ See Bajpai, *Child Rights in India*; Debadutta Chaudhury and S.N. Tripathy, *Girl Child and Human Rights* (New Delhi: Anmol Publications PVT. LTD., 2005).

category, but with some others being given brief consideration for additional information. At a secondary level, a consolidated theological analysis will be done from the data received from thirty-four questionnaires from caregivers working with CAR from an additional twenty organisations⁸ that either have a different approach or focus on a category of CAR in their work.

In the primary analysis, the first category of agencies selected consists of those with associations with ecumenical bodies. The main agency studied in this category is the Council of Churches for Child and Youth Care (CCCYC), with some attention being given to the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) as the additional organisation. Both have a close association with WCC- and NCCI-associated churches. The second category of NGO chosen for analysis is agencies that have evangelical tenets which are cited in their vision and mission statements. In this category, the primary focus will be on World Vision India (WVI), while Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB) and Scripture Union India (SUI) are additional. Each of these organisations have a different operational strategy. WVI is an international child-centred organisation working with a community-based approach. FMPB is an indigenous mission agency which has recently started child sponsorships to help the first-generation tribal and Dalit believers' children; SUI, on the other hand, is a child-evangelism-focused organisation that first started their projects for Tsunami affected children among the fishing communities on the Coromandel coast of South India. The third and final category is those agencies that have either Pentecostal or Charismatic or Neo-charismatic influences.⁹ This category is a very loose category for the organisations within it are difficult to neatly categorise as they are diverse and cannot be placed within the first two categories.¹⁰ The focused organisation is Anti Child Labour Force (ACLF – Pseudonym) and the additional agency Operation

⁸ See Appendix 3

⁹ Brian Grim explains this typology and this is just one interpretation of the many. Pentecostals are affiliated with a Classical Pentecostal denomination. Charismatics are baptised members affiliated to nonPentecostal denominations who have entered the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Neocharismatics are part of the Third Wave of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Renewal, and their churches are generally characterized as independent, post-denominationalist and neo-Apostolic. See Brian J. Grim, 'Pentecostalism's Growth in Religiously Restricted Environments', *Society* 46, no. 6 (2009): 485–86, doi:10.1007/s12115-009-9265-y.

¹⁰ Further explanation of how this category was qualified will be detailed in the section later in this chapter.

Liberation (OL – Pseudonym). Nevertheless, it is important to point out at this juncture that some caregivers serving in Evangelical agencies were members of Pentecostal churches and vice-versa. We will now look at these agencies in detail, and then provide a consolidated analysis of their theology of mission to engage with CAR.

6.2. Agencies that have Ecumenical Associations: Council of Churches for Child and Youth Care and Young Men’s Christian Association.

Besides the primary data collected from these organisations, Michael Taylor’s 1995 book *Not Angels but Agencies*¹¹ was useful in studying the response of ecumenical agencies to poverty. This book does not deal directly with CAR but gives a general analysis of development-based organisations.

CCCYC, which was earlier known as Kindernothilfe translated as ‘children in need’, was founded in 1959 and is a member of the *Diakonisches Werk* of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland, Germany. It works within various alliances of non-governmental organisations. The first project began in India with five children, but in the year 2016, they claim to support and protect nearly two million children in 783 projects in 31 African, Asian, Eastern European and Latin American countries. At the time of this research, they had 325 projects in India providing basic education, nutrition, water, community development, health, the inclusion of children with disabilities, lobbying/advocacy, human rights education, psychosocial rehabilitation, schooling/vocational training, self-help groups, and environmental protection. Their target groups consist of working, malnourished, traumatised children, children with disabilities, street children, orphans, other vulnerable children and ethnic minorities.¹² CCCYC partners with mainline churches such as CSI, the Methodist and Lutheran churches in forms of diocesan partnership (though generally not through local churches). They have their headquarters in Bangalore and have in the last fifty years helped several churches, such as, St John’s CSI church in Bangalore, and children who are now pastors, such as Rev Charles Wesley of ECI Church, Chennai, who was one of the participants in this research.

¹¹ See Taylor, *Not Angels but Agencies*.

¹² ‘Annual Report 2015’ (Kindernothilfe, March 2016), 3,8.

YMCA began their work, as the name suggests, for the youth in England in 1844 and have had a worldwide presence, including in India, for over a century. Since the 1950s, YMCA Bangalore has been serving young men through their hostels, providing them with vocational and physical education training. However, in 1988 they started a programme to facilitate 'Children in Crisis' (CIC) with the aim of developing self-respect, self-esteem and self-reliance among such children. With an increasing number of street children in Bangalore, the project was designed to give them love and affection, care and concern, motivate them to know that they have a right to decent living and that the strength and power to achieve it is within them. For YMCA Bangalore, CIC are the neglected, underprivileged children who spend most of their time on the streets.¹³

**6.2.1. Summary, Analysis, and Challenges of the Work with CAR
Undertaken by Ecumenical Agencies.**

These two agencies focus on CAR, and despite the fact that some of their approaches are similar, their focus and methods are different, as the following introduction and analysis will demonstrate.

Flexible, Diverse and Specialised Intervention Methods: As mentioned earlier, CCCYC is a child-focused agency, and partners with dioceses in the CSI and other ecumenical churches. Having been present for more than half a century, they have become flexible in their operations and have diversified according to the needs of CAR. Currently, they work for CAR coming from various backgrounds. Programmes supported by CCCYC at the time of this research are:

- Programmes for Children at Risk, which includes children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, street children and working children, women and children under the threat of sexual abuse and exploitation, burn victims, etc.
- Programmes for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, for children with sensory, cognitive and locomotor disabilities.

¹³ Joseph Selladurai and R Prassana Kumar, eds., *A Documentation: Children in Crisis 1988-2000* (YMCA, Bangalore, 2001), 13.

- Child-Focussed Community Development Programmes contributing towards sustainable improvements in the life situation of marginalised communities, with a focus on children.

- Day Care Centres are facilitating holistic development of children from socially and economically backward communities.

- Residential Care Programme addressing the physical, spiritual, intellectual and social needs of destitute, socio-economically backward and tribal children and to ensure a better quality of life for them.

My findings suggest that agencies that have foreign support and accountability tend to diversify their approaches in line with new developments and research in child care and protection. The constant evaluation of their programmes makes their methods relevant at local and global levels. Asir Jeyasing, a senior leader in CCCYC, illustrates this point succinctly: “...if we are convinced that any program is relevant to the child and it’s most appropriate for the child then, that sort of thing, we do it. Right now, we don’t say that we do only residential, we don’t say that we will only take community-based, we have a mix of both programs.”¹⁴ However, this may not be the case with YMCA, Bangalore – as they focus on street children and their rehabilitation. Previous research by Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade on NGOs in India indicates that NGOs tend to be more democratic in the early stages of establishment. But, once they grow, new goals and targets are set, and they tend to gravitate toward satisfying external factors, such as supporters and funders – local, national and international.¹⁵ Such a shift was in evidence in this research mostly among International Christian NGOs. One of the biggest influences among them was the effect of the rights-based language used in communication and intervention methods in their work. The other finding that this research identified was that in agencies that lacked foreign influence in funding and management, the rights-based language was either missing or minimal. Participants from organisations such as YMCA, SUI and FMPB, in the next category, hardly used

¹⁴ Asir Jeyasing, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, CCCYC, Bangalore, 29 September 2014.

¹⁵ R. Sooryamoorthy and K. D. Gangrade, *NGOs in India: A Cross-Sectional Study*, Contributions in Sociology (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2001), 152.

such language while, on the other hand, agencies such as CCCYC and WVI have diversified their work to meet the requirements of UNCRC.

Child-focused Community and Institution-based Interventions: While looking at both agencies' intervention methods, the findings suggest that there is a need for both residential and community-based child-focused interventions. At the time of this research, YMCA, Bangalore was managing 24 shelters for street boys and four day-care centres. These are also called 'children in crisis' (CIC) centres in the city of Bangalore. Street children should not be seen as synonymous with child labourers, although street children can be used as child labour openly to the public as vendors or secretly using them as pedlars. In India, most of these children are from poor Dalit or tribal families. UNICEF identifies three groups of street children and all these categories can be identified in the main cities in India:

- Children on the street: 'Home-based' children who spend much of the day on the street but have some family support and usually return home at night.
- Children of the street: 'Street based' children who spend most days and nights on the street and are functionally without family support.
- Abandoned children: Children in this category are also 'children of the street' but are differentiated from that category by the fact that they have cut off all ties with their biological families and are completely on their own.

The YMCA Rehabilitation Homes are part of the CIC project and focus on street children with a primary intention of rehabilitating them to live away from the streets. This requires building confidence in them and either counselling them to enable them to join their family or providing them with basic education and training. The current leader of this project, Daniel Ratanankumar, commented:

In that way, [institutionalised] children are kept away from problems in the streets and street habits. We ... keep ... children between the age of 11 and 14 ... in these centres. Then we have Vocational training centres for children who are 15 and above. Here we give training in carpentry, welding – these are some of the old traditional occupations. Presently

we have also started new training as delivery boys for courier, pizza... and to repair mobile phones.¹⁶

Despite much focus and attention being given to community-focused intervention, we see the continuing need for such institutional intervention. The existence of these institutions and their use by CCCYC and YMCA to help some children is evidence of the necessity of an institutional form of intervention to protect children from the high-risk community context even today.

Organisations such as YMCA have focused on specialised work with street children and have minimal connection with churches; rather, they network with organisations that are engaging with street children in Bangalore and associate with the police. This tendency of focusing one's work on one category of CAR is seen in most of the NGOs. It would be rather short-sighted to dismiss such a method as imperfect because of its exclusive mission. Moreover, when the needs around are so large and the resources limited, such methods do evolve and are rationalised. However, such problems are resolved through partnership, as the next section will explain in more detail.

Partnerships and Participation in Mission: As of 1st April 2014, CCCYC covered about 22,183 sponsored children and 30,000 non-sponsored children in 275 Projects in South India. The Projects were implemented through various CSI Dioceses, the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church, Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church, India Evangelical Lutheran Church, South Andhra Lutheran Church, Methodist Church in India, Mar Thoma Church and Roman Catholic Church as well as independent partners (NGOs). Altogether, CCCYC was partnering with 50 different project holders.¹⁷ Working in partnership and as a sponsoring agency, they reach out to CAR from diverse backgrounds.¹⁸ However, it should be noted that such partnerships are implemented at the diocesan level and not at local church level. Local churches and their members do not engage in these projects as volunteers

¹⁶ Daniel Ratanakumar, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, YMCA, Bangalore, 26 September 2014.

¹⁷ Jeyasing, Interview, 29 September 2014.

¹⁸ Kenneth Joshua, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, CCCYC, Bangalore, 29 September 2014.

but as staff mostly employed in a professional capacity. Hence, although there is a rich engagement with society and children at risk, the local churches are not equipped and trained to start similar projects. There seems to be a considerable distance between the church leaders and the laity in involvement in such projects. As seen in the earlier chapter, churches like St Andrews's Church do have a ministry among CAR, but it seems to be a project more of the agency than of the local church. The underlying reason for non-involvement of churches is because these agencies mostly fund, staff and administer the projects directly.

Alongside partnership, this research also identified some agencies such as CCCYC, WVI in the next category and a few others which encourage child participation as a critical approach to empower CAR. This notion of perceiving children not just as objects of Christian welfare but as subjects of transformation is an emerging approach in contemporary Christian mission to CAR and is worth exploring in future Christian practice. Chapter Seven will elaborate on this theme.

6.2.2. An Analysis of Motivations and Theological Frameworks of the Workers and Caregivers in these Agencies.

The two sub-themes specialisation of child care and partnership are key drivers for their operations but, two further themes emerged which need further exploration, and are discussed now.

Holism Threatened: Ecumenically-associated churches and agencies focus on a holistic approach to Christian work. However, these ecumenical agencies sometimes become a threat to 'holism' itself. Their ecumenical virtue could become a vice. That is, because of their outstanding achievements and examples of providing aid, these agencies have come to focus on their work and have failed to draw 'the churches together into common life and witness, as part of their ecumenical endeavours'. They have focused on their development work instead of strengthening their focus on 'common witness'.¹⁹ Secondly, according to Michael Taylor, former CEO of Christian Aid, holism is threatened because development

¹⁹ Taylor, *Not Angels but Agencies*, 33.

agencies have become specialised – they have promoted an ‘institutionalisation and professionalisation of *diakonia*’. Such ministry and missional engagements are no longer for the amateurs, but for the ‘intelligent’; it is no longer for the people of the local congregation and their holistic calling but for the few who are qualified by their profession.²⁰ This phenomenon is not confined to the ecumenical agencies but can also be traced to some extent even among evangelical and charismatic INGOs.

Even though an ecumenical church such as St John’s CSI Church, studied in the previous chapter, focused its work exclusively on the children of poor, rural Christian believers, a similarly exclusive approach to their mission was not found among ecumenical agencies. Rather, the majority of CAR under their care are from non-Christian backgrounds. These agencies have a greater motivation to get involved in compassionate ministry because of their Christian faith. There is no strong motivation to evangelise, but children are encouraged to receive the influence of Christian values and teachings.²¹ The agencies feel compelled to get involved to show the love of Christ to this vulnerable group. For example, the then CEO of the CCCYC neatly put it: “for us, we don’t to have speak ... we just have to live as Christ ... this is [an] ... opportunity.”²² However, in such a context, the question arises, whether a ministry is to be holistic, whether every aspect of a child is to be nurtured and developed, including physical, social, emotional and spiritual aspects of both the child and their family. Holism in the context often gets confined to community intervention methods to the detriment of the child’s holistic development, which includes the spiritual dimension, their faith aspect. Hence, in such circumstances, the issue that needs further interrogation from a rights perspective is: Does the child not have a right to spiritual development as provided by Article 14 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion), Article 29 (goals of education, including religious) of UNCRC? The theological implications of Christian mission to CAR will be more fully explored in the next chapter.

²⁰ Ibid., 33–34.

²¹ Jeyasing, Interview, 29 September 2014.

²² Solomon Benjamin, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, CCCYC, Bangalore, 14 November 2014.

Influence of Parents and Mentor: The findings from this research suggest that early exposure to social ministry during childhood, either with the family or in the church, does shape and motivate people to get involved later as adults. At least three of the eight respondents shared that their current engagement is due to early exposure to work with vulnerable groups. A young social worker, Teresa James, observed: “I pictured myself working with children; maybe it is because also my parents brought us up. We were four girls in the family ... from childhood every Monday, we had street people coming home where we will serve food for them.”²³ Another respondent said, “I used to come to this office when I was a child, ... and when I graduated with MSW [Master’s in Social Work] ... I said I should continue my work ... what my mother has been doing ...”²⁴ Hence, it seems that such early exposures in life do impact a person’s professional and missional life and incline them to get involved with CAR, or perhaps in any social action. Similar experiences were also shared by participants in churches, where an elder or the minister motivated them to get involved with CAR.

6.2.3. Evaluation of Mission Models Illustrated by Ecumenical Agencies with CAR.

The example of these two agencies suggests that Christian organisations can partner with churches, NGOs, community or government to help CAR. Interestingly, out of the eight participants from this category, four belonged to the Roman Catholic Church, which broadens the ecumenical range of these organisations, even though the Roman Catholic Church is not part of the WCC. This diverse representation gives an opportunity for Christians coming from various denominations to work together for a ‘common witness’. Hence, doctrinal differences and diverse theological understandings of children and their rights have little space for deliberation.

Increased Accountability and Vigilance: With increased attention now being given by the media to the issues pertaining to children, government institutions such as

²³ Teresa James, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, CCCYC, Bangalore, 29 September 2014.

²⁴ Joshua, Interview, 29 September 2014.

CWC, police, child rights organisations and civil society, Christian agencies are required to improve their accountability – accountability not only to the funding agencies and children but also to government regulation and institutions. The question was raised at the beginning of the chapter: To whom are these NGOs accountable? Is it to the community, the CAR they are engaging with, the churches, other NGOs they partner with, government and regulatory bodies, or predominantly the funding agency or sponsors? Depending on funds from international donors, government or even business corporations can challenge the autonomy of these organisations. They can become counterproductive instead of acting as advocates and lobbyists.²⁵ With the ever-watching media and an urban population well-informed about child abuse and protection, churches and Christian agencies are required to be more vigilant in their practices. An excerpt from one of the caregivers demonstrates this idea:

There have been many incidences where there are a lot of exploitation and media also brings in very heavily [the incidences], and there is some kind of sensitivity [among the public]... and they [public] feel it has to be addressed and in some of the places the people who implement legislation or common people or collectors or police officers, they are also coming more strong [on] the institutions ..., [requiring] minimum standards to be kept, so ... these are some of the things that we have to follow whether we like it or not.²⁶

Inadequate Church Leadership: All the participants from these agencies were members of a local church, and they do see the need for churches to engage with CAR. However, more than fifty percent of the participants did not actively participate in their local church in any activity related to CAR or even otherwise. Only about 20 percent of them were directly involved with CAR through their churches. Nearly 30 percent of the participants took part in the regular children's work such as Sunday School, yearly visits to orphanages or other children-related ministries in the context of their church's ministry. The reason for such lack of involvement could perhaps be, within the mainline churches, that ministry to CAR is done at a diocesan level and not at the local church level. In these churches issues

²⁵ Sooryamoorthy and Gangrade, *NGOs in India*, 155–56.

²⁶ Jeyasing, Interview, 29 September 2014.

concerning CAR are mostly deliberated among the ministers, but not among the laity. Another reason for such a gap is a sense of insecurity among the ministers of the local church, who are not well versed in such work. A comment from a leader of a family-focused Christian organisation in Bangalore, who belongs to a mainline ecumenical church, clearly points out this struggle: “I am not involved because of insecure pastors and leaders who see [our] ministry as competition than building God's kingdom.”²⁷ Nevertheless, one should realise that in the previous chapter, church ministers were crucial in shaping the vision and supporting the mission and ministry for CAR in certain churches. Hence, what is evident is that there is a need to educate ministers about the need for Christian mission to CAR through their local churches and one possible way is by encouraging those caregivers in their congregations who are employed in working with CAR and others within the laity who are interested in such work.

Lack of Missiological Foundations: The majority of agencies, including CCCYC and YMCA, mostly employ social workers and people connected with programmes, for example in finance or communication. Theological reflections on their engagement are sometimes confined to specific themes and biblical texts rather than a coherent theological explanation of why they are doing this work. For example, two participants shared this view: “Christian values motivate me to serve, but I cannot quote any Bible ... they [grass-root level caregivers] think that at the end of the day [they are] doing something good.”²⁸ Another respondent gave personal reasons that motivate him to work for children, “because I was already involved in social activities as an activist ... one thing, YMCA takes care of us as a family member.”²⁹ For another professional, his qualification enabled him to find this work, which brings a sense of satisfaction. He says, “Having finished my degree in criminal sociology and psychology, I joined YMCA ... [when] I started working then I thought this is my call ... so I’m happy to work with children.”³⁰ Such expressions, clearly

²⁷ Prabhakaran C Mathew, Interview, Questionnaire, Urban India Mission, Bangalore, 7 November 2014.

²⁸ James, Interview, 29 September 2014.

²⁹ Selvaraj, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, YMCA, Bangalore, 26 September 2014.

³⁰ Maria Louise, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, YMCA, Bangalore, 26 September 2014.

indicate that a good number of grassroots caregivers in CNGOs work as Christian professionals, with little or no theological reflection on their mission to CAR.

6.3. Agencies that have Evangelical Tenets: World Vision India, Scripture Union India, and Friends Missionary Prayer Band.

In this section, the three agencies categorised together for this research are WVI, SUI and FMPB. They are grouped together primarily because of their evangelical tenets. Although they have similar beliefs, they have different approaches towards work with CAR. I will now briefly introduce them and then analyse their work.

WVI began in 1958 in a small way in Calcutta (now Kolkata). At the time of this research, it had more than 1700 staff working in over 5000 communities, supporting a little over 225,000 children, their families and communities. WVI helps CAR from all backgrounds by focusing on sustainable community development programmes with the following three-fold intervention methods: All the development work that World Vision India carries out is focused on building the capacity and ability of communities and families to ensure the well-being of children. The welfare of children includes ensuring children have access to education, health, protection and participation. Secondly, World Vision India operates as a community-based organisation. Their staff live with communities at a grassroots level, learning from them and working alongside them for the wellbeing of all CAR. Finally, World Vision describes itself as partnering with communities, children, government, civil society, corporations, academia, and faith-based organisations to build a nation fit for children.³¹

Scripture Union India (SUI) began their work among children in 1896. From 1891 under the leadership of Roddy Archibald, a British missionary, the movement grew and was established in many of the Indian states, serving churches, Christian schools, and hostels. Currently, many of the SU International child-based projects are also carried out in India³², but SUI is run by an indigenous autonomous body,

³¹ 'World Vision India', *About World Vision India*, accessed 25 October 2016, https://www.worldvision.in/About_Us.

³² Bible Ministries, Holiday Activities, Neighbourhood Clubs, Sports Ministry, Work with those 'at risk' – abandoned boys, street, and orphaned children & youth. Work with those with 'special needs' – those with disabilities and hearing impaired, Broadcast Media, Children/Youth Ministry

called the advisory council.³³ The ministry of the 'Children at Risk' department begun in 2005 when a Tsunami hit the shores of Tamil Nadu. Initially, four projects were started with generous support and encouragement from the SU international office in the UK. The idea was to help children continue their disrupted education and provide for their basic needs for five years. During this time efforts were given to 'share the love of God in a meaningful way'. Moreover, in the year 2010, seeing the result and impact of the work, the project was continued and was named 'Suhasay' ('joyful laughter' in Sanskrit).³⁴ Their work consists of providing community-based day-care centres where children come for after-school tuitions. During this time, Christian devotions, an evening meal, regular health care and counselling to children and their parents are provided. Support is also provided to older children for vocational training such as tailoring and some assistance to their parents to start small businesses.³⁵

Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB) is an indigenous missionary organisation which began in the early 1960s, following a revival stimulated by the VBS ministry of P. Samuel in South Tamil Nadu. Later, prayer groups known as 'Friends Fellowships' came into being among the teens who attended the VBS and among the volunteers who helped in the ministry. This later emerged as the FMPB. These prayer groups met for Bible study and prayer and were challenged to spread the Gospel. In 1971, FMPB began sending missionaries to various parts of India. It has since grown into a large indigenous missionary organisation that has planted many churches among tribal and Dalit communities mostly in rural India with more than 3,000 missionaries working with them.³⁶ Many of them cannot

Training, Ministry Resources Bookshops; Campsites/Conference; Volunteer Scripture Union. See 'Scripture Union', *What We Do*, accessed 25 October 2016, <http://su-international.org/about-us/what-we-do/>. See Nigel Sylvester, *God's Word in a Young World : The Story of Scripture Union* (London: London : Scripture Union, 1984), 59–64.

³³ Brian Stanley, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott*, A History of Evangelicalism: V. 5 (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter Varsity Press, 2013), 86.

³⁴ The current CAR projects are in Nagipattinum, Tranquebar (among the Tsunami-affected fishing community), Poolankulam (in the local cigarette making community) in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, in the Pulikudram slum in Kanchipuram district of Tamil Nadu, and Konai in West Bengal (among the rickshaw pullers).

³⁵ Herbert Samuel, 'Department of Ministry to Children in Crisis - Suhasya' (Scripture Union India Brochure, 2010).

³⁶ After three decades of pioneering work, FMPB recently handed over two large groups of converts to ECI in the state of Jharkhand and to CNI in Gujarat state.

afford to send their children to school. The need for proper education, as requested by many parents for their children, compelled the organisation to care for these children of their believers by providing them with a good Christian education. The primary idea for this 'holistic care' is that 'giving a child education gives the Church a future!'³⁷

**6.3.1. Summary, Analysis, and Challenges of the Work with CAR
Undertaken by Evangelical Agencies**

While focusing our study on WVI, we should not presume that other agencies have a similar approach. WVI is one of the few organisations that, though evangelical in its convictions, is very secular in its operations and is community-focused. Our focus will be on their 'My City Initiative Project' (MCIP). This was started in 2007 after consultation with Academia, NGOs and several other people across the country; then seven cities were chosen to start MCIP, that is Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Bangalore. WVI which was primarily working in rural areas through their Area Development Projects wanted to address the problems faced by children in cities, including issues such as, urban poverty, migration-related issues, child sexual abuse, and teenage suicides. From various possible issues, WVI has chosen building resiliency among children and child protection as their method of intervention in the urban context through MCIP.³⁸

Christian Compassion and Rights-based Intervention: For these Christian agencies, the dominant theme for their involvement is drawn from Christian compassion. The stated reason for their engagement is because of their faith in Christ Jesus who showed God's love and compassion to the needy during his earthly ministry. Additionally, for a few agencies such as WVI in the contemporary context, child rights were a reason for their involvement. Their language, their approaches, their partnerships and policies are shaped and developed within the framework of child rights.³⁹ This method provides them with leverage to work alongside government

³⁷ J. Harris, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, FMPB, Bangalore, 1 November 2014; Simon Ponaiah, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, FMPB, Chennai, 4 November 2014.

³⁸ Joseph Wesley, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, WVI, Bangalore, 9 September 2014.

³⁹ Ibid.

departments, legislatures, secular child-rights based NGOs at national and international levels. An excerpt from the then National Director of WVI gives an exact scope of the current shifts made in their work:

One ... we work with other faiths as well as government and non-governmental institutions.... The second big shift is...[to] address systems and structures.... The third is, invest a significant portion of our advocacy portfolio on policy implementation rather than policy formulation.⁴⁰

These new shifts or approaches necessitated a broadening of the understanding of the agents involved in helping CAR in Indian society. Hence, these agencies are creating a niche in their Christian engagements to CAR by specialising and professionalising their work among CAR. However, what remains to be seen is whether in doing so can they sustain Christian work with and through the Indian church. It seems that, as indicated in Chapter Three, a kind of elitism is beginning to emerge among them. However, recently this gap is being bridged through partnerships and networks.⁴¹

Education and Empowerment: For the majority of agencies, such as FMPB, SUI or GLC, there is an emphasis on empowering children through education. For example, in the year 2015-16, FMPB cared for 9,396 children in 78 Children's Homes, spread over 11 states. These children's homes are run with the help of a sponsorship programme run by FMPB in partnership with organisations such as Compassion East India and Navjeevan Seva Mandal.⁴² Development in the Indian context especially for the marginalised and deprived community is through education. Christians have made a substantial contribution and hence continue to invest an enormous amount of resources in educating children so that they are empowered to claim their fundamental and special rights given by the constitution to them.

⁴⁰ Jeyakumar Christian, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, WVI, Chennai, 10 September 2014.

⁴¹ 'Orientation on Child Rights and Participation', *CSI Life*, November 2015, 24.

⁴² 'Child Care', *Friends Missionary Prayer Band*, accessed 27 October 2016, <http://fmpb.co.in/child-care.php>. In March 2017, Compassion East India had to stop its operations following government intervention.

6.3.2. *An Analysis of the Motivations and Theological Framework of the Workers and Caregivers of Evangelical Agencies.*

As indicated, this group has strong evangelical tenets yet they follow different approaches in their mission to children at risk. This reflects their different motivating factors and expresses a particular kind of theology of mission for their work among CAR.

Contextual and Personal Reasons: Caregivers from these agencies were asked about their motivations to work for CAR. The findings suggest that, for the majority, the living condition of the many children who are at risk, and a desire to change their lives and circumstances, compelled them to undertake this work. Several of them attributed such motivation to the compassion and love of God and mentioned some of the biblical texts that motivated their work. A director of the organisation said, "I'm not very good at picking up nuggets from the Bible; for me, the whole Bible tells the thought of a God who has a redemptive bias for the poor."⁴³ For another, it was, "...love for children; God loves the children and wants to show that love to children..."⁴⁴ which compelled him to do this work. Another caregiver shared, "God is particularly concerned with those who are vulnerable and children are vulnerable; it is not that he doesn't love us, but these people need special care and special attention and children occupy a special place in God's sight..."⁴⁵ Faith was a major motivating factor among Christian caregivers to join and work for children. A senior missionary who was involved in starting a child sponsorship programme in FMPB said, "...primarily because of my calling to work for children. Secondly, my inspiration is Jesus, as he loves children. He also says that we are to be like children. Thirdly, children accept whatever is said very freely..."⁴⁶ Such spiritual motivations derived from faith and the Bible are foundations for Christian mission to CAR. Faith and other personal reasons take the predominant role in the Indian context, especially in Christian mission organisations, where most of the caregivers are not

⁴³ Christian, Interview, 10 September 2014.

⁴⁴ Joshua, Interview, 29 September 2014.

⁴⁵ Pat (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, ACLF (Pseudonym), 24 September 2014.

⁴⁶ Prabhakar Sarathy and Malar Sarathy, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, FMPB, Bangalore, 2 October 2014.

competitively paid. Their commitment to stay in the missions and for children is driven not by any monetary benefit, but it brings a sense of satisfaction that children are transformed and, through them, the community and their parents have a better future. As noted in FAG church, the church members were equally transformed while working for CAR, similarly, in this case, one can note that caregivers equally find some kind of transformation within them to continue their work for CAR.

Community-based Demonstration of God's Love: Another common theme that emerged from studying these agencies is their involvement with the community. As a community-focused organisation, their engagements are more with the secular organisations and the government. So, now we come back to the question: To whom are such agencies answerable – to the church, to the funders, or to the government? In this case, most often the preference goes first to the stakeholders, who are the donors – individuals, national and international agencies and government and less to the church. This disengagement from the church has resulted in some of the leaders within the organisation leaving and choosing other agencies, where commitment to partner with churches, evangelism and discipleship is not compromised.⁴⁷ As evident from the case studies, in contemporary Christian missions, agencies struggle to negotiate their work for CAR with churches and most often continue their work with or without the help of local churches.

6.3.3. Evaluation of Mission Models by Evangelical Agencies

Two important findings emerged from evaluating the models of these three organisations for CAR in South India. Although these findings have a predominant place in this section, similar themes appeared in the other two categories as well. As mentioned earlier, although these agencies have a strong commitment towards evangelism, the understanding of 'mission and evangelism' is varied and contextualised within these organisations. Rather, these agencies could be said to have regained the missionary practices of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century

⁴⁷ Lawrance Mangalarajan, Interview, Questionnaire, Compassion International, Chennai, 4 November 2014.

missionary agencies, which did not make any clear separation between evangelism and social development: for most of those involved in the evangelical agencies, Christian witness includes both. An excerpt from the National Director of SUI shares this idea:

Children ...now have access to education, communication skills, a new vision for life and personal knowledge of Jesus. Their school teachers and communities testify to their transformed behaviour: Fighting youngsters have changed into loving, peace-loving and helping members of the community.... Many young people have been brought to Christ.⁴⁸

This contemporary development has not been a smooth journey. Since the emergence of the late nineteenth-century Social Gospel and the secularisation of Christian philanthropy from the middle of the twentieth century, Protestant mission has had to grapple with issues of the relative prominence of evangelism and social work. Moreover, with the merger of IMC with WCC in 1961, at the New Delhi assembly, the role of mission agencies became secondary to that of the Church, which was understood as a 'betrayal of the two billion' unevangelised people by some world evangelical leaders, such as Donald MacGavran.⁴⁹ Since then, several Christian NGOs have led the way in integrating missionary and development work. Although there are church-based missions, the majority of the work is currently done by Christian NGOs in India. This phenomenon may be due to several reasons. With increased suspicion of any Christian role in development, charitable organisations in India are under scrutiny, if funds from the Global North are used for other than development purposes. Hence, a clear distinction is required to assert publicly and constitutionally that, although the organisation is unashamedly Christian, it is purely engaged in development with and for the community.

Proxy Missions: A common buzzword for a long time in Christian missions was 'partnership'. This word has evolved since its first use in a mission context by the International Missionary Council (IMC) in 1947 at its meeting in Whitby, Canada.

⁴⁸ Herbert Samuel, 'Scripture Union International News', *SU International Council*, June 2011, 6.

⁴⁹ Mark T. B. Laing, *From Crisis to Creation: Lesslie Newbigin and the Reinvention of Christian Mission* (Eugene, Or.: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 128–29.

The idea of 'real partnership' was believed to involve the grace of receiving as well as giving; nevertheless, it was used to the support of the economically weak, yet without taking advantage or dominating. Further, in the 1961 New Delhi assembly, this idea of partnership was expounded as sharing of 'spiritual, material and personal gifts in the light of the total economy of the household of God' by removing the distinction between receiving and giving church.⁵⁰ Among evangelicals, two significant developments began around this time. Firstly, from the 1960s, there was a growth of Christian NGOs for relief and development to tackle the needs of the poor in the Global South such as World Vision, TEAR Fund and Compassion International. However, since 2000, advocacy and community empowerment started gaining importance. Advocacy movements such as Micah Challenge in 2001, began partnering alongside concerned non-Christians and urged governments and their machinery to tackle the fundamental needs and injustices in the international system which have allowed, and at times caused, unacceptable poverty.⁵¹ Hence, according to American missiologist Bryant Myers, for many evangelicals in the contemporary context, the issue of social action versus evangelism is mostly a historical footnote.⁵² Thus, there has been a significant shift among many evangelicals toward the concept of integral mission⁵³, but as evidenced in this research, there are still tensions among some church and NGO caregivers (Evangelical and Pentecostal) at the grass-root level.

Moreover, with the emergence of several child-based NGOs, both international and indigenous, one cannot deny that NGOs have appropriated this work from the church. There is evidence for this in the St Andrew's ECI Church, where the church members slowly withdrew from this work and started a new one because of the active involvement of an NGO. Additionally, in the case of St. John's Church, there were several people involved in childcare as part of their work

⁵⁰ Taylor, *Not Angels but Agencies*, 80–81.

⁵¹ Woolnough, 'Christian NGOs in Relief and Development', 197.

⁵² Bryant L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, (2011), 49.

⁵³ Integral mission means discerning, proclaiming, and living out, the biblical truth that the Gospel is God's good news, through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for individual persons, and for society, and for creation. All three are broken and suffering because of sin; all three are included in the redeeming love and mission of God; all three must be part of the comprehensive mission of God's people. See 'The Cape Town Commitment', *The Lausanne Movement*, accessed 11 January 2016, <https://www.lausanne.org/content/ctc/ctcommitment>.

through an NGO but not through their church. NGOs have become proxy missions for local churches and welfare agencies for the government. These agencies are widely portrayed as being more capable, proficient, professional and specialised, thus leaving little space for local churches and their members to get involved in such missional work.

NGO-isation of Child Care: According to Arundhati Roy, an Indian social activist and a columnist, drawing her arguments from a broader perspective, NGO-isation in India began after the government's liberalisation process and adoption of free-market economic policies in the 1980s. It led to a reduction of public funds for public development and, in keeping with the requirements of structural adjustment, public funds were withdrawn from rural development, agriculture, energy, transport, and public health. As the state abdicated its traditional role, NGOs moved in to work in these very areas. Most large NGOs are financed and patronised by aid and development agencies, which are in turn funded mostly by Western governments, the World Bank, the UN, or some multinational corporations. She further says, "They [NGOs] turn people into dependent victims and blunt the edges of political resistance. NGOs form a sort of buffer between the Sarkar [Empire] and the public They have become the arbitrators, the interpreters, the facilitators."⁵⁴ For others, such "new partnership initiatives" can be "understood as ... an ambitious attempt at societal engineering being undertaken by Western donors."⁵⁵

From a secular understanding of NGOs and their partnership, both with the government and the civil society, let us now return to Christian child-based INGOs. With this ample space provided for NGOs, Christian NGOs also seem to have piggy-backed on this and thus began the mushrooming of NGOs in India, where almost every church had an NGO attached to it to do social work. Although this gave the necessary impetus for Christians to get involved in the community and to provide child care and protection, it also becomes a specialised enterprise, leaving many

⁵⁴ Arundhati Roy, *Public Power in the Age of Empire: On War, Resistance and the Presidency* (American Sociological Association, San Francisco, California, 2004), accessed 9 April 2016, http://www.democracynow.org/2004/8/23/public_power_in_the_age_of.

⁵⁵ Julie Hearn, 'The "NGO-isation" of Kenyan Society: USAID & the Restructuring of Health Care', *Review of African Political Economy*, 25, no. 75 (1998): 90.

local churches to perceive themselves as inadequate and recognise supporting these NGOs as better than involving themselves in the community. Several participants representing the NGOs in this research claimed that they believed churches have a significant role to play in serving and protecting CAR, but expressed frustration at the churches' disengagement. This excerpt from a participant working with an NGO shares this notion vividly: "I feel awkward that we need to convince the church of a very common-sense message, I would rather convince my other partners, the church should be a natural ally of ours, but we invest heavily in convincing the church... I don't know why."⁵⁶

The NGO-isation of childcare work has also resulted in specialised intervention methods which focus on one or two risk factors that children face. The number of evangelical agencies engaging with children is increasing day by day. Such specialised intervention methods make missions very exclusive on the one hand and bring professionalisation on the other. Such methods also become the preserve of the privileged few and thus tend to lose sight of the primary need for partnership to equip and empower the local church, the body of Christ. Andrew Walls a British missiologist says,

Protestant Christians in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries developed the voluntary society, which was to prove so powerful and efficacious that even the Catholic missionary orders found something to copy. The societies organized the systematic channelling of western Christian energy, work, prayer, and giving, and built up, trained, and equipped a force for cross-cultural mission. This force established churches, often pastored them, and usually led them...; and missions had become a means not only of planting churches but of servicing a huge international network with educational, medical, social, industrial, translational, and many other branches.⁵⁷

If Walls comment is correct, then Protestant missions have a certain inherent legacy that has continued from the colonial past into present-day India where NGOs or mission agencies have taken a prominent role in doing missions generally and also particularly with CAR as compared to churches or churches have found it easier

⁵⁶ Christian, Interview, 10 September 2014.

⁵⁷ Andrew F. Walls, *Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith*. Kindle Edition (Orbis Books, 1996). pp. 257-258

to do missions through NGOs. Nevertheless, need-based interventions also result in focus and deeper engagement and perhaps future Christian mission to CAR has to understand and grapple with this issue. What perhaps is needed is a way for these agencies to build the capacities not only of local communities to care and protect CAR but also of local churches. However, is this possible? Can NGOs work along with the churches as well as secular agencies? If so, what paradigms would be needed? These issues need to be explored.

6.4. Agencies that have Pentecostal/Charismatic/Neocharismatic Influences: Anti-Child Labour Force and Operation Liberation

Besides the data collected, one book was of great significance for this section: *Global Pentecostalism* (2007) by Miller and Yamamori.⁵⁸ The authors regard the Pentecostals who are seriously engaging in social engagement as 'Progressive Pentecostals', indicating that many other Pentecostals are still resistant to such social engagement. Hence, for Miller and Yamamori, if any from this group are engaged in the social development, they are from the progressive group.

To begin with, let me clarify this category. During my fieldwork, there were two challenges in incorporating and gaining the consent of NGOs that have Pentecostal influences. First, although this category of NGOs exists, there were very few and, secondly, as explained in Chapter Four, they were not so open to participating in this research work. However, two organisations of a Pentecostal-charismatic orientation were identified in Bangalore, and these two form the basis of the section that follows. The representatives of these two agencies have a mix of both evangelical beliefs and Charismatic influences. Regarding the first, Operation Liberation (OL, Pseudonym), the leader was clearly associated with a church that has Pentecostal and Charismatic influence. In the case of the second, the Anti-Child Labour Force (ACLF, Pseudonym), the agency associates itself with the Evangelical Alliance, but some of their leaders and workers have associations with Charismatic Independent churches. Lastly, but importantly, keeping them in a separate category was due to the nature of work and the connection they have with government

⁵⁸ See Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, (2007).

offices and the public, and not primarily because both organisations and individuals wanted to be anonymous. Hence, keeping them together was thought to be the best method to study their work and motivations. As both these organisations have requested to keep their identity anonymous, their historical and geographical references are avoided. What follows now is a summary of the nature of their work.

ACLF and OL both have an international presence and have begun their operations in India very recently. ACLF started working in India in the year 2000. It is a human rights-based organisation and seeks to fight for issues concerning justice through the constitutional provisions provided by the state and work with the legal system. In India, they have their offices in five cities and focus on anti-human trafficking – for commercial sex work (girls) and bonded labourers (families and children). OL, recently started its first work in Bangalore, India and focused on children and their families. However, a few staff members and the Director were previously involved with this work through another organisation. Due to some theological differences and faith-related issues, they moved out of the organisation and continued their work with the support of another international NGO.

OL runs three projects in their Christian mission to CAR in Bangalore, India. Firstly, they run a Sports Academy, which is a preventative project for the most vulnerable boys on the streets who would otherwise be either trapped in trafficking or manual labour. Secondly, they have an anti-sex-trafficking project to rescue girls caught in the sex industry in and around Bangalore. Thirdly, they have a Safe House, and Assessment Centre opened in 2014, for girls who have been rescued from sex trafficking.

6.4.1. Summary, Analysis and Challenges of the Work with CAR by International Neo-Charismatic Agencies.

Our primary focus in this section is the work of ACLF which can be summarised in four interconnected steps. The first kind of work is to rescue, where the victims are brought out of the place of danger they are living in. Second, the criminals, such as slave-owners, traffickers, rapists and criminals are brought to court for justice and accountability. The third step involves restoring the lives of the survivors, by providing sufficient support and tools for them to heal and thrive in their

community. The final project is to strengthen the judicial system to stop violence before it starts by helping to strengthen the local justice system. This requires partnering with the local justice system to help victims of violence. However, before this is done, the weaknesses of the judiciary are studied to strengthen the system. The primary aim of these approaches is to help the poor from succumbing to violence in their lives.

Rights, Justice and Rescue: Gary Haugen, an International human rights activist, endorses this notion. He quotes Mr Dhillon, a historian and a retired Indian Police Service officer, to prove this point: “Those [criminal Justice] systems were never intended to protect the ordinary people from violence – they aimed to protect the colonial rulers from the common people.”⁵⁹ Hence, the failure to protect the weak, vulnerable and marginalised within the present system requires restructuring the system to the extent that the poor find it safe to request help from the police. In such communities, exploiters who have access to money and power can manipulate law enforcers and the judiciary to their benefit. Hence, for them, intervention is not only restoring the victims and their community but also building structures that empower the community and the law enforcement systems to maintain law and justice, primarily to protect the at-risk community, including children. Therefore, to help the exploited, ACLF provides ‘quality’ legal aid and advice. They do not engage in evangelism but focus strongly on advocacy, which is then equally supplemented with compassionate ministries. They collaborate with the government to increase the skill and capacity and the knowledge of the local police, of the state anti-human trafficking unit, of the revenue department and the *Tehsildars* (the Village administrative officers).⁶⁰ Such intervention requires long legal battles, resources and lobbying with the police and government. Such organisations work professionally and get support from international bodies and human rights watchdogs to validate their work, method and reach.

⁵⁹ Gary A. Haugen and Victor Boutros, *The Locust Effect: Why the End of Poverty Requires the End of Violence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 174.

⁶⁰ Priya (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, ACLF (Pseudonym), 25 September 2014.

Police, Government and Christian Mission: Both ACLF and OL work along with the police and the government.⁶¹ This kind of nexus with the government and the police then requires them to be supported by legislative frameworks and by the judiciary, which requires implementation of law and rights accorded to children or adults by the constitution and special legislation. Hence, invariably, at least at the leadership level, the organisation speaks and operates with the language of rights. However, at the grass-root level, their staff are oblivious of such notions. This excerpt from one participant indicates such underdeveloped concepts on universal rights that children have – “they certainly have rights, such as - education; food, cloth, Protection, but no one teaches them.”⁶² Similar patterns could be found in most of the grass-root level working caregivers, whose primary motivations, sincere but naive are to serve these children with the love and compassion of Christ and bring them into God’s kingdom.

As the coach of the football academy associated with OL informed the researcher, “I have a great desire that everybody should come to the Lord and they should develop in their life.... My desire is that these people who are at the bottom of the society should develop and grow.”⁶³ Although there is an explicit motivation to evangelise the children and their families, this is not obviously stated. Hence one cannot put these agencies entirely under a category which uses compassion ministries to evangelise, but there is such a latent desire.

6.4.2. An Analysis of the Motivations and Theological Framework of the Workers and Caregivers of Charismatic Agencies

The two agencies in this category have some motivations in common with the previous groups, but here in this section some key and distinct factors are discussed in detail.

⁶¹ Amita (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, Operation Liberation (Pseudonym), 21 October 2014.

⁶² Sam (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, Operation Liberation (Pseudonym), 21 October 2014; *ibid.*

⁶³ Auto Raja, Interview, Questionnaire, Home of Hope, Bangalore, 2 November 2014; Sam (Pseudonym), Interview.

Globalisation of Child Rights and Care: One of the most prominent factors identified in some agencies such as in this category and WVI in the previous category is the greater use of rights language in their interaction. These agencies have embraced the role of UNCRC in their work positively. Another sub-theme that emerged from them is a development in their theology of holistic mission from Christian compassion to Christian understanding of justice.⁶⁴ With the emergence of human and child rights equally promoted by many international NGOs, Christian organisations with similar motivations have shaped their work accordingly in many countries, including India. As seen in the third chapter, a similar pattern of intervention was seen during the colonial period, when Christian missionaries intervened by providing care and protection by creating legislation such as acts outlawing child marriage and *Sati* in the early nineteenth century.

In conclusion, it can be said that as compared to churches, most INGOs have made a paradigm shift in their approach to work with CAR from saving them to protecting their rights. However, a similar transition is not found among indigenous NGOs such as FMPB or with INGOs that are self-governed and do not have strong international connections such as SUI.⁶⁵

Deliverance and Empowerment: Agencies such as OL very clearly see their work as an act of 'saving' the children or, in other words, as an act of 'deliverance'. Agencies that engage in intervention methods that require political lobbying and community transformation have developed some new meaning for old words. For example, saving children need not mean just converting them, but it also means rescuing and protecting them from various risk factors. Secondly, deliverance here not only includes from 'sin' and 'Satan', but also from the structures that perpetuate crime and injustice which are controlled by Satan and demons. Such expressions were common among some of the agencies that have evangelical beliefs, such as WVI and FMPB. One key feature of these agencies with either Pentecostal or charismatic background is that they espouse a theology that demands deliverance of children

⁶⁴ Anjana Purkayastha, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, WVI, Chennai, 10 September 2014; Amita (Pseudonym), Interview, 21 October 2014.

⁶⁵ See Sections 5.1 and 5.6.

and their families not just from oppressive structures but also from ‘principalities and power of darkness’ who have bound them in such conditions. Pentecostals tend to spiritualise all social problems, seeing them as the result of demonic forces in the world. Poverty, illness, and unjust political policies are due to moral failures, and the only solution is personal repentance and supernatural intervention; hence, for them, the social transformation will occur when Christ returns and establishes his earthly kingdom.⁶⁶ One of the participants expressed this idea succinctly:

for the [CAR] is to be free of that is pulling them or holding them down... they are not able to break free; so when we say deliverance it is through a lot of prayers and... exactly what Jesus spoke to his disciples, some things, it only goes through fasting and prayer. Some things which are beyond what we know, in terms of a pull or a hold. We strongly believe we need deliverance and we see it happening in our work.⁶⁷

This involves a theology of mission that interprets sin not only in spiritual terms but also as affecting the structures of the world. Hence, to deliver a victim, salvation and social service are not seen as two different components, but as one. A senior caregiver from an NGO gave a critical comment about how generally churches perceive social work, “the church does not consider social work or reaching out to people in ways that matter to people as part of its purpose. Its sole focus is on conversion, converting for bringing them in, rather than reaching out.”⁶⁸ This comment illustrates a contrast: First, such agencies do not see any distinction between Christian work as evangelism and social work, for both form part of the liberating commission given to the Church. Secondly, it might suggest that churches, in contrast to agencies, make a distinction between evangelism and social action. The theology of these agencies motivates participants to engage meaningfully in such work without using these as methods of conversion. Here the act of service derives motivation because of a Christian calling and not as a means to convert. However, such clear distinction does get blurred at the grass-root level, where for

⁶⁶ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 127.

⁶⁷ Amita (Pseudonym), Interview, 21 October 2014.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

most making disciples is an important method of intervention. The ministries of these churches encourage and motivate the congregation by equipping individuals and communities to improve their lives and share with others.⁶⁹

Partnership with the Government and the Community: Historically Pentecostal churches and agencies have avoided engaging in politics, as they understand the world to be corrupt. Moreover, if the second coming of Jesus Christ is seen as imminent, devoting time to transforming social and political structures seems unnecessary. The more urgent mandate is to 'save souls'. However, some Neocharismatics and the 'Progressive Pentecostals' do see a need for involvement in such issues as justice.⁷⁰ Agencies such as OL, ACLF and even WVI and CCCYC see the strengths of such partnerships and are able to work alongside non-Christians who have similar vision and burden, such as serving CAR. This kind of intervention gives the agency an added advantage to receive support from government and community to engage in the society. A majority of the participants reported that they do not have any challenges from the community, or even from religious fundamentalists, because of their Christian identity. Challenges are encountered from the perpetrators who commit crime and abuse children and normally not from the community.⁷¹ Such practice comes from a perspective which looks for a commonness in the 'other': a theology of mission that begins with such commonness and that encourages openness to work collaboratively in the Christian mission to CAR. So, is it possible to partner simultaneously with Christian and secular organisations? The answer is, yes, it is possible, and these organisations have shown to some extent how discreet they need to be to do that.⁷²

⁶⁹ Kirsteen Kim, 'Theology', ed. Jon Bonk, *Encyclopedia of Mission and Missionaries* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 439.

⁷⁰ Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 125.

⁷¹ Sekhar (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, ACLF (Pseudonym), 25 September 2014; Amita (Pseudonym), Interview, 21 October 2014.

⁷² Pat (Pseudonym), Interview, 24 September 2014.

6.4.3. Evaluation of Models Illustrated by Charismatic Agencies in their Work with CAR.

Uncritical Rights-based Intervention: It seems that for most participants, intervention through a rights-based method provides them with a constitutional basis on which to engage in Christian work, which otherwise would be viewed with suspicion. Leaders especially, in these agencies, endorsed the need for such intervention. For some, the very idea that ‘children are made in the image of God’ and that such an image is marred and distorted by individuals and structures, means that an intervention is required. As this excerpt illustrates: “Every child or every person is made in the God’s image, and nothing can mar that – no experience or abuse, because God sees the inside and not the outside.”⁷³ Within ACLF, the most common scriptural reference was given from Isaiah 1:17: “learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.” [NRSV]. Their entire intervention method is justified in this verse, where one is required to do good, seek justice, rescue, defend and plead. Furthermore, examples such as God’s deliverance through Moses in the book of Exodus, the Jubilee year as a Levitical law and the messages of many of the minor prophets were cited. However, several comments, suggest that rather little theological reflection has been undertaken to justify their work with children through child rights.

The Bible does talk a lot about the rights of the child, I think, but not in the way that it is defined. I’m not sure because I’m not a big Bible scholar....⁷⁴

Children have rights, (Yeah), I can’t think of a specific passage; the only thing that pops up in my mind is that... when it says that those who are pure in heart will inherit the kingdom which is ...I think a kind of from it, for me, it is more than the rights or something; you’re in the kingdom....⁷⁵

These references from the caregivers denote that there is an essential but undeveloped theological framework that already exists within which they operate.

⁷³ Amita (Pseudonym), Interview, 21 October 2014.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Priya (Pseudonym), Interview, 29 September 2014.

As Allan Anderson, a leading scholar of Pentecostalism, says, “Charismatic theology is not usually written, academic theology, but is found in the preaching, rituals, and practices of churches that have contextualised Christianity in such a way as to make it meaningful to ordinary people. This is ‘enacted theology’ or ‘theology in practice’.”⁷⁶

There appears to be a discontinuity in their work and reflection. Given this gap in theological reflection, little importance seems to be given to theological evaluation of child rights and their implications in India and for the Indian church. Hence, to fill this gap, an attempt is made in the next chapter, which deals with child rights and Christian missions to CAR in India.

Institutional versus Community-based Intervention: The existence of both kinds of intervention for a Christian mission to CAR indicates that both are indispensable, although there may be reasons for one over the other, based on the care and protection to be given to the children. Often, community-based intervention is not possible because the community itself is a high-risk environment. Secondly, with limited financial and human resources available, helping the child becomes a priority rather than helping the community. A participant serving as judicial magistrate of the first class, said, “family is the best place for the child, but here, when the environment where the family stays is not conducive, so for child’s best interest we have to admit ... in institutional care.”⁷⁷ Therefore, the debate will continue, about whether one is better than the other. Recent research has shown that, in community-based intervention where the child is nurtured within the context of her family and community, the child grows to its full potential and the family and the community is empowered. Nevertheless, institutional intervention is preferable when the perpetrators of abuse are family and community members themselves and hence, until the child becomes safe enough to go back to the family or community, they need to be kept in institutions.

⁷⁶ See Allan Anderson, ‘Pentecostalism and Charismatic Movements in Asia’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Christianity in Asia*, ed. Felix Wilfred (Oxford University Press, 2014), 168, doi. 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199329069.013.0010.

⁷⁷ Annie (Pseudonym), Interview, Digital Audio Recording, CWC, 4 November 2014.

6.5. Consolidated Analysis of the Theologies of Mission Informing these Agencies in their Work with CAR.

This thesis understands the limitation of trying to build theologies of mission from the represented case studies. Nevertheless, it is a necessary endeavour as this is the first comprehensive research on Protestant NGOs that work with CAR and fills the gap in the field of practical theology and mission studies from an Indian context. Outlined below are some of the major missiological arguments and justifications that this research has identified which informs agencies working for CAR in India. A consolidated analysis of their theology of mission suggests some of the key drivers are as follows.

6.5.1. *Children at Risk, NGOs, Church and Christian Mission.*

Consolidated analysis from Chapters Three, Five and Six demonstrates that child-related ministries have increased in the twentieth century and are taking new directions in the twenty-first century. Several churches have child-related ministries in the form of Christian education, and few are partnering with child-based NGOs to help CAR either in their church or the community. On a related note, it is evident that child-based NGOs are proliferating and have dominated contemporary Protestant mission to CAR in the Indian context. This dominant presence of NGOs seem to suggest that local churches have handed over their ministry to work for CAR to the NGOs. There are three underlying reasons for this apathetic attitude of the Indian local church to work for CAR. First, is the preference of church leaders and their members for evangelism rather than to help the community with their 'limited resources, human and non-human resources'.⁷⁸ Secondly, the increase in micro-political interventions through child-related state policies and finally working in an environment of suspicion due to accusations from religious Hindu fundamentalists have discouraged many from taking a leading role.⁷⁹ Finally, such interventions through multiple agencies are creating confusion and suspicion among primary caregivers of children in the Indian society - the parents.

⁷⁸ Harris, Interview, 1 November 2014.

⁷⁹ P. G Samuel, Interview, Questionnaire, Shalom Ministries, 22 October 2014.

From the fifty-eight questionnaires⁸⁰ distributed to caregivers in Chennai and Bangalore, a more in-depth understanding can be derived of the perception that Christian missions have of various risk factors that children face in the urban context. The following data, summarised from the questionnaires completed give a broad understanding of how they understood the phrase 'children at risk' in their context. The number denotes the rating provided by respondents about the different sources of risk to which children are exposed, one being the highest risk factor and four being the lowest.

Table 5: Risk factors that children face, identified by caregivers working in NGOs

Abuse		Deprivation		Marginalisation		Exploitation	
Physical	1	Basic Food/ Shelter	1	Poverty	1	Child Labour	1
Sexual	2	Home /Family	2	Dysfunctional Family	2	Sexual Exploitation	2
Mental	3	Basic Education	3	Sickness	3	Street Children	3
Social	4	Health Care	3	HIV+/ AIDS	4	Begging	4

The table above indicates that child poverty was identified as the single greatest threat that affects the well-being of a child's holistic development. This results in child abuse, depriving them of their fundamental rights, perpetuates exploitation and finally marginalises them from attaining 'the fullness of life'.

As mentioned earlier, the twenty-first century has represented a turn of events in the way Christian NGOs have adopted or are taking their work with children towards a rights-based approach. Such practices are more common in agencies that have an international presence and global accountability. However, indigenous agencies tend to engage much less with rights-based intervention methods and seem to be less concerned or not aware of such a need.

The Church in India is mostly composed of depressed and marginalised communities that require much attention for their development and care. In such circumstances, NGOs have negotiated these tough terrains better than local churches and hence have taken the lead in Christian mission to CAR. Additionally, this research indicates that the lack of space for many NGOs to work alongside local

⁸⁰ See the list of participants in Appendix 8.

churches is causing suspicion among church leaders and a mindset of superiority among the NGOs while working for CAR. The distance between local churches and the Christian NGOs is greater than before. However, a few agencies have realised the potential sustainable role that churches can provide in a community as compared to them. FMPB, CCCYC, WVI and ACLF, who represent each category, are gradually working towards it. To work alongside churches gives church members the opportunity to see first-hand the impact and scope of such work among CAR. The closure of Compassion International's operation in India in March 2017 resulted in losing sponsorships of over a hundred thousand CAR. However, as they partnered with local churches and agencies, a good number of these children are now supported by the local churches and agencies. A similar move was seen in St John's Church, when KNH withdrew its support. This indicates a positive step that whether INGOs or NGOs continue to work alongside churches, even under such circumstances the ministry and mission among CAR will continue but in a limited scale.

Clearly, Protestant mission to CAR in the contemporary context cannot be done uniformly with a single narrative that unites everyone. This study indicates that the Indian Christian Church, however, has a definite role – it needs to continue some of the inherited intervention methods from the eighteenth to twentieth-century missions, such as in child evangelism and child compassion. All these models have a place in the contemporary context, but they need to be reshaped and adopt new approaches. While some organisations, such as OL, ACLF, CCCYC and WVI, have changed and developed their work according to the new intervention policies, such as child rights, and according to the requirements brought in by national and international bodies, the majority of churches and Christian NGOs need to bring changes in their practices. A mission theology that is relevant to the needs of both converts and our neighbours by responding to the problems is necessitated. Additionally, while developing this theology attention needs to be given to the systemic and endemic issues that put children in difficult circumstances and not just deal with one part of the problem.

6.5.2. Missional Approaches - Partnership, Networking, Institutional and Community-based Interventions for CAR.

Continuing from the previous point, it is clear that many different actors are providing child care and protection in the contemporary Indian context. Hence, to identify one particular missionary method in the twenty-first century would be an impossible task. Even if an attempt were made to make this a work exclusively of Christian missions, the state legislative requirements and the pluralistic nature of the Indian community would not permit such work for long. This study suggests that comprehensive, multi-pronged intervention methods are a necessity. Partnerships, networking and searching for common ground to work with other NGOs and churches are possible approaches of contemporary missions for CAR. An advantage that international agencies have is that they get not only external support for their funds but also accountability and new strategies to work with CAR. Nevertheless, such an approach is not straightforward and faces several challenges.

Prevette's study of the relationship between faith-based NGOs and churches with CAR in Romania identifies some of these difficulties.⁸¹ India, of course is not fundamentally different, but here the challenges are magnified due to the numbers of CAR and the diversity of the society. Networking opens a space for communication in formal and informal ways without any organisational binding. In Chapters One and Two, it was identified that there seem to be significant gaps between those in the church, Christian agencies and theological institutions. Although this research does not look at the problems between NGOs and churches in working for CAR, one of the key questions that was asked during the interview was, 'How can this daunting task of serving CAR in India be done? A majority of the respondents believed that partnerships and networking are possible ways for the future. Personally, I have seen development in this area in Bangalore. In 2010, when ASHA forum (a networking agency) was conceived, there were few members and most of them were small organisations. However, now this Forum has a full-time staff member coordinating monthly meetings with big organisations, which are now taking an interest and leadership roles to share their expertise and knowledge. An excerpt from a WVI participant illustrates this point:

⁸¹ See Prevette, *Child, Church and Compassion*, 2012.

We're bringing all the Christian organisations under Asha Forum, and we're going to make them clearly see what you're doing is right, how to comply with legal standards so that nobody can point their fingers at us [Christian organisations] next week in the meeting our focus in Asha Forum in which World Vision is given the responsibility to Chair, is to make sure that everybody complies with the rules and regulations of the government.⁸²

Such partnerships are often termed as 'first-generation partnerships', where partnerships emerge on a profession-specific arrangement. In contemporary Protestant mission, partnerships have not moved to the next level, which is 'second-generation partnerships'. This second generation of partnerships is cross-professional and inter-agency; it includes children, youth, church, NGOs, community, government and families as partners and co-authors working together.⁸³ What the future missions in India require is such a theology of partnerships seeking commonness with all those who are working towards providing care and protection for holistic child development of CAR. Nevertheless, in such circumstances, new problems and challenges may arise – more so, with multiple actors playing the role of child caregivers. Moreover, in the Indian context where family and community of a child have been the primary caregivers, now with the emergence of second-generation partnerships, the traditional boundaries of the primary caregivers get blurred. This research realises the need for such a theology of mission but how to go about it will be further explored in the next chapter in much detail. One possible missiological approach that can be further explored is by investigating a possible common space through dialogue with other Christians and non-Christians on 'Common task' and 'Common witness' and understanding the notion of 'Common grace'.

⁸² James, Interview, 30 September 2014.

⁸³ Katharine Hooper-Briar and Hal A Lawson, eds., *Expanding Partnerships for Vulnerable Children, Youth and Families* (Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education, 1996), 6.

6.5.3. Motivations Underlying Christian Mission in Selected NGOs.

We have identified several theological factors motivating Christians to engage with children. The broad models of evangelism, compassion work and advocacy are still dominant factors. The data collected from the questionnaires provides us with an interesting finding.⁸⁴

The data suggest that, as one would expect, NGOs comparatively are very low on the evangelism scale and concentrate more on the compassion model. Except within the evangelical agencies, the advocacy role among the ecumenical and progressive Pentecostal agencies is very high as compared to the churches in the previous chapter. This indicates that NGOs are more aware of the rights and perhaps operate to some extent on rights-based intervention methods. Even though fifty percent of those interviewed are from indigenous NGOs, commitment to the advocacy model among NGOs is significantly higher as compared to the churches in South India. While developing a theology of mission for CAR these three factors are essential building blocks.

Following the analysed data, we can now locate the missions of the Protestant NGOs to children at risk in the diagram displayed below. Despite the diversity that these NGOs have in their missions for CAR, one can note in this diagram that all the three locate close to the centre. However, they are positioned more to one side of the triangle. There is a significant shift from evangelism to a compassion model among NGOs as compared to the ministries of churches in South India, even though Evangelical agencies do continue to focus on child evangelism to a greater extent than the other two groups. One should note in this research, 'the progressive Pentecostals' are represented, and for them, compassion and advocacy models are dominant in their work. However, it is entirely possible that this may not be an accurate representation of all Pentecostals.

⁸⁴ See Appendix 8 for the list of NGO participants.

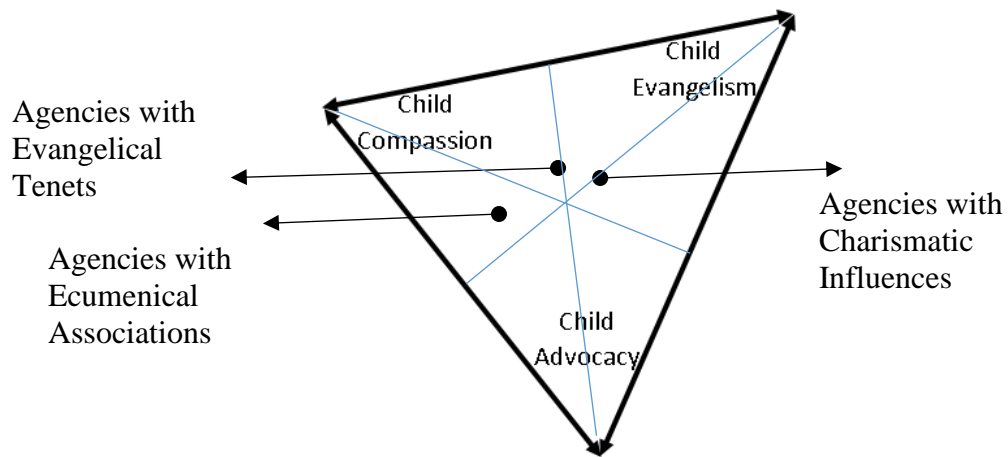


Figure 4: Locating Protestant NGOs' missions to CAR

However, when coming to agencies that work with CAR in the contemporary context, such neat categories cannot be maintained as many other nuanced factors are playing a pivotal role in contemporary missions to CAR in India. This research identifies three other factors that are shaping the future of Christian work among CAR in India. We will now briefly look at each of them.

Child-based Intervention: Agencies which categorically assert that they are child-focused missions, such as WVI, SUI, YMCA and CCCYC, have a very clear focus on their operations. These organisations are child-focused and integrate evangelism, compassion or advocacy work for CAR in their approaches. Among the evangelicals, as indicated in Chapter Three (section 3.4.4), International movements such as the 4/14 window and the Global Alliance for Holistic Child Development are creating awareness among Christian missions of this much-neglected area in Global missions. The Lausanne gathering in Cape Town in 2010 gave a special place to children at risk and missions. The recognition of this category as a priority for world evangelisation, in Section IID,5 of the Cape Town Commitment, gives a priority focus on CAR in global evangelical missions.⁸⁵ However, what is still lacking are tools to develop a relevant theology of missions to engage with CAR. Prevette, through his research, does provide a theology which he refers to as 'child theology' developed for the Romanian context. He recognises the tensions existing between evangelism and social action, which he terms Side A (from above) and Side B (from

⁸⁵ See 'The Cape Town Commitment'.

below). He illustrates several categories within them and emphasises the need to develop a theology of mission for future work with CAR. He recommends a continuing integration of Side A and Side B for holistic mission. For him, theological reflection is needed on the theme of God's relationship to a child's humanity, who is also created in God's image. He concludes that "human children are not divided neatly into soul, spirit, and body... Children are complete human beings."⁸⁶ Hence, our missions will always be inadequate if we describe God's love and compassion for children through these dichotomies.

Although these agencies mention that they are child-focused, such organisations also engage with all that is related to children, such as a child's family, community, school, hospital and other institutions. The need is for comprehensive child development and that relates to the development of the whole ecology in which the child lives. Children are potential agents of transformation who can affect the wellbeing of the entire community. This child-focused intervention through the community also brings a sense of accountability and sustainability at various levels: child, family, community, agencies, government and nation.

Risk-based Interventions: With an increased interest in children and expanding horizons in providing child care and protection, there is an increased diversity in specialised missions to CAR based on the various risks to which children are exposed. Christian agencies hence engage with particular categories of children, which enables them to become experts by focusing on one or two categories of CAR. Agencies such as SUI focused on Tsunami-affected children, while OL and ACLF focus on children who are trafficked and used as labourers. FMPB on the other hand, concentrates on the children of their believers, knowing that if they are not helped now, the future church members will be at still greater risk. The selection of a particular approach or model to work with CAR by NGOs could be for various reasons. The table below lists some of the categories of CAR that NGOs in this research were engaging.

⁸⁶ Prevette, *Child, Church and Compassion*, 2012, 319–22.

Table 6: Selected categories of CAR with which NGOs engage in South Indian Cities

i. Street Children	ii. HIV infected and affected children
iii. Children in conflict with law	iv. Slum children
v. Hostel/church-based children	vi. Children of prisoners
vii. New converts' children	viii. Children affected by Tsunami
ix. Children of bonded labourers	x. Child beggars
xi. Orphan or single parent children	xii. Dalit and Tribal Children
xiii. Children in addiction	xiv. Sexually exploited children
xv. Trafficked children	xvi. Child Burn Victims
xvii. Physically and Mentally challenged children; children with learning difficulties.	xviii. Temple children/ children of Devadasi
xix. Children of construction workers	xx. Child victims of abuse and neglect

Such categories keep increasing as new challenges emerge from urban and rural contexts. The diversity is also seen in the way these children and their issues are addressed – some through institutions; some through and with the community, empowering the parents and family. In comparison to churches, NGOs have greater freedom in developing their ministry for children with their expertise they can share their best practices with the local churches, thus equipping the body of Christ to engage in the community among whom they live.

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter has identified that in Bangalore and Chennai based on the selected case studies NGOs, in comparison to churches, have a more extensive and more diverse presence and engagement with CAR. This phenomenon is similar to the colonial period when there was a proliferation of mission agencies working for the poor, marginalised CAR and their families, as seen in Chapter Three. This phenomenon can be found in other parts of India as well. However, it is essential to

know that these agencies are driven by various motivating factors. For example, NGOs that have ecumenical associations focus on compassion work and integrate their work in line with UNCRC. Agencies such as CCCYC and YMCA have both community- and institution-based intervention methods to help specific categories of CAR. This study reveals that, when compared to ecumenical churches, these agencies focus on non-Christian CAR. However, they do not work primarily through local churches.

The NGOs with evangelical tenets such as WVI are also community and child-focused organisations, and they have developed their work in alignment with Child rights-based intervention methods, which enables them to associate more with government and non-government organisations that work for children and less with churches. Whereas organisations such as FMPB do not directly focus on children but as part of their missionary endeavours to build 'healthy' churches and congregations, support their convert's children who are primarily from Dalit and tribal background. Agencies such as SUI began their work for CAR motivated by their International office, but, now they have developed similar community-based projects to help CAR. These agencies have evangelistic and compassionate motives and are lacking in Child rights-based intervention methods and often work in isolation and often find it as a challenge to interact with other Christian and non-Christian agencies working for CAR. In the third category, it was identified that very few Pentecostal organisations work for CAR, but such practices are increasing among the 'progressive Pentecostals' that do so. Some of them frame their work based on Christian ideas of justice and human rights (even WVI). Not all of them are child-focused organisations. They discreetly collaborate with the government and the judiciary through their rescue and rehabilitation programmes.

The case studies selected for this research tend to suggest that NGOs have a more significant presence and are better equipped in Christian missions to CAR as compared to the churches. They are well-funded, globally and locally connected, have a professionalised and specialised child-focused work, unlike churches who need to cater to all categories of people in the church and society. Although the theme of partnerships was common among caregivers from churches and NGOs, this is still an emerging phenomenon. There seems to be no or very limited 'space'

for churches and NGOs to share and work together. Similar estrangement is evidenced among child care caregivers with their local churches. Secondly, as specialisation and professionalisation of child care services are promoted by NGOs, they are making it exclusively their work niche. Especially, INGOs with their increased use of child rights language and intervention methods, the indigenous churches and agencies found themselves as inadequate and withdrawn from working for CAR. All these factors have led to an environment of suspicion among church and NGO leaders, on the specialisation of child care work based on UNCRC, among government officials and religious fundamentalists suspecting NGOs of using their money for conversion if associated with churches. Therefore, the central theme that emerges in this research is that there is a lack of a theology of mission to equip churches and NGOs to work alongside each other, in the civil community and with the government. This entails a need for developing Christian foundations and principles to work among CAR that can address these diverse contextual realities. Based on these findings the next chapter will attempt to construct and propose a preliminary theology of mission that recognises the role and influence of child rights on Christian missions and ministries.

Evaluating the work of churches and NGOs to CAR suggest that in order to meet the challenges coming from the UNCRC and Hindu fundamentalists groups various approaches are used currently. For example, one approach is to withdraw from all evangelistic dimensions of Christian mission to CAR or to be highly selective in their methods and thus hope to avoid controversies, as used by St John's Church, ACLF, CCCYC or even YMCA. The opposite extreme would be to do 'Christian mission' in an overtly or covertly evangelistic way, despite any controversy in the present mission context such as St. Andrew's Church, FMPB, SUI or even OL. The challenging question is whether, by understanding the local context and adapting to it, is it possible to engage in such Christian missions in all aspects of holistic Christian mission to CAR, i.e. evangelism, advocacy and compassion for holistic development of CAR? Perhaps how FAG church or even WVI have tried. Let us now investigate some of the further possible ways of working with CAR in the following chapters.

**Part Three – Reshaping Christian Missions to
Children at Risk in India: Investigating Foundations
and Principles for Future Christian Mission**

Chapter 7. Investigating Foundations and Principles for Future Christian Mission With Children at Risk in South India

7.1. Introduction

The evaluations of the selected case studies in Indian Protestant history and contemporary Protestant missions to CAR in South India suggest that due to the emerging changes and challenges in contemporary Indian context there is an urgent need for an assessment of the ways Christian caregivers perceive and approach missions to CAR in contemporary India. The analysis suggests that a substantial theology of mission, to equip churches and NGOs to work alongside civil society and the government, is lacking, mainly due to the emergence and influence of rights-based intervention methods on child care and increased vigilance from the state, public and Hindu fundamentalist Hindus. Furthermore, this entails a need to investigate preliminary foundations and principles for future Christian missions to work among CAR, to address some of the central contextual realities mentioned above.

This chapter first aims to argue that contemporary missions to CAR in India through churches and Christian NGOs, need to reshape their missions to CAR. Secondly, it then goes on to investigate the possible foundations and principles for Christian missions. This has to happen in creative tension, where current boundaries on principles and practices need to be pushed from the current understanding of God's mission as being 'to' and 'for' CAR (that is, serving and advocating for CAR) to including a more holistic or comprehensive understanding of God's mission 'with' CAR (that is, as participants). Hence, one can notice the change in the title of this chapter, from Christian mission 'to' or 'for' CAR in the earlier chapters, to 'with' CAR.

After providing a brief biblical foundation for Christian mission among CAR, this chapter has three sections which focus on reshaping and developing

contemporary Christian missions to CAR. The first of these addresses the practical realities of how and why Christian caregivers need to affirm their Christian and Indian identities and be accountable to the government amid the homogenisation and professionalisation of child care and objectification of CAR in contemporary Christian missions. The second section primarily addresses, from a Christian perspective, the growing role and implications of UNCRC for contemporary Christian missions to CAR. Moreover, in the light of the increased vigilance through new government legislation and opposition from Hindu fundamentalists towards Christian work with CAR, a new Christian foundation for caregivers is suggested. Rather than reducing the scale of such work or being apprehensive about such engagements, it is proposed that Indian Christians need to develop new ways of engaging with CAR in their vulnerability. To develop this new way of thinking among Christian caregivers, three missiological foundations are advanced in the final section of this chapter.

The first of these foundations integrates children as subjects of God's mission through a multi-pronged approach for holistic Christian mission, and investigates to what extent UNCRC could be used as a missional tool to sustain Christian mission with CAR in the current context. Secondly, acknowledging that this is a contested space, a radical approach is necessitated through the idea of 'childness'. Finally, this approach is then given practical expression based on a theology of child participation. All these foundations are based on the idea that CAR are subjects, as opposed to being mere objects, both in God's mission and kingdom and as mandated by the UNCRC. Hence this chapter argues that CAR should be appropriately integrated into the various Christian models – evangelism, compassion and advocacy – through their participation as subjects. This is one of the foci of this chapter but, due to limited space, in this section emphasis is given to the particular issue of constructing a preliminary but authentic theology of mission with CAR that is Christian, Indian and accountable to local governments.

Finally, this chapter argues that a robust theology of mission for the future needs to develop a preventative missiological approach that avoids the

‘commoditization of children’.¹ Hence, new approaches need to be contemporary, communal and sustainable. Two methodological frameworks are used based on the principles introduced by David Bosch and Richard Osmer’s investigating questions presented in Chapter One. This chapter uses the creative principle of *poiesis*, as proposed by Bosch, and attempts to answer Osmer’s question, ‘How might we respond?’ to construct a contextual theology of mission. This creative approach needs not only to keep in tension existing theologies of mission to CAR but also to provide a theology of missions for the future. It advocates a rights-based approach that is not confined to the idea of saving and rescuing children, as evidenced in historical (Chapter Three) and empirical research (Chapters Five and Six), but addresses some new sociological problems and cultural and political challenges to Christian engagement with CAR, that arise from the notion of child rights and from Hindu fundamentalist critiques. The following section investigates and proposes a possible theology of mission to work with CAR in contemporary Indian society by moving Christian mission for CAR from a few specialised professionals to the local churches and community. However, before launching into a theological discussion, some attention will be paid to biblical resources relevant to the theme of CAR as subjects in God’s mission.

7.2. Children at Risk, Christian Mission and the Bible²

At various locations in the Bible, we can find illustrations of CAR such as children suffering hurt, for example, Ishmael in Genesis 21:17, or the starving children of Judah in Lamentations 2:19. The biblical writers emphasise that children need instruction and training as part of their development and nurture, or else they will be at risk. (Deuteronomy 6:6-8; Proverbs 22:6, 15; 29:15). It must also be acknowledged that the Bible contains some problematic passages that refer to children being caught up in acts of violence because of adults and their agencies, for

¹ Frampton F. Fox, “‘Eating the Flesh of Our Sons and Daughters’” Mission to Children-at-Risk through Parents Who Risk’, *Missiology: An International Review* xxxvii, no. 4 (October 2009): 499,505.

² See Prasad D R J Phillips, ‘Caring Child Care Givers: Training Efficient and Effective Practitioners’, in *Children at Risk: Issues and Challenges (A Reader for Holistic Child Development Education)*, ed. Jesudasan B Jeyaraj et al. (Delhi: CFCD/ISPCK, 2009), 572–73.

example Jephthah's daughter (Judges 11:30-39), the killing of innocent children, including King Herod targeting the child Jesus (Matthew 2:16-18), Herodias' daughter influenced by her mother to kill John the Baptist (Matthew 14:8) or even some texts in the Hebrew Bible where God is understood to be involved in destroying all people including children (Numbers 31:15–18; Deuteronomy 20:16; Joshua 6:21,24,26; I Samuel 15:3; Hosea 9:11-16 etc.) or allowing parents to eat the flesh of their children (Leviticus 26:29, etc.). These texts do raise several theological questions, such as, why all children seem to be not precious in God's sight, or what place such children have in God's heart.³ Nevertheless, there can be little argument that Scripture on the whole shows that God is outraged about what is happening to children who are put at risk as a result of injustice and unrighteousness. Christian interventions are but a pale reflection of God's mission to restore justice and righteousness. Christian compassion work for hurting children arises from God's concern and mission.⁴

The biblical authors affirm that children, like all humans, are created in the image of God, endowing them with dignity and inherent value – no matter to what tribe, language, nationality, age, gender, ability, behaviour, caste, etc. they belong. For example, the Hebrew Bible shows that God has not merely cared for children but used them to fulfil His mission, such as in the life of Moses (Exodus 2) – here *God provided* basic survival needs. In the lives of Samuel (I Samuel 3:1), the servant girl in Naaman's house (II Kings 5: 2, 3) or the little boy who shared his loaves and fish (John 6:9), children *participated in God's mission*. Moreover, one must also understand that, throughout the Scriptures, God shows concern for neglected or exploited children; God has always come as a defender of the impoverished and the orphans (Deuteronomy 10:18, Psalms 68:5, 82:3, 10:18) – *here God protected CAR*. Jesus showed His respect for children by giving both time and priority to them

³ See Douglas McConnell, Jennifer. Orona, and Paul. Stockley, *Understanding God's Heart for Children: Toward a Biblical Framework* (Colorado Springs; London: Authentic : Published in partnership with World Vision, 2007); Roy B. Zuck, *Precious in His Sight: Childhood and Children in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996).

⁴ See 'Children at Risk: Statement of an International Consultation at Oxford, January 1997'; Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, *Mission as Transformation: A Theology of the Whole Gospel* (Oxford: Regnum, 1999), 419–20.

(Matthew 11:25; 18:6; 21:16), although his disciples did not (Matthew 19:13b). Moreover, rereading the Bible with a focus on CAR reveals that they have a prominent place in God's heart.⁵ This strongly suggests that children are indeed not an afterthought in the Bible. As we have seen, God used and still uses children as an agency for transforming lives, their families and the communities in which they live. God is undoubtedly concerned about all CAR, the weak and the fatherless, but he also wants the human agencies to be part of this mission. If so, it is imperative that Christian caregivers understand these foundations for their engagement with CAR.

God's mission toward children can be seen happening in at least three ways. First, children are to be nurtured in and through the family (Genesis 2; 24; Psalm 127:3-5; Ephesians 6:1-4). Secondly, in the New Testament, God's mission to children is actioned through the Church, where children represent both the today and the tomorrow of the Church.⁶ Hence, like all church members, children are to be nurtured and disciplined, as they also constitute the body of Christ. Thirdly, through the community, it is important to realise that children are part of society as a whole and are to be protected and nurtured by its structures – family, schools, hospitals, local bodies, and public and private agencies.⁷ If so, as part of God's mission, the Church needs to be in the process of making these agents and herself child-friendly. It is imperative to recognise that multiple agencies are working for children.

Going back to the quotation cited at the beginning of Chapter Two, which is on 'making this world fit for children', it is a vision for the UN and the Indian government to make this a reality that demonstrates hope and dreams for all children, including CAR. A similar kind of vision, of a situation where no one, including children, is at risk, can be seen illustrated in the Bible as an eschatological hope. The Bible envisions, in Zechariah 8:4, 5 and Isaiah 11:6, an environment where, not just children, but everyone enjoys the life given and sustained by God in this world. In the first text, one can see that the two vulnerable groups, the old and

⁵ Brewster, *Child, Church and Mission*, 26.

⁶ See Christian Grethlein, *An Introduction to Practical Theology: History, Theory, and the Communication of the Gospel in the Present*, trans. Uwe Rasch (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2016), 138–48.

⁷ *Ibid*, pp 421-422.

the young, are enjoying their due space in dignity and living without any fear. The other image similarly asserts the space for the 'weak and vulnerable' along with the 'powerful' – both living without fear in a safe environment, led by a little child. Perhaps these two images of restoration by God mentioned by the prophets in the Old Testament can provide the required motivation to work for Christian caregivers working for CAR having complete trust in the living God who also initiates and sustains such work here and now. However, the challenge remains: can the Church recognise these prophetic voices and find its own role in so responding? In a similar vein, in Matthew 18:2,3 there is a refreshing but challenging perspective. Here, Jesus gives his disciples a visual image by placing the child in their midst and encourages them to become like these children – a representation of where children are ushering and leading everyone into the kingdom of God. This would entail welcoming children as 'present citizens' of God's kingdom and as active subjects participating in God's mission – an idea that will be explored further in this chapter.

The above discussion suggests that in both Old and New Testaments, children are seen not merely as objects of God's love, anger and care; but crucially also as subjects of God's mission, capable of being used in the work of God's kingdom.

7.3. Practical Realities Reshaping Contemporary Christian Missions to CAR in India.

First, one must recognise that, although children have featured in Christian thought since early Christianity, they were until very recently denied much attention in theological and missiological discourse.⁸ As evidenced in Chapters Three, Five and Six, children have historically been part of Protestant missions, to nurture future generations for churches, and they were subsumed under categories of family and community. However, as indicated in Chapter Two, since the beginning of this millennium, and more particularly during this decade, theological reflections on

⁸ See Marcia J Bunge, ed. *The Child in Christian Thought* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001).

children have been emerging through the construction of child theology⁹ and the increasing attention given to the child in practical theology,¹⁰ Christian mission¹¹ and the notion of child rights.¹² Inevitably, these reflections have been provided by adults on behalf of children. How far children as agents, both in religious thought and mission practice, can be said to engage in their own theological exploration is still an unexplored area of research, and it might be a challenge to see this happen in its purest form. One of the principal reasons is that children as agents always need to negotiate their space with adults, who are the ones who finally ‘provide’ and ‘protect’ in their development, resulting in Christian mission ‘to’ and ‘for’, CAR respectively.

7.3.1. Integrating Christian Mission to CAR as God’s Mission

Historical and contemporary references indicate that children have been mainly objects of love, care and development in Christian missions and, like any other areas of mission, they also bring missiological challenges which are still under-explored or unexplored.¹³ In other words, Christian mission was and is mostly ‘to’ and ‘for’ CAR, perceiving them as objects of love and care, and not ‘with’ them as subjects of God’s mission. Surprisingly, even prominent studies on mission theology

⁹ See Dawn DeVries, ‘Toward a Theology of Childhood’, *Interpretation* 55, no. 2 (2001): 161–73; Prevette, *Child, Church and Compassion: Towards Child Theology in Romania*, 2012; Gideon, *Child Labour in India*; Keith White, *Introducing Child Theology: Theological Foundations for Holistic Child Development* (Penang, Malaysia: Compassion International, 2012).

¹⁰ See Pamela D. Couture, *Seeing Children, Seeing God: A Practical Theology of Children and Poverty* (Abingdon Press, 2000); Joyce Mercer, *Welcoming Children: A Practical Theology of Childhood* (St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press, 2005).

¹¹ See Brewster, *Child, Church and Mission*; Susan Hayes Greener and Bill Prevette, ‘Introductory Editorial for Transformation Special Issue on Children-at-Risk’, *Transformation* 33, no. 3 (15 March 2016): 157–58, doi:10.1177/0265378816637551. Bill Prevette et al., eds., *Theology, Mission and Child: Global Perspectives*, Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series 24 (Oxford: Regnum, 2014).

¹² See Don S. Browning and John Witte, ‘Christianity’s Mixed Contributions to Children’s Rights’, in *Children, Adults, and Shared Responsibilities Jewish, Christian and Muslim Perspectives*, ed. Marcia J Bunge (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 272–91; Kathleen Marshall, *Honouring Children: Rights in Christian and Family Life: A Study Guide*, Public Concerns (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2004); Laura Marie Rector, ‘Towards New Narnia: An Evangelical Response to Children’s Suffering Grounded in Human Rights’ (Ph.D., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2014).

¹³ See chapter 2, 3 of this thesis and Grundmann, ‘Children and Christian Missions’.

by Lesslie Newbigin,¹⁴ David J. Bosch,¹⁵ Jan Jongeneel,¹⁶ Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder¹⁷ and Kirsteen Kim¹⁸ have not given much consideration to children or CAR. This neglect in missiological reflection indicates that children have not been treated as subjects in mission studies. Nevertheless, some general and broad themes, such as missions to the marginalised, liberation, dialogue as mission, justice and reconciliation, are possible areas to look for some missiological discussion on CAR.

Within Protestant mission thinking, the understanding of Christian mission relates directly to the understanding of God's mission. This chapter will not discuss how God's Mission, or *Missio Dei*, was shaped among mission scholars since it was first conceptualised in 1952, at the Willingen IMC conference. The focus will instead be on contemporary Christian mission in the Indian context and CAR. Christian thinkers have extensively discussed the phrase *Missio Dei* for almost six decades. However, what is lacking is a reflection on the actual practices of God's mission in the world, especially among CAR. Hence, Philip Wickeri, an American missiologist, advocates that, to understand God's mission, actual observation, practice and doing are equally important in the study of theology and religion.¹⁹ This thesis has attempted to understand the actual practice of God's mission among CAR in South India and, by doing this, places children and CAR as subjects of missiological and theological reflection. Indian missiologist Thomas Thangaraj offers another new starting point for doing missions which he terms *missio humanitatis* or 'mission of humanity', where he suggests responsibility, solidarity and mutuality as concepts to develop a theology of mission in a pluralistic religious context such as in India where

¹⁴ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*, Revised Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995).

¹⁵ David Jacobus Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1991).

¹⁶ J. A. B. Jongeneel, *Philosophy, Science, and Theology of Mission in the 19th and 20th Centuries: A Missiological Encyclopaedia* (P. Lang, 1995).

¹⁷ Stephen B. Bevans and Roger Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, American Society of Missiology (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2004).

¹⁸ Kirsteen Kim, *Joining in with the Spirit: Connecting World Church and Local Mission* (London: Epworth Press, 2009).

¹⁹ Philip L. Wickeri, 'The End of Missio Dei-Secularization, Religions and the Theology of Mission', in *Mission Revisited: Between Mission History and Intercultural Theology*, ed. V Kuster (Munster: LIT Verlag, 2010), 34–37.

Christians face a 'common task', such as working for CAR.²⁰ For Thangaraj, the mission of humanity compels Christians to be missional to their neighbours, which includes vulnerable CAR neighbours. However, in such an approach there is a danger of becoming anthropocentric. To avoid this, the phrase 'mission of humanity' in this chapter implies mission with God as its source, which is done for humanity (for CAR) in solidarity and mutuality.

David Bosch asks a very pertinent question: 'Is everything mission?' Affirming that it 'would be a risk' to understand it in that way, he then illustrates God's mission as a 'multifaceted ministry that encompasses witness, service, justice, healing, reconciliation, liberation, peace, evangelism, fellowship, church planting, contextualization, and much more.'²¹ Similarly, for Bevans and Schroeder, there are six elements: witness and proclamation; liturgy, prayer and contemplation; justice, peace and the integrity of creation; dialogue with, women and men of other faiths and ideologies; enculturation; and reconciliation.²² Studying these multifaceted ministries on CAR can provide us with some directions to understand what Christian mission to CAR will look like. One missiological theme that can help in our investigation is the approach of dialogue as mission, which looks promising in a pluralistic context of theologies, religions and ideologies. Children and more particularly CAR are of concern not just to Christians; even people from other religious and non-religious backgrounds are involved in such work. The challenge in contemporary India is for the churches to recognise and reshape their own work with CAR whilst maintaining their Christian identity. If so, authentic mission does not happen in isolation, but in constant dialogue (in humility) with what is happening in the local (Hindu, including fundamentalist Hindu) and global (UNCRC) contexts. In doing so, it can also help in exploring ways in which mission to CAR is paradigmatic of all Christian mission, perhaps because it has to be conducted in humility and simplicity. These attributes that are so much a part of children can help develop a theology of missions.

²⁰ See M. Thomas Thangaraj, *The Common Task : A Theology of Christian Mission* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 45ff.

²¹ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 512.

²² Bevans and Schroeder, *Constants in Context*, 64ff.

The question here is not whether we need to do mission; rather, it is how to be authentic and relevant in the contemporary context – being Christian, Indian and accountable to the government. For this process, listening, which is the first step in any dialogue for any kind of participation and provides a gateway to approach historical and contemporary changes and challenges. Examples include listening to God’s mission to CAR in mission history, listening to Indian indigenous knowledge and practices of care and development of children, listening to the new legislation and childcare methods and – not the least of all – listening to CAR themselves. This research offers one such possible way – that is, through listening to or dialoguing with what is happening in India now concerning Christian missions to CAR in order to construct appropriate foundations to engage with CAR.

At the outset, it is important to understand that Christian missions to CAR cannot follow an independent, monolithic or pan-Indian approach, but the approach needs to be dialogical. Mission as dialogue in India must first recognise the presence of many others working for CAR and then secondly negotiate their work for CAR alongside others working for CAR as part of God’s mission in the world. Given this, how is Christian work with CAR different from that done by Hindus, Muslims, humanists or even by the ‘secular’ government? This will be explored further in forthcoming sections. However, before that, it is important first of all to recognise and define Christian identity and role while working for and with CAR in God’s mission with others.

7.3.2. Recognising and Defining Christian Identity in God’s Mission for CAR

The first element of distinctiveness arises from Christian faith and identity. This research identified that, for a majority of the Christian caregivers contacted, their action is a result of Christian spirituality deriving from belief in the triune God. It is a spirituality which creates, nurtures and sustains them in their engagement with CAR. As seen earlier, these Christians believe that their involvement with CAR originates from God and not just from human emotions or a church’s missionary obligation or foreign donations. Christian faith produces Christian models of mission to witness for God in the world, sustained by God’s love, compassion and justice – a

common theme by a majority of caregivers in this study. Such models and motivations are true for all persons at the most general level, then for all children at a more particular level, and finally for CAR at the most specific level. Secondly, practising these Christian models in contemporary society provides new opportunities, alongside challenges to work with 'others' for the same cause.

According to David Bosch, to practice such engagements requires a spirit of reconciliation, which happens in 'bold humility'²³ and is modest (the mission is God's), exciting (God's self-giving missionary life) and urgent (in the contexts of globalised poverty).²⁴ Kirsteen Kim argues that, in contemporary mission, new practical ways need to be explored not only to face complications but also to find solutions. For this to happen, 'fresh expressions'²⁵ are necessary to make the gospel relevant. There is a need for not only a 'mission-shaped church' but also 'Spirit-shaped mission'. According to her, the Spirit works in the Church and also in cultures, changing church and society together.²⁶ For Kim, the Spirit of God is already involved in mission, and Christians need to recognise and join with the Spirit's work in the world. Consequently, Christian mission to CAR may be understood, not just as 'the mission of God' or 'the mission of humanity', but also as 'the mission of Spirit'.²⁷ It will be suggested below that Christian mission among CAR is more likely than other forms of mission to provide these new expressions and opportunities because of its universal appeal. Hence, a mission theology that is constructed under the paradigm of 'mission as dialogue' can create bridges between various sub-groups within Protestant Christianity and beyond it, enabling them to work together for the vast population of CAR in India. Furthermore, living in an environment of suspicion in India, Christians working for CAR in a pluralistic

²³ See Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 389-90.

²⁴ See *Ibid*, 91-94.

²⁵ In the UK, some understand fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church. Hence for them fresh expressions are: missional – serving those outside church; contextual – listening to people and entering their context; educational – making discipleship a priority: journeying with people to Jesus; ecclesial – forming church – they are not bridges to an existing church, but an expression of church for others in the midst of their lives. See 'Definition', *Fresh Expressions*, accessed 27 June 2017, <https://www.freshexpressions.org.uk/guide/about/whatis>.

²⁶ Kirsteen Kim, *Joining in with the Spirit*, 66.

²⁷ World Council of Churches, *'You Are the Light of the World': Statements on Mission by the World Council of Churches 1980-2005* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2005), 29.

society provide a visible presence of God's work in the world and an opportunity to join with the Spirit in God's mission with others for CAR.

This missiological principle of dialogue between religions and secular ideologies and groups is not a new concept to Indian Christian theologians. But what is needed in the contemporary context is a proper balance – a balance between evangelism and condemnation of corrupt religious and social practices in Christian missions that reduce CAR to just targets or objects of one's missionary work. There are several nuances within 'mission as dialogue,' such as inter-religious dialogue, inter-faith dialogue, prophetic dialogue and dialogue as daily conversation. Within ecumenical circles in the WCC, inter-religious dialogue remains a high priority in missional thinking. Similarly, among Catholic theologians, emphasis is given to the prophetic role of dialogue in Christian mission in India – 'Prophetic Dialogue'.²⁸ On the other hand, for the majority of Evangelicals and Pentecostals, dialogue is perceived as merely a means to evangelise. However, such notions are slowly changing. One group of evangelical leaders in America have now perceived this need, and in 2015 established 'The Civilitas Group' dedicated to 'promoting civility' and 'fruitful dialogue' across confessional and non-religious lines. Although it is still in the incipient stage, it certainly demonstrates their bold and creative way of reaching out beyond the confines of the 'evangelical ghetto' to promote civil society and greater understanding among people of different backgrounds and religious/political convictions. In India, ecumenical and Catholic Christians have forums on inter-religious and inter-faith dialogue, but unfortunately, such movements are not very popular among Evangelicals and Pentecostals. Nevertheless, as seen in some of the case studies, churches such as St Andrews and FAG and several of the NGOs such as ACLF, WVI and OL are making significant efforts and giving new expressions to dialogue as mission – dialoguing with children, churches, communities, government institutions and legislation, judiciary, monitoring agencies and many more, to work for and with CAR. According to Anantanand Rambachan, a Hindu Indo-Trinidadian American scholar, the future of inter-religious dialogue for a theology is not very bright as there seems to be an

²⁸ See Cathy Ross and Stephen B. Bevans, eds., *Mission on the Road to Emmaus : Constants, Context, and Prophetic Dialogue* (London: SCM Press, 2015).

anti-intellectual trend in religious traditions thus leading to disinterest in theology. However, for him, the future of Hindu-Christian dialogue needs to find new avenues such as concerns of justice and the role and responsibility of religion in over-coming systems of oppression and domination.²⁹ If so, working for CAR can provide this new avenue and impetus for various religious bodies to work alongside in India.

Hence, dialogue as mission in this research is understood as cooperation and collaboration with others for a common agenda, such as CAR. This shows that such approaches are not impossible but need more concerted sustained effort. As we have discussed in Chapter Two, the Christian community is fragmented not just because of doctrinal issues but also because of contextual issues. Hence, dialogue for CAR at various levels – inter-faith and intra-religious dialogue and work is increasingly becoming imperative. Dialogue as mission opens opportunities to listen, learn from others in the community in humility and then involve in caring and sharing of resources as a witness to the kingdom of God and the good news of Jesus Christ.³⁰

Furthermore, Muthuraj Swamy, a Cambridge-based Indian theologian, argues that the existing inter-religious dialogue practices have remained in the hands of the elite few and hence have their limitations. Hence, while re-visioning the dialogue process, he proposes fostering ‘Inter-community relations recognising multiple Identities and everyday living experiences’ of the common people, where dialogue as conversation happens all the time such as, as a farmer, businessman, social activist, men, women or, in our case, children.³¹ However, these dialogical processes at any level will find themselves limited when they confront the ‘Hindutva ideology’ that attempts to forge one ‘Hindu’ identity seeking to displace the presence of multiple Hindu and other religious and Christian identities. Dialogue is by definition a two-way process, so, in such an emerging context, can we expect

²⁹ Anantanand Rambachan, ‘Hindu-Christian Dialogue’, in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue*, ed. C. Cornille (John Wiley and Sons, 2013), 344, DOI: 10.1002/9781118529911.ch20.

³⁰ See S. Wesley Ariarajah, *Dialogue* (Singapore: Singapore : Christian Conference of Asia, 1980), 15–25.

³¹ Muthuraj Swamy, *The Problem with Interreligious Dialogue: Plurality, Conflict and Elitism in Hindu-Christian-Muslim Relations*, Bloomsbury Advances in Religious Studies (London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 190–203.

Hindus to collaborate with Christian mission efforts on behalf of CAR? Is this realistic? The answer to this question is Yes. First, it is important to understand that the issue of Hindu fundamentalism is not a pan-Hindu perspective. Within Hindus, there are many who are sympathetic and supportive to Christian missions and their contribution to the Indian society. Hence, instead of being overwhelmed by the challenges thrown by Hindu fundamentalists our dialogue with moderate and liberal Hindus in India needs to be given more focus. Secondly, nevertheless, we need to accept that the present form of Hinduism promoted by BJP and *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS) is a missionary religion and will have its implications on contemporary Christian missions in India.³² The ideology behind the RSS and the BJP is to preserve, protect and promote 'Hindu' identity and religion. For example, the BJP in North East India, where a majority of the population is Christian, have started several institutions and work to rehabilitate tribals living there as part of their missionary work to persuade the people of 'Hindu' religious beliefs and practices.³³ So, challenges to Christian missions in India will remain, and any kind of missionary work in the future can be expected to result in conflict and suspicion. However, to reduce conflict and suspicion, stopping all missionary work is not reasonable. Christian missions in India will continue to be in the midst of minority-majority conflict, in an environment of suspicion, violence and persecution.³⁴ Therefore, all the more, the situation demands constant use of dialogue as mission with others – Christians, non-Christian and secular agencies.

Dialogue in normal conditions calls for maturity and honesty as it is a two-way communication which can lead to mutuality in wrestling with the realities of diversity as found in India and still holds onto hope.³⁵ However, dialogue as mission has its limitations when it is confronted by any kind of fundamentalist ideology that persecutes Christians. Dialoguing with them directly may be impossible, but on the

³² See C.V. Mathew, *The Saffron Mission* (Delhi, India: ISPCK, 1999).

³³ See Arkotong Longkumer, 'The Power of Persuasion: Hindutva, Christianity, and the Discourse of Religion and Culture in Northeast India', *Religion* 47, no. 2 (3 April 2017): 203–27, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0048721X.2016.1256845>.

³⁴ See Vedhamanickam. C. T PrabhuSingh, 'Serving Under the Saffron Shadow: Hindu Nationalism, Violence and Christianity in Gujarat, India.' (Ph.D., Asbury Theological Seminary, 2008).

³⁵ Musimbi R.A. Kanyoro, 'Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Diverse Cultures', in *Called to One Hope : The Gospel in Diverse Cultures*, ed. Christopher Duraisingh (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1998), 102.

grounds of human rights, it can happen, especially when Christians begin to dialogue with government, judiciary, humanitarian bodies and the common people. Dutch missiologist Jan Jongeneel interestingly comments that today, the issue of human rights is more closely linked to the subject of dialogue than to Christian mission. He argues this by saying, first that mission is – and claims to be – a human rights issue; secondly, mission is ‘free’ where human rights are respected; and, finally, that (Christian) mission promotes human rights.³⁶ However, in India, Hindutva activists regard all Christian mission as an invasion of the human rights of Indians. So, the question is, how can human rights provide a way forward for dialogue in relation to CAR? Dialogue in this context needs to happen in at least two ways. First, to begin with, one needs to dialogue appropriately with those concerned about human rights, to respond using the judiciary recognising the entitlements provided by the constitution and, secondly, one needs to act against perpetrators who violate human rights, working alongside those who are fighting for a similar cause. Consequently, despite several limitations, it is imperative that a dialogical process provides some space for negotiating methods, motivations and approaches within certain boundaries. Nuances are to be recognised, explored and learnt in creative tension, such as inter-religious dialogue, inter-faith dialogue, mission in bold humility, mission in persecution, mission in prophetic dialogue and mission as conversation.

The ecumenical churches have been involved in the process of dialogue for several decades and learning from them could be a possible way ahead for Evangelical and Pentecostal churches for future Christian missions. According to Sri Lankan theologian Wesley Ariarajah, dialogue can happen at a regional and local level and in many forms. For example, talking together through discussions on common problems (here, CAR); working together in concrete projects of social

³⁶ J. A. B. Jongeneel, *Philosophy, Science, and Theology of Mission in the 19th and 20th Centuries: A Missiological Encyclopaedia*, vol. Part 1 (P. Lang, 1995), 308–9.

action; living together as neighbours which is a reality in India; finally, celebrating together some of the national and regional holidays.³⁷

Now coming to the context of CAR in India, as seen in Chapter Two, this category is a huge constituency and, as seen, some churches (in Chapter Five) and NGOs (in Chapter Six) have responded to their CAR neighbours. With such a rich legacy and continued presence, Christians need to continue to bring their unique gifts to work alongside other religious and secular ideologies. What is required now is to recognise and celebrate our participation in a 'common task,' appreciating God's common grace, and push the boundary of common witness from working only with Christians to working alongside people of other faiths and no faiths, for the sake of CAR.³⁸ A multi-religious context generally provides an opportunity to work for a common cause – to seek justice, welfare and development of all people. Thomas Thangaraj gives an interesting point

People who belong to religions other than Christianity and those who lead secular-based lives become partners with Christians in humanity's attempt to set its house in order. No single group can work in isolation and expect any significant social and economic transformation in the 'global village' of today.³⁹

Although Thangaraj does say that significant changes cannot be brought in the society, the 2011 Indian census shows a different picture. As we will see later in this section, the Christian community has seen significant development as compared to other communities. However, to bring changes in the society and to get rid of some of the endemic problems that result in CAR, Indian Christians need to work alongside non-Christians as part of God's mission. In India, this generally happens where Christians work in government and non-governmental agencies for the welfare of all people and, while engaging in these kinds of work, the majority of the differences get blurred, and the task takes priority. Here, Christian inter-faith dialogue and work happen in the secular world not just in word, but also in deed.

³⁷ S. Wesley Ariarajah, 'A World Council of Churches' Perspective', in *Hindu-Christian Dialogue: Perspectives and Encounters*, ed. Harold G. Coward (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1990), 254–55. See Michael Kinnamon and Brian E Cope, *The Ecumenical Movement : An Anthology of Key Texts and Voices* (Geneva : Grand Rapids, Mich.: WCC Publications: W.B. Eerdmans, 1997), 393–422.

³⁸ Thangaraj, *The Common Task*, 156.

³⁹ Thangaraj, 118.

Although Christians, like everyone else in a pluralistic context in their everyday life participate in dialogue, unfortunately, when it comes to churches and Christian agencies working for CAR, very often they do not engage in the same way. Thus, Indian churches need to take seriously the call to work for CAR living inside and outside their membership, as part of God's mission. Once this call is recognised, the churches will be compelled to work for CAR alongside our neighbours such as people of other faiths and no faith and agencies that promote child rights.

From the above discussion, it is clear that Christian missions in the twenty-first century India need to be conducted in humility, allowing for the Indian religious context, which includes persecution. First, despite the Christian presence in India for almost two thousand years, the Christian population has remained only three percent, according to the 2011 government census. Secondly, it has existed in an environment of suspicion and animosity especially from the Hindu fundamentalists. Based on this historical evidence, Indian Catholic missiologist Augustine Kanajamala gives some interesting conclusions from his missiological analysis of Christian missions in India. He says, "in quantitative terms, Christian mission in India is a failure.... In qualitative terms mission is assessed as a success."⁴⁰ For him, this has happened because Christians have impacted the Indian society, religions and cultures through social and intellectual transformations, through education and by opposing the hierarchical caste structure in the last two centuries. However, it is important to recognise that this three percent Christian population reported by the Indian government is a conservative figure because of several sociological and political reasons. Most Dalit, marginalised Christians hesitate to declare their Christian identity as they may lose privileges from affirmative actions provided by the government to them. According to a non-Indian database, India has about 4.7 percent of their population as Christians; Protestants and the Independent Churches, other than Orthodox (.38 %) and Catholic Churches (1.52%), constitute

⁴⁰ See Augustine Kanajamala, *The Future of Christian Mission in India: Toward a New Paradigm for the Third Millennium*, Kindle edition, Missional Church, Public Theology, World Christianity 4 (Pickwick Publications, 2014).

3.09 percent of the total Christian population in India.⁴¹ We can conclude that even though Christians are a minority, they are a significant minority who have contributed in the past and are still contributing significantly to the Indian society in the present and certainly in the future. For example, as highlighted earlier,⁴² the Indian census demonstrates, on Christian demographics that they have progressed in most levels as compared to others; secondly, Christians have continued to influence Indian society through churches and their NGOs in educational, developmental and charitable services. So, Christian mission in India generally and specifically for CAR has a significant place in the future and this requires churches and NGOs to engage even more in new and creative ways, in the midst of challenges such as suspicion and persecution. One such new way is to recognise CAR as subjects of Christian mission.

7.3.3. Recognising CAR as Subjects of Christian Mission

As discussed earlier, children, especially CAR, are generally perceived as objects of care and development in Christian missions and have often been marginalised in research. Theological and missiological reflection has therefore tended to neglect the view of them as subjects of Christian mission, having dignity and honour in spite of their vulnerability. We will now see how CAR as subjects of God's mission bring along with them, through their participation, certain unique attributes to contemporary Christian missions generally and more specifically to those working with CAR.

The case studies in this research strongly underscore Christian witness as an important motivation for work with CAR for most of them, especially lay people. For many local churches, social action is an afterthought or a method used as pre-evangelism. The need to save the souls of children is seen as the primary task. This kind of notion does not result in a holistic mission to care for children. These children can sometimes become mere targets that need to be saved from eternal

⁴¹ See Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Center for the Study of Global Christianity, *World Christian Database* (Boston, Mass.: Brill., 2004).

⁴² See Section 2.4

damnation. The German missiologist Christoffer Grundmann sees this as a major missiological challenge and says,

Any advocacy for saving an ‘eternal soul’ not minding the ‘temporal’ – and hence assumedly negligible – body is not Christian at all ... to develop strategies for the implementation of the Great Commission by making children the prime focus for future church growth denies minors their dignity as individual personalities and turns them into a means to an end.⁴³

Grundmann is against the current practices among churches and NGOs that tend towards the objectification of children. Children in some sense are objects of care, protection and nurture but by objectifying them and making them into a means to meet one's end, belittles children of their agency. Hence, the proposition that is made here is to perceive children and even CAR as subjects within God's kingdom and mission. According to British theologian W.A Strange, Jesus affirmed what children were; children were still children in the kingdom of God, they were not called out of families or forced into a kind of discipleship inappropriate to them and their status as children.⁴⁴ So, it is important to recognise the agency of children by identifying them as subjects who are to be involved in their own development in the present and now not just in the future.

As seen in Chapter Three, Christians have historically developed their work with CAR through institutions and in communities and have brought transformation through education and by giving the dignity of life to the victims of poverty, marginalisation, injustice and war. Although such attitudes perceived dignity of life for children, they were very paternalistic which restricted the agency of children to participate in God's mission and in their own development. Such an attitude continues to exist even now, where children are often perceived as the ‘other’ – different from the benefactor – and as the ‘dependent other’, always needing care and protection. Such attitudes resist the possible transformation that can come to the benefactor while working for and with CAR. In contrast, this study provides

⁴³ Grundmann, ‘Children and Christian Missions’, 181–82.

⁴⁴ Strange, *Children in the Early Church: Children in the Ancient World, the New Testament and the Early Church*, 64–65.

evidence that many caregivers in churches and NGOs⁴⁵ have themselves benefitted while working with CAR. Hence, what is now required is changing one's perspective of CAR by recognising that CAR are subjects of God's mission and are part of the kingdom of God, as adults are. This would involve giving the needed attention to every child in the neighbourhood, including those within Christian communities, with churches, mission agencies, seminaries and Bible colleges becoming aware of this 'great omission concerning children'⁴⁶ and working towards becoming 'child-friendly'.⁴⁷ Although Bosch does not refer directly to children, Christian mission to CAR could be done in a way

where not just priests or pastors [a select few] are involved but the entire church, including the laity, in the form of the ongoing life of the Christian community in shops, villages, farms, cities, classrooms, homes, law offices, in counselling, politics, statecraft, and recreation to the extent that the clergy and laity engage in such a way that it becomes impossible to distinguish who is doing what.⁴⁸

Another significant change that requires attention is the role of men and women working with children in Christian missions. The historical and contemporary case studies in this research indicate that women generally dominate children's work, compared to men. Perhaps this is the reason why theological reflections on children are quite scarce, as most theologians, until recently, have been men. Hence, if Christian mission to CAR needs to be comprehensive and holistic, this subtle character of contemporary Protestant missions also needs to change – where both men and women equally take part in Christian theological reflections and missions to CAR. Therefore, following from the above quotation from Bosch, an entire church, including both ministers and laity, need to aim for appropriate participation of not only men and women but also children.

⁴⁵ See footnote 37 and 72 in Chapter Five and footnote 23 in Chapter Six.

⁴⁶ Dan Brewster and Patrick McDonald, *Children-the Great Omission?* (Viva Network, 2004), 6-9.

⁴⁷ Rohan P. Gideon, *Children-at-Risk: Towards Inclusive Communities - A Resource Book* (Bangalore: BTESSC, 2016), 116–17.

⁴⁸ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 473.

Cases from historical and empirical studies indicate that all the three aspects of mission – evangelism, compassion and advocacy – potentially involve the risk of perceiving children as objects, because of inappropriate motivations. For example, within evangelism, just as for adults, if the conversion of children is merely for future church growth as an end in itself, they can just become mere targets to be achieved or objects who are to be shaped for the future. Such attitude and practices rob them of their agency in God’s mission and kingdom. On the other hand, if attention is given only to the conversion of adults and children are not given proper nurture and education, then children become unimportant or insignificant – more specifically Dalit and tribal children become doubly marginalised. In the compassion model of mission, if child-based projects and programmes become more important than children themselves, then there are possibilities of seeing them as mere targets to be achieved, reported and monitored. In such cases, the child-based programmes, donors, funding agencies and projects become more important than children themselves. Finally, in relation to advocacy, which is slowly gaining prominence in the contemporary context, very often child rights campaigns take the dominant role over children in partnerships and networking groups. In all these cases, we have seen that children become a means to achieve one’s end in Christian mission. Hence, it is important to evaluate whether CAR are seen as subjects in our mission.

7.4. Reshaping Christian Missions Through Rights-based Intervention for CAR

The UNCRC presents children as subjects and, by doing so, encourages adult agencies to relate with all children equally. In particular, a few UNCRC Articles proscribe the objectification of children under any circumstances by any adult agencies. For example:⁴⁹

⁴⁹ UNICEF, ‘Read the Full UNCRC’, *What Is the UNCRC*, accessed 15 June 2017, https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/UNCRC_united_nations_convention_on_the_rights_of_the_child.pdf?_ga=2.246873220.1012334534.1497522324-1206203201.1497365328.

Article 14.

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
2. States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
 - (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
 - (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
 - (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
 - (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

As seen above, the UNCRC also presents children as subjects by providing entitlements that children are right holders of their religious education and practices besides secular education for their nurture, especially if they are from Christian homes.⁵⁰ Mindful of these arguments, I shall now provide some missiological evaluation and theological discussion on the notion of children as subjects with certain entitlements. Christian mission to CAR may in the past have treated children just as objects, but given the contemporary context, it is now

⁵⁰ Consultative Group on Ministry Among Children, *The Child in the Church and Understanding Christian Nurture.*, 70–72.

appropriate to reshape Christian missions to CAR. The challenge in such situations is to avoid the trap while focusing on child rights and advocating for CAR; child caregivers can still perceive CAR as helpless beings and deprive them of their agency. Nevertheless, a rights-based intervention for CAR that empowers their agency can empower Christian missions which are often adult-run to perceive CAR as subjects. However, this requires, first, familiarity with child rights and, secondly, awareness of their implications for children, families, churches, communities and nations.

7.4.1. Recognising Children's Rights and Duties of Adults – An Integrative Approach

Parents and families are the primary caregivers of children in most societies. This is culturally and religiously sanctioned in India and elsewhere.⁵¹ This kind of traditional notion of parenting is found in most societies in the world, certainly in Asia, involving: parental authority, respect and caring; children's obligation to parents and families; expectation of parents from children at the various development stages; and gender-based obligation, attitudes and behaviours.⁵² Most societies and communities have some mechanisms for protection, often sanctioned by religions and cultures, and failure to comply can result in social exclusion, even for children. Very often these traditional intervention methods override constitutional obligations. However, with the emergence of child rights and other child-focused legislation, some of these traditional practices such as female infanticide, forced child marriage, payment of dowry, child labour and others have become illegal and demand counter-cultural responses. What was once perhaps considered normal and accepted within a culture may now be viewed as a deviant practice. Hence, with UNCRC, the agenda focuses on child protection and their participation rather than just providing care and help in their development.

⁵¹ Jan Horwath et al., *Religion, Beliefs and Parenting Practices* (York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2008), 52–53.

⁵² See Ruth Chao and Vivian Tseng, 'Parenting of Asians', in *Handbook of Parenting: Social Conditions and Applied Parenting*, ed. Marc H. Bornstein, vol. 4 (Psychology Press, 2005), 59–94.

According to Kathleen Marshall and Paul Parvis, both British theologians, the traditional Christian understanding that children are immature, vulnerable and needing constant supervision and protection has directly influenced the notion of the limited capacity of children to decide. This has resulted in two divergent views on the freedom that children should have. The liberationists argue that children are more capable of making decisions and see children most often oppressed by unwarranted restrictions on their liberty; while, on the other hand, the paternalists argue that children should have little freedom and power. Such attitude underestimates the agency and the potential decision-making capacity of a child. In the contemporary context, the UNCRC provides broad parameters that shape childhood. From the UNCRC point of view, concerns of child protection and prevention of abuse in some sense restrict their freedom, arising from children's vulnerability. However, child participation, a fundamental principle of the Convention, asserts that 'children and young people have the right to express their views freely'.⁵³ There is also an obligation to listen to children's views and to facilitate their participation in all matters affecting them within the family, schools, local communities, public services, institutions, government policy, and judicial procedures. This important theme will be further explored in later sections of this chapter to develop a theology of child participation. Looking at these dynamics, UNCRC not only demands child protection and child provision, but also encourages their participation. Hence, both paternalists and liberationists agree that children lack freedom. However, the difference is whether this deficit is intrinsic to being a child or results from how adults treat them. The solution to this is only by accepting the notion that the context and the ability of the child in its vulnerability, plays a significant role and by promoting an adult attitude of treating children not as objects but as subjects, which the UNCRC tries to uphold.⁵⁴

In this study, most Protestant church caregivers were not aware of UNCRC and, even if they were, they were sceptical about it. For some, the UNCRC does not

⁵³ UNCRC Articles 4, 12 to 17 attribute child participation.

⁵⁴ Kathleen Marshall and Paul Parvis, *Honouring Children: The Human Rights of the Child in Christian Perspective*, University of Edinburgh. Centre for Theology and Public Issues (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2004), 223–25.

explain the duties and responsibilities of a child in equal terms. The general fear within churches is that children may look at UNCRC as a legal entitlement to claim what they should have, without knowing that rights go alongside responsibilities (duties). For many Indian parents, child rights seem to overrule their parental rights. The responsibility of a parent is to care for the child's well-being, and the UNCRC acknowledges this. Despite this, the idea of child rights is very often misunderstood as undermining parental authority. Christians and especially caregivers need to dialogue with the Scriptures and Christian traditions on child and parental rights and duties and then engage within the Indian cultural context to fully understand the relationship between child rights and parental authority. One cannot deny that children and parents have certain rights and responsibilities to empower them to make decisions that affect them and others.⁵⁵ The notion of human rights as defined in the UN Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) has not been an explicit part of Christian tradition until quite recently. For Indian Christians, this individualistic notion of human rights is even more strange as, for Indians, the concept of rights is sustained by duties which are predominantly relational and communitarian. Hence, caregivers working with CAR in Indian churches were very wary of this idea, because of its anthropocentrism and links to libertarianism. Similar fears continue to exist with parents, who see UNCRC as empowering, not them, but only children. So, for a large number of them, the very phrase 'child rights' immediately seems to disempower parents, which presumably played a part in preventing them from understanding what UNCRC advocates. Similarly, notions on UNCRC in relation to Christian models of mission to CAR as described in this research – namely child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy – also need to be interpreted. The UNCRC is in many ways compatible with Christian mission approaches focused on child compassion and child advocacy, provided children are treated as subjects and not as objects. However, such compatibility is harder to identify when the emphasis is on child evangelism.

In fact, as indicated earlier, UNCRC on many occasions focuses on the rights of parents and the importance of family. It affirms the family as the primary

⁵⁵ Marshall and Parvis, *Honouring Children*, 2004, 203–4.

caregiver which provides, protects and nurtures children. A few theological reflections on the UNCRC can help to remove some misconceptions among Christians. For example, the German scholar Friedrich Schweitzer and the Indian scholar Jesudason Jeyaraj argue that UNCRC provides space even for religious education and the importance of parents in providing it.⁵⁶ Empowered with the entitlements given by the UNCRC can avoid any kind of education to be used as a manipulative tool for conversion. The UNCRC provides children and their parents to be agencies in their development as social actors and avoid manipulative practices used in Christian missions to CAR.⁵⁷ The case studies of WVI, CCCYC, ACLF and OL in this research demonstrate that some NGOs participate in compassion and advocacy work among CAR by employing UNCRC and UNDHR as missional tools in their Christian work.⁵⁸ In other words, using UNCRC as a missional tool is not an impossible task, but what is required is a theological rationale in doing this.

In a recent article, the American missiologist Susan Greener explores this approach and calls it an integral approach that focuses on the whole Gospel. She suggests that Christian missions to children should be understood in a multidimensional way – to children (focused); for them (on their behalf) and with them (as agents).⁵⁹ However, in her article, she does not interact with ideas relating to child rights and the categories identified in this research – namely child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy – but argues more from an integral mission perspective. Nevertheless, the ideas offered by her are further explored in this chapter and the next to investigate some possible foundations and principles for Christian mission for CAR.

The use of rights as a theoretical framework for Christian mission practice is slowly gaining prominence, but is unfortunately done in an uncritical manner.

⁵⁶ See Friedrich Schweitzer, 'Children's Right to Religion in Educational Perspective', in *The Bloomsbury Reader in Religion and Childhood*, eds. Anna Strhan, Stephen G. Parker, and Susan B. Ridgely, Kindle Edition (Bloomsbury Academic, 2017); Jesudason B Jeyaraj, 'Children Rights to Education: Training for Parents and Trainers', in *Child Rights CRC Document Education*, ed. Jesudason B Jeyaraj and Thomas Swaroop (Bangalore, India: Global Alliance for HCD Education (South Asia Unit), 2013), 49–64.

⁵⁷ Further discussion on this will be done in the next section.

⁵⁸ See sections 6.2.1 (CCCYC), 6.3.1 (WVI), 6.4.1 (ACLP, OL)

⁵⁹ See Susan Hayes Greener, 'Children-at-Risk and the Whole Gospel: Integral Mission "To, For, and With" Vulnerable Agents of God', *Transformation* 33, no. 3 (24 February 2016): 165–66, doi:10.1177/0265378816631256.

Hence, it is crucial to construct a Christian anthropology of children, such as perceiving children as subjects and not just objects of Christian mission. This will require the implementation of the missionary duties and obligations that churches have traditionally been talking about but in a reformed way. Moreover, using UNCRC as a missional tool shifts the focus from the stronger party to the weaker – the lost, least and the last, such as CAR. Finally, using the language of rights also allows churches to speak to today’s society using a public language and joining in the broader public discourse. Hence, it seems, there is nothing objectionable in using the language of rights to support beliefs that Christians already hold on other grounds.⁶⁰ However, the question is what happens if government policies and programmes around work with CAR contradict Christian teachings? It is here that Christian caregivers, through their participation in society with the government using UNCRC as a tool, have another advocacy role in influencing the policymakers and empowering the community by speaking for CAR to bring necessary structural changes within society and Christian institutions in bold humility. Even here a theology of mission based on ‘mission as dialogue’ is one possible and viable way to develop new models and motivations to work for and with CAR.

In such a case, children are equally important in God’s mission of restoration and reconciliation. As seen in Chapter Two, Christian mission to children and specially CAR is imperative in the contemporary context.⁶¹ Hence, the four P’s propagated by UNCRC – Protection, Provision, Prevention and Participation of children – need to be considered from a Christian point of view and theologically grounded. Human rights and child rights both give a fresh understanding of Christian anthropology – an anthropology that addresses the God-given rights of children and the God-given rights of parents simultaneously. Empowering children and parents with their rights and duties empowers the society and community as well. For Christians, UNCRC also connects with the Christian notion of the dignity of all human persons, including CAR who are also made in the image of God.⁶² If

⁶⁰ Marshall and Parvis, *Honouring Children*, 181–86.

⁶¹ See Phillips, ‘Caring Child Care Givers’, 572–74.

⁶² See Marcia J. Bunge, ‘Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Children, Parents, and ‘Best Practices’ for Faith Formation: Resources for Child, Youth, and Family Ministry Today’, *Dialog* 47, no. 4 (2008): 348–60, doi:10.1111/j.1540-6385.2008.00414.x.

Christian mission for CAR is all about restoring the image of God and reconciling children to God's abundant life, then UNCRC can and does provide a framework and also provides a legal process to fight for human dignity. Having explored the reasons for treating UNCRC as a missional tool, I will now propose how this can be done by looking at some of the ways already explored and some possible ways yet to be explored by churches and NGOs globally and in India.

7.4.2. *Negotiating UNCRC and Christian Missions for CAR in India*

Chapter Two has shown that the idea of child rights has been influenced by Christians since it was first proposed.⁶³ At the global level, some Protestant groups such as the WCC, the Baptist World Alliance, the Anglican Consultative Council, the Lutheran World Federation United Methodist Church (USA) and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches have supported UNCRC.⁶⁴ Other denominations are slowly discovering the scope of UNCRC in their mission to children. However, in India, theological articulation has been somewhat more focused on human rights than on UNCRC, although in the recent past, as shown in Chapters Two and Five, there is an interest in putting the UNCRC into practice and a few NGOs, such as WVI, CCCYC, YMCA and APCL, are using it as a missional tool. Rights have empowered people who are exploited, marginalised and kept on the fringes of society. Churches in India have stood for the oppressed and marginalised, such as Dalits, tribals, and women. Similarly, UNCRC also provides a platform for relating to children, government, community and many other NGOs. Alongside this, efforts need to be made, creatively and critically to contextualise UNCRC and connect it with the already existing indigenous knowledge in India on childcare and welfare.

Legislation and conventions play a significant role in stopping deviant practices. However, while replacing these old child-care practices with new ones, a proper assessment is needed. For example, by tracing the 'healthy strands' of childhood within India, one could then translate the new childhood construct developed by UNCRC in a way that does not disillusion parents, family, and

⁶³ Browning and Witte Jr, 'Christianity's Mixed Contributions to Children's Rights'.

⁶⁴ Marshall and Parvis, *Honouring Children*, 50–52.

community, who have been the primary caregivers of children. Indian families and communities and their culture have a long history that has survived and evolved over centuries. Much of its indigenous knowledge of childcare, protection and participation are still practised, but not integrated with modern intervention methods. Many of these constructs involve high kinship welfare concepts that are built into the society and community and have survived for many centuries. However, through the impact of globalisation, migration within and without is affecting the Indian context today. On the other hand, Hindutva religio-politics poses another threat to Christian identity, since it is claimed that to be authentically Indian is to be Hindu. Nevertheless, amidst these challenges, certain cultural values and etiquettes perpetuate interdependence and coexistence between families, community and environment and these are to be identified, respected and critically engaged with. For example, traditional Indian parenting is value-based, and people are bound by their duty to family, to parents, to children, and to society.

- Parents are to be honoured and cared for.
- The community is seen as an extended family.
- Values of mutuality, interdependence and community are promoted.
- It is expected that one will live up to one's family name and fulfil one's duties to the family and to the community.

Hence, when new intervention methods are developed in the west, or with scientific research, which are often evolutionary and potentially problematic, they also need to recognise and acknowledge this pre-existing indigenous knowledge, not quickly dismissing it as merely superstitious or irrelevant. In contemporary Christian mission, the scope of relational anthropology and the importance of community engagement (church and the civil society) is steadily becoming imperative. A similar notion is gradually being seen in the secular world also. One such move is seen in the twenty-two Sustainable Development Goals, a target set for the UN countries to achieve by 2030. Here, although the focus is on children, the development is now to be accomplished through and in the community in which the child is born, develops and contributes.

To be modern and scientific does not necessarily mean discarding that which is traditional. Recent discoveries among development professionals identify how much local communities know that is genuine and valuable.⁶⁵ Denis Goulet, an American economist, wrote almost thirty years ago,

traditional values (including religious beliefs and practices) harbour within them a latent dynamism which, when properly respected, can serve as the springboard for modes of development which are more humane than those drawn from outside paradigms. When development builds from indigenous values, it exacts lower social costs and imposes less human suffering and cultural destruction than when it copies outside models. This is so because indigenously-rooted values are the matrix whence people derive meaning in their lives, a sense of identity and cultural integrity, and the experience of continuity with their environment and their past even in the midst of change.⁶⁶

Similarly, through dialogue with all the stakeholders (parents, community, school, healthcare providers, religious leaders, government officials, police, politicians and, of course, children), the UNCRC can be adopted, adapted or contextualised. In this way, the social fabric will be kept intact, and yet provisions can be made for child protection and participation within Indian society through proper integration. This is not an easy task and can only be achieved through proper negotiation, training, deliberation and practical engagements for a sustained Christian presence and lasting impact on families, churches and communities.

Currently, it seems that among many Christian charities the focus on Christian heritage of loving service has moved to a more compelling and pressing notion, centred on a Christian theology of human dignity and equality emerging from the doctrine of the image of God to more communal values as against individual rights that transcends all boundaries to help all of humanity. Simultaneously, several other shifts were gradually happening from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment period, especially in the Global North, with the focus moving from faith to reason, from

⁶⁵ See Bryant L. Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*, Revised and Expanded Edition (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2011), 212-219.

⁶⁶ Denis Goulet, 'Development Experts: The One-Eyed Giants', *World Development* 8, no. 7 (1980): 485.

community to individuals, spiritual values to humanism, and duties to rights. Such radical changes did not happen as sharply in the Global South. Although India (like other nations) has been influenced by several of these new developments from the Global North, for the majority of Indians, including Protestant Christians, faith, community life, spirituality and social and religious duties still pervade their worldview. Another strong cultural and religious phenomenon surrounds the concept of *Dharma* or “the cosmic order or rules of religious conduct to attain happiness”, which is enshrined in the majority Indian religions, and also supports the performance of duties over rights.⁶⁷ Similarly, within Tamil history, the literature on and for children can be found from the Sangam Period (300 BCE to 300 CE), which describes adult care and nurture for children.⁶⁸ Even within the Indian Constitution, along with the provision of fundamental rights, there is equal emphasis on duties.⁶⁹ Under these circumstances, the notion of child rights disseminated through Conventions such as the UNCRC is regarded with suspicion and alien. Nevertheless, the ideas surrounding ‘rights’ are currently taking precedence, focusing concern on the victims and the vulnerable as opposed to the perpetrators.

There are challenges that the Indian church and Christians need to address. Sadly, even now, social evils such as the caste system thrive among Christians and go unchallenged among the community of disciples. Secondly, the Christian community often leads a life unaffected by the concerns of the social mainstream and thus has little to say on national issues. Christian bodies are often more concerned about the safety of their institutions and prefer to survive as a privileged

⁶⁷ Robert Traer, *Faith in Human Rights: Support in Religious Traditions for a Global Struggle* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1991), 129ff.

⁶⁸ See S Sivakumar, ‘Development of Tamil Children Literature during the Sanggam Period’, *Journal of Indian Culture and Civilization*, no. 1 (2014): 1–5.

⁶⁹ The Fundamental Rights and Duties are not incorporated in the same chapter in the Indian Constitution; in other words, Fundamental Duties do not form a part of chapter III. They are added to Chapter IV of the Constitution in Article 51 A. Since the Fundamental Duties have been added to the part of Directive Principles of State Policy, they have a non-justiciable character. Although these duties are not enforceable, they are observed by the citizens because they feel a moral responsibility to obey them. See Lily Goswami, ‘The Supreme Court of India - Its Role Perception & Performance in the Development of Fundamental Rights, Duties and the Directive Principles of State Policy’ (Unpublished PhD Thesis (Political Science), Gauhati University (India), 2004), 207.

minority. Hence, to negotiate these difficult and challenging terrains, there is an urgent call for contextualising, for countercultural and cross-cultural engagements for an authentic witness and real transformation is to happen in the church and the community.⁷⁰ In such engagements, efforts need to be made to get rid of an exaggerated 'minority complex' and an alienated identity. The Indian church needs to go through a radical change to counter all those dehumanising practices in the culture, that place many children at risk and, at the same time, rise to a new life by accepting all the genuine human values present in the culture. In other words, Indian Christians need to respond to the Indian reality creatively and responsibly as a community effort,⁷¹ developing an identity as a significant minority.

7.5. Constructing a Preliminary Theology of Mission with CAR

Before beginning to construct a preliminary theology of mission with CAR, it would be appropriate to mention three predominant existing theologies used for CAR, namely the Child Theology Movement (CT), started by Keith White; Holistic Child Development (HCD), endorsed by Dan Brewster while working with Compassion International; and the 4/14 Window, initiated by Louis Bush and Brewster. These movements have given considerable impetus to contemporary Christian mission to CAR. White defines child theology as a process of theological reflection starting with the question: 'what does it mean for us today to respond to the teaching and example of Jesus when he placed a little child in the midst of his disciples... to enter the kingdom of God?' In other words, his epistemological tool to do theology is 'placing the child in the midst', as done by Jesus in Mathew 18:2. However, for him, child theology is all about Jesus and the Father who sent him and not about a child or children or even CAR, although they may be implicit.⁷² So the question arises in

⁷⁰ Grethlein, *An Introduction to Practical Theology: History, Theory, and the Communication of the Gospel in the Present*, 183–85.

⁷¹ Jacob Kavunkal, 'Eschatology and Mission in Creative Tension: An Indian Perspective', in *Mission in Bold Humility: David Bosch's Work Considered*, ed. Willem Saayman and Klippies Kritzing (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1996), 80–81.

⁷² White, strangely does not mention the role of the Holy Spirit in his theology. See Keith White, *Introducing Child Theology: Theological Foundations for Holistic Child Development* (Penang, Malaysia: Compassion International, 2012), 8–9.

what sense is it child theology? For Dan Brewster, HCD includes spiritual nurture as well as attention to physical, social, psychological, and other aspects of the person. He finds this model of development from Luke 2:52, which says that, Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men. Hence, for him, there are four components – wisdom, stature, favour with God, and favour with man – thus encompassing all aspects of the whole person.⁷³ The 4/14 Window, on the other hand, refers to the age range of 4 years old through 14 years old, a range that research shows is when most people will make some kind of conversion to Christianity.⁷⁴ Following this research, a new strategy is developed that focuses on children within this age category to convert. Although these three missional concepts provide considerable reflections on Christian mission to CAR, none of them takes up the issues about child rights or reflects on the missiological implications of agency of children in Christian missions and the danger of objectification of CAR in any missionary enterprise. Hence, this research grapples with this issue and takes their discussion further for the Indian context.

The findings from the case studies suggest that the majority of churches and NGOs who work for CAR seem to have their own, distinct methods and seldom partner with each other or the community. However, there are exceptions and, although they cannot all work in uniformity, they may be united for common witness. Earlier chapters and some sections in this chapter have provided appropriate biblical, historical and contextual foundations to construct a theology of mission for CAR in India. What is required is to recognise several models and motivations to do Christian missions for and with CAR as done by churches and NGOs.

Nevertheless, it is essential to recognise that no one church or NGO alone can actually engage in the holistic development of CAR. What is required now is to develop partnerships and networks among churches and NGOs to provide holistic development through cooperation and sharing of best practice. The future of

⁷³ See Dan Brewster, *Child, Church and Mission* (Penang, Malaysia: Compassion International, 2011), 37–39.

⁷⁴ See Dan Brewster, 'The 4/14 Window: Child Ministries and Mission Strategy', *Transformation* 14, no. 2 (1 April 1997): 14, <https://doi.org/10.2307/43070442>.

Christian missions to/for/with CAR needs to focus on the common task of God's mission for CAR – the mission of humanity and the mission of Spirit – rather than focusing on the differences that exist between churches and NGOs in their models and motivations. For such missions to happen, it would require the caregivers to be vulnerable and open, like CAR, and yet, without compromising their Christian identity. This would require working beyond local and global boundaries where Christians join with the Spirit's work in the world as committed partners in God's mission with God and God's agencies – adults and children.

As demonstrated in the case studies of St Andrew's and FAG churches and even organisations such as FMPB, SUI or even CCCYC, Christian caregivers generally either get fixated on the Parousia or on history, either of which is a problem. Hence, for Bosch, an exclusive emphasis on the Parousia neglects the problems in the world, while a sheer historical approach robs us of the teleological dimension of mission.⁷⁵ In such cases, it is important to have a theological understanding that salvation history unfolds in secular history and so the world is no longer to be seen as a hindrance but as a challenge. Christians must also come to believe that an attempted blueprint for societal and political order can never match the will and the rule of God. The ultimate triumph remains uniquely a gift of God. It is God who makes all this new (Rev 21:5) and our mission is an 'action in hope'.⁷⁶ However, in such engagement, the Spirit's discernment is equally required, to do Christian mission for and with CAR. In the following sections, we will now look at how this can be made possible.

7.5.1. Theologies of Mission and Theology of Missions with CAR using UNCRC as a Missional Tool.

Locating a mission theology for CAR is a challenge because the subject is still emerging. Even if it exists, it is mostly subsumed within child-based ministries in churches in the form of Christian education, practical theology, child evangelism or Christian work done for children in Christian institutions such as schools, hostels

⁷⁵ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 508–10.

⁷⁶ Kavunkal, 'Eschatology and Mission in Creative Tension', 74.

and hospitals. This study has shown that churches and NGOs have some form of evangelism, compassion and advocacy-based models and motivations, but often with one or two of these tending to dominate the others. According to former CMS Director, Mark Oxbrow, there is a false dichotomy in Christian mission between relief, development and advocacy on the one side, and evangelism, discipleship and pastoral ministries on the other hand, especially in work that is funded or directed from the Global North.⁷⁷ At a general level, but also within Christian mission to CAR this seems to reflect some of the controversies among Christians that were prevalent in early-twentieth-century North America between modernists and fundamentalists. However, in this research, only a few caregivers working for CAR demonstrated an apparent dichotomy in their reflection on whether the priority is evangelism over compassion or vice-versa, while child advocacy has been seen to be an emerging model. As we saw, such divides are not always so clear-cut and are beginning to change.

Chapter Two indicated that the twenty-first-century phenomena of specialisation and homogenisation of childcare interventions have brought paradigm shifts in child care, development and protection, displacing several pre-existing notions on child-related missions in India. Massive changes and developments in childcare and protection have taken place in the Global North, where the majority of INGOs have their headquarters. Having their base in the Global North, they are influenced and accountable to their national laws, which indirectly affect the operations in India and the Global South. In contemporary India, the question is no longer whether these new developments through UNCRC are needed, because India has ratified it and is accountable to the global community through the UN. The big question now is how the UNCRC can be implemented without displacing the social and cultural fabric of India and making Christian missions sustainable in contemporary India.

As identified in Chapters Two, Five and Six, although Christian mission practices for CAR exist, a theology of mission with CAR is still pending. The

⁷⁷ Mark Oxbrow, 'Christian Mission: Contemporary Theology and Practice with Reference to Children', in *Theology, Mission and Child: Global Perspectives*, ed. Bill Prevette et al., Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series 24 (Oxford: Regnum, 2014), 58.

emergence of Liberation Theology in India has provided a powerful hermeneutical tool to create theologies for women, Dalits, tribals and Adivasis. Adrian Thatcher, a British theologian, and the recent research by Rohan Gideon, an Indian theologian, have explored new perspectives by seeing child theology from a liberationist perspective, where they recommend a methodology of a 'preferential option for children' in reading the Bible and doing theology.⁷⁸ For Thatcher, from whom Gideon borrows this phrase, this method is used in two different contexts. In the context of developed countries, it is to be used when parents do not put the interest of children first; and, in other contexts, it is mainly used for marginalised children who are not recognised as people in their existing social order.⁷⁹ However, what seems to be missing in their articulation is how to do Christian missions with CAR.

To address this question, some of the key strands of existing theologies of child, childhood and families are reviewed to construct a preliminary theology of mission for CAR. Recognising the diversity in the categories of CAR and in contexts and beliefs among Protestants, this chapter concludes that a single, homogenising theology of mission to CAR is not achievable. Instead, space first needs to be provided to construct plural theologies of mission to CAR. However, this thesis argues that, although contexts are varied, it is in these contexts that a theology that can provide a framework for negotiating diversity and facilitate Christian witness in unity for CAR becomes imperative. Hence, in many ways, there is an absence of an explicit theology of mission to work for and with CAR in the contemporary Indian context that addresses the above-mentioned challenges. One possible method that can provide the necessary common ground to develop a theological framework for Christian missions for and with CAR is by using UNCRC as a missional tool.

⁷⁸ See Adrian Thatcher, 'A Theology of Liberation for Children', accessed 14 March 2017, <http://www.adrianthatcher.org/data/resources/a%20theology%20of%20liberation%20for%20children.pdf>; Rohan P Gideon, 'The Agency of Children in Liberation Theologies in India and Children Related Theologies. Similar notion on child rights from a postmodernist point can be seen in John Wall's essay. John Wall, 'Human Rights in Light of Childhood', *The International Journal of Children's Rights* 16, no. 4 (2008): 523–43, <https://doi.org/10.1163/157181808X312122>.

⁷⁹ Adrian Thatcher, 'Theology and Children: Towards a Theology of Childhood', *Transformation: An International Journal of Holistic Mission Studies* 23, no. 4 (2006): 196.

In recent years, greater unity on the importance of working for and with CAR has emerged from Protestant groups, especially within evangelical and ecumenical communities. The 2010 Cape Town Lausanne document recognised the need surrounding CAR and the need for relevant training, equipping and advocacy in the contemporary context.⁸⁰ The WCC, in its 10th Assembly in Busan in 2013, in the outcome document 'Putting Children at the Centre', affirms that the dignity of children comes from the image of God and proposed a policy document for children, which was recently published in February 2017.⁸¹ This statement not only affirms that children are precious human beings whose rights are to be guaranteed and protected, but also provides new standards for child participation by creating child-friendly churches. It seems that, at the level of councils and church leadership, there is a serious attempt and desire by the Protestant churches to move towards protecting the rights of the child. However, much effort needs to be undertaken to see a similar move at the grass-root level as evidenced by this research.

Nevertheless, a few individual churches and agencies have taken similar commitments to care for and protect CAR. Child-focused Christian NGOs have carved out their unique place in India. They hold a vital position to mediate between the public, the child, the community, churches and the government. They bring in new insights and intervention methods as they are specialised in their work and identity. New private and state partnership efforts have given NGOs a new identity, not as competitors but as supporters.⁸² The question here is how effective this can be. At least two NGOs and one church analysed in this research demonstrated that, by being creative and bold in developing a theology of mission that is relevant to their context, it is possible to be effective. WVI lobbies for CAR both at national and community levels.⁸³ The government, in turn, has recognised their role and has given them a distinct place in India, as they have started several

⁸⁰ See 'The Cape Town Commitment'.

⁸¹ See WCC, 'Churches' Commitments to Children', accessed 22 February 2017, <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-programmes/public-witness/rights-of-children/churches-commitments-to-children>.

⁸² See Stephen Hanmer, "Child Rights Organizations and Religious Communities: Powerful Partnerships for children1," *Cross Currents* 60, no. 3 (2010): 451–61.

⁸³ Christian, Interview, 10 September 2014.

local level child parliaments, which has resulted in raising child advocates who have become agents of transformation in their own community and for other children.⁸⁴ The Shelter, another small NGO working among AIDS-affected children, is a residential care home in the outskirts of Chennai city and was recognised as a model home by the district Child Welfare Committee in the year 2014-15 because of their transparency in their operations and child participation methods where children help, in making their monthly food menu and in taking part in the day-to-day running of their 'home'.⁸⁵ Similar approaches can perhaps reduce suspicion and fear among caregivers while working with CAR. NGOs, in particular, need to have a transformation from the inside out, which we will explore in the coming sections. However, such practice and the accompanying theology of mission can be a slow and difficult route in the contemporary context⁸⁶ because, unfortunately, NGOs do not generally encounter respect and a willingness to collaborate from governments and churches. This can be seen in the recent example of the INGO, Compassion International, which was shut down by the Indian government.⁸⁷

Among churches, the FAG church in Bangalore, through their network, organises an annual seminar followed by a rally against human trafficking, where government officials, school children and teachers and religious leaders from various faith backgrounds participate. It is noteworthy that this network is facilitated by a conservative Protestant group through a process of dialogue.⁸⁸

Under these circumstances, the challenge is for the Indian church and Christian mission agencies to be holistic, transparent and dialogical, placing their 'Christianity at risk'. The late Lesslie Newbigin, the influential British missiologist, in his book *The Open Secret*, described how witness in a pluralistic context could happen in and through dialogue. The purpose is not to persuade or recruit another person but, instead, it is a faithful witness to Christ where one comes with another into the presence of the cross, where both are prepared to receive judgment and correction of one's beliefs, even 'Christianity'. Thus, meeting with a non-Christian

⁸⁴ 'World Vision Annual Review, 2013-14' (Chennai: WVI, 2015), 4,6,14,16.

⁸⁵ Solomon Raj, Interview, Digital Audio Recording, Shelter Home, Chennai, 7 October 2014.

⁸⁶ Grundmann, 'Children and Christian Missions', 183.

⁸⁷ See Barry and Raj, 'Christian Charity Shuts amid Govt Crackdown'.

⁸⁸ See section 5.4., page 127

partner in dialogue puts one's 'Christianity' at risk.⁸⁹ This indirectly assumes that faith and witness happen in a context of 'bold humility'. For example, in the case study of the FGAG church, the process of witnessing to CAR and their families brought mutual transformation in their Christian beliefs and practices.⁹⁰ This mutual experience is perhaps what Jesus refers to as becoming like a child to enter the kingdom of God (Matthew 18:3-4; Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17). It is recognising and accepting the invitation given by CAR, along with their families, to churches and NGOs to a ministry and mission of mutual transformation.

Following our discussion in the previous section on using UNCRC as a missional tool, we will now briefly investigate how UNCRC can guide and protect existing models of Christian missions with CAR – child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy. To begin with, suspicion and misrepresentation of the UNCRC needs to be cleared by providing a more balanced view of the UNCRC. After that, proper teaching needs to be provided so that people can reassure themselves that the UNCRC, in reality, empowers parents and the community to be primary caregivers of children. If so, attention needs to be given to both CAR and parents and families who are at risk in their community. The American missiologist, Frank Fox, and Belgian practical theologian, Annemie Dillen, argue that parents and the community are key agents in addressing the issues concerning CAR. Hence, contemporary interventions need to address the environment in which CAR live. A basic understanding that there is a relational anthropology in creation, which is an 'interconnected web of relationships,' is to be perpetuated between the children themselves and the adults with whom they come into contact.⁹¹ This notion of a relational anthropology is fairly recent in the Global North, where theological anthropology is more individualistic than relational. Currently, there is a growing discourse on a theological need to have a relational anthropology (or relational ontology, as it is sometimes described). A key figure to introduce this notion is John Zizioulas, an Eastern Orthodox theologian, who argues for '*Being as Communion*,

⁸⁹ Newbigin, *The Open Secret*, 182.

⁹⁰ Cunningham, Interview, 18 October 2014.

⁹¹ See Fox, "'Eating the Flesh of Our Sons and Daughters'"; Annemie Dillen, 'Power, Justice, Asymmetry and Relationality in Pastoral Care and Parent-Child Relationships.', *International Journal of Practical Theology* 14, no. 2 (February 2011): 214–15.

since personhood in the Trinity is fundamentally relational, and human beings are made in the image of God with the same essence. He believes this is true in the Cappadocian formulation of the Trinity and human personhood.⁹² Although there are some criticisms of this understanding, other scholars agree, such as Hans S. Reinders, a Dutch theologian, who finds this notion very helpful especially to argue for the inclusion of the disabled and to counter modern individualism.⁹³ Therefore, it can be argued that any interventions for CAR should not be done independently but in mutuality, as interdependent relational beings. So, if interventions are to be developed, they must address the whole interconnected web of relationships, which will require a conscious effort and a radical approach. As mentioned earlier, the question now is not whether various models are essential, but how to practise these models, especially when children are vulnerable to various abuses in Christian missions.

Child evangelism in Christian missions as practised during the colonial period is being challenged in the contemporary context. Many a time in such practices child compassion and advocacy work do become a means for child evangelism especially for some Evangelical and Pentecostal Christians. Unfortunately, as discussed earlier, such methods not only raise suspicion but rob the agency of children from participating in their development and objectifies CAR. However, providing such children and their parents with some agency, not only prevents unwanted accusations but ushers in a new way of religious education that happens within the context of consent. Practices that objectify children and CAR should be discontinued, and instead, scope for authentic mission needs to be encouraged. Some scholars⁹⁴ argue that UNCRC's right to education (Article 30) provides space for children to have religious education and instruction, with checks to avoid coercion or allurements, which could be called spiritual abuse. Hence the UNCRC

⁹² John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985). See Paul M. Collins, *Trinitarian Theology West and East: Karl Barth, the Cappadocian Fathers, and John Zizioulas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198270324.003.0007.

⁹³ See Hans S Reinders, *Receiving the Gift of Friendship : Profound Disability, Theological Anthropology, and Ethics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2008), 248–60.

⁹⁴ See footnote 52 of this chapter.

provides space needed for religious instructions from adult agencies with parents' consent for children to make an informed decision (Article 14). As indicated earlier, in St Andrew's Church, non-Christian parents who benefited from the Christian mission approved of such Christian practices for the sake of the development of their children. In such situations, Dillen proposes a participatory model, which is influenced by the child participation notion offered by the UNCRC and also by some reflections based on relational anthropology, but from children's perspective. She says,

I would like to make clear the basic meaning of participation in this model, namely, 'taking part in'. I propose using the concept 'participation' in a broader sense, namely, both as 'taking part in' and 'having a voice that is heard'. Religious education, following the above-proposed image of the child as a competent subject, should aim to activate children's concrete experiences, their thinking and expressions of their own religious ideas.⁹⁵

The preceding statement has a few theological implications. It sees children as competent subjects having agency and as being able to take part in matters concerning their spiritual development, to be heard or listened to for their own religious experience. In such circumstances, the children have the option and freedom to express their faith and religious experiences with others – children or adults. It could also be argued that, if a child needs to be provided with holistic care and development, then parents and the community are deemed to provide care and development of a child's physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual needs as well. If so, any neglect of these basic needs also means child neglect and abuse. This continues to be a contested issue, which needs to be more thoroughly discussed in future research.

⁹⁵ Annemie Dillen, 'Religious Participation of Children as Active Subjects: Toward a Hermeneutical-communicative Model of Religious Education in Families with Young Children', *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 12, no. 1 (1 April 2007): 44, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13644360701266119>.

7.5.2. Theology of Missions in and through 'Childness'

As seen in the earlier section, for Marshall and Parvis, promoting the rights of vulnerable people, especially children, is an effective way of negotiating Christian work.⁹⁶ However, they perceive some problems arising from the tripartite relationship between children, parents and the state in the contemporary context. Tensions arise when rights are associated with excessive individualism, but children also need rights to counter the potentially abusive power of adults. To mitigate this problem, Thatcher explores the possibility of including child rights by incorporating them into Christian theology and ethics, which he builds on the universal application of Jesus' teachings about children. For this, he uses Matthew 18:2-5:

He called a child, whom he put among them [disciples], and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.' (NRSV).

Here in the text, although the child is brought into the context, the teaching is specifically for the adult disciples only. The disciples are urged by Jesus to become like children and not children to be like adults. William Strange comments, "the coming of the kingdom of God did not make children into adults, but affirmed their childhood."⁹⁷ Unfortunately, sometimes the text is extrapolated to making children 'little adults', which the text does not suggest here in any way. Jesus very clearly addresses his audience – the (adult) disciples around him – to explore and understand what being and becoming like children would require. Here the essence of Jesus' teaching is about being not just humble (childlike), but someone who desires to understand the meaning of 'being a child'. Unfortunately, the word 'childlike,' as popularly translated into English, has a strong cultural connotation and can objectify children as the other rather than accepting them as they are; so, this and other similar words limit the understanding of the text. Hence a new word,

⁹⁶ Kathleen Marshall and Paul Parvis, *Honouring Children*, 3.

⁹⁷ Strange, *Children in the Early Church: Children in the Ancient World, the New Testament and the Early Church*, 64.

such as ‘childness,’ can provide new and fresh meaning to this vital teaching of Jesus. However, using such a neologism has its limitations. Even though it can provide an opportunity to explain and explore new ideas, it could also be misunderstood and construed in diverse ways. For example, for American educationalist and literary critic Peter Hollindale, ‘childness’ is a quality of being a child, as perceived and understood by an individual (including children themselves). For him, this word is not similar to words such as childhood (a term that imposes to allusions of preciseness), childishness (a term of abuse) or childlike (a word of equivocal praise).⁹⁸ Hollindale’s epistemological tool enables individuals, including children, to explain the essence of being a child. If so, childness as a word seems to have both mysterious and creative elements to help construct a theology of missions to work for and with children, especially CAR.

For Thatcher, the above text represents the blessedness of children, i.e. in their powerlessness and vulnerability, they belong to the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God as represented by a child is unique, something which adults do not possess. Even for him, words such as childish or childlike do not give complete meaning, and hence he uses the word ‘childness’, something which he says adults are at risk of losing. Hence, in this text, children illustrate counter-cultural, radical, anti-hierarchical power reversal even in the midst of their vulnerability. In other words, there is the presence of Christ in the child and in the welcome a child receives. So, any harm to any child (not just Christian children) is worthy of the millstone metaphor. During Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, “... the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard the children crying out in the temple, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David,’” (Matthew 21:5, NRSV). Although the leaders failed to recognise him, children knew and revealed Christ’s identity unmediated. Also, God makes himself known through a child, the Christ child.⁹⁹ For Hollindale and Thatcher, the word ‘childness’ seems to provide a new understanding of ‘being a child’. Childness, with this theological and missiological underpinning, carries specific attributes. Hence, to develop a theology of missions

⁹⁸ See Peter Hollindale, *Signs of Childness in Children’s Books* (Stroud: Thimble, 1997). Hollindale defines and explores the phrase ‘childness’ journeying from children’s literature.

⁹⁹ Adrian Thatcher, *Theology and Families* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2007), 154–59.

for CAR, a methodology surrounding 'childness' is worth considering, besides theologies already discussed, such as CT and HCD.

Within Christian thought, this word was first introduced by Anderson and Johnson¹⁰⁰ and was further developed by Thatcher.¹⁰¹ The term 'childness' is explained by reference to attributes such as vulnerability, openness, immediacy and neediness, which is a helpful approach understanding 'being a child'. But, if a theology of missions that begins in 'childness', with these attributes, is to provide a conceptual framework for adults, who are unfortunately at risk of not comprehending children, then a radical change is needed in their perception about them. In other words, Christians working in India with CAR need to engage with attributes such as vulnerability, openness, immediacy and neediness. This requires from Christian caregivers an unconditional trust in the actual presence of the living God here and now, as the source of motivation and sustained strength for such demanding work. In his radical teaching on children, Jesus places them not as subordinate but as sharers with adults in the life of faith; they are not only to be formed, but to be imitated; they are not only ignorant, but capable of receiving spiritual insight; finally, they are not 'just' children, but representatives of Christ.¹⁰² In such cases, adults working for CAR need to incorporate these attributes of childness into their missionary thought and practice.

Using this as a method, the agency of children might usher not only children but also adults, their lives, missions and churches into the kingdom of God. Hence, just as Jesus the Saviour humbled himself in his incarnation and crucifixion (Philippians 2:7-8), children in their childness can also challenge, provoke and motivate adults likewise to humble themselves. In this radical transformation, childness compels every adult who wants to enter or be part of God's kingdom to undergo a process of humility to become like a child or embody childness.

¹⁰⁰ Herbert Anderson and Susan B.W. Johnson, *Regarding Children: A New Respect for Childhood and Families* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994).

¹⁰¹ Thatcher, *Theology and Families*.

¹⁰² Judith M. Gundry-Volf, 'The Least and the Greatest: Children in the New Testament', in *Child in the Christian Thought*, ed. Marcia J. Bunge (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2001), 60.

Recent research by Indian theologian Rohan Gideon argues that children provide a ‘contrapuntal liberative’¹⁰³ perspective to existing theologies, such as child theology, holistic child development and theologies of childhood. For him, contrapuntal means recognising the contested space, where children equally become an agent of God’s mission, alongside adults.¹⁰⁴ This is a creative and bold perspective. It is true that children as agents irrespective of their age and circumstances, bring unique contributions and they are to be recognised and addressed. Yet there are limitations to Gideon’s approach. Making children an independent agency is practically impossible due to the basic framework of the UNCRC and to some extent even what the Bible advocates. Both promote child protection, development, prevention of abuse, and participation, usually all done by adults (parents and families) as children cannot advocate for themselves the way adults can. This is especially true if they are CAR and especially girls. Similarly, if adults are seen as independent agencies, the basic child-adult web of relationship needs to be recognised. Some of the caregivers in this research indicated that creating completely independent and separate agendas for adult and child agencies will create suspicion and thus restrict mutual growth and nurture.

Hence, this thesis proposes an alternative solution, which fundamentally underscores that the agencies of adults and children are interdependent and are in a mutual relationship with each other’s being, transformation and happiness. The mutuality of both kinds of agency will need to consider that every child should have an adult future and every adult has a child past. These two agencies are neither independent nor dependent, but interdependent, for their development and protection in the web of relationship discussed in earlier sections.

Secondly, Gideon’s analysis does not explain much about how or where these two kinds of agencies can engage with each other from a missional

¹⁰³ According to Gideon, contrapuntal analysis assembles agency from two theological streams current in Indian theologies: firstly, the agency of the marginalized in Indian liberation theologies, and secondly, the agency of children from the recent forms of children-related theologies that have so far influenced children-related theologies in India: Child theologies, and Holistic Child Development. Gideon, ‘The Agency of Children in Liberation Theologies in India and Children Related Theologies’, 28.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 270–73.

perspective. He suggests that listening to children is one possible method.¹⁰⁵ The questions remain as to who needs to listen – certainly all adults – and what kind of children are to be heard – certainly all children, specially CAR. Moreover, from a child participation perspective, merely listening might be categorised as one of the lowest possible forms of participation or even non-participation and has its limitations.¹⁰⁶ Even so, a theology of missions through childness may provide a possible direction for how this contrapuntal mission can work, where both adults and children are seen as interdependent agents. The notion of childness invites all caregivers engaging with CAR to be interconnected actors depending on each other and not independent. Therefore, this method of ‘childness’ can be a gateway for further explorations to do missions with CAR, their families and the community alongside churches, NGOs and even people of other faiths and ideologies who are committed to engage for CAR.

7.5.3. *Theology of Child Participation in Christian Missions with CAR*

Following from the previous section on the use of the participatory model, I have argued that it can be explored through childness. I shall now briefly consider how a theology of missions for CAR can be constructed with a theology of child participation through childness. I have argued that, in Christian mission children too are the present-day subjects of God’s mission, God’s Church, God’s Kingdom (not just future), who are participating in their development in, for and with the community as citizens. So, a theology based on child participation can evaluate and guide present and future Christian missions to, for and with CAR. Studies on child participation show that there are various levels of child participation. Of the many, the most widely used is Roger Hart’s ladder of participation (see below), which was published for UNICEF. For Hart, participation is “the process of sharing decisions which affect one’s life and the life of the community in which one lives.”¹⁰⁷ A typology based on his ladder can provide some directions to develop a theology of

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 175ff.

¹⁰⁶ This notion of child participation we will be discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁰⁷ Roger Hart, *Children’s Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship*, Florence: UNICEF, 1992, 5.

child participation. According to his ladder, there are degrees of non-participation and participation which churches and NGOs could incorporate in their work with CAR. Due to lack of space, a detailed discussion cannot be included here. However, a progressive attempt by Costa Rican missiologist, Desiree Segura-April, in this direction is worth considering. According to Segura-April, Hart's "definition does not focus exclusively on children, but, rather, on all people in a community collaborating to make decisions and intervene for change... while always considering how empowering children to participate might impact relationships within their family."¹⁰⁸

In order to bring children and CAR into the mainstream theological and missiological discussion and missionary work, a conscious effort needs to be made and this could be done through a theology of child participation. Ideas on children participating in worship are becoming familiar. However, this thesis proposes that Christians should push their boundaries further by developing a theology of child participation for their churches and NGOs in 'creative tension' and through 'dialogue'. However, for such a possibility, Christian agencies engaging with CAR may have to equip themselves with the attributes of childness – openness, vulnerability, immediacy and neediness. The framework provided by Roger Hart can help evaluate present and future practices of child participation and also provide new frontiers in constructing theologies, mission practices, church ministries and family and community lifestyles. Here the researcher understands the implications of children's age and their cognitive and physical capabilities having direct implications on their participation in missions and to be an agency in Christian missions. Nevertheless, it is important to underline that the age and capabilities of a child do not undermine their contribution and participation – children bring certain contributions and challenges to Christian mission just as they are and not as 'little adults'. Hence, what perhaps is required here is to recognise and provide space for their agency to be the actors as they are – in their vulnerability and powerlessness.

¹⁰⁸ Desiree Segura-April, 'Appropriate Child Participation and the Risks of Spiritual Abuse', *Transformation* 33, no. 3 (12 April 2016): 174, doi:10.1177/0265378816636798.

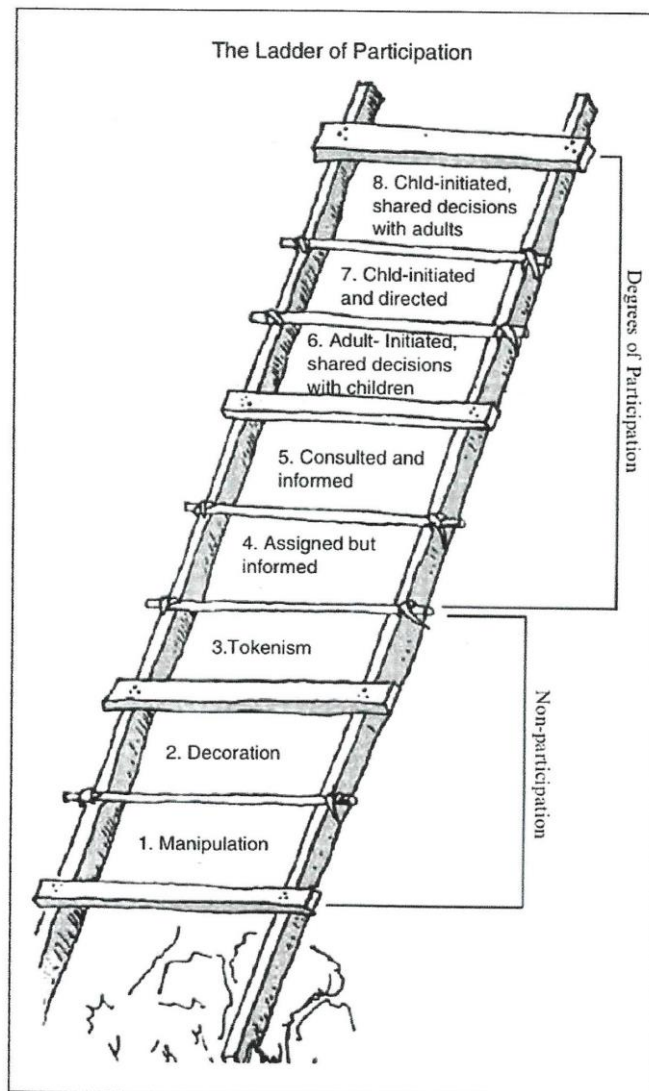


Figure 5. Roger Hart's ladder of participation¹⁰⁹

Based on Hart's ladder, Segura-April further argues that, in the majority of churches, child participation still exists in the first three rungs of the ladder, and very rarely in the next five rungs where children participate in varying degrees. This study affirms that this is true not only of churches but also of the indigenous NGOs in this research. With little child participation in churches and NGOs, children are vulnerable to religious and spiritual abuses and are often manipulated to do the desires of adults without giving children the right to choose. In order to further develop a theology of child participation, three working principles can be suggested to equip churches and NGOs and encourage child participation, one for each model

¹⁰⁹ Hart, 'Children's Participation', 8.

of Christian missions to CAR (that is child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy).¹¹⁰

- i. In Child Evangelism: A solid Christian or religious education (both through modelling and instruction from parents and church members) can be provided where children according to their ability must be given the freedom to learn, participate, understand and choose their beliefs and how they will act upon them (or not) as a dialogical process. Also, instead of focusing only on the numbers of children coming into the kingdom of God it is essential to concentrate on the quality of their growth and development. It is important to recognise that conversion through evangelism is done by the Holy Spirit and not through human work.
- ii. In Child Compassion: While providing care and protection, any form of coercion, force and manipulation or abuse need to be identified and avoided. Caregivers need to affirm that the relationships between children and adults within the church and NGOs are mutual and respectful. Compassion work needs to be evaluated continuously to see if CAR are reduced to mere objects of their projects who need to be proselytised.
- iii. In Child Advocacy: The churches and NGOs must seek to educate and train all adults on how to use their authority appropriately to avoid spiritual abuse by making them aware of UNCRC and its implications on Christian beliefs and practices. Children, likewise, must be educated about the rights they have, about how to recognise when those rights are being infringed and what to do about it, and also about the way adults communicate with children. This can be done through teaching and sermons, etc.

These principles, at first sight, do not sound very revolutionary, but they highlight some of the practical ways churches and NGOs, in their practice of the various mission models, have appropriate motivations to avoid various kinds of abuses, including spiritual abuse. They provide new trajectories for Christian education and

¹¹⁰ See Segura-April, 'Appropriate Child Participation and the Risks of Spiritual Abuse', 174–81. Also for some practical insights of how it can be done see Glenn M. Miles and Josephine-Joy Wright, *Celebrating Children*, 207–356.

Christian mission to both adults and children to empower their 'capabilities'. Moreover, these principles can serve as a basis for a preliminary theology of mission that reshapes the models of child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy and their underlying motivations. A theology of child participation can further help the existing Christian models in contemporary Christian mission. Finally, this investigation suggests that such an approach will need to be juxtaposed with a theology of mission that encourages dialogue with children, CAR and all the agencies that are working towards their nurture and development. In such efforts, attributes of childness that are built on a fundamental foundation that CAR are subjects in God's kingdom and mission can be great motivating factor. Having such motivations can significantly help churches and NGOs to move from a notion of just saving CAR to upholding their God-given rights. Moreover, using these foundations and principles become essential where child rights policies become important in child-related work, and where Christian work among children exists in an environment of suspicion and vigilance, such as in contemporary India. Using a theology of child participation avoids manipulating the vulnerable and defenceless. It rather empowers Christian missions to CAR through churches and Christian NGOs to do authentic Christian mission. It also serves as a defence mechanism against all sorts of manipulation and proselytization of CAR and their families within Christian missions. While practising such Christian models in God's mission human rights and the UNCRC are not undermined but, rather, the human dignity of CAR is best realised. While engaging in such kind of missions, it is hoped that, "children may not be the center of mission but rather an inextricable part of the intergenerational mission of God to humankind".¹¹¹

7.6. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to investigate basic foundations and principles for Christians to work among CAR in South India and elsewhere. The necessary foundation argued throughout the chapter was that CAR are to be perceived as

¹¹¹ Douglas McConnell, 'Encyclopaedia of Mission and Missionaries', ed. Jon Bonk, *Children, Youth and Missions* (New York; London: Routledge, 2007), 68.

subjects, as indicated in the Bible and the UNCRC, and not as mere objects. For this to happen, this chapter proposed to augment to the already existing principles of Christian mission *to* and *for* CAR (as objects of love, care and protection) with an understanding of Christian mission *with* CAR (as subjects who can also participate in their development). Therefore, it is argued that contemporary missions are to be done in a multidimensional way – Christian mission *to/for/with* CAR. These principles will be further explored in Chapter Eight.

Another foundation that was argued is that churches and indigenous NGOs need to be made aware of UNCRC and other new legislation. Nevertheless, while doing so, in the Indian context, the role of families and community in kinship welfare methods and practices must be acknowledged, which is against UNCRC's generally individualistic prescribed approach. Hence, this chapter demonstrated that, by looking at the UNCRC afresh from an Indian perspective, children and adults cannot be perceived as independent individuals, but as interdependent beings needing each other for care, protection and development within the web of relationships for mutual sustainable development, acknowledging that a child's identity, nurture, growth and development are found in a family. Hence, the family becomes the nursery bed on which a child's physical, social, mental and religious development is shaped, which Christianity and the UNCRC upholds. To bring a change within churches and society for holistic and authentic Christian witness can raise several challenges, but these challenges can be resolved through a process of 'dialogue' with all those who are concerned for CAR. Christian missions should strive more towards such an approach. So, we can conclude that in the contemporary Indian context the UNCRC needs to become a guiding tool for policies to be framed and programmes developed, after proper critical deliberations. All this will require a bold humility to analyse past and existing beliefs and practices and not to repeat the mistakes of the past. To do this, the final section developed a preliminary theology of mission as a foundation to work with CAR, using UNCRC as a missional tool, in and through the idea of childness and by encouraging a theology of child participation. Hence, it is proposed that these foundations and principles of Christian mission to CAR can be advocated dialogically

through sermons, Bible study, seminars, workshops, networking and partnering with churches and agencies working for and with CAR.

This chapter of the thesis seeks to open a new, feasible way to develop a theology of missions with CAR. But some areas need further exploration. Concepts in this thesis, such as the radical humility based on childness will be hugely counter-cultural in all societies and especially in hierarchical India. Secondly, in India, many state schemes are influenced by a vote-bank which involves caste-based politics; and faith-based NGOs of all religions tend to be conscious of and sometimes even entirely driven by the community identity of those they wish to help. In such cases, how will such collaboration with 'others' take place? Can Christian mission to CAR move beyond such caste and community boundaries? These and many other challenges will be faced in contemporary Christian mission to CAR. However, it is here that the attributes of childness – vulnerability, openness, immediacy and neediness – take precedence. It is surely the hope of Christians that, while joining in with the Spirit in solidarity with humanity in God's mission for CAR, the same Spirit will also empower and offer discernment to do it authentically and faithfully.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

This concluding chapter returns to the questions that were raised in the Introduction and seeks briefly to answer those questions in three parts. The first states the key findings from evaluating the various models and theological motivations in contemporary Christian mission practice to CAR in South India. This evaluation is carried out specifically in the light of child rights and growing vigilance from the government and Hindu religious fundamentalists. Secondly, a few limitations of this research are highlighted, indicating possible trajectories for future research, and an attempt is made to locate this pioneering research within the existing body of literature and research. Finally, principles for future Christian practice are expounded.

This study used child evangelism, child compassion and child advocacy as three models for a structured, comprehensive evaluation of various models and theological motivations underlying work for CAR. Although other methods could have been used, this approach was found to be feasible and appropriate for this qualitative research in the Indian context. In summary, the first part of this study mapped the history of Protestant mission practice to CAR in India. This research indicates that, even though the category of 'Children at Risk' (CAR) is a twentieth-century, secular invention, care and protection of children at risk are not a twentieth-century phenomenon, but such activities existed earlier. Significant among them have been Christian work with CAR, including such work in India. The second part of the research analysed actual contemporary Protestant mission practices through qualitative research on selected Protestant churches and Christian NGOs that were engaging with CAR and that were based in the South Indian cities of Bangalore and Chennai. The main conclusions strongly suggested that, although it exists, Protestant mission in its three approaches of child evangelism, child compassion, and child advocacy particularly to and for CAR is a contested space and often inadequate, especially in the sphere of advocacy.

Inadequacy was identified at three levels: first, in engaging with the government; secondly, at inter- and intra-church and NGO levels; and, thirdly, in participating in Civil Society on behalf of CAR from all backgrounds.

This research further argued that such inadequacies are due to the secularisation and professionalisation of childcare and protection, arising mainly from the emerging child rights movement. These trends have caused churches and some indigenous NGOs either to become more cautious or uncritical while accommodating new ideas and approaches, while getting involved in such activities. There are new laws and increased monitoring from both international and national agencies and increasing allegations and vigilantism from Hindu religious fundamentalists against Christian work to and for CAR, accusing it of being a means to convert. Such developments are placing Christian missions to CAR themselves at risk.

This research has attempted to fill a significant gap in missiology and practical theology in the following ways. First, it is pioneering research that reflects theologically on the actual practices and lived experiences of Christian mission caregivers working with CAR in selected churches and NGOs in South India. Secondly, it proposes a theology of mission with CAR as a mission of God in and through 'childness', having attributes such as vulnerability, openness, immediacy and neediness. Christians have a strong faith tradition in this, so this thesis has advocated a Christian response using UNCRC as a tool to intervene in the contemporary context. However, a Christian theological critique of child rights from an Indian Christian perspective is promoted, with sensitivity to family, community and kinship-based welfare values founded on the Bible and Indian cultural practices on the one hand and, on the other, with accountability to new legislation in India and the global community, as discussed in Chapter Seven. The empirical data in this research also clearly suggests that churches and agencies that are most active among CAR, in reality, are from a 'conservative' background and are often thought to be exclusively 'spiritual' and otherworldly in their concerns. It seems that their evangelistic goal has in practice often led churches and agencies to holistic engagement with CAR and to have some elements of evangelism, compassion and advocacy. In contrast, other ecumenical bodies have had much to say about

liberation theology and social problems faced by Dalits, women, and tribal communities, yet seem to have a comparatively less holistic engagement with CAR as they focus less on evangelism, with their work through churches generally confined to their marginalised church members (women, often Dalits, and even people from tribal communities) and mostly in and through institutions. However, the situation is different with their NGOs, who cater to the wider community. On the other hand, ecumenical churches have used dialogue as mission to engage with other communities and agencies; an area Evangelical and Pentecostal churches are yet to explore. This thesis has suggested that working together for CAR through dialogue can provide creative opportunities to learn and unlearn from each other as co-participants in God's mission.

Additionally, this thesis suggests that Protestant mission to and for CAR needs to broaden the scope of Christian understanding of holistic mission by perceiving CAR as subjects of God's mission and Kingdom. The traditional debate on a holistic mission has been about keeping a balance between evangelism and social work. However, Protestant mission to CAR challenges this notion. Here, a holistic approach involves integrating not only evangelism and social work, but also advocacy. Christian mission *to, for* and *with* children also attempts to recover the place of children in the holistic mission, as against the traditional idea that mission is *by* and *for* adults. In a similar vein, one needs to recognise that, since the mid-nineteenth century, some female missionaries focussed primarily on a Christian mission to children. However, can Protestant mission to CAR remain holistic if only women do it? Are not men and even children included in holistic missionary work? Finally, holistic mission covers not only the marginalised sections but also integrates the whole of society – including children, men and women (along with the whole of creation), irrespective of what class, gender, geography, age, caste, race or religion one belongs to. Nevertheless, among those, Christian mission is naturally drawn to the most marginalised and vulnerable sections of society, which are, no doubt, the children at risk.

This research began with several assumptions which were, during the study period, shaped, corrected and developed. In the last three years, interest in children, childhood and children at risk has grown in almost all aspects, especially in

Christian reflection. However, there are still many unexplored areas. One of the challenges faced by the researcher was to bring focus to this study and not try to address too many unanswered questions, a problem which also illustrates the complexity that this mission with CAR inherits. The possibilities for research on CAR are so vast that the more disciplines and approaches are discovered, the more promising and new perspectives emerge. Therefore, this study claims only that it has dealt with a small part of the many areas needing to be explored. There are still many gaps that need to be filled. It is hoped that this study will provide new trajectories in research relating to CAR from historical, biblical, theological, missiological and contextual perspectives and through comparative methods. Areas for possible further research include a focused study on various categories of CAR and their implications for Christian missions in India; an in-depth analysis of child rights from an Indian Christian perspective; and exploring Christian missions as provision, protection, prevention and participation of CAR through churches and NGOs.

This research has a geographical limitation in representing the dynamics of Christian mission in South India. For example, in North India the percentage of Christians living there is much less; on the other hand, in North East India a few states have a very high percentage of Christians. Christian missions in these contexts will differ. The findings of this research do not necessarily apply to these contexts. However, as it has been argued, there are some common themes and challenges to which this research provides appropriate answers and material with which to interact and explore. Moreover, similar research can be done not only in India but also in other parts of the world. When such research emerges from various contexts, comparative studies are possible which will permit a global conversation on CAR and Christian missions. One potential area of research would be the impact of Christian missions on CAR and the implications of this on other religions, amid growing religious fundamentalism and vigilantism towards Christian work in general and specifically towards CAR-related ministries. Another would be the impact on Christian missions to CAR of changing social landscapes due to migration in rapidly-developing India. One significant limitation of this research is not engaging with the voices of children directly, but only through their caregivers.

This was a deliberate choice, to provide adult caregivers more freedom to share their opinions without fear, which otherwise would have been curtailed if children's voices were to be included. Moreover, from the beginning of this study, the focus was on CAR through the eyes of those directly involved in providing childcare, whose voices are often overlooked in child-focused work.

Karen Wells' comment was raised in Chapter Two,¹ questioning whether Christian mission in India is involved in a transition from child saving and protection to child rights and participation. This study on selected churches and domestic NGOs has indicated that such a shift has not yet happened toward child rights, especially in child participation – activity is still located primarily within the realms of child saving and protection, while also using evangelism and compassion models and motivations for their work with CAR. One important shift or trajectory that is required by most of the churches and indigenous NGOs studied is to articulate theologically and demonstrate the close connection between the Christian understandings of justice and love (or compassion) in their existing work with CAR. However, among the majority of INGOs, the UNCRC is a key motivating factor, and their models of work are shaped accordingly. This demonstrates that there is great diversity in Christian missions to CAR in South India, and perhaps indicates that such diversity is to be cherished alongside the need to work towards some degree of unity. This research does not prescribe a single monolithic model, because that would be impossible, given the diversity and dynamics involved. But what is prescribed are some foundations such as using the UNCRC as a missional tool, doing a theology of mission in and through 'childness' and, finally, by incorporating a theology of child participation as a possible framework to work with CAR in South India. For this to happen, as indicated in the previous chapters, three principles are further explored to strengthen the foundations and to bring all who work for CAR together:

¹ See Footnote 34 of Chapter 2.

1. It is God's mission *to* CAR – a common goal for the Church.
2. It is mission *for* CAR – for CAR in unity through partnership and networking.
3. It is mission *with* CAR (with childness) and with the Community – with common attributes, in bold humility through a theology of child participation.

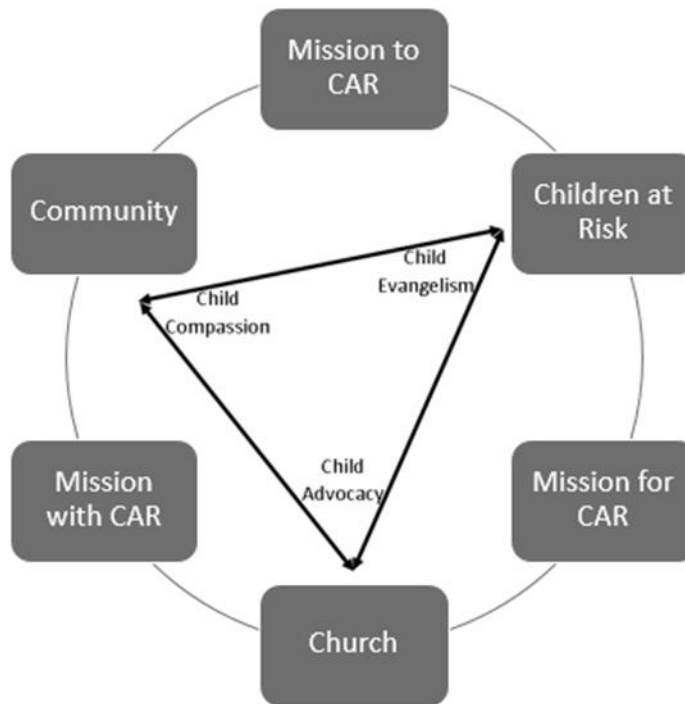


Figure 6: Multidimensional representation of contemporary Christian mission to, for and with CAR

Based on this foundation (see Fig. 6), this thesis proposes foundational principles that can help Christians to be faithful in God's mission among CAR in contemporary Christian mission in South India. This requires multi-dimensional work consisting of missions 'to, for and with CAR'² and encourages theologians and missiologists in India and elsewhere to push their boundaries to provide new insights on theology of mission and to be involved in Christian missions with CAR, Church and the community through 'dialogue'. It is to be hoped that these recommendations will

² Developed from ideas presented in Greener, 'Children-at-Risk and the Whole Gospel: Integral Mission "To, For, and With" Vulnerable Agents of God', 165–66; 'Mission with Children at Risk - Lausanne Occasional Paper 66', Lausanne Movement, 2 May 2017, <https://www.lausanne.org/content/lop/mission-children-risk-lop-66>.

prove to be foundational principles which can nurture others through future research and practice for Christian mission to CAR. They are as follows:

1. Principle 1: Christian Mission *to* CAR as God's Mission:

As discussed in the previous chapter, Christian mission to CAR is a contested space with many other equally important missions. However, in recognising Christian mission to CAR as God's mission, this principle asserts this focus, by emphasising the urgency and non-negotiability of mission. It begins first by recognising the neglect of CAR and the existing missional gap both in reflection and practices and then, secondly, by finding that space to do missions to CAR. However, for this to happen, the notion that it is a specialised work by a few qualified workers needs to be removed by empowering adult and child agencies at all levels. God's mission to CAR will need to incorporate a holistic or integral approach using evangelism, compassion and advocacy models for the spiritual, physical, emotional, social and mental developments of a child. In short, it is a principle that proposes that the whole church should take the whole gospel for the whole child. Moreover, this being God's mission, it is a mission which is beyond the walls and compound of the church and happens in the community alongside the mission of the Holy Spirit and for humanity. It also recognises the limitation that one church or one NGO cannot accomplish such mission to CAR, but it will require synergetic missional relations with others working for CAR. This leads to the next two principles that are interconnected:

2. Principle 2: Mission *for* CAR in Unity through Partnership and Networking (Advocacy):

This study discovered that there is a desire among caregivers working for CAR to work alongside others, but that many have not found such avenues. This principle directly relates to works of advocacy and hence proposes standing in the gap between CAR and others as agents who facilitate a web of relationships between various agencies related to CAR through teaching, training and learning from each other in partnerships and networks. This will enable churches and NGOs engaging with CAR to share their vision and best practices with other churches, NGOs and the

community. This model of work can resolve tensions and avoid suspicion. To do this, as proposed in this research, a theology of mission in and through childness can provide the needed impetus for Christian mission to CAR. Hence, this principle suggests that mission for CAR needs to be conducted in partnership with churches, local government agencies, NGOs and community, which includes families, parents and the environment in which a child is nurtured, grows and develops. Such engagements will enable Christian missions to critique existing practices for CAR in a healthy environment for the sake of CAR.

3. Principle 3: Christian Mission *with* CAR through Child Rights.

This is perhaps the least explored and hence most challenging of the three principles. It begins with a fundamental belief that children are human beings made in the image of God. They have every right to be part of the kingdom of God and are equal members of God's household. The other challenge to overcome is to develop awareness of child rights in the light of Christian faith and Indian identity. The four P's proposed by UNCRC – Provision, Protection, Prevention and Participation of children – need to be grounded in Christian faith and practice. Such deliberations can help shift the thinking from perceiving children as mere objects to subjects having human dignity and rights. This research has attempted to demonstrate that UNCRC can be used as a tool for missions. Christian missions have, for a long time, been involved in providing for and protecting children, sometimes preventing children from being abused, through compassionate ministries. However, what is lacking in contemporary Christian missions is child participation in Christian missionary work. CAR are to be seen as subjects who, while being transformed, are also capable of becoming agents of community transformation to eradicate poverty and to promote sustainable child development, as seen in some of the case studies in this research. For this principle to work, a radical humility informed and sustained by 'childness' can be of great help. Moreover, in Christian mission with CAR, in the vulnerability and at-risk conditions of CAR, children invite all, including adults working with them, to be transformed along with them.

The question now remains: in the contemporary context, are Christian caregivers ready to accept this invitation to work for and with CAR, or will they

resist this change? In the previous chapters, this research has accepted the UNCRC as a preliminary foundation on the basis that it has been influenced by Christians and by the basis for their work that Christian caregivers have found in Scripture. It is evident from this study that, to continue in God's mission to, for and with CAR in the contemporary pluralistic Indian context, Protestant mission has to move from just saving or rescuing CAR to also protecting their rights and encouraging them to be participants in God's mission. Recalling the quotation made at the beginning of Chapter Two, which is on 'making this world fit for children', and the theological reflection in the previous chapter, it is vital that children, especially CAR, find their due space in the contemporary context.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Consent Form for participation and personal data to be used for research

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research project, the details of which are:

Research Project name:	PhD research on 'Evaluating contemporary Protestant mission to children at risk in South India: Developing foundations and principles for future Christian practice
Name of the researcher:	Dhinakaran R. J. Prasad Phillips; UNN: s1201550
Researcher's Contact details:	UK: New College, School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh, Mound Place, Edinburgh EH1 2LX, UK India: ...
Scope of the project:	This project attempts to discover various models and underlying motivations of Protestant mission to children at risk in South India and also study the ideas relating to the rights of the child in Christian mission
Confidentiality and Anonymity	The opinion expressed will be kept confidential from the employer or any other party, and will be quoted only in the thesis for which this research is being conducted and for academic purpose only. Anyone who anticipates risk, harm and discomfort and wish to remain anonymous in this thesis, will be referred to under an alias name.

Please complete the following: Please tick (✓) the appropriate choices.

I consent to participate in this research project for no extra benefits and understand that I may withdraw at any time. YES NO

I consent to use my personal data, as outlined below, being held for use in the research project detailed above YES NO

- The data collected through focus group on _____ at _____.
- The data collected during the in-depth interview on _____ at _____.
- The data collected through the questionnaire on _____.

Name and Signature:	
Date:	

Appendix 2

Questionnaire: Christian Caregivers of work with children at risk

Introduction: The purpose of this study is to discover contemporary models of Christian mission to children at risk (CAR) and their underlying motivations in South India. The study also attempts to understand the ideas of rights of the child in relation to Christian mission. This questionnaire is to be completed by Christian caregivers who have worked with CAR for at least five years. *CAR here refers to children who are at risk from abuse, exploitation, marginalisation and deprivation, and live in impoverished urban environments.* This study does not deal with CAR directly and their issues but with agencies that work for and with CAR.

Instructions: There are different types of questions in this questionnaire. Some you will have to briefly answer, some you will have to answer by ticking (✓) from the alternative answers suggested, and one you will have to rank as 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively. If none of the alternatives suits your position, write your own answer briefly. If any question is not relevant please omit. This survey will take about 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Please go through the questions first before you start completing the questionnaire.

- This survey is conducted exclusively for an academic purpose.
- The opinions expressed by you will be kept confidential from your employer or any other party, and will be quoted only in the thesis for which this research is being conducted. If you wish your identity to remain anonymous in the thesis, please indicate this in Part I below, and you will then be referred to under an alias name.
- Any suggestions or supplementary comments will be gratefully received.
- Thank you for your kind cooperation.

(D.R.J. Prasad Phillips, PhD Candidate, School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh, UK. India)

Part 1: General Background

Name:.....

Age	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 – 30	<input type="checkbox"/> 31-50	<input type="checkbox"/> 51 and above
Years of Experience	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 plus
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	

Church:.....

Qualification :..... Organisation working:.....

Place/Location :..... City:

Date : Occupation :

Do you want your identity to be anonymous? Yes No

Part 2: Christian mission and children at risk

1. What do you understand by the phrase ‘children at risk’?

.....
Which phrase conveys meaning most clearly for you?

- Children living in difficult circumstances Children at risk Vulnerable children
- Children in crisis Any other.....

2. What are the primary risk factors children are exposed to in your context?
(Insert 1, 2, 3 and 4 in each column to indicate your ranking)

Abuses

	Physical		Mental		Sexual		Social
--	----------	--	--------	--	--------	--	--------

Deprivation

	Health Care		Basic Food/ Shelter		Basic Education		Home /Family
--	-------------	--	---------------------	--	-----------------	--	--------------

Marginalisation

	Sickness		HIV+/ AIDS		Dysfunctional Family		Poverty
--	----------	--	------------	--	----------------------	--	---------

Exploitation

	Child Labour		Street Children		Sexual Exploitation		Begging
--	--------------	--	-----------------	--	---------------------	--	---------

Any other.....

3. What are the various kinds of work with CAR in which you are involved?

a. In your church:

b. Why are you involved in your church?

.....

In your organisation

4. What attracted you to this organisation in particular to pursue your work with CAR?

.....

5. In your work with CAR, which of the following statements would most accurately describe the model of Christian mission or ministry you are following? Please ✓ no more than THREE:

- I am/we are seeking to save their souls for eternity.
- I am/we are seeking to save the souls of their family members for eternity.
- I am/we are trying to deliver them from poverty and deprivation.
- I am/we are trying to protect them from abuse and oppression.
- I am/we are showing them Christian compassion.
- I am/we are showing others what Christian love means in practice.
- I am/we are trying to create awareness in the churches of the needs of CAR.
- I am/we are trying to raise the consciousness in society of the rights of CAR.
- I am/we are trying to persuade local, state, and national governments to take a more active role in protecting the rights of CAR.
- Any other.....

6. What are some of the underlying reasons that motivated your mission to CAR?

.....

7. Are there any specific theological reasons or biblical passages that motivated you? If so, what are they?

.....

8. Do you have some example you want to follow (✓ the appropriate ones)?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jesus Christ | <input type="checkbox"/> Mother Teresa |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pandita Ramabai | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal experiences with CAR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Amy Carmichael | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other |

9. In what way might God have a special concern for children at risk?

.....

10. Do you think children have rights? If so, name up to THREE rights that children possess.

- 1.....
- 2.
- 3.

11. What Christian beliefs or doctrines might be relevant to the claim that children have rights? If you do not think it is theologically appropriate to claim that children have rights, please indicate why you believe this?

.....

12. Are you aware the rights of the Child as incorporated in:

a. The Indian Constitution

Yes No Some

b. The United Nations (UN) Declaration of Human rights made in 1948.

Yes No Some

c. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, India ratified in the 1992.

Yes No Some

13. What place should protecting the rights of the child play in Christian mission to CAR?

.....

Why?.....

14. What are some of the challenges you face or anticipate as you work with non-Christian CAR?

.....

15. What are the various changes required in your church and organisation in order to be ineffective and efficient in Christian mission with CAR in India?

.....

.....

Appendix 3
Questionnaire
Parents or Guardians of Non-Christian Beneficiaries
of Christian mission to children at risk

Introduction: The purpose of this study is to discover contemporary models of Christian mission to children at risk (CAR) and their underlying motivations in South India. The study also attempts to understand the ideas of rights of the child in relation to Christian mission. *CAR here refers to children who are at risk from abuse, exploitation, marginalisation and deprivation, and live in impoverished urban environments.* This study does not deal with CAR directly and their issues but with agencies that work for and with CAR.

Instructions: There are two kinds of questions in this questionnaire. In the first question, you will have to answer by ticking (✓) from the alternative answers suggested. If none of the alternatives suits your position, write your own answer briefly and in the second, you will have to briefly answer. This questionnaire will take about 10 to 15 minutes for your complete.

- This survey is conducted, exclusively for an academic purpose.
- The opinions expressed by you will be kept confidential from any other party, and will be quoted only in the thesis for which this research is being conducted. If you wish your identity to remain anonymous in the thesis, please indicate this in Part I below, and you will then be referred to under an alias name.
- Any suggestions or supplementary comments will be gratefully received.
- Thank you for your kind cooperation.

(D.R.J. Prasad Phillips, PhD Candidate, School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh, UK)

Part 1: General Background

Name:.....

Age	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 – 30	<input type="checkbox"/> 31-50	<input type="checkbox"/> 51 and above
No of years benefitted	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 plus
Father/Mother/Guardian	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	

Number of children benefitted:.....

No of children in the family: Girls:..... Boys:.....

Place/Location :..... City:

Occupation : Date:

Do you want your identity to be anonymous? Yes No

Part 2: Christian mission and Beneficiaries

1. What in your opinion are the main reasons that motivate Christians to be involved in helping children at risk? Please read all options first and then ✓ no more than THREE:

- They want to deliver them from poverty and deprivation.
- They want to protect them from abuse and oppression.
- They want to convert them and their families.
- They want to show them Christian compassion.
- They have enough funds to help children at risk.
- They want to show others what Christian love means in practice.
- They want to create awareness in their churches of the needs of children at risk.
- They want to create awareness in society of the needs of children at risk.
- They want to raise the consciousness in society of the rights of children at risk.
- They want to persuade local, state, and national governments to take a more active role in protecting the rights of children at risk.
- Any other.....

2. What difference, if any, do you see between Christians' work and other people's work with CAR, such as government and other non-Christian people working for children at risk?

.....
.....
.....

Appendix 4

Guiding In-depth Interview questions

For interviews, some or all of the following questions will be used. The questions are designed to elicit answers that will shed light on the primary research questions of the thesis. At the beginning of the interview, a short introduction about the research was given, and the researcher explained that his research is primarily focused on children at risk living in impoverished urban environments. The questions are arranged in five categories:

Children at Risk (CAR)

1. Who is a child?
2. What do you understand by the phrase 'children at risk'?
3. What are the primary risk factors children are exposed to in your context?

Models of Christian Mission to CAR

4. What kind of work with CAR are you involved in within your church/organisation?
5. In your work with CAR, which one of the following statements would most accurately describe the model of Christian mission or ministry which you are following?
 - a. We are committed to 'Save' the children.
 - b. We are committed to serve the children through 'Compassion' and love.
 - c. We are committed to protect the 'rights' of the child.

Motivations Underlying Christian Mission to CAR

6. What inspired you to work among the CAR?
7. What motivated your mission to CAR? Any specific biblical, theological or personal reasons?
8. Do you think God has a special concern for CAR?

Child Rights and Christian Mission to CAR

9. What rights do children have?
10. What Biblical passages or Christian beliefs might be relevant to the idea that children have rights? To what extent do churches have a responsibility to protect the rights of CAR?
11. What if anything do you know about the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights?
12. What if anything do you know about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which India ratified in the 1992?
13. To what extent do parents have a responsibility to protect the rights of CAR?
14. To what extent does society as a whole have a responsibility to protect the rights of CAR?
15. What place should protecting the rights of the child play in Christian mission to CAR?

Challenges of Christian mission to CAR

16. What are some of the challenges you face or anticipate as you work with non-Christian CAR?
17. What are some of the needs in your work with CAR and how are you planning to build them?
18. What are the changes needed in your church and organisation in order to engage more efficiently and effectively as Christians with CAR in India?

Appendix 5Guiding Focus-Group Questions for the Moderator

1. Who is a Child?
2. What do you understand by the phrase 'children at risk'?
3. What kind of risk factors do children face in and around your church?
 - a. Areas of high risk
 - b. Chart is given to display
 - c. Identified and categorised
4. Do you think God has a special concern for CAR? And why?
5. Why should Christians and the church be involved in ministries and missions related to children at risk in India?
6. In what way has your church been involved in mission to CAR?
7. What motivated you to involve with these children?
8. What do you know about child rights?
 - a. Display the UNCRC sheet
 - b. NCPR book for them to have a look?
 - c. Identify the rights
9. To what extent does the church has the responsibility to protect the rights of the child?
10. To what extent do parents and society have a responsibility to protect the rights of CAR?
11. What are some of the challenges you face or anticipate as you work with non-Christian CAR? Also, why?

Appendix 6

Table illustrating identified themes as parent and child nodes for analysis and interpretation³

Code No	Parent Node	Child Node
A	Understanding the phrase CAR	
A1		Meaning of the Phrase CAR
A2		Various Primary Risk Factors
B	Models of Christian Missions to CAR	
B1		Methods and Types of work
B2		Church: B2John's; B2ECI; B2FAG
B3		Through Child Evangelism/Save Children
B4		Through Child Compassion
B5		Protecting the rights of the child/ Child Advocacy
C	Motivations underlying Christian Missions to CAR	
C1		Personal Experiences
C2		Scriptural or Bible-based inspirations
C3		Theological Reflections
C4		Influenced by some person
C5		God's heart for children
D	Rights of the child and Christian missions to CAR	
D1		Various rights of child
D2		Child rights in the Bible
D3		Church's role in protecting rights of the child
D4		Awareness of child rights in UNDHR
D5		Aware of UNCRC
D6		Parental rights and child rights
D7		Christian mission to protect child rights
E	Challenges of Christian missions to CAR	
E1		Personal
E2		By beneficiaries
E3		Society
E4		Organisation
E5		Church
E6		Needs
F	New Findings	

³ Nodes are categories that describe various levels of codes identified within the data collected from empirical research especially in NVivo software.

Appendix 7List of caregivers working in churches who participated in this research

	Name	Organisation	City	Interview Date	Questionnaire Date
1	Mary Paul	St John's Church	Bangalore	03.11.2014	03.11.2014
2	Satyandam Paul	St John's Church	Bangalore	29.10.2014	11.11.2014
3	D Merwin Joshua	St Andrew's Church	Chennai	09.10.2014	05.11.2014
4	J. Charles Wesley	St Andrew's Church	Chennai	04.10.2014	04.10.2014
5	Gavin Cunningham	First AG Church	Bangalore	18.10.2014	18.10.2014
6	Thomas Moses	Bethesda Baptist Church	Bangalore	-	03.11.2014
7	Titus John	Bethesda Baptist Church	Bangalore	-	07/11.2014
8	William John	Living Hope Church	Bangalore	-	03.11.2014
9	K.P. Robinson	Believer's chapel	Chennai	-	09.10.2014
10	Presanna Robinson	Believer's Chapel	Chennai	-	10.10.2014
11	Peter*		Bangalore	19.09.2014	13.10.2014
12	Alice*		Bangalore	18.10.2014	13.11.2014
13	Susan*		Chennai	-	03.11.2014
14	Daniel*		Bangalore	29.10.2014	08.11.2014
15	Ruth*		Bangalore	18.10.2014	11.11.2014

*Pseudonym – Details of the church not given to protect the identity

Appendix 8**List of NGO caregivers who participated in this research**

	Name	Organisatio	City	Interview Date	Questionnaire Date
1	J Asir Jeyasing	CCCYC	Bangalore	29.09.2014	13.10.2014
2	Joshua Kenneth James	CCCYC	Bangalore	30. 09.2014	20.10.2014
3	Rev Solomon Benjamin	CCCYC	Bangalore	30.09.2014	15.10.2014
4	Teresa James	CCCYC	Bangalore	30.09.2014	15.10.2014
5	Amita	OL*	-	21.10.2014	11.11.2014
6	Sam	OL*	-	21.10.2014	11.11.2014
7	Pramila*	ACLF*	-	25.09.2014	01.11.2014
8	Pat*	ACLF*	-	24.09.2014	30.09.2014
9	Sekhar*	ACLF*	-	25.09.2014	12.10.2014
10	Priya*	ACLF*	-	29.09.2014	29.10.2014
11	K Prabakar and Malar Sarathy	FMPB	Bangalore	02.10.2014	15.10.2014
12	Rev Dr J J Harris	FMPB	Bangalore	01.11.2014	03.11.2014
13	Rev Simon Ponniah	FMPB	Chennai	04.11.2014	17.10.2014
14	C Jones Israel	SUI	Chennai	11.09.2014	15.10.2014
15	J G Jeevaraj	SUI	Chennai	11.09.2014	27.10.2014
16	S Ugin Raj	SUI	Chennai	08.10.2014	03.11.2014
17	Joseph Wesley	WVI	Bangalore	19.09.2014	14.10.2014
18	Jayakumar Christian	WVI	Chennai	10.09.2014	-
19	Christopher Bhaskaran	WVI	Chennai	-	27.10.2014
20	Clara Raphael	WVI	Chennai	10.09.2014	26.10.2014
21	Anjana Purkayastha	WVI	Chennai	10.09.2014	03.12.2014
22	C Pascal Mary	YMCA	Bangalore	26.09.2014	15.10.2014
23	Daniel Rathanakar J	YMCA	Bangalore	26.09.2014	13.10.2014
24	Maria Louis	YMCA	Bangalore	26.09.2014	15.10.2014
25	Selvaraj	YMCA	Bangalore	26.09.2014	14.10.2014
26	Esther	ACCESS	Bangalore	-	11.10.2014
27	Uma Jennifer	ACCESS	Bangalore	-	09.10.2014
28	Chitra Dananjay	ACCESS	Bangalore	-	14.10.2014
29	Eunice Mercy	ACCESS	Bangalore	-	14.10.2014
30	Kavitha Wilfred	ACCESS	Bangalore	-	10.10.2014
31	Santa Sylvia M	Asha Forum	Bangalore	-	15.10.2014
32	A Devakirubai Hosanna	BKN - CDC	Chennai	-	05.11.2014
33	Sathi*	CVV*	-	-	05.11.2014
34	Priyanka*	CVV*	-	-	11.11.2014
35	Jebakumar*	CVV*	-	-	05.11.2014
36	Ravi*	CVV*	-	-	05.11.2014
37	J B Jeyaraj	CFCD/Jubile	Bangalore	-	22.08.2014

38	Mr Lawrence Mangal Rajan	-	-	07.10.2014	04.11.2014
39	Annie*	Government	-	04.11.2014	06.10.2014
40	Ruth*	Government	-	-	06.10.2014
41	Selina	Green Bag	Bangalore	-	21.10.2014
42	Pamela	HBI	Chennai	-	03.11.2014
43	Auto Raja	Home of Hope	Bangalore	14.10.2014	14.10.2014
44	Pastor P G Samuel	Shalom Ministries	Bangalore	-	22.10.2014
45	Rev George Fernandes	Hosanna Ministries	Bangalore	-	04.11.2014
46	Daisy Phillips	Independen	Bangalore	-	02.11.2014
47	Edwina Pereira	INSA	Bangalore	-	16.11.2014
48	Florence J David	INSA	Bangalore	-	17.10.2014
49	D Ruben	KEA	Bangalore	-	30.10.2014
50	Dishon S	KEA	Bangalore	-	10.11.2014
51	M Devanand Samuel	KEA	Bangalore	-	30.10.2014
52	C Daniel Praveen Raj	Oasis	Chennai	-	09.10.2014
53	Rebecca Swamickan	Oasis	Chennai	-	09.10.2014
54	Reny George	Prison Fellowship	Bangalore	-	20.10.2014
55	Solomon Raj	Shelter	Chennai	07.10.2014	04.11.2014
56	Chitra V	UIM	Bangalore	-	07.11.2014
57	John Peter	UIM	Bangalore	-	07.11.2014
58	P C Mathew	UIM	Bangalore	-	07.11.2014
59	Jessy Job	Vatsalaya Trust	Bangalore	-	10.11.2014
60	David Selvaraj	Visthar	Bangalore	-	27.10.2014

*Pseudonym – Details of the place not given to protect the identity.

Appendix – 9
Information on the Focus Group Participants in this Research

CSI St John's Church, Bangalore on 24th October 2014, conducted in the Church Meeting Room

Moderator: Prasad Phillips; Observer: Varun Mukund

1. W John Manokaran, a retired teacher was helping the hostel as a volunteer counsellor
2. Jeyanthi Manokaran, in her mid 50's is a writer, illustrator of kids' books and was serving the hostel out of her own interest.
3. Daisy (Pseudonym), in her mid 50's volunteer at the hostel
4. Mary Isaac, a retired teacher, was volunteering as a tuition Teacher for hostel children
5. Renuka Varghese, a retired teacher and was serving as tuition Teacher for hostel children
6. Mrs Bala Jeyasing is a retired teacher and was volunteering at the hostel
7. Rev Satyanandan Paul, in his mid 50's is the main minister and serves as the Chairperson of the hostel.
8. Daniel (Pseudonym) in his 50's helps with the hostel work.
9. Mary Paul, in her 50's is the Director of Vatsalaya Charitable Trust and a member of the church and as a trained counsellor provides counselling to the hostel children
10. Victor I Jeyaraj, a retired lecturer previously worked in Madras Christian College Social Service wing and was helping the hostel as a volunteer consultant

ECI St Andrew's Church, Chennai on 4th October 2014 at the Church Premises

Moderator: Daniel Praveen; Observer: Prasad Phillips

1. K Sheela Mary, GLC Tuition teacher
2. Susan (Pseudonym), GLC Volunteer
3. Esther Mathiazhagan, GLC Tuition Teacher
4. A Ruth Saral Solomon, GLC Tuition Teacher
5. G. Valarmathi Gnanasekaran, GLC Sunday School teacher
6. Rev J Charles Wesley, Minister of the church and Administrator of GLC
7. P. Mathiazhagan, GLC Volunteer
8. Helen Ester S, GLC Volunteer

First AG Church, Bangalore on 18th October 2014 at the church Premises

Moderator: Prasad Phillips; Observer: Varun Mukund

1. Andrew Kandan, one of the assistant Pastors in his mid 30's with a theological degree who assists the slum ministry.

2. Rev Gavin Cunningham, in mid 40's is the lead minister of the church and also has done an MTh at United Theological College in Bangalore
3. Alice (Pseudonym), in her mid 40's is part of the women's church group called Elizabeth fellowship.
4. Ruth (Pseudonym), in her late 50's, an entrepreneur, a church elder and was a leader of a slum project
5. Jennifer, in her mid-20's, is a college student and volunteer with the Little Lambs' project
6. Jerome Christopher, in his 40's was the assistant pastor of the Tamil FAG church and also involves himself in the church's slum ministry.

Appendix 10**List of Parents and Guardians of CAR Who Participated in this Research**

	Name	Organisation	Occupation	Date
1	R Sita*	-	Helper in School	10.10.2014
2	Akilya*	-	-	14.10.2014
3	Vani*	-	Petty Shop Owner	04.10.2014
4	Vasanthi*	-	House Maid	12.11.2014
5	Yellamma*	-	Child Minder	01.11.2014
6	Maha*	-	Teacher	05.11.2014
7	Sathaya*	-	-	05.11.2014
8	Amira*	-	Daily Labourer	26.09.2014
9	Sumathi*	-	Daily Labourer	29.09.2014
10	Vantiha*	-	-	29.09.2014
11	Amudha	ACCESS	Project Helper	11.10.2014
12	Rani	ACCESS	School Helper	11.10.2014
13	Manjula	ACCESS	House Maid	09.11.2014
14	Priya	ACCESS	House Maid	11.10.2014
15	Manuel	ACCESS	Tailor	09.10.2014
16	Hanumantha	Bethesda Church	Daily Labourer	03.11.2014
17	Anushaya	BKV	Project Helper	05.11.2014
18	Anitha	CCYCC/Agni Rakshak	Field Mobilizer	14.10.2014
19	Mara	Home of Hope	Child Minder	15.10.2014
20	Sumathi	KEA	House Maid	26.10.2014
21	Haseena	KEA	Homemaker	07.11.2014
22	Manjula	KEA	House Maid	07.11.2014
22	Uma Prabhu	Mercy Girls Home	Project Coordinator	05.11.2014
23	Mani*	OL*	Bangalore	03.11.2014
24	Anitha Gabbur	Prison Fellowship	Homemaker	27.10.2014
25	Luke Pramod*	St John's Church	Self Employed	15.10.2014
26	Murgesan	St. Andrews Church	Masson	04.10.2014
27	Jamuna Babu	St. Andrews Church	Daily Labourer	04.10.2014
28	Ramya	St. Andrews Church	Domestic Maid	04.10.2014
29	M Asha	SUI	Fish Seller	04.11.2014
30	K Agathiya	SUI	Fish Seller	05.11.2014
31	Abdul Kaleem	YMCA	Auto Driver	14.10.2014
32	Usha	YMCA	Nurse	14.10.2014
33	Mahesh	YMCA	Gardener	26.10.2014

*Pseudonym – Organisation and names removed to protect the identity.

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