

## **ABSTRACT**

### **ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: SEX TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG GIRLS IN KARNATAKA**

by

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The purpose of this study was to find out the role of the local church in Bangalore, a region of Karnataka in executing restorative justice with special emphasis to sex trafficking of children and young girls.

Justice is a main characteristic of God who willingly relates with his creatures and endlessly seeks to restore those relationships when they are broken. God responds to the brokenness that came into world due to sin by bringing healing through the formation of a particular community who would know God's shalom and share it.

The literature review revealed that the church has an obligation and mandate to be involved in issues of justice in the society like human trafficking that is so rampant in the state of Karnataka. This study sought to find what the church in Bangalore thinks about the seriousness of the issue of human trafficking and how effectively it can be involved in fighting this social evil which is prevalent in the state and is the third largest network in the country.

The project employed a pre-intervention method with a qualitative method of research to study the relationship between the church in the city of Bangalore to the issue of sex trafficking and restoration of victims rescued from the clutches of human trafficking. The research chose ten leading denominations in the city of Bangalore comprising of pastors and lay members with a total of 40 participants. Qualitative data

was collected through open-ended questionnaires and focus group discussions for pastors and committee members of mainline church and indigenous church in four different sessions. About 60 percent of the participants knew about the issue of human trafficking in their community and could not do much about it. About 40 percent of the participants were not familiar with the issue. However, a majority of the participants agreed that this issue of human trafficking is a serious crime and the church needs to take a stand to fight against this evil.

The church is an agent of God's restorative justice who opens opportunities for the transformation of lives and community. The church can make a great impact in not just preventing human trafficking to a great extent but rescuing the victims and restoring their lives to what God intended them to be.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled  
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ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: SEX TRAFFICKING OF  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG GIRLS IN KARNATAKA

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
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Doctor of Ministry

by,

Roopa Anand

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **NATURE OF THE PROJECT**

#### **Overview of the Chapter**

This chapter is an introduction to the topic of restorative justice and the local church with special emphasis on sex trafficking of children and women in Karnataka, India. This chapter will begin with a personal introduction to what led the researcher to take up to this topic and state the gravity of the problem in the state of Karnataka. Research questions that help explore the problem are then stated, followed by a brief description on research methodology.

#### **Autobiographical Introduction**

At the age of 18, I committed my life to full time ministry and began my theological studies. During my course, I was required to be involved in summer ministry, and I opted to go to Mumbai, which is situated in the western part of India. There, I was introduced to a ministry called Bombay Teen Challenge which focused on ministry among drug addicts and young girls trafficked into prostitution. One evening, the other students and I were taken to the red light area called Kamatipura to minister to young girls who were working as prostitutes. For the first time in my life, I saw a sea of young girls as young as 10 year olds standing outside waiting for a man to pick them up. As I began to talk with them, I discovered that many spoke my native language and were from my hometown. It was shocking.

The incident that most horrified me was when a man approached me thinking I was a prostitute just like the other girls. I was scared to death and was immediately rescued by my colleagues. Eventually, I found out that hundreds of the girls standing in

this market place were trafficked from different parts of India and forced into prostitution. The question that kept disturbing me was—what if I had been trafficked like one of these girls? Since God has given me a liberated life, what could I do for these young lives?

A few years later, I got married to a pastor who had the same burden. Eventually, I too was ordained into pastoral ministry. From that time on, I have been thinking and praying about how I can effectively be involved in eradicating injustice and how the local church can play a vital role in bringing about restorative justice in the community.

Human trafficking in India is a violent and complex issue caused by economic injustice, social inequality, harmful cultural attitudes, and regional gender imbalances. It is further facilitated with corruption among government officials and police allowing trafficking of children and women to continually expand, illegal brothels continue to flourish, and traffickers continue to go unpunished.

The vast majority of these girls find themselves working in India's sprawling commercial sex industry, which, according to the government, has about three million prostitutes of which 40 percent are children under the age of 18. (Trafficking and Commercial Sex, 34)

The United Nations defines trafficking as any activity leading to recruitment, transportation, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or a position of vulnerability.

Human trafficking is considered the third largest global organized crime (after drugs and arms trade). It is a 10 billion dollar a year criminal enterprise fueled by various

factors including poverty, unemployment, corruption, gender discrimination, harmful cultural practices, and a lack of will by governments to stop it.

Almost 80 percent of all worldwide trafficking is for sexual exploitation, with an estimated 1.2 million children being bought and sold into sexual slavery every year. India is the poisonous hub for this heinous activity!

Every year millions of women and children are trafficked in India. Most of them remain within the country, being moved from one state to another. A child goes missing somewhere in the country every eight minutes. Almost 35,000 children were officially reported missing in 2011. However, only 30 percent of cases of missing children are reported. Most of these missing children are trafficked into commercial sex work.

A leading newspaper called the *Times of India* published an article on November 5, 2013 stating that Karnataka ranks third amongst states in India for human trafficking. Home ministry data says that 1,379 human trafficking cases were reported from Karnataka alone. However, many cases go unreported. Ending trafficking in India will greatly reduce the worldwide epidemic of human suffering caused by this crime.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Given the magnitude of the problem of human trafficking in India where millions of children and women are trafficked into prostitution every year and a child going missing every eight minutes, one must wonder where the church involvement is. Why is the church not effectively involved in this issue?

The state of Karnataka ranks third in the entire country for human trafficking, yet the church, which should be involved in alleviating human suffering, is not on the forefront in dealing with the problem. God has called the church to do justice and be



agents of His restorative justice. There are churches in the Karnataka region. Yet, the church does not act as the agent of restoration in the midst of such social injustice.

### **Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this research is to find out the role of the local church in Bangalore, a region of Karnataka, in bringing about restorative justice with special emphasis on children and women trafficked into prostitution. This research will explore the church's current awareness of trafficking of young girls in Karnataka, the reasons for the local church's non-involvement in the problem of human trafficking, and the ways it can be involved in bringing about restorative justice to the victims through combating the trafficking of girls and restoring the victims back into the community. This research will conclude with proposals to further the effectiveness of the church in exacting restorative justice in the area of human trafficking.

### **Research Questions**

The guiding research questions in this study are as follows/

#### **Research Question #1**

What does the local church know or how familiar are they with facts surrounding young girls in their area trafficked for commercial sex?

#### **Research Question #2**

What are the major reasons for the lack of involvement by the local church in Bangalore in restorative justice pertaining to the issue of human trafficking of young girls and women into the commercial sex trade?

### **Research Question #3**

What steps can the local church in Bangalore take toward the process of restoration of trafficked girls into the church and society as part of its restorative justice role?

### **Rationale for the Project**

The first reason why this study matters is because it will enhance the church's understanding of and its role in restorative justice. Justice is a main characteristic of God who willingly relates with his creatures and endlessly seeks to restore those relationships when they are broken. God responds to the brokenness that came to world due to sin by bringing healing through the formation of a particular community who would know God's shalom and share it.

Justice in the Bible is restorative. God is 'just' especially in that He seeks to bring about healing in relationships, transform alienation into community, restore offenders into God's family and bless all the families of the earth.

In the New Testament, Jesus emphasizes that living as part of God's people involves seeking justice, even to the point of facing persecution for doing so. This included at its heart—caring for vulnerable people, acting to restore them to the community, and introducing the concept of 'neighbor' to enemies.

Thus, this study will enhance the church's understanding of its role in restorative justice, as a call by God to accomplish His purpose where believers become healers, peacemakers, and reconcilers when faced with violence and vengeance. Through love, care, and forgiveness, the church is able to witness transformed lives through Jesus Christ. He restores dignity and purpose as recorded in Micah 6:8, "He has told you O mortal,

what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.”

The second reason why this study matters is because it will bring awareness to the church context of the rampant problem of young girls being trafficked into the commercial sex trade from the state of Karnataka. This study will inform the church about this rampant problem in the state of Karnataka which is missing thousands of its children and young girls every year to the commercial sex trade. The state of Karnataka is a hotspot of human trafficking and is the third highest in the country for the number of cases reported. Moreover, many more cases go unreported.

Human traffickers find an easy ground in the fast-growing South Indian metros, enticing their victims with huge salaries and better living. A great number of trafficking victims, especially the migrant laborers, are often forced into sex work. The NGOs and government officials’ efforts taken to rescue such victims are just the tip of the iceberg.

Therefore, if the church understood the seriousness of the problem, it could be better equipped to effect restorative justice in raising its voice against this inhuman act through preventing the trafficking of young girls and rescuing those who are trafficked.

The study is also important in that it will seek to find practical ways that the church can be involved. This study will not only enhance the church’s understanding of its role in restorative justice and bring awareness of this rampant problem but will also challenge the church to actively participate in addressing the problem of human trafficking and bring about restorative justice, thereby fulfilling its God given purpose.

The church is an agent of God’s restorative justice who opens opportunities for the transformation of lives and community. The church can make a great impact in not

just preventing human trafficking but rescuing the victims and restoring their lives to what God intended them to be. The study will explore tangible ways that such restoration could look like.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

#### **a. Restorative Justice**

Restorative justice as an approach to justice that focuses on the needs of the victims and offenders, as well as the involved community, instead of satisfying abstract legal principles or punishing the offender. Victims take active role in the process, while offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. (Kara, 6)

For the purposes of this project, restorative justice will be used from a biblical perspective where the church is called to be an agent of healing, reconciliation and restoration of lives that are victimized by human trafficking and restore a wholeness which can be found in Jesus Christ. It is not just about addressing the problem of human trafficking or rescuing of young girls from commercial sex trade but bringing about restoration of lives which if found in the work of Christ.

#### **b. Human Trafficking**

Human Trafficking is an organized criminal activity in which human beings are treated as possessions to be controlled and exploited (as by being forced into prostitution or involuntary labor). It is the trade in humans, most commonly for the purpose of sexual slavery, forced labor or commercial sex exploitation for the trafficker or for others; or for the extraction of organs or tissues, including surrogacy and ova removal, or for providing a spouse in the context of forced marriage.” Human trafficking can occur within a country or transnationally. (23)

The first known use of the term human trafficking was in the year 1988. Human trafficking represents an estimated \$31.6 billion of international trade per annum in 2010. Human trafficking is one of the fastest growing activities trans-national criminal organizations. (UNODC, 7)

For this research, the term human trafficking is used in the context of commercial sex trade where especially children and young girls from the state of Karnataka are trafficked and sold into the trade of commercial sex in the metropolitan cities of India.

#### c. Trafficking and commercial sex industry

It is a trade where women and children are trafficked into situations of forced labor and commercial sex work. Most women are deceived, coerced, drugged, or kidnapped before being trafficked for commercial sex purposes. These women have never worked as prostitutes and generally do not know what is happening until they find themselves being forced to take clients. They are either directly trafficked into strip clubs as waitresses or as dancers, which then leads to situations of forced prostitution or trafficked directly by brothels, where they are held against their will, coerced, and threatened.

#### d. Karnataka

Karnataka is a state in the South west of India. It covers 5.83 percent of the total geographical area of India and is the seventh largest Indian state by area. The capital and largest city is Bangalore. With 61,130,704 inhabitants at the 2011 census, Karnataka is the eighth largest state by population, comprising 30 districts. Kannada is the most widely spoken and official language of the state.

#### e. Local Church in Karnataka

According to Karnataka Missions Network, there are over 100 Protestant denominations in Karnataka with over 5000 churches, not including Catholic churches. The majority of the churches in Karnataka are concentrated in the cities of Bangalore, Hubli, and Raichur which have birthed branch churches that are spread out across the state and funded by the city churches. Bangalore is considered a hub of over 70 percent of Christian denominations and organizations which takes responsibility for most of the local churches in Karnataka.

In this research, the phrase local churches in Karnataka will refer to individual churches from various denominations in the state of Karnataka. This phrase will concern their involvement in dealing with human trafficking. The actual churches will be picked by certain criteria set out in the methodology section.

### **Delimitations**

The state of Karnataka comprises of 30 districts with a population of over 62 million people. There are no official statistics on the number of denominations or churches in the state since the country is considered to be a Hindu nation with various religious Hindu outfits that constantly persecute Christians. However, there is an estimation of over 100 Protestant denominations with over 5000 churches in the state of Karnataka. Since this is a huge area to be covered, this research is limited to ten leading denominations in the city of Bangalore. Only two churches from each denomination are interviewed.

The city of Bangalore is chosen rather than the entire state of Karnataka due to the large geographical area which cannot be covered within the limited time of this study. Also, most of the churches are concentrated in this city, and the act of human trafficking

is predominant there. Thus, research comprises a total of 20 churches across the city of Bangalore which has a concentration of almost all the denominations in the state of Karnataka.

This study is limited to the local church pastors and their members in the city of Bangalore because the scope of the study is the local church. Interviewing pastors and congregation members provide a clear picture about the status of the church in regard to human trafficking and their role in bringing about restorative justice.

Therefore, by sampling ten leading denominations with two pastors and two members from each denomination, comprising a total of 40 individuals in the city of Bangalore, the implications of the research could be replicated for implementation of restorative justice in the rest of the churches in Karnataka.

### **Review of Relevant Literature**

This section deals with the main themes that arose from the research literature. These themes are divided in to various categories—biblical understanding of justice, human trafficking, restorative justice, and the church's role in justice.

Since little published work has focused on human trafficking, the literature review focused on the information provided by organizations that work with human trafficking like International Justice Mission and the United Methodist Mission, as well as government related facts both from the United Nations and the Indian government statistics. Some of the top authors who addressed the issue of human trafficking are Gary Haugen, Charles Marshall, Jim Martin and Beth Grant from a global perspective and Siddharth Kara from an Indian perspective. An in-depth literature review from these agencies and writers is included in chapter two.

### **Research Methodology**

For this study a qualitative open ended questionnaire and focus group research method was used. This provided quality information needed from both points of view. Individual opinion was provided with open ended questions which enabled the participants to be comfortable and express their views in an intimate matter. Focus groups facilitated the gathering of information from various viewpoints in one place and also allow participants to trigger another participant's memory based on the topic on human trafficking.

### **Type of Research**

The research used a qualitative pre-intervention method using two effective means of open ended questionnaires and focus groups. First, a questionnaire was given to each participant individually to gather their personal knowledge and opinion on human trafficking in Karnataka. They received the questionnaires in their respective places which allowed building rapport with the participants. After a month, they were invited to a focus group which was a collective discussion of their response to the topic of human trafficking and its effect on the state of Karnataka. The venue for the focus group was the researcher's church because its central location. Moreover, this location reduced the expenses for the meeting and was not biased to one particular participant or denomination.

To seek permission from the pastor to include congregation members in this study, the researcher wrote a letter to the pastor asking permission to allow their committee member to be interviewed. Each pastor had the freedom to choose which member he would propose to be part of the study.



Through the responses received from using these methods, needed information was gathered both from a personal and group point of view to answer the research questions.

### **Participants**

The participants were local pastors and congregation members from ten leading denominations in the city of Bangalore. Bangalore is chosen because it is the capital of the state of Karnataka on which the study is based. Additionally, the act of human trafficking is rampant there. The criteria for choosing the ten denominations was based on two main aspects: first, the mainline churches which have had its presence for over a hundred years—Church of South India, The Methodist Church of India, the Baptist Church, the Assemblies of God, and the Church of the Nazarene; second, the indigenous churches which originated in India and are governed indigenously—the Evangelical Church of India, House of Worship, Indian United Evangelical Mission, Believers Church of India, and India for Christ Ministries. These criteria allowed for a broader perspective to the issue of human trafficking and various angles.

The criteria for selecting local church pastors was because this study was based on the local church attempting to propose a psycho-spiritual solution of restorative justice to the issue of human trafficking in Karnataka which can be best dealt by the local church. Two pastors from each denomination were chosen based on their seniority of experience in their ministry in the city of Bangalore, twenty pastors in total. Two congregation members also were chosen from each denomination comprising a total of 20 members. The criteria for choosing the congregation members was that they were a

committee member in the church which showed their leadership in the church and presumed to be well knowledgeable about ministry in the church.

Therefore, the total number of participants was 40 individuals. Initially, a questionnaire was distributed to the participants in their respective places asking for a personal opinion on their understanding of human trafficking. Giving the questionnaire to them personally allowed the researcher to build a relationship with the participants. This relationship was helpful for the second method, the focus group. After a month, the participants were invited to a focus group.

A total of four focus groups were formed with 10 participants each. The four focus groups were organized as follows:

Group one was comprises of 10 pastors of the mainline churches—Church of South India, the Methodist Church of India, the Assemblies of God, the Baptist Church and the Church of the Nazarene. They gathered together in the arranged venue of which they were informed earlier. These were senior pastors who served in church ministry for several years and were well informed about the issues in the community.

Group two was comprised of 10 congregational members of the same mainline churches as the group one participants. They were committee members of the church who had reasonable knowledge about ministry in the church and community.

Group three was comprised of 10 pastors of indigenous churches—Evangelical Church of India, House of Worship, Indian United Evangelical Mission, Believers Church of India, and India for Christ Ministries. These pastors mostly worked among the lower middle class society, especially those who are poor and underprivileged. This gave

an enhanced view of their opinion on human trafficking as it mostly happens among the economically poorer sections of society.

Finally, group four was comprised of 10 congregational members of the same indigenous churches which were led by group three participants. They were committee members of the church who were well informed about the affairs of the church and ministry in the community. They have been segregated based on clergy and laity which gave them openness and courage to express their views freely.

All participants were above the age of 30 in order to get an experienced point of view in the study. Groups were comprised of both men and women varying in vocation, background, and social status.

All focus groups met once in the same venue but at different times. Each focus group spent three hours in discussion from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm followed by lunch for all participants.

### **Data Collection**

After the distribution of open ended questionnaires to all participants, the questionnaires were collected from them the same day to avoid delay in the process of research. After a month's time, they were divided into four focus groups categorizing them as mainline pastors, mainline congregation members, indigenous pastors, and indigenous congregation members. They gathered at different times at the same venue. Discussions and responses from these focus groups were gathered and recorded for further development of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

The open ended questionnaires and focus group discussions were compared to see their knowledge and response to the issue of human trafficking in Karnataka. In addition, qualitative instruments such as written narratives, researcher's notes, and audio recording of the focus group discussions provided information and insight on each group's perspective to answer the research questions.

### **Generalizability**

The anonymity of questionnaires and discussions from the focus groups protected the confidentiality of the participants. The open ended questionnaires and a free flow of discussions in focus groups limited the ability to duplicate the narratives. The selection of experienced pastors and committee members from predominant mainline churches and indigenous churches gave a broader perspective and enhanced the credibility of the study and will provoke researchers for further study on the topic.

### **Project Overview**

Chapter two provides a review of literature dealing with biblical and theological foundations for restorative justice. Chapter three structures the research methodology using a pre-intervention method which includes qualitative analysis through open-ended questionnaires and focus group discussions. Chapter four reports the findings of the research from the questionnaires and focus groups analysis. Finally, chapter five interprets the findings from chapter four and concludes by offering recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW FOR THE PROJECT**

#### **Overview of the Chapter**

This chapter provides the views of various authors on restorative justice beginning with what the Bible says about justice both in the Old and New Testaments. Secondly, this chapter sets forth theological foundations on the concept of justice dealing with the theology of justice and various themes pertaining to it. Finally, this chapter highlights various research related themes like human trafficking, restorative justice, and the church's role in restoring justice to the victims of human trafficking.

#### **Biblical Foundations**

##### **Old Testament Understanding of Justice**

God is the ultimate creator. Humans were all created in God's image. His shalom encapsulates perfect justice for all. Injustice mars God's image in mankind, and shalom is broken by sin. To be justice-seekers, the church must cultivate the strength of character needed to bring restorative peace to others and to community.

The Old Testament creation narrative provides three critical pieces of understanding to frame an understanding of justice. First, God is creator (Gen. 1:1-2). Second, God affirms his creation is good. Scripture states that man and woman are created in God's own image; they are His image-bearers (Gen. 1:26). Third, God involves humans in stewarding or caring for creation (Gen. 1:28-29).

Concerning God's justice and holiness, humans are both a part of the problem and a part of the solution to the challenges of injustice in the world today. And when people become aware of the ways in which they have fallen short of reflecting the image and

likeness or character of God, they repent, receive God's healing forgiveness, and are transformed—restored into his likeness (Jer.15:19). Part of the original mandate in Genesis was for mankind to work in and cultivate the garden that God had planted. This call to cultivate the good things that God seeded in the world extends beyond gardens into every area of human life. Preserving, cultivating and promoting all that is good is a part of living righteously and incarnating God's image and likeness. This is the heart of doing justice.

The Hebrew word for Justice is '*tsedhaqah*' which means the same as 'righteousness.' Justice and righteousness are used with the same meaning and the two ideas are essentially the same. God's justice or His righteousness is vividly founded in His essential nature. This nature is not abstract but is seen in His relation to the world. In the Old Testament, God's justice appears to be retributive—that reaction of His holy will which was grounded in His eternal being against all evil. God's justice is most often conceived as the action of His mercy. All the prophets in the Old Testament insisted upon this demand for righteousness from Yahweh. For the people of Israel, justice meant the relief of the oppressed and needy, and for God it meant His kingly power engaged on behalf of people where justice and mercy constant joined together (Jeffrey, 120).

When Old Testament talks about justice, it is not only being or acting justly but also the kind of situation that would result when justice is executed. In Leviticus 19:9-10, God reminds the children of Israel to leave some of their crops for the poor, stranger, widows and orphans. This theme is also supported in Deuteronomy 24:19-22 where God commands the Israelites not to go back and collect that which was left in the fields.

A true and responsible reading of the Old Testament would produce a kind of people that are sensitive to the hurts and needs of others; people who are actively committed to making the society a better place. Righteousness is the idea of doing justice which means righting what was done wrong and restoring things to a condition of rightness.

The prophet Amos in the Old Testament was a strong contender of justice. In Amos 5:6-7, he links justice and righteousness with the presence of God as the life-bestowing force. True life in Israel could only flourish when God's concern for the vulnerable found embodiment in its social life. Such embodiment required that the gate truly was justice, correcting the wrongs committed. To experience the presence of God, was, for Amos, practicing justice. Religiosity did not matter, and he makes the point clear in 5:22-24:

I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and cereal offerings, I will not accept them, and the peace offerings of your fatted beasts I will not look upon. Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an overflowing stream.

Justice was the foundation of Amos' life. It was simple, 'do justice and live or do injustice and die.' He sees justice as something to be done—relationships established, needs met, and wrongs corrected. God's justice ultimately sought redemption. God's critique of Israel hoped that its self-destructive injustice would be corrected. He sees justice as the solution. It is about healing and transformation.

God's justice in the Old Testament centers not primarily on retribution but on salvation. God's justice does not punish so much as to correct. The justice of God saves, manifesting God's fidelity to the role as the Lord of the covenant. God created the earth and its inhabitants for harmonious relationships. God continually acts, even in the midst of human rebellion to encourage those relationships (Jeffrey, 33).

### **New Testament understanding of Justice**

Justice is one of the major themes in the New Testament. Many modern translations use the word 'righteousness' instead of 'justice' which means the same and is used interchangeably. The Greek word for 'justice' is 'dikaiosune,' and the Septuagint uses this word to translate over 90 percent of the occurrences of 'tsedek' (335).

In the New Testament, Jesus represents the fulfillment of this biblical hope. Jesus incarnates the justice of God. In him, justice moves from heaven to earth in a new and dramatic way. The prophecies regarding Jesus' birth and life connect the Old Testament scriptures with the New Testament and give the reader an insight into what God's loving-justice would look like:

The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely, and do what is just and right in the land. (Jer. 23:5)

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and of peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom,



establishing it and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. (Isa. 9:6-7)

Jesus fulfilled many roles throughout the course of his life. He echoed the Old Testament prophets in rejecting hierarchies founded on wealth, status, and pride and was radical in rejecting all forms of social discrimination. The prophet's task was to remind the people to live in accordance with the principles of God's covenant and to challenge the ideologies of status, money, and power that threatened their relationships with each other. Jesus related inclusively to those on the social margins, the destitute, deformed, sick and demon-possessed. These were religious outcasts. He delivered the demonized and challenged dominant systems of exclusion and oppression in accordance with what the prophet Isaiah had anticipated (Isa. 10:1-3).

In fulfilling his roles as prophet, priest, and king, Jesus demonstrated the fulfillment of biblical prophecy and effectively inaugurated a new kingdom, or a new 'community of creation' which Paul calls the 'new creation.' If political action is understood as seeking the welfare of people through good governance that ensure equality, protection of the vulnerable and the establishment of justice that leads to real peace, Jesus' life and teachings reflect a very real engagement with the political powers of his time (Ted, 84).

A good example of substituting 'justice' with 'righteousness' is in Matthew 6:33, "But seek first the Kingdom and its justice and all these things will be added to you." The problem presented by Matthew is that the justice of the Kingdom does not occur on earth as the Father in heaven intends. However, Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount describes what justice of the Kingdom on earth means: 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst

after justice.’ The noun and verb forms of ‘*dikaiosune*’ occur seven times in chapters five and six of the sermon (45).

### **Theological Foundations**

Chris Marshall in his book *The Little Book of Biblical Justice* attempts to explain the complicated and often misunderstood concept of biblical justice. He discusses the process in terms of supporting scriptural passages that speak about Justice. He derives four key ingredients to the idea of Justice: distribution, power, equity and rights. Later on, he examines five basic aspects that connect to different ways of approaching and interpreting God’s justice: Shalom, the Torah, covenant, deed-consequence and atonement-forgiveness.

He also mentions the expectations placed on God’s human creation in relation to Justice. Humans are made in the image of God to reflect his essence of justice, mercy, and equality. He goes on to say that Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s Justice on earth: to instill righteousness and defend the most vulnerable.

At the end of his book, Marshall describes Jesus’ work on righteousness and justice in the culture of which he was born into in Palestine. There are significant highlights to God’s preferential treatment of the poor and oppressed, easily through the completed work of Jesus on the cross. Therefore, God’s new way of fighting for the vulnerable and oppressed sent his son to the cross for redemption.

In his book *What is Biblical Justice?: The Theology of Justice flows from the Heart of God* Paul Metzger explains biblical justice as making individuals, communities, and the cosmos complete by upholding goodness and impartiality. He says that justice flows from God’s heart and character. God seeks to make the object of His holy love

complete which motivates Him throughout the Old and New Testaments in His judgment on sin and injustice.

Metzger makes a strong point stating that one of the greatest injustices people succumb to individually is self-righteousness—the belief that one does not need Jesus and is just and good apart from him. People can fail to see that Jesus is the ‘righteous judge’ judged in their place or their own acts of injustice including marginalizing him by refusing to sense their need for him to remove their sin and make them whole.

He concludes that only when people experience the wholeness that Jesus offers, they cannot fail to carry His justice forward in the world. Both individual and community transformation are part of restoring wholeness. In the post-Christian setting, many skeptics view religion as corrosive, divisive and a source of injustice. However, the kind of religion the Bible advocates is rooted in justice that flows from the heart of God and seeks to bring all things into the wholeness of God.

Andrew Kulikovsky presented a paper about the “Bible and Justice” at the Summit Australia Conference in 2007. In this paper, Kulikovsky evaluated historical and contemporary notions of justice as well as analyzed what the Bible says about the topic, and he thereby applied justice to general and specific issues faced by the church.

The book, *Rise Up O Judge: A Study of Social Justice in the Biblical World* by Enrique Nardoni traces back the roots of the biblical concept of social and liberating justice to the Mesopotamian culture and analyzes the development of justice through its different stages and various environments and communities of the Old and New Testament. In this book, the author reads the ancient and biblical texts in their own historical, social and intellectual context, relating them to contemporary culture where his

readers are participants and not mere spectators. This book gives a view of justice to the poor, widows and orphans from 3500 BCE to the synoptic gospels and the Gospel of John. It appears that nothing has changed as to justice for the poor in 5509 years.

Dealing with the concepts and themes relating to the comprehensive view of justice both in the Old and New Testaments, Carol Dempsey brings together various passages of scripture to give the historical and literary context. She gives a clear definition of justice and its relationship to compassion whereby the two virtues lead to liberation. Dealing with the dilemma of justice and violence, Dempsey introduces the understanding of how the ancient Israelite and early Christian cultures and worldviews influenced the shaping of the Old and New Testaments and how contemporary readers must approach biblical literature in relation to the contemporary global, religious and social contexts in which the texts are now heard.

Dempsey raises key issues from the Old and New Testaments as well as from the Apocrypha. This book deals with selected passages of scripture that seeks to provide readers of the Bible an opportunity to reflect in light of today's struggles with injustice.

Christopher Marshall notes that the pursuit of justice must be a primary obligation of the people of God and that to know God is to learn about the meaning of justice. To love this God is to join in God's great campaign to restore justice to the world.

## **Research Themes**

### **1. Human Trafficking**

Siddharth Kara who was the first Fellow on Human Trafficking at the Harvard University speaks and consults extensively on contemporary slavery and human rights. He also advises several governments as well as private and non-governmental

organizations on antislavery policy and law. *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*, is the first of three books providing his groundbreaking new approach to contemporary slavery.

In this book, Kara provides a riveting account of his journey into this brutal industry sharing the moving stories of its victims and revealing the shocking conditions of their exploitation. He also describes the local factors and global economic forces that gave rise to the different forms of modern slavery over the past two decades and quantifies, for the first time, the size, growth, and profitability of each industry. Finally, he identifies the sectors of sex trafficking industry that would be hardest hit by specifically designed interventions and recommends the specific legal, tactical, and policy measures that would target these vulnerable sectors and help to abolish this form of slavery, once and for all.

This book deals with three aspects of this world-wide business: the exploitative traffickers, the wrenching servitude of the victims and the economics of the trade.

In *Beyond the Curtain: Project Rescues Fight for the Victims of Sex-slave Industry*, David and Beth Grant explain what goes on in the red light districts of India and how Project Rescue helps intervene through prevention and restoration. The emotional and spiritual needs can be a huge message to these women who have been looked down upon, abandoned, abused, used, suicidal, demon possessed, HIV/AIDS victims, etc. This book will enable the readers to discover how millions of girls are living tragedies every day as they are forced into the third largest profitable criminal industry in the world. It describes how Project Rescue sets out to share Christ's love and rescue girls from this cycle of abuse.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime developed a joint initiative with the Government of India and published *A Resource Book on the Legal Framework on Anti Human Trafficking*. This book deals with collecting, reviewing, and analyzing the relevant national legislations, international and regional instruments, and judicial precedents that bring out the full range of crimes which comprise human trafficking; analyzing the existing legal framework in the light of international and regional legal standards on trafficking, and provide recommendations where necessary.

This book attempts to sensitize the legal law enforcement officials and other stakeholders regarding the effective role they can play under various available laws on trafficking. It hopes that a proper reading of the law will lead to its better enforcement. This will result in victims being rescued more effectively. As a part of this, appropriate protective measures will be ordered looking at the age of victims so they will have a better chance of reintegration into the society. This is a concise, practical and user friendly tool useful for to all stakeholders working in the field of anti-human trafficking.

Sadika Hameed et al. did research on the dynamics and efforts taken to fight Human Trafficking in India in their report, *Human Trafficking in India: Dynamics, Current Efforts, and Intervention Opportunities for the Asia Foundation*. The authors are graduate students from Stanford University who did this research at the request of Asia Foundation. It outlines the landscape of human trafficking in India, evaluating the current NGO, donor, and government efforts to fight trafficking and recommends promising interventions based on current gaps and ‘best practice’ approaches.

This report explores the potential for developing a program for their new office in India. The research first reviews available secondary information and data based on the

dynamics of human trafficking in representative states. Later, it interviews NGOs and donor organizations in India to understand their implementation hurdles and identify best practices.

The US state department in their report, *Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery* describes the situation of India in terms of human trafficking for bonded labor and commercial sex exploitation. It states that the Government of India does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is however making efforts to do so. This report gives certain recommendations for India to continue to expand central and state government law enforcement capacity to conduct intrastate and interstate law enforcement activities against human trafficking and bonded labor. It comes up with a strategy of prosecution, protection, and prevention of human trafficking by suggesting ways to curb it.

## **2. Restorative Justice**

Howard Zehr, one of the founders of the restorative justice movement, writes about the response to violence and crime in his book *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*. He first explores how restorative justice is different from criminal justice. He proposes workable principles and practices for making restorative justice both possible and useful. He also discusses what Restorative Justice is not.

Dennis Sullivan and Larry Tifft advocate in their well-researched essay, *Restorative Justice: Healing the Foundations of our Everyday Lives*, a radical alternative to the punishment reflex of the criminal justice system—a ‘needs based’ model of restorative justice. Instead of defining justice in relation to people’s rights, the needs-based model strives to respond to the needs of all participants. The authors apply this

distinctive restorative justice beyond the legal system, to resolving conflicts in families, schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods.

This book breaks down the components of restorative justice, argues for transformative justice (which would require reorganizing the way people interact with each other and institutions economically and well as socially) and presents good examples of how the state has coopted certain aspects of restorative justice in ways that are ineffective.

*Good News about Injustice: A Witness of Courage in a Hurting World* by Gary Haugen lays out a comprehensive theology of justice and injustice, sharing his experience as a UN investigator and discussing what the scripture says and how Christians are to respond to it. Haugen is the founder and CEO of International Justice Mission. The main chunk of his work is in the middle of his book where he makes four affirmations about the nature and character of God that are crucial in understanding what God wants from us. First, God loves Justice and conversely hates injustice; second, he has compassion on those who are suffering injustice—everywhere around the world without distinction or favor. Third, God judges and condemns those who perpetrate injustice. and fourth, God seeks active justice for those who suffer injustice.

In his book, he makes a passionate plea, calling out to those who desire a Christianity that risks, dares, and desires not a domesticated Christ, but one who is out in the darkest corners of the earth. Haugen not only offers stories of courageous witnesses past and present but also calls the body of Christ to action. He offers concrete guidance on the ways and means its members can rise up to seek justice throughout the world.



Nicholas Wolterstorff in his book, *Journey Toward Justice: Personal Encounters in the Global South*, addresses the seismic shift to the global South and East and reflects on what he has learned about justice through his encounters with world Christianity. As a philosopher, he shares how his experiences in South Africa, the Middle East, and Honduras shaped his views on justice through the years. He offers readers an autobiographical tour, distilling the essence of his thoughts on the topic. After describing how he came to think about justice and reviewing the theory of justice he developed in earlier writings, Wolterstorff shows how deeply embedded justice is in Christian Scripture. He reflects on the difficult struggle to right injustice and examines the necessity of just punishment. Finally, he explores the relationship between justice and beauty and between justice and hope.

*Welcoming Justice: God's Movement toward Beloved Community* by Charles Marsh, John Perkins, and Philip Yancey is a combination of social justice and scholarly reflection. This book provides important insights into the life, testimony, theology and ministry of John Perkins. It is both a work of inspiration and a work of history reflecting the leanings of the dual authors. It provides novices, faithful servants, and even the weary laborers the inspiration to persevere in God's kingdom work. John Perkins and Charles Marsh provide a view of compassion, mercy and justice ministry that needs to be heeded in the context of a new evangelicalism in North America. Together the authors attempt to restore the vision, both conceptually and practically, showing how theology can be lived out in a multicultural society despite its deeply stained past.

### 3. Church's role in Justice

In his book *The Just Church*, Jim Martin proposes a practical guide on how to do justice and how to grow in discipleship from those on the frontlines of the battle in the world's darkest and most dangerous places. Jim Martin is vice president of church mobilization for International Justice Mission, a human rights agency that protects the poor from violence. Martin shares tangible, accessible strategies to respond to God's call to seek justice, defend the widow and orphan, and rescue the oppressed, whether in far-off places or right in one's community. Jim Martin makes an invitation to follow the God of justice into some of the most fertile ground for discipleship there is and to revive one's own soul through renewed faith and a deeper experience of God.

In the second section, *The Justice Journey*, Jim Martin expands the readers understanding of the process of spiritual formation. By fueling one's work, encountering the Just God, discovering one's talent, and stepping out in faith instead of fear, this book invites on an adventure with God, who uses pilgrimages to transform pilgrims.

In the book, *What is the Mission of the Church?: Making Sense of Social Justice, Shalom and Great Commission*, the authors De Young and Gilbert think carefully about what the church is sent into the world to do. Looking at the Bible's teaching, they explore the what, why, and how of the church's mission for today. There are three particular strengths that set this book apart from other books on this very topic of the Church's relation to mission, culture, and the world. First, the points made in this book are built on scriptural explanation and scriptural application. Second, the authors clarify the misunderstanding and misapplication of various Scripture passages. Third, the authors

write with a pastoral approach, clearly written with the church in mind and manage to address controversial issues with a great deal of humility.

Bethany Grant, a justice advocate poses the question that many ask—What can I possibly do to make a difference? In the face of daunting statistics on human trafficking, sexual slavery, child abuse, and brutal violence, she underscores how man's inhumanity to man can become "crushing, unbearable, paralyzing . . . and, evokes utter despair." Yet her words challenge Christians to move away from despair and with faith, toward hope, which is impossible without drawing near to the heart of God.

Through her experience with IJM the author has seen, heard, and understands the desperate need for human rights intervention on a massive scale. She poses a question that resonates with other justice-warriors, "What does it mean to pray in the face of brutal injustice?" Her insights are clear: people need to see, hear, and know. Many justice-seekers imagine the "frontlines" in fighting against violence and oppression as brothel raids or in courts of justice. Yet, the author contends the true frontlines are in the place of prayer, a radical shift in thinking for some. In this short book, Grant gives a few practical ways followers of Christ can join Jesus in bringing restoration to the world and the pathway to keep going.

*The Church's Role in Social Justice* by Calvin Van Reken invites individual Christians to be responsible, compassionate, and law abiding citizens, calling the individual churches to speak out on the general goals that a society should pursue. When it comes to moral matters when the church should address a social problem or policy proposal, the church should do so officially in and through its ecclesiastical assemblies.

Daniel Van Ness in *The Role of the Church's Criminal Justice Reform* addressed a forum on restorative justice with participants from diverse perspectives. Ness focuses on the role of the Christian church in criminal justice reform, particularly reform oriented around restorative justice. Asserting that any successful reform movement in a democracy must be presented in terms that will include people from a wide variety of belief systems, he poses two questions—why should the Church play a role in the restorative justice movement? If the church should play a role what role can it play? To answer these questions, Ness explores the past record of the church with respect to criminal justice and criminal justice reform, reasons why many Christians oppose criminal justice reform, reasons why Christians should support criminal justice reform, and ways in which the church can play a vital role in reform.

### **Research Design**

This is a qualitative research project focusing on the leading denominations in the city of Bangalore to see their perceptions and involvement in the issue of human trafficking which will be compared in a larger area of the state of Karnataka on which the project is based. This project uses a pre-intervention method which will analyze the information gathered and will offer suggestions and recommendations to help effectively involve the church in fighting the issue of sex trafficking in the state of Karnataka.

### **Review of Chapter**

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, the emphasis on the justice of God and the call for believers to do justice is very evident. The constant theme of justice is deeply embedded in Israel's history. In the Torah, God delivered the Israelites from oppression in Egypt and then expects them to be liberators as well. The Mosaic Law is filled with

examples of justice. For example, every three years the Israelites were required to bring a tenth of their produce for those that do not have an inheritance, the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows (Deut. 14:28-29). Later, the prophets echoed and reiterated such requirements. Isaiah, for example, condemns those who plunder the poor (Isa. 3:14).

In the gospels, Jesus did not come to start a religion but to announce a new kingdom, a new way of life. This kingdom was not a future state of being or some distant place but something that was happening on the earth, here and now. Rebuking the Pharisees for their lack of justice and mercy, Jesus says, “You have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness” (Matt. 23:23).

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY FOR THE PROJECT**

#### **Overview of the Chapter**

Chapter three deals with various aspects of the research methodology used for this project. It provides a brief description of the study's context, including demographics. In addition, the chapter provides details about the research participants, describing the plan for data collection and the procedure used for analyzing the data. Finally, chapter three states the steps taken to strengthen both the reliability and validity of this research.

#### **Nature and Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this research was to discover the role of the local church in Karnataka in bringing about restorative justice with special emphasis on children and women trafficked into prostitution.

The main goals of this study are threefold: 1) To find out the churches' current awareness of trafficking of young girls in Karnataka region, 2) to find out the reasons for church's non-involvement in this issue; 3) to propose ways that the church can be involved in combating young girls trafficking through restorative justice.

#### **Research Questions**

The overarching questions guiding this study were as follows:

##### **RQ #1.**

What does the local church know or how familiar are they with facts surrounding young girls in Karnataka trafficked for commercial sex?

There is a lack of awareness by the churches of the extent of the problem of young girls' trafficking. The church in Karnataka might be ignorant of this reality. Their

focus could be solely on evangelizing people to become members of the church. It simply may not have considered its role in issues of justice and reconciliation.

**RQ #2.**

What are the major reasons for the lack of involvement by the local church in Karnataka in restorative justice pertaining to issues like human trafficking of girls into the commercial sex trade?

This knowledge is important because it is the starting point of beginning to affect change in the culture and the lack of the church's activity in justice based ministries.

**RQ #3.**

What steps can the local church in Karnataka take toward the process of restoring trafficked girls into the church and society as part of its restorative justice role?

Once the churches are well equipped to intervene, the society will begin to show signs of transformation that include the number of girls rescued from trafficking and a lower number of girls that fall prey to this trade.

### **Ministry Context for Observing the Phenomenon**

Karnataka is a state in the Southwest of India. It covers 5.83 percent of the total geographical area of India and is the seventh largest Indian state by area. The capital and largest city is Bangalore. With 61,130,704 inhabitants at the 2011 census, Karnataka is the eighth largest state by population, comprising 30 districts. Kannada is the most widely spoken and official language of the state.

According to Karnataka Missions Network, there are over 100 Protestant denominations in Karnataka with over 5000 churches, not counting the Roman Catholic Church. Most of the churches in Karnataka are concentrated in the cities of Bangalore,

Hubli, and Raichur. The churches in these three cities have birthed branch churches that are spread out across the state. Bangalore is considered a hub of over 70 percent of Christian denominations and organizations which take responsibility for most of the local churches in Karnataka.

### **Participants to be Sampled**

The participants were local pastors and congregation members from ten leading denominations in the city of Bangalore. Bangalore was chosen for two main reasons. First, it is the capital of the state of Karnataka on which the study was based. Second, human trafficking is rampant there.

The criteria for choosing the ten denominations was based on two main aspects: First, the researcher considered mainline churches which have been present for over a hundred years—The Church of South India, Methodist Church of India, Church of the Nazarene, Assemblies of God, and the Baptist Church—and other independent denominations which originated in India and are governed indigenously—Evangelical Church of India, Believers Church in India, Karnataka Evangelistic Association, Reach Out Ministries International, and the Pentecostal Church. Second, this study was based on local churches attempting to propose a psycho-spiritual solution of restorative justice to the issue of human trafficking in Karnataka.

Two pastors from each denomination (20 total) were chosen based on their seniority of experience in pastoral ministry in the city of Bangalore. One congregation member was also chosen from each church selected for the study, comprising a total of 20 members. The criteria for choosing them was that they were a committee member in the church. Their active service implied leadership and knowledge about ministry. The



pastor proposed the name of committee member chosen for the study. This action avoided any form of suspicion, specifically to rule out any partiality by the researcher.

Therefore, a total of 40 participants comprised the sample for the study. The participants were both men and women. All of them including pastors and committee members were adults, and the ages ranged from 30–80. The criteria for choosing this age group was to have a balanced view of both young and old pastors' perspective.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The following ethical considerations were implemented in this study. All participants were given a consent form. The consent form was explained by the researcher, and time was given for participants to ask questions or concerns they might have had regarding the study. Since the nature of this topic is sensitive, they were given the freedom to opt out of the process. They were also informed that they could quit the study at any time during the process. The study did not involve interviewing of victims of sex trafficking. Furthermore, all participants were informed what the goals of the research were before they began the research. This study did not involve any participants under the age of 30.

### **Procedure for Collecting Evidence from Participants**

This qualitative pre-intervention study method used two effective methods—open ended questionnaires and focus groups. First, a questionnaire was given to each participant individually to gather their personal knowledge and opinions on human trafficking in Karnataka. They received the printed questionnaires in their respective homes which alleviated time constraints for the participants and allowed the researcher to build rapport with the participants.

A letter seeking permission to include committee members for interview was given to the pastor. He or she had the freedom to choose which members to propose for the study, preferring those who had some knowledge of their church ministries and above 30 years of age. The pastor and the committee members selected for the study assembled together to fill in the open ended questionnaire, either after the church service or at their residence depending on their convenience. The filled in questionnaires were collected from them the same day.

After a month's time by which the researcher would have collected all the answered questionnaires back, the participants were divided into four focus groups of 10 participants each, categorizing them as mainline pastors, mainline congregation members, indigenous pastors, and indigenous congregation members who gathered in different times at the same venue. The following is the description for the focus groups:

- a. Focus group One: A total of 10 participants comprising pastors from each of the five mainline denominations selected. The participants were largely senior pastors who served in the ministry of the church for several years and well informed about the issues in their community.
  - Church of South India – 2 pastors
  - Methodist Church of India – 2 pastors
  - Church of the Nazarene – 2 pastors
  - Assemblies of God – 2 pastors
  - Baptist Church – 2 pastors

- b. Focus group Two: A total of 10 participants comprising committee members from each of the five mainline churches selected. They were participants who had reasonable knowledge about ministry in the church and community.
- Church of South India – 2 committee members
  - Methodist Church of India – 2 committee members
  - Church of the Nazarene – 2 committee members
  - Assemblies of God – 2 committee members
  - Baptist Church – 2 committee members
- c. Focus group Three: A total of 10 participants comprising pastors from each of the five indigenous denominations selected. The participants mostly worked among the lower middle class community and villages. This gave an enhanced opinion on human trafficking as it mostly happens among the economically poorer sections of the society.
- Evangelical Church of India – 2 pastors
  - Believers Church in India – 2 pastors
  - Karnataka Evangelistic Association – 2 pastors
  - Reach Out Ministries International – 2 pastors
  - Pentecostal Church – 2 pastors
- d. Focus group Four: A total of 10 participants comprising committee members of each of the five indigenous churches selected who were well informed about the affairs of the church and ministry in their community.
- Evangelical Church of India – 2 committee members
  - Believers Church in India – 2 committee members

- Karnataka Evangelistic Association – 2 committee members
- Reach Out Ministries International – 2 committee members
- Pentecostal Church – 2 committee members

All the focus groups had collective discussion on their response to the topic of human trafficking and its effect on the state of Karnataka. The venue for the focus groups was the researcher's church because it is in the heart of the city and easily accessible. This venue reduced the expenses for the meeting and also provided a neutral place for the study.

The separate grouping along homogeneity of clergy and laity as well as denominational closeness provided a safe space for freedom of expression. All participants were above 30 years and older to get an experienced point of view in the study. All the groups comprised both men and women varying in vocation, background, and social status. All the focus groups met once in the same venue at different times. The researcher facilitated the discussions in all focus groups. Each focus group spent two hours in discussion from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm followed by snacks for all participants. The expenses for snacks and other stationary were borne by the researcher.

The researcher gathered discussions and responses from these focus groups. Questionnaire and focus groups allowed for individual and collective responses to the issue of church involvement and human trafficking.

### **Procedure for Analyzing the Evidence**

The open ended questionnaires and focus group discussions facilitated by the researcher were gathered and compared to examine the participants' knowledge and responses to the issue of human trafficking in Karnataka. The audio recordings done with

the help of an assistant was transcribed. All data was categorized according to emerging themes from the research and articulated by the participants' responses and researcher's concepts.

### **Reliability & Validity of Project Design**

The anonymity of questionnaires and discussions from the focus groups protected the confidentiality of the participants. The open ended questionnaires and a free flow of discussions in focus groups limited the ability to duplicate the narratives. The selection of experienced pastors and committee members from predominant mainline churches and indigenous churches gave a broader perspective and enhanced the credibility of the study.

### **Limitations of the Study**

One limitation of the study is that the actual victims of sex trafficking and as well as their perspectives are not represented by the research. Though this limits the informational perspective of the study, it ensures that the study remains within its scope of the church's involvement with sex trafficking in Karnataka state. This research is confined to the state of Karnataka. Hence, its findings are not generalizable. However, there will be aspects of the research that could be generalized to other regions of the world with some contextualization to various social, cultural and economic variations.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **EVIDENCE FOR THE PROJECT**

#### **Overview of the Chapter**

This chapter is an overview of the evidence gathered during the research study. It begins with a re-introduction of the problem that prompted the study, the purpose of the project, and a detailed overview of the participants involved in the study. A systematic discussion of the evidence collected as linked to the research questions that designed the project are considered. Finally, the results are analyzed and reported, and conclusions about major findings from the research are drawn.

The state of Karnataka ranks third in the entire country for human trafficking with millions of children and women trafficked into prostitution every year and a child going missing every eight minutes. Given the magnitude of the problem of human trafficking in India, one might wonder where the church is involved in this.

The church, which should be involved in alleviating human suffering, is not on the forefront in dealing with the problem. There are churches in the Karnataka region, yet the church's role as the agent of restoration in the midst of social injustice is not evident. Why is the church not involved in this issue?

The purpose of this research was to discover the role of the local church in Karnataka in bringing about restorative justice especially with regard to children and women trafficked into prostitution.

The main goals of this study were threefold: 1) To find out the churches' current awareness of trafficking of young girls in Karnataka region, 2) to find out the reasons for

church's non-involvement in this issue, and 3) to propose ways that the church can be involved in combating young girls trafficking through restorative justice.

### **Participants**

A total of 40 participants were involved in the study. The participants were divided into two categories—20 Local Pastors and 20 church committee members from ten leading denominations in the city of Bangalore. Two churches from each denomination were chosen to participate in the study, for a total of 20 churches. The criteria for choosing the churches was that they were members of a leading denomination and within 10 kilometers radius of the heart of the city.

The city of Bangalore was chosen for two main reasons. First, it is the capital of the state of Karnataka in which the study is based. Second, human trafficking is rampant there. The denominations were divided into two categories—main line churches and indigenous churches. The mainline churches have lasted for a hundred years, while the indigenous churches originated in India. These the two categories gave a rich spectrum of the denominations.

The five denominations from the main line church were Church of South India, Methodist Church of India, Church of the Nazarene, Assemblies of God, and the Baptist Church. The five denominations from the indigenous churches were Evangelical Church of India, Believers Church in India, Karnataka Evangelistic Association, Reach Out Ministries International, and the Pentecostal Church.

Two pastors from each denomination were chosen based on their seniority of experience in pastoral ministry in the city of Bangalore for a total of 20 pastors. One lay member was also chosen from each of the twenty churches selected for the study,

comprising a total of 20 lay members. The criteria for choosing the lay members was that they were in active service as a committee member in the church. Their active service implied leadership and knowledge about ministry. The pastor proposed the name of the most active and appropriate committee member for the study, which ruled out any partiality by the researcher. Below is a chart illustrating the breakdown of denominational participation.

**Chart of Participants**

<b><u>Mainline Churches</u></b>	<b><u>No. of Local Pastors</u></b>	<b><u>No. of Members</u></b>
1. The Church of South India	2	2
2. Methodist Church of India	2	2
3. Church of the Nazarene	2	2
4. Assemblies of God	2	2
5. Baptist Church	2	2
<b><u>Indigenous Churches</u></b>		
6. Evangelical Church of India	2	2
7. Believers Church in India	2	2
8. Karnataka Evangelistic Association	2	2
9. Reach Out Ministries International	2	2
10. Pentecostal Church	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

The researcher contacted each of the pastors of the above identified churches over the phone and made an appointment to meet each in person. The researcher then



discussed the proposed objective and design of this study and made an invitation to the pastor to participate and propose a lay member who could potentially participate. Then, the researcher presented each of the pastors with a letter of consent to participate in the study and a letter requesting permission to invite participation of their committee members. The letter also asked the pastors to help identify the specific potential participants. The researcher requested their signatures indicating consent on both letters, and each pastor signed the consent letter. The next step was to contact the recommended committee members over phone with the help of the respective pastor. Upon their willingness to meet, the researcher met each in person, explained the objective of the study, and asked to each person sign a letter of informed consent to participate in the study.

After the signing of informed consent, each of the 40 participants was given questionnaires to complete. Most of the questionnaires were filled and collected by the researcher during the personal visit. A few of them needed time and asked the researcher to come at a later date to collect it.

After one month, the participants were invited to participate in the second section of the study, which would allow for open guided discussion. A total of four focus group discussions were conducted for pastors and church committee members of the 10 denominations. The focus groups were organized so that two focus groups met on the same day at different times and two others on a different day, all on the same location.

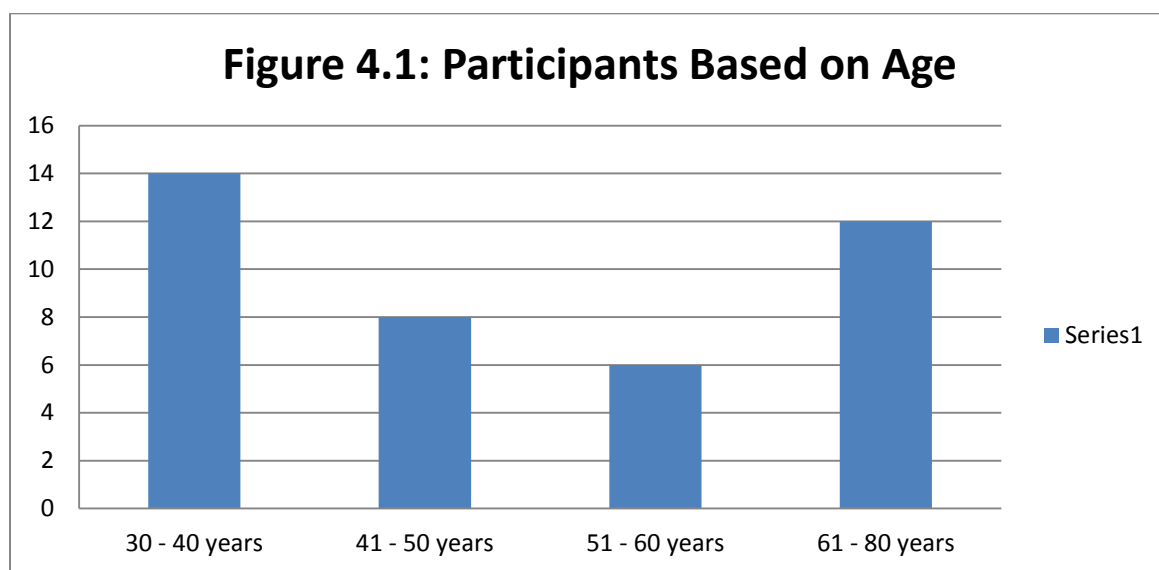
Two focus group discussions for the pastors were conducted at Divya Jyothi Church of the Nazarene, one from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon for main line church pastors and the other from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm for indigenous church pastors on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2018.

Similar focus groups were conducted for the church committee members on the same premises from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon for main line church committee members and the other from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm for indigenous church committee on 9<sup>th</sup> March, 2018.

Divya Jyothi Church of the Nazarene was chosen because of its central location. Both time and location were convenient for all participants. The focus groups were presided by the researcher, and audio recordings were done over a mobile phone. Using the recording device freed the researcher to listen without the interpretation of taking notes while allowing effective analysis of the data later.

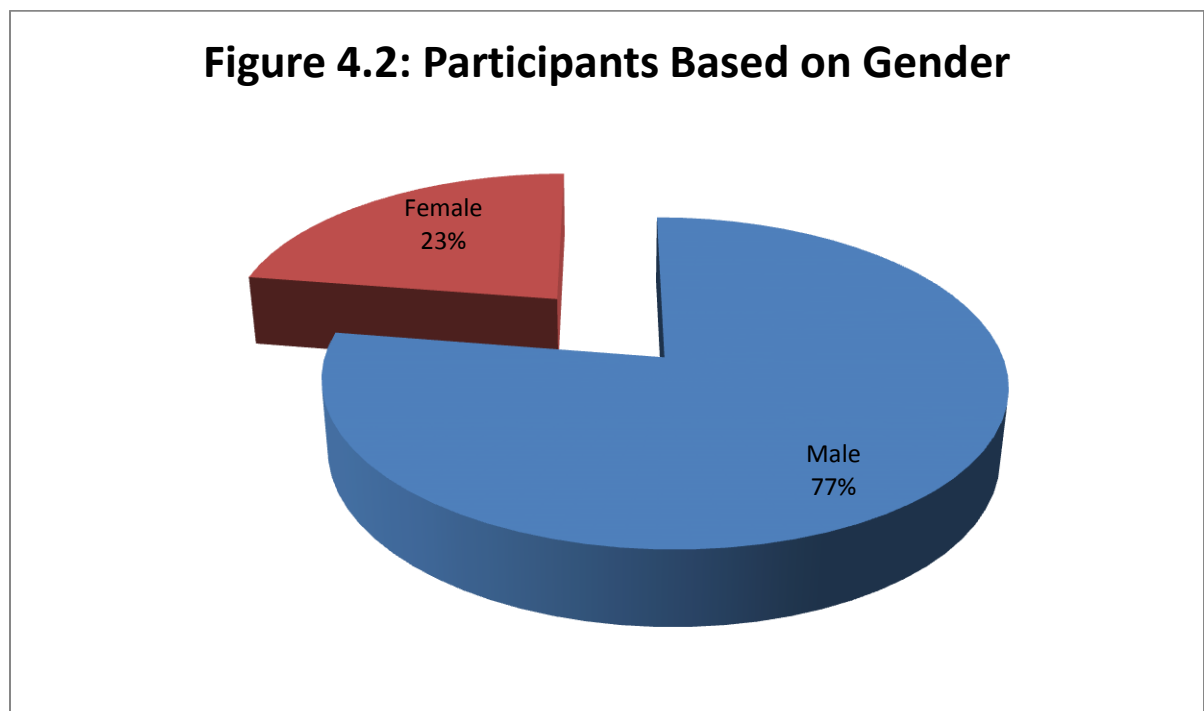
### Participant Profiles

Since the researcher's interest was only on the perspectives of the general church member to the issue of sex trafficking, only minimum demographics of age and gender were taken into consideration. Social economics, political leanings, and other demographics were not pertinent to this study. Below are two figures illustrating the demographics of the participants with regard to age and gender.



Out of the 40 participants, 14 of them were in the age group of 30-40 years, 8 of them were in the age group of 41-50 years, 6 of them between 51-60 years, and 12 of them who were between 61-80 years of age.

Of the 40 participants, 31 were men, comprising of 77 percent, 9 participants were women, comprising of 23 percent of participants for this study. Since India by culture is male dominated, most of the Christian denominations do not have women pastors. The majority of the churches prefer to have male lay members on their board. These demographics are illustrated in the figure below.



All participants seemed enthusiastic and eager to participate in the study. Before beginning the focus groups, the researcher explained the process and reiterated anyone could decide to drop off the study for any reason, with no questions asked. The researcher also explained that should anyone be under distress, the person can walk away or indicate the need to stop. There were no signs of distress or anxiety observed during all the focus

groups. Some pastors were skeptical about the involvement of the local church. Those who had knowledge about the issue of sex trafficking were more active in contributing their views. A few differences of opinion were evident during the discussion. A few committee members expressed discouragement due to bad politics in the churches.

### **Description of Evidence**

Analysis of the data collected will be presented and discussed under three sections; all are guided by a subheading of each research question.

The researcher used four main questions with sub-questions for each of them. These questions along with the questionnaire were created using the research questions as a guide. In some instances, the researcher had follow-up questions that were appropriate to the response from the focus group. Below are the four main questions and their sub questions:

1. What do you think is the church's responsibility to address the issue of trafficking of children and young girls?
2. Is the local church involved in confronting this problem?
  - a. If so, in what ways?
  - b. If not, what do you think are the reasons for non-involvement?
3. What are a few ways in which the local church in Karnataka can get involved in the process of rescuing and restoring children and young girls from sex trafficking?
4. What are some effective strategies that can help prevent the problem of sex trafficking of children and young girls in Karnataka?

Information gathered from the focus groups and the questionnaires were categorized according to the themes that emerged. These themes are discussed in the following sections in the context of addressing the research questions around which the study was designed.

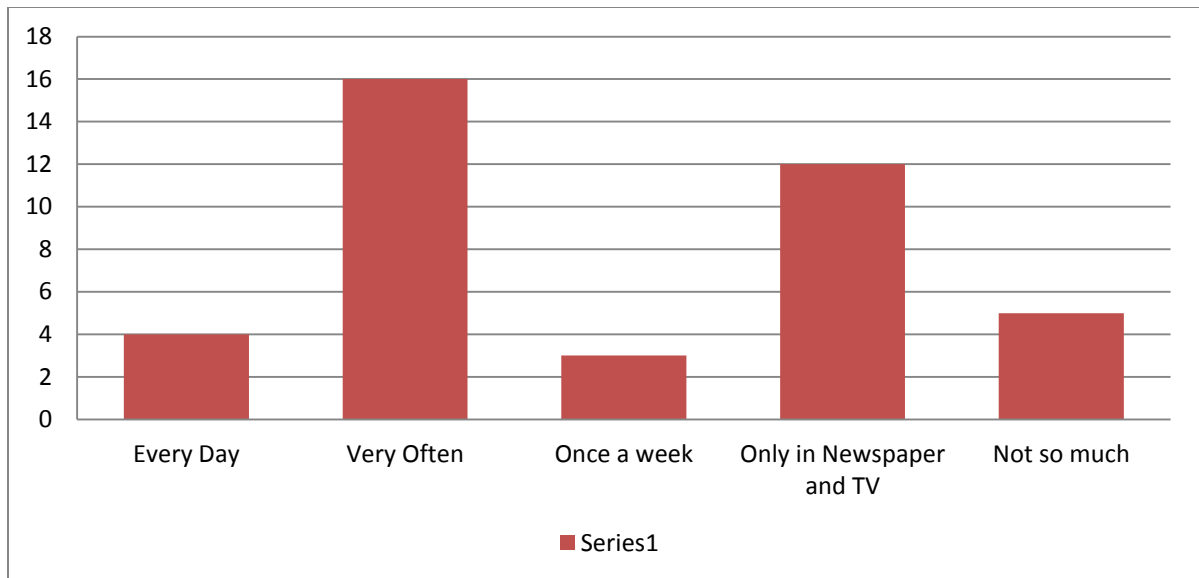
### **Research Question #1**

*What does the local church know or how familiar are they with facts surrounding young girls in their area trafficked for commercial sex?*

The questionnaires that were distributed to the 40 participants had three basic questions pertaining to their personal knowledge and experience on the issue of human trafficking. They were open-ended questions from which responses were drawn to answer this research question. The three major questions are given below:

1. How often do you hear the term human trafficking?

In response to this question, out of the 40 participants, four of them said that they hear about human trafficking every day. A majority of 16 participants stated that they hear of it very often though not every day; three of them said they hear about it once a week. Twelve participants stated that they have not seen or heard about human trafficking around them but have seen reports in the newspaper and television quite often. Finally, five of them said that they have not heard much about it.

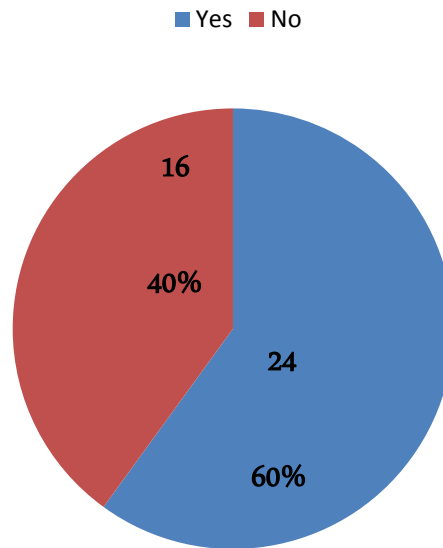


Combining those that hear every day, very often, and once a week as designating those have heard about human trafficking, often enough, 23 out of 40 or (58%) have heard of human trafficking often enough. This means that they are quite familiar with the issue as one of social concern. The second majority of 12 participants said that they hear about it in the newspaper and television. This may imply that they might not have directly encountered incidents of human trafficking in their community or heard about it from people. However, this could also mean that the issue of human trafficking is followed by on television and in the newspaper.

## 2. Are you familiar with any human trafficking case in Karnataka?

Out of the 40 participants a majority of 24 participants (60%) said that they were familiar with human trafficking cases in Karnataka. Sixteen (40%) of the 40 participants said that they were not familiar or have not heard about specific cases of human trafficking in Karnataka. The diagram of the same is given below.

**Figure 4.4. - Familiarity of Human Trafficking in Karnataka**



This data implies that more than half of the participant population is familiar with specific cases of human trafficking in the state of Karnataka. This is a telling statistic that confirms that human trafficking is rampant in the state of Karnataka and that majority of people are aware about it.

3. Do you know any church or organization working against human trafficking? If yes give details.

More than half (24 out of 40) of the participants did not know any church or Christian organization that worked against human trafficking. Only 16 participants knew some church or Christian agency that worked against human trafficking.

The church and Christian organizations that worked against human trafficking mentioned by the participants were:

1. First Assembly of God Church

2. Justice and Care
3. International Justice Mission
4. Bombay Teen Challenge
5. Oasis
6. Karnataka Minorities Commission

Their follow up questions revealed more information. The responses varied depending on the knowledge of the individual participant. Most of them were familiar with term human trafficking but said that it was a hidden issue that is not brought to light. They also said that it is an underground mafia and is a very sensitive and risky issue to deal with, and it cannot be handled without the government's intervention. One participant knew the statistics and stated that on an average 500 cases of sex trafficking are reported each year, while many more go unreported. Two of the pastors were involved in rescuing children trafficked from Karnataka who were given away as temple prostitutes called "Devadasis."

However, a few participants said that this is an issue that happens only in economically poorer sections of society where due to poverty parents sell their own children for survival. They say that it is a deliberate act since the girl child does not have much of a value in the Indian society and is treated as a commodity for profit.

### **Research Question #2**

*What are the major reasons for the lack of involvement by the local church in Bangalore in restorative justice pertaining to the issue of human trafficking of young girls and women into the commercial sex trade?*



Varying responses from the questionnaire and focus group discussions were categorized and classified. Some of the major themes that emerged from these responses are as follows:

1. Lack of awareness: The participants mentioned that there is lack of awareness about the issue of sex trafficking in general. It is not a topic preached or discussed within church circles at all. In the questionnaire responses, 80 percent of participants say that they had not heard of any preaching on social justice or heard the term human trafficking mentioned from the pulpit. Very rarely has anyone heard preaching on justice issues concerning human trafficking. The only preaching heard on social justice issue, and which very lightly touched the issues of sex trafficking, was from the Church of South India. This denomination has a centralized calendar of preaching topics, and so, on one appointed day in a year, the topic on social justice is preached across the country.
2. Church intervention would be risky: The participants mentioned that since sex trafficking is an underground mafia like network and is “hidden under the carpet,” it is very difficult for the church to combat. They said that even government officials and politicians are involved in the trade either for profit or for pleasure, making it very risky for the church to be involved. They expressed fear of the mafia against the church or individuals who wanted to fight against the network. It could cause threats, assault, or even murder by the mafia if the issue is disturbed. A senior pastor said that since it is an organized crime, it should be dealt with legally, and the church is not equipped in that area. They also

mentioned that a lot of bribery and corruption is involved in government dealings which make it difficult for the church to get involved.

3. Persecution against Christians in India: It was stated that since India is a non-Christian country, the efforts of the church would not be well accepted by the government. Hence, there would be lack of cooperation from the police to fight against sex trafficking. Without police support, the initiative would be futile.
4. Getting involved in sex trafficking would misdirect the mission of the church: According to most of the participants, the church's role is predominantly worship and preaching of the gospel. Most of the pastors who participated in the survey said that the focus of the church was to draw people to worship God and maintain sanctity. The topic of sex is an unholy thing which cannot be spoken from the pulpit or addressed in the church. They said that there are specialized Christian agencies that are called to do such works. The church's primary aim is to share the gospel and win souls in the Kingdom of God and should not be defiled with the social issues in the society. The church can only extend support to those agencies working against human trafficking.
5. Lack of coordination between Christian agencies working against human trafficking and the church. The church is not familiar and well acquainted with Christian non-governmental organizations to either invite them to the church or assist them with their work.
6. The church is preoccupied with activities within the church so much so that it does not have time or resources to lend to the community.

### Research Question #3

*What steps can the local church in Bangalore take toward the process of restoration of trafficked girls into the church and society as part of its restorative justice role?*

From the responses in the questionnaires and focus group discussions various themes were drawn in order to answer the third research question. The various themes derived are as follows:

1. The first and dominant response received from the survey was prayer. Most of the participants responded that primarily the church can earnestly pray about the issue. This sincere effort is stated to work wonders and miracles in restoring the lives of victims of human trafficking. It is also a powerful tool in fighting against the wicked schemes of Satan who is seeking to destroy the work of God. A few pastors who stated that spiritual warfare is more powerful than physical involvement referred to the scripture from 2 Corinthians 10:4, “The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.”
2. Unfamiliarity with scriptures on the call to social justice: The researcher observed that most of the participants were not familiar with biblical understanding of justice in dealing with social issues. Through the discussions it was evident that majority of the participants only know the God of justice and righteousness but hardly knew anything about doing justice.
3. The church needs to be well informed on the issue of sex trafficking in Karnataka. When they are well informed they can bring awareness about it in their

communities. A few pastors suggested that workshops or seminars dealing with the issue of human trafficking could be conducted for the clergy in order to be well informed and equipped to bring awareness about it in the churches.

4. There needs to be a bridge between the local churches and Christian non-governmental organizations so that they can support each other and together fight the issue. The church can financially and physically support these organizations while the Christian agencies are legally engaged in rescue operations. A few participants expressed their disappointment of the church and Christian NGOs, blaming each other for the lack of cooperation and united efforts in fighting the issue.
5. The church can provide counselling and moral support to the rescued girls and also provide shelter and vocational training to those who need them. The pastors were open to the idea of inviting the rescued victims into their churches and offer monetary help and support for those in need. All the participants were positive about restoring the victims of sex trafficking and confirmed that their lives can be transformed with the sharing of the gospel and providing physical and moral support in the time of need.

### **Summary of Major Findings**

One of the first findings the researcher observes is that majority of the participants were familiar with human trafficking in their region and knew it was a rampant issue that needs to be addressed. However, they were not familiar with biblical justice and the role the church has toward injustice in the community. Most of the participants were either familiar with a secular understanding of justice from a judicial perspective or they see

God as a God of justice who would judge the world when Christ comes again in His glory.

Another finding is that there appears to be a division in their understanding of the church's role in issues of justice. Some participants felt that the church needs to be more engaged in evangelism than involved in social action. Some pastors expressed that the church is not open discuss issues of sexual abuse in the society. Sex trafficking is an even more abominable topic in such a society. The word 'sex' is a taboo. It is offensive to the congregation if it is addressed from the pulpit. There is a notion that church is a place that is holy and pure. Therefore, the issues of the world should not defile the church. All that matters to the church is worshipping God and preaching the gospel for the salvation of the perishing ones.

Another major finding is that most of the pastors in the survey felt there needs to be a connection between the local church and Christian agencies involved directly in the issue of human trafficking. They stated that human trafficking or sex trafficking is a very sensitive issue that cannot be dealt with like other issues. They feel the church cannot directly address this issue since the government does not encourage or cooperate with the efforts of the church in a non-Christian country. Moreover, it was stated that the churches are not legally equipped to fight in judicial cases. Christians are not willing risk their lives since human trafficking is an organized network with underground mafia involved across the country.

In response to how the church can be effectively involved in the issue of sex trafficking, the researcher found that a majority of the participants stated that prayer is the

most effective tool to fight the issue of sex trafficking. They said that spiritual warfare is more powerful than physical engagement.

Another major finding is that all participants agreed that the church has to do something about the issue of sex trafficking. They said that the church can be an agent of transformation by advocating justice in their community against the issue of sex trafficking.

In conclusion, the following chapter will further discuss the findings with the perspective brought by the researcher to the conversation. The researcher will conclude with drawing from biblical teaching as to why the church should be well versed and involved with societal ills.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **LEARNING REPORT FOR THE PROJECT**

#### **Overview of the Chapter**

The church has a significant role in fighting the issues of social justice in the community. The purpose of this study was to find out the role of the local church in Karnataka in bringing about restorative justice to children and young girls trafficked into prostitution. The research was conducted with 20 pastors and 20 lay members from 10 leading denominations in the city of Bangalore. The methodology of the research was through qualitative data utilizing questionnaires and focus group discussions. The following are the major findings.

In this chapter, the findings stated in chapter four are further explored. There were five major findings from the study as follows:

- Little knowledge of the local church about sex trafficking in Karnataka
- Dichotomy between the Church's role in evangelism and in social concern
- Disconnect between local churches and Christian agencies
- Prayer, the most effective tool to fight the issue of sex trafficking
- The church can advocate justice in the issue of sex trafficking

These major findings are discussed by corresponding them to the three major research questions which guided the study. Following a brief overview of the finding and its link to the research questions, each of the findings is explored from the researcher's lenses integrated with literature review and biblical insights. Key ministerial implications are also drawn from these major findings. Following the implications is an exploration on the limits of study and suggestions for further research around the issue of the church's

role in restorative justice with specific reference to sex trafficking of children and young girls. A postscript of personal reflections including how the study has affected the researcher will conclude this study.

### **Major Findings**

The first research question was: *What does the local church know or how familiar are they with facts surrounding young girls in their area trafficked for commercial sex?*

In response to this research question, the major finding is as follows:

#### **Major Finding One**

##### **Knowledge of the local church about Sex Trafficking in Karnataka**

##### **Overview of the Finding:**

Twenty four out of the forty participants said they were familiar with specific cases of human trafficking in the state of Karnataka. This is a telling statistic that confirms that human trafficking is rampant in Karnataka and the majority of people are aware about it.

One participant knew the statistics and stated that on an average 500 cases of sex trafficking are reported each year, while many more go unreported. Two participants were pastors involved in rescuing children trafficked from Karnataka who were given away as temple prostitutes called ‘Devadasis.’ Seventeen participants said that they do not have much information on human trafficking.

They were open to admit that though they are aware of sex trafficking, they are not involved in acts of restorative justice. Either they choose not to be engaged since it involves a few risks and challenges, or they are not aware of how to be involved. They said that it was a hidden issue that is not brought to light. It is an underground mafia



which is very sensitive and risky to deal with and cannot be handled without government's intervention.

### **Researcher's Observation Integrated with Literature and Theological Insights**

The best way to end human trafficking is to prevent it from happening in the first place. In order to do this, we must have knowledge and understanding of the contributing factors. At its heart, human trafficking is a failure to value individuals as the precious and unique creations of God that they are. It results from a cultural worship of sexuality and sexual gratification, and it is fueled by the rampant pornography industry. There is no entity on earth better equipped than the church to spearhead the cultural changes needed to remedy these sad realities.

Every human being is created in the image of God with inherent dignity, value, and purpose. Followers of Jesus have a biblical mandate to care for the poor and the oppressed—those who are vulnerable and exploited. Human trafficking is a form of evil that seeks to destroy God's image in people and corrupt his purposes for humanity. The best agency of change and restoration is God's people, the church. For the church to be involved it must seek to know the injustices that are ongoing in its local and immediate communities.

As we engage with God's justice and holiness, we need to understand that we are both a part of the problem and a part of the solution to the challenges of injustice in our world today. As we become aware of the ways in which we have fallen short of reflecting the image and likeness or character of God, we repent, receive God's healing forgiveness and are transformed—restored into His likeness (Jer. 15:19). Part of the original mandate in Genesis was for mankind to work in and cultivate the garden that God had planted.

This call to cultivate the good things that God seeded in the world extends beyond gardens into every area of our lives. Preserving, cultivating, and promoting all that is good is a key part of living righteously and incarnating God's image and likeness, which lies as the heart of doing justice.

Luke 4:18-19 describes the 'Nazareth Manifesto' a powerful reminder that Jesus came into this world to do justice and set an example for the church to follow. Jesus proclaimed, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." This call was not only for Jesus but for every one of his followers.

God calls His people to be a light in the darkness and the ambassadors of His kingdom. He also charges us to stand between innocence and evil in whatever ways He leads and provides. This is a great responsibility He has entrusted to His children, and we have the mandate to seek to know as much as we can about human trafficking!

The second research question was: *What are the major reasons for the lack of involvement by the local church in Bangalore in Restorative Justice pertaining to the issue of human trafficking of young girls and women into the commercial sex trade?*

In response to this research question, there were two major findings as follows:

### **Major Finding Two**

#### **Dichotomy between Church's Role in Evangelism and in Social Concern**

##### **Overview of the Finding:**

During the focus group discussions, pastors were skeptical about the church's involvement with sex trafficking. They perceived the church's role was to preach the

gospel and win souls into the Kingdom. They said that it should not be diluted or distracted with the problems of the world. These pastors felt the church was a place that is holy and pure, and the issues of the world should not defile the church. All that matters to the church is worshiping God with all your heart and preaching the gospel for the salvation of the perishing ones. However, they said that there are Christian non-governmental organizations and agencies who are involved in fighting the issue of human trafficking. The church can only extend support to these agencies working against human trafficking.

### **Researcher's Observation Integrated with Literature and Theological Insights:**

The question of how to deal with issues of social justice has divided Christians into two groups. One group argues that evangelism is the basic solution for common social dilemmas, while the other emphasizes direct social involvement as the true expression of the gospel. This divide became a major part of the discussion in all the focus groups. There was definite difference between the discussions of the pastor's focus groups when compared to the lay persons group. In the pastors' focus group it was evident in the discussions that getting involved in the issue of sex trafficking would misdirect the mission of the church.

According to most pastors, the church's role is predominantly worship and preaching of the gospel. The topic of sex is an unholy thing which cannot be spoken from the pulpit or addressed in the church. They said that there are specialized Christian agencies that are called to do such works. The church's primary aim is to share the gospel and win souls in the Kingdom of God. Therefore, it should not be defiled with the social issues in the society. The church can only extend support to those agencies working

against human trafficking. However, the lay members were very positive about the church contributing to the issue of human trafficking in the society. They were affirmative about the church being an agent of restoration and transformation in the lives of victims of sex trafficking. They expressed that the very purpose of the church was an agent of change in the society and cannot shut itself from the problems in the world.

The Bible has given the church two great mandates. The first one is pertaining to self which is individualistic as may be interpreted from the passage in Matthew where a lawyer asked Jesus the question, Which is the greatest commandment in the law? Jesus responded: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 22:36-40).

The second mandate is evangelistic, usually associated with the Great Commission of Matthew 28:16-20. This mandate is given to the new humanity in Christ, the church, which is commanded by the risen Lord to make disciples of all nations.

For some, evangelism may be an attempt to escape personal social involvement. For others, social concern and involvement may be an attempt to avoid spiritual regeneration or build God’s kingdom without God. But this kind of dichotomy need not be. Both evangelism and social concern go hand in hand. Neither is a substitute for, nor escape from the other. When people receive Christ, they are born again into His kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit, but also to spread, righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us into the totality of our personal and social responsibilities.

In the biblical model of evangelism, there is no separation between feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, ministering to people's social needs, and communicating the gospel. Good deeds must be accompanied with the preaching of the Word if evangelism is to be complete.

A church that withdraws itself from social involvement will do a poor job of communicating the gospel. Such a church says very little to the world about the virtue of Christianity. Most people would be willing to listen to a church that not only preaches salvation by grace but is also actively identified with the outcome of the gospel: ministering to all the needs and concerns of humanity.

### **Major Finding Three**

#### **Disconnect between Local Churches and Christian Agencies**

##### **Overview of the Finding:**

Discussions in the focus groups pointed to the idea that the disconnect between the local churches and Christian agencies working against human trafficking is one of the major setbacks for the church's non-involvement in the issue of human trafficking. In analyzing the data, it was evident that out of the entire participating churches, only one church is identified as working toward eradicating human trafficking. Beyond this church, the participants named a handful of Christian agencies. They said that the church is not familiar or well acquainted with Christian non-governmental organizations to either invite them to the church or assist them with their work. The lay members in the focus group discussions expressed their disappointment of the church and NGOs blaming each other for their lack of cooperation and united efforts in fighting this issue of human trafficking.

### **Researcher's Observation Integrated with Literature and Theological Insights:**

The church needs to reach out to service providers and other organizations currently meeting the needs of trafficking victims as they recover and rebuild their lives. Both the church and non-government organizations need to meet to discuss the best ways to collaborate for their common cause. Some of the congregation members or volunteers may be service providers themselves. The church can encourage them to use their skills to support victims on their road to recovery. If the church is aware of the various Christian non-governmental organizations that work towards the eradication of human trafficking and if they invite them to collaborate, they can achieve much more and be very effective in their intervention efforts.

One such example of a Christian agency looking for connecting with the church is International Justice Mission. It is a leading Christian Organization working in India against human trafficking. The model used by them is as follows: the organization believes that God uses the Church to bring transformation and justice to a hurting world. It claims to believe in the transformation of justice system where the ultimate goal is to prevent violence from happening in the first place. It partners with local governments and communities to meet both urgent and long-term needs with the intention of bringing about powerful changes that protect the poor from violence. There are three phases to the transformation of the Justice system”

- a. Collaborative Casework: The organization partners with local authorities to rescue individual victims of a specific crime, bring criminals to justice, and restore survivors. This strategy provides hands-on mentoring and training that

strengthens the justice system and discovers the specific problems in the justice system that leave poor people vulnerable to violence.

- b. System Reform: The goal here is to demonstrate that the justice system's ability to protect vulnerable people from the targeted crime has substantially improved which results in a reduction in the prevalence of the crime.
- c. Sustain Gains: It monitors and evaluates results and continues to support the local government partners. Thus, the justice system can finally be counted on to effectively protect poor people from targeted forms of violence.

Since the researcher herself has been a part of this organization while also a pastor, the researcher can affirm that it is possible for the church to effectively work in fighting the issue of sex trafficking with the help of such Christian agencies that work with the local government.

*The third research question was: What steps can the local church in Bangalore take toward the process of restoration of trafficked girls into the church and society as part of its restorative justice role?*

In response to this research question, there were two major findings as follows:

### **Major Finding Four**

#### **Prayer, the Most Effective Tool to Fight the Issue of Sex Trafficking**

##### **Overview of the Findings:**

One of the predominant responses from the research shows that majority of the participants believed prayer is the most powerful tool to fight the evils of human trafficking in the society. A few pastors mentioned that spiritual warfare is more powerful

than physical involvement. They referred to the scripture from 2 Corinthians 10:4. They said that where the church is not skilled to handle legal issues and underground mafia, it can very well fight any issue, however complicated it may be, through prayer and spiritual warfare. Where the government is non-cooperative and the church is unskilled in dealing with legal issues pertaining to human trafficking, prayer has the power to change things.

### **Researcher's Observation Integrated with Literature and Theological Insights:**

The most important thing a believer can do to combat human trafficking is to pray, to seek the throne of God and ask for His guidance and intervention, to pray for victims, and the survivors, that through Jesus they will be transformed and restored. They can pray for those who are actively working against trafficking, for wisdom, protection, and favor. Intercessory prayer is a vital component in the Bible as the scripture says, “The prayer of a righteous man (or woman) is powerful and effective” (James 5:16).

Rebecca Snippe states that while we cannot begin to know the full extent to which human trafficking is hurting the people of this world, we can pray for the ability to see the tragedy that it is. The church can pray for the victims and their families. As we pray prayers of lament and prayers for the healing of our world and its people, we can look forward to the day when everything will be made new.

Various song writers have written songs interceding for victims of human trafficking and abuse. A powerful song by Tommy Walker—“He knows my name”—talks about God knowing each person by name. He knows their thought, every tear and hears every word that is uttered. God will always plead our cause. He will always break our chains. While every individual ensnared in human trafficking can't say that they are



free on this earth, we are all free in Christ's love because of redemption in Christ's blood. Jeremiah 31:15-17 says, "Rachel is weeping for her children, she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more. Thus says the Lord: they shall come back from the land of the enemy."

For each of the enslaved children and adults in the human trafficking industry, there is someone in the world that gave birth to them. There is someone who held them. Someone, who even for a moment, cared for them. And so, praying for the families and friends of those involved is just as important as praying for the victims.

We can ask God to guide us to hope, to justice, to truth and to love. God promised a world of peace, where the lion can dwell with the lamb, and God will bring it about. Until then, we can pray, hope, and work for justice in our broken world.

For what God has promised, God will one day do. As Christians, God's children bear a calling to go into the world, into the hurt and pain and the torture, and to work towards the redemption, to promote freedom, to bring about justice, and to offer compassion to a hurting world. Revelation 21:4 says, "God will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." It was of great joy to see all the participants agree on this one action in tackling the issue of sex trafficking—pray!

### **Major Finding Five**

#### **The Church can Advocate Justice in the Issue of Sex Trafficking**

##### **Overview of the Finding:**

All the participants agreed in unison that the church has a responsibility to address the issue of human trafficking. They said that the church needs to be well informed about

the issue of sex trafficking in Karnataka. It is only then that they can bring awareness in their communities. A few pastors suggested that workshops and seminars dealing with the issue of human trafficking could be conducted for the clergy in order for them to be well informed and equipped to bring awareness about it in churches.

The participants suggested that the church can provide counseling and moral support to the rescued girls and also provide shelter and vocational training to those who need them. The pastors were open to the idea of inviting the rescued victims into their churches and offer monetary help and support for those in need. All the participants were positive about restoring the victims of sex trafficking and confirmed that their lives can be transformed with the sharing of the gospel and providing physical and moral support in the time of need.

#### **The researcher's Observations Integrated with Literature and Theological Insights:**

Information is power. So, it is important to become informed on what human trafficking looks like in our region. The church is 'salt and light' in our world, which means they are the embodiment of truth and a defense against evil. Believers can attend an awareness event, or host one at their church, school, or ministry. They can seek out resources and share them with others. This will provide people with the information needed to identify red flags and to spot the potential victims that are living in our midst. It will help them understand how traffickers lure individuals into their nets of exploitation. It will teach more parents and those who work with children how to be more effective in protecting their children, youth, and young adults from the risky behaviors that traffickers exploit.

The church has a role in serving the emotional, physical, and spiritual needs of those who have been victims of human trafficking. The shattered hearts and lives that result from human trafficking will not be easily mended, but when the church wraps its heart and arms around these people, the healing can take place.

The church can reach out to organizations like International Justice Mission, Justice and Care, Rahab's Rope, Project Rescue, and many other Christian agencies which might have operations in their area to intervene on behalf of these victims. They can volunteer time, skills, and resources in shelters and other facilities in their area that care for rescued victims of such abuse.

The church can contribute in providing shelter to those victims who have been rescued from trafficking and share their skills and talents in developing the rescued victims to be strong and stand on their feet. The church can also encourage believers to invite the rescued victims to their homes to build relationships with them, so they become part of the family of Christ.

The church can be a counseling center that provides healing and restoration to children and women who have been through sexual violence, abuse, torture, and pain. The church can be an agent of transformation in lives of these victims and bring them to restoration that is found in Christ. The church can plan a worship service with a human trafficking theme. The church can plan group discussions during Bible study to discover what it means to "do justice" in the light of human trafficking. The church can plan a community awareness event in the local community featuring local human trafficking organizations. The church can plan a prayer walk or candle light vigil in the community to bring awareness that human trafficking happens in every community. The church can

decorate the outside of the church with lights, purple ribbons, and a human trafficking banner so that the church will be a beacon of light on this issue. There is no end to the things the church can do to help these victims and bring about justice in the community.

### **Unexpected Observations**

The first unexpected observation was that a few pastors were skeptical about the involvement of the local church in the issue of sex trafficking. It could be understood that since it pertained to girl children and women, they were not keen on discussing these issues from the church's perspective. They felt that women issues should be dealt with by women. As a researcher, it was surprising to me because, though obvious that one of the major causes of sexual abuse and trafficking of girl children and women was to satisfy the sexual urge in men, the male pastors felt uncomfortable discussing about it and wanted to pass it off as women's issues.

It was surprising to find out during the research that all the participants without a doubt said the church is called to do justice. the very purpose of its existence is to be a salt and light to the world. However, it was saddening to observe that not many participants understood the concept of justice in the Bible. Most of the participants knew the God of justice but were not well informed about the church's call to justice. As Micah 6:8 says, "do justice and love mercy and to walk humbly before thy God." The church needs to find practical ways of doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with the Lord with regard to the injustice of sex trafficking. Psalm 82 gives a clearer picture of how to execute justice that God demands—"Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless, maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked" (Ps. 82:3-4).

### **Ministry Implications of the Findings**

The church is God's vehicle to bring in 'shalom' into the brokenness and oppression in the world. N.T. Wright reminds us that the church has to be "actively involved in seeking justice in the world, both globally and locally, and cheerfully celebrating God's good creation and its rescue from corruption." (227) Without this active interaction with the brokenness around us, our proclamation remains merely a shadow of the glorious gospel we have been tasked with sharing.

First, the church needs to be a prophetic voice in the world. The church's purpose was made clear in the words of Jesus ("You are the salt of the earth. . . . You are the light of the world." [Matt. 5:13-14]). By this Jesus meant that the church is the instrument to preserve righteousness and justice on the earth and bring people from darkness into light—to be the prophetic voice of transformation in the world. Yet, it has historically swayed to the prevailing philosophical winds of time. The church must recognize that it was first and foremost established to bring transformative news of God's rescuing justice to this broken world.

Second, the church needs to be hopeful. The enormity of human trafficking and the abuse and oppression that inevitably follows it can be frightening for most people. When this is added with a lack of capacity to make a difference, it can lead most people into a state of hopelessness. Yet, these very situations of injustice can be the perfect ground for hope. The church must continue to engage in issues such as human trafficking, in both big and small ways in such a way that it presents the body of Christ as the ultimate forerunner of hope. This hope is both for the uncorrupted resurrection reality of

the future and, perhaps more importantly, for that which will come alive in the present in the lives of millions around the world who simply do not have it any longer.

Third, the church needs to be involved. It has historically been in the forefront of issues of education, hospitals, orphanages, feeding the hungry, and the abolition of slavery in many parts of the world. Unfortunately, it has been evidently missing, for the most part, on human trafficking even though it is a worldwide phenomenon. The church can encourage young people toward careers that will help protect and care for the abused. The church can speak up for victims of trafficking. Most importantly, within the church, there is a need to teach the biblical foundations for justice and God's view of women and children, encouraging Bible study groups to talk about exploitation and violence and how it affects women and children, and encourage them to become protectors of and advocates for vulnerable women and children (5). Trafficking survivors need short term emergency care and shelter. They need long term care, counseling and mentoring in order to rebuild healthy lives from the ruins their perpetrators left them in. The church has the resources, the heart and the Spirit necessary to provide for these needs.

Fourth, the church needs to be aware that it does not exist only for spiritual purposes. It has a responsibility towards the issues of the society. Only after the church has understood its role in issues of justice can actively engage in issues of human trafficking. Below are some recommendations on how the church in general can enhance its understanding of its role in issues of justice.

- I. Teach biblical passages that challenge the church towards restorative justice. There are many biblical examples that explicitly command us to do justice and "to seek justice, encourage the oppressed, defend the cause

of the fatherless, and plead the case of the widow” (Isa. 1:17). There is a constant theme for the concern for the oppressed and the abused. It is deeply embedded in Israel’s history. The prophets echoed and reiterated such requirements. Isaiah for example condemns those with power who “plunder the poor” (Isa. 3:15). In the New Testament, Jesus set the stage for the church to execute justice. He admonishes the Pharisees for their lack of justice and mercy by saying, “You have neglected the most important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness” (Matt. 23:23).

- II. Teach the origins of justice. If the church knew more about the origin of justice and why we need to seek justice, it would become more fervent and active in our participation against human trafficking. These origins lie within the confines of the Old Testament scriptures and teaching of Jesus Christ.
- III. Nuance justice to include restorative justice as a Christian social call. It is evident that rescue and rehabilitation is a priority in every initiative, but restoration of the whole person can make a lasting impact which can be found in Jesus Christ. Thus, the church can execute its plan effectively by restoring lives, introducing them to the lifesaving person of Jesus Christ.

### **Limitation of the Study**

This research project collected data from 40 participants through qualitative survey and focus group discussions. While the study was based on the state of Karnataka, the research was limited to the city of Bangalore due to the magnanimity of area and

population. Since the city of Bangalore is the capital of the state of Karnataka and is a hub of most of the Christian organizations in the state, implications from the research may be relevant to the entire state. Yet, it must be contextualized to the different contexts that India represents.

Due to cultural norms in a country like India which is male dominated, women did not equally participate in the discussions, though they openly expressed their views in the questionnaires. Therefore, a balanced view of both men and women in the discussions cannot be justified.

Disparity between the older and younger participants made it difficult to have balanced views from both the categories. The older participants seemed dominant in expressing their views which made the younger participants feel insecure and could not express openly.

### **Recommendations**

Since the participants affirm that the church does have a specific mandate to be involved in issues of justice in the society, where majority of the participants were familiar with the issue of sex trafficking in the state, further discussions can be held since the church agrees that it is the church's mandate to involve in issues of justice in the society.

Denominations can organize special awareness programs for their pastors about human trafficking so they can have the knowledge and be well equipped to address it in the churches.



### **Postscript**

My first experience at the age of 18, ministering in a red light area in Mumbai through the seminary was an eye-opener for me and since then has been prompting me to do something about this issue of sex trafficking. God opened the way for me to be involved in fighting this issue by working with International Justice Mission and volunteering to provide shelter and vocation skills to rescued girls from sex trafficking. I am glad to be guardians for three children who were rescued from sex trafficking and who are a part of my family and stay with us in our home.

As an ordained pastor in the church of the Nazarene, it was always my desire to bring awareness about this issue in the Nazarene churches. I believe the church is a powerful agent to fight human trafficking and can bring about restoration and transformation of victims of sex trafficking. This research project was born out of that desire. Through this project, I was not only able to know what churches and pastors think about this issue but was able to raise my voice in bringing awareness about this issue in the churches of Bangalore.

This project has challenged me to be more involved in fighting this issue through the church. It has inspired me to be a voice to the voiceless and those that are sexually exploited every day through sex trafficking. This project has given me confidence to move forward in raising awareness in the communities and churches. It has strengthened my ability to be disciplined and focus more intensely in my work.

Finally, this project has increased my faith in the church truly being an agent of transformation in this broken and hurting world. If it does, it will become an

unmistakable part of the process of God birthing his shalom in this world. The church can indeed rise up against the scourge of human trafficking and other such evils.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM CHURCH LEADERS**

Dear Pastor,

My name is Roopa Anand and I am a student at Asbury Theological Seminary. In partial requirement of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Asbury Theological Seminary, I am presently undertaking a research study on the role of the local church in restorative justice. The purpose of the study is to explore the role of the local church in restorative justice pertaining to sex trafficking of young girls in the state of Karnataka. I am writing with two requests as follows:

1. To allow and also recommend a committee member or two to participate in this study.
2. To ask your consent in participating in this study as the pastor of one of the leading denomination churches in Bangalore.

Attached is a more detailed letter of consent that details the specifics of the research. This letter will be given to all potential participants to obtain their consent. Please sign the “consent letter” indicating your consent to participate in this study.

Please also sign this letter here below indicating your permission to allow me to speak to your committee member and, if possible ,indicate the name(s) of people you recommend that I approach to be participants in this study. All the data gathered in the course of the study will be held in strict confidence and will be used solely for the purpose of this study.

Your cooperation and consent in this regard is highly appreciated.

Respectfully yours,

Roopa Anand

Researcher

Pastor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee members recommended: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B**  
**INFORMED CONSENT LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**AND FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPATION**  
**RE: REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

My name is Roopa Anand, and I am a student at Asbury Theological Seminary. As part of my degree requirements, I will be conducting a study for my dissertation on the local church's involvement in restorative justice.

I wish to invite you to participate in this research whose purpose is to study the role of the local church in restorative justice pertaining to sex trafficking of young girls in the state of Karnataka. The research will be conducted in two stages as follows:

- A questionnaire filled out by each participant. The questionnaire will take approximately half an hour of your time.
- A Focus Group Discussion with nine other persons during which we will discuss guided open questions regarding sex trafficking of young girls in the state of Karnataka. The Focus groups will meet at \_\_\_\_\_ on either \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_, and will last about 2 hours. The discussions will be recorded to allow me accuracy transcription. I will facilitate these groups.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may still refuse to answer any question that you do not wish to answer. You may also withdraw from the study at any time.

There are no risks associated in this study. If for any reason you feel that you are at risk, please inform me promptly so I can address it.

While there is no guaranteed benefit, it is possible that you will enjoy participating in an important study that is geared towards transforming lives. This study is

intended to benefit the local churches and help deal with the issue of sex trafficking of young girls in the state of Karnataka.

Your name will not be used in any of the reporting and writing related to this study. I will be the only person that facilitates the filling of the questionnaires and conducting the focus groups. Any writing or reporting of the findings will use pseudo names, alter identifying details, and use aggregates where necessary.

I plan to develop a dissertation based on the questionnaires along with my reading and historical research. This dissertation will be shared with my cohort colleagues and Asbury Theological Seminary faculty on the Asbury's Kentucky and Florida campus.

I also plan to share some of my findings with my denominational leaders. Portions of my dissertation may be published as an article in the seminary's magazine. There is a possibility that I will publish this study or refer to it in published writing in the future.

By signing below, you are agreeing to participate in this research study. Once signed, a copy of this document will be given to you.

Please feel free to contact me at any time with any questions or areas you may need clarified. My telephone number is +919844760195. You may also contact my research supervisor Dr. Anne Gatobu if you have concerns that I cannot address, at [anne.gatobu@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:anne.gatobu@asburyseminary.edu).

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**1. Personal Details**

- a. Denomination :
- b. Office held :
- c. Age range : ☐ 30 – 40    ☐ 41 – 50    ☐ 51 – 60    ☐ 61 – 80
- d. Gender: Male \_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_

**2. Meaning of Justice**

- a. What is your definition of justice?

\_\_\_\_\_

- b. How important is justice to you?

\_\_\_\_\_

- c. How do you relate to justice in your every life?

\_\_\_\_\_

- d. How often do you preach or engage in discussions about justice?

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Human Trafficking**

- a. How often do you heard this term? \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Are you familiar with any human trafficking case in Karnataka?

☐ Yes    ☐ No

- c. Do you know any church or organization working against human trafficking?

☐ Yes    ☐ No

If yes, give details.

---

- d. What ways do you think people can effectively fight human trafficking?
- 

#### 4. Church's Role in Justice

- a. Is there any relationship between the Church and justice? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- b. If yes, how is justice related to the Church?
- 

If no, please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

- c. Has your church participated in any ministry of justice? ? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, in what ways?

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- d. Has your church done anything about human trafficking? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, in what ways?

---

- e. What role should the church take regarding human trafficking?
- 

Why?

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#### 5. Restorative Justice

- a. What do you understand by the term restorative justice?
- 

- b. Is there a possibility to restore victims of sex trafficking? ☐ Yes ☐ No



- c. What is your opinion on the perpetrators of human trafficking?

---

- d. Does your church accept victims of human trafficking to the worship service?

☐ Yes    ☐ No

- e. What would you need to happen for you to be willing to partner in fighting human trafficking?

---

## **APPENDIX D**

### **FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS**

1. What in your best knowledge is the meaning of human trafficking?
2. What do you know about sex trafficking in India?
3. What do you know about trafficking of children and young girls from Karnataka?

The researcher briefs the participants about the facts on human trafficking and the rampant sex trafficking in the state of Karnataka. After the briefing, the following questions are discussed:

1. What do you think is the church's responsibility to address the issue of trafficking of children and young girls?
2. Is the local church involved in confronting this problem?
  - a. If so, in what ways?
  - b. If not, what do you think are the reasons for non-involvement?
3. What are a few ways in which the local church in Karnataka can involve in the process of rescuing and restoring children and young girls from sex trafficking?
4. What are some strategies that can help prevent the problem of sex trafficking of children and young girls in Karnataka effectively?

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