Christianity is the most visible religion, practiced and preached around all the continents of the World. The Christians believe in One God, the creator of both heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, His crucifixion and resurrection. Faith, hope, love and charity form the core message of Christianity.

The origin of Christianity can be traced to Palestine, in West Asia and its birth and progress is closely interlinked with the story of human history. Lord Jesus was born during the reign of Caesar Augustus (27 B.C. - A.D. 14) and suffered at the hands of Pontius Pilate (Roman prefect of Judea, the fifth Governor of the Province and the second – longest holder of the office from A.D. 26 to 36.) according to the chronological records of the history of Rome.

Circumstantially, Christianity has evolved from Judaism revolving round the haloed personality of Jesus Christ, His life, His belief, His sufferings, and above all His teachings. His first and immediate followers were all Jews and given the historical perspective they rallied round Him and interpreted the significance of what He perceived and preached. According to the established chronology, a handful of His disciples set off on the mission to spread the message of Jesus on the day of Pentecost\(^1\) 29 AD, which is the day of the birth of the Church. Thus, it is on this significant day that the eventful missionary journey of the disciples carrying the torch of the faith of Christianity to various parts of the world, far and near, was inaugurated.

It was with this mission of carrying the message of Christianity across the different corners of the world that one of the beloved faithful of the 12 disciples of Jesus, St. Thomas came to India which has been the welcome home to many different streams of thought, cultural and religious over the ages. The diverse groups have interacted, co-existed and mutually assimilated the emerging composite culture and traditions in India.
Importantly, the Church celebrations and other such festivities in South India bear out the fact that Christianity is as good as an indigenous religion in India, developing into an influential social force.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of Indian Republic, while mentioning the arrival of Christianity in India stated:

Remember, St. Thomas came to India when many of the countries of Europe had not yet become Christian, and so those Indians who trace their Christianity to him have a longer history and a higher ancestry than that of Christians of many of the European countries. And it is really a matter of pride to us that it so happened.

The Christian missionaries came to India, took the mission in right earnest wanting to make the right impact on the society. They reached out to the most neglected sections of the society and in the most inaccessible areas of the country with the message of faith, hope and love to enlighten their spirit. Mixing with the poor, illiterate and marginalized people, the missionaries would generally talk about the basic issues of life and living, trying to bring about a change in their mind-set by cultivating faith in God and Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

They were motivated, influenced, impelled by the word of God from the Holy Bible, like, “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by whom we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Before the Lord Jesus ascended to heaven, He said to his disciples, “Go into the entire world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation” (Mt.28:16). “The one who believes and is baptized will be saved; but the one who does not believe will be condemned” (Mk.16:18). The scriptural passages continues to move the missionaries. It is written in the book of Philippians “therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord” (Phil.2:9-11).

A missionary is urged to move on with this belief and to make every effort possible to dispel ignorance and darkness from wherever he can and bring cheer to the miserable and suffering humanity. Thus, a missionary follows the footprints of Jesus Christ, and is a selfless worker for the salvation of mankind.
The Christian missionaries came to Punjab and reached out to the poor, the backward and the neglected sections of the society. They traversed distances to reach the inaccessible areas trying to bring about a new meaning, a ray of sunshine in their hitherto miserable lives. Admittedly, it must have been stupendous task for the missionaries to instill self-belief in the minds of the ever suffering people. Nonetheless, the missionaries continued their efforts by concrete actions.

With the passage of time, in Punjab the kinetics of Christianity as a missionary movement underwent many changes, but its progress was barely noticeable. With the arrival of the Protestant and Catholic missionary movements from America and Europe, in the early eighteenth century, the dynamics of the purpose took a paradigmatic shift. Reaching out to the most backward people in the far-flung areas became a priority with them. They received an encouraging response from these far-off villages, where the people neglected for ages, found some dawn of hope in the caring attitude of the missionaries.

In Punjab, education became the primary focus of the mission. Many elementary schools were set up in different villages and towns to give their purposes a practical shape, and to help, besides spreading education, increase the interaction of the missionaries with the people. A very special attention was given to the emancipation of women and the education of the young children. Every effort made by the missionary was to bring about a qualitative change in the lives of the people and to lead them towards an improved and healthy future. The educational services were subsequently complemented with some social welfare schemes in the remote areas to render possible help in many different ways to ameliorate the suffering of the hapless people, eventually creating in them a sort of awareness of their basic human rights.

In Punjab, the major concentration of the Christians is in the border villages of Ferozepur, Amritsar and Gurdaspur Districts. In quite a few such villages, the Christians are numerically in a majority but in other villages they form only a small chunk of the population. Otherwise, the Christians in Punjab form a very small percentage of the total population which comprises of Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims.7

The present study focuses on the identity of the Christian community as a whole with a special emphasis on a socio–economic and political condition in the districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur. For this study, various indicators and variables were taken into
consideration while analyzing the pattern of their activities and their attitudes in the spheres of socio-economic and political scenario prevailing in the 18 selected villages in the Majha area of the Punjab.

The present study is empirical in nature; it highlights the real living conditions of the rural Christians especially living in villages along the Pakistan border in Gurdaspur and Amritsar districts of Punjab. The problems faced by them in their life are also equally focused upon. This is an endeavour to scan the comprehensive micro-level from the macro-level research for any purposeful socio-economic, cultural and political understanding.

Punjab witnessed a remarkable economic growth during the green-revolution in agriculture in 1960’s. The state ensured not only food for itself but became the food basket for the whole country. As a consequence, Punjab became the economically leading state in the country with the highest per capita income. The state too offered all possible help to the agriculture sector in terms of ensured market for the agriculture produce, subsidies and other encouragements, to keep up the momentum of development.

The fruits of this economic growth benefited land holders the most. The economic structure being as it is even today; those sections of the society living on the margin, the dalits and other deprived classes gained little from this economic growth and as such did not experience any material change of consequence in their condition. Being mostly landless and as such subservient to the rich landlords, their economic status remained as pathetic as ever. With little economic power they remained deprived politically too, and different political dispensations conveniently ignored them. The Christians too, fall in this category.

No doubt, there are some villages in the border areas where Christians are visible as Panchayat members but they seemed to be only titular in form and effect.

Ours is an attempt to present an analytical study of the socio-economic, cultural and political conditions of the Christians as it is in Punjab as also the significance of the role they play in the society as a whole.
Review of Literature

There is a plethora of literature available on the history and development of the Church and how the missions traversed in different continents of the world, but there is only a little information available concerning the existence of Christians in Punjab and almost negligible study concerning the Christians in and around the countryside in Punjab.

Of late, some researchers have been keen on discussing and delineating the political rather than the socio-economic issues concerning the community. As such, a brief review of the selected and relevant literature will help us in gauging the focus of the present study viz. the concept, the issues and an insight into the relevant factors thereof.

The available literature can be broadly categorized into three types:

1. Historical and descriptive studies with origin, growth and spread of Christianity.
2. Christians in Punjab in India.
3. Empirical and behaviour literature concerning broadly with socio-economic and political parameters.

Most of the research exercises have revolved round the state and national level and are demographic in nature. However, there is no study that is directly pertinent to our field of research though there are some which helpfully point towards the direction in the formulation of issues and preparations of the schedule for our empirical study.

M.P. Christianand Pillai\(^8\) in a write up *Introduction to the Study of the Christian Religion* presents a comprehensive exposition of the historical development of Christianity right from the beginning upto-1215 A.D.

The author covers his study in four parts. The first part describes the beginnings and the dawn of Christianity. Part II deals with the epical personality of Jesus Christ aptly supported by biblical references. In part III he traces the historical growth and spread of the new faith in various continents of the world and part IV elucidates the main teachings of Christianity. The article is useful for any research to grasp the historical perspective and to get a comprehensive understanding of the basic concepts of Christianity as also its teaching.
William G. Young in his book gives a narrative assessment of the work of the Church of Scotland in Punjab in ‘The age of William Harper, 1873- 1885’. The author lauds the work and activities of a great missionary William Harper, a Scottish pioneer, who was entrusted with the momentous task of establishing the Christian faith in Punjab. The author traces the beginning of Christianity and how the attempt to establish the Church though painful, proved fruitful.

William Harper launched his mission from Sialkot in the undivided Punjab with the establishment of Scottish mission schools. He conducted religious instruction classes, bazaar preaching and distributed the literature on Christianity. He continued his efforts to reach out to the people in a meaningful way. A girls’ orphanage and a girls’ school in Sialkot were started with the explicit purpose of providing and promoting women education. Churches too were constructed. In order to sustain his faithful efforts, he worked hard to develop and encourage, indigenous leadership and clergy and to cultivate a spirit of service in the cause of the upliftment of the oppressed sections of the people. The book provides us with an understanding of the means and methods which attracted common man to Christianity.

Fr. Leo’s book covers a broader spectrum with references to history, geography, ethnology and of course the religion. It records the history of the untiring efforts of the missionaries to propagate the teachings of Christianity in the face of hostile environment in the undivided Punjab. The author makes a special mention about the work done by the Franciscan Capuchin, a religious order of Roman Catholic Church form 1880 - 1910. The work is divided into three parts. Part one of the book deals with the general information of undivided Punjab, especially its geography and history. Part two focuses on the socio- economic and ethnographic conditions around there. Part three deals with the founding of the mission by the Roman Catholic Church, its missionaries, various statistics, and demographic information. The author presents the record of the missionary stations set up one after another and an overall progress report of the Church mission in undivided Punjab.

James K. Mathew’s book gives a brief but lucid description of one hundred years of Methodism in India and Pakistan (1862 -1962). He spells out the great contribution made directly and indirectly by the missionaries toward the development of the region as a whole. The author makes a cogent point by making the observation that
freedom of India from the British Raj was implicitly facilitated by the Church and the leaders of the national freedom movement were one and all shaped by and schooled in Western and Christian influences. At one point of time, the author observes, every cabinet member in free India had a Christian confidential secretary. The book also assesses the reasons for the failure to convert Dr. Ambekar to Christianity and why the influence of the missionaries failed to reach out to all sections of the society.

Andrew Gordon’s work describes the thirty-year history of the Indian Mission of the United Presbyterian Church of North India (1855 -1885). The author was nominated by the Presbyterian Church to travel to Punjab and to propagate the faith that he had received from the Lord Jesus. He narrates the difficulties and the trials faced by the Christian Missionaries in their task. He gives detailed information about the names and the achievements by the missionaries, the first converts in 1857 -1864 among the Chuhras, the religious awakening among the Megs and especially the conversions of Muslims and the work carried out by the missionaries among these people. He concludes the book mentioning the various institutions, social and educational run by the Presbyterians in North India. Since Andrew Gordon and his team concentrated their working among the lower strata of society in Gurdaspur district, the book helps to understand the conditions of the Christians in and around the area.

E. Morris Wherry in his book traces the history of the Punjab Mission by the Presbyterian Church of USA. He covers a period of about 90 years between 1834-1924. of their work in India and especially in Punjab. The author presents the contents thematically and topically rather than chronologically. The book is useful in assessing the various social upliftment plans and the apostolic programmes adopted by the missionaries to establish the Church in Punjab.

John Rooney in his book emphasizes that historically the primary concern of the Catholic Missionaries in Punjab was not the conversion of the people but to look after the spiritual as well as the temporal needs of the already baptized Catholics who were the soldiers serving in the British army. This study helps us to understand why the Catholic Church did not flourish in Punjab.

Arthur J. Brown in his book evaluates the task of preaching the message of Jesus and the propagation of Christianity by foreign missionaries in Punjab. It is a useful guide
for a missionary to understand and assess ground realities, the requisite qualification of a missionary as well as his obligations and responsibilities. The author informs the missionaries of the difficulties to be overcome and the creation of the congenial atmosphere to evolve a proper response among the people. He lays stress on the simplicity of the Christian message and its missions. Its dynamics are as simple as common things of life. The author’s observation based on his experience and his insight into the administrative problems of the missionaries, is strategic.

John C.B Webster in his analytical article gives a historical view of the Mission Source of 19th century Punjab History of the North Indian Church and the Christian community. He traces the role of the foreign missionaries since 19th century and acknowledges their pioneering role in education, the mitigation of the sufferings of the poor sections of the people, and the emancipation of women and the outcastes. Basically a historical study of the working of the various foreign missions in Punjab, the article ignores the socio-economic and political aspects of the Christian community of North India.

John C. B. Webster in his work presents a detailed analysis of the Ludhiana and Farrukhanbad Missions of the Presbyterian Church of USA, during the period from 1834 to 1914. He explains how the Christians in Punjab and United provinces had evolved as a distinct community and how they interacted with the other community on different levels and how this interaction brought about numerous changes both within and beyond the Christian community. This book has six chapters, the first two chapters analyze the profile of the Christian community itself; one on the missionaries’ background, motivation, theological outlook, and conditions of service; the other on the converts; background and motivation, the screening process they were put through prior to baptism, their post-baptismal identities and social life, their relationships with the missionaries, and the conditions to interact and the changes they made. The next three chapters on interaction deal with religious controversy, evangelism, education, famine relief, and politics. The concluding chapter explains the growth and change of the Presbyterian Church to the north Indian Christian community as a whole and traces how the Christians became a community, and its role in the changes which took place in north India during the nineteenth century. This book helps the reader to understand the gradual historical growth of the movement to a well developed community.
John C. B Webster, in yet another of his analytical article\textsuperscript{18} gives the account of the presence of Christians in Punjab at the time of the arrival of a protestant missionary John C. Lowrie at Ludhiana in 1834. The author states that the protestant missionaries had no specific methodology to execute and therefore no specific audience in their mind while preaching the message of Jesus Christ. This article is based on the perceptions of the missionaries and not on the direct contact with the reality. They were under the impression that the Sikhs would embrace the Christianity. Infact, they faced a lot of opposition and the cultural interaction did not happen. The author maintains that things changed tangibly with the rural Chuhras embracing the Christian religion. The missionaries had the most significant encounter with dalit culture. He also examines the reasons of numerical growth of the Chuhras converts to the Christian faith. Here specifically, the author examines the caste culture at the time of conversion and mass movements to Christianity in the year 1870 onwards and then focuses attention on the interaction between Christians and Chuhras. The author then gives a picture of cultural relationships between the Christians and the new generation of the converted Christians.

John C. B Webster\textsuperscript{19} in yet another work has analyzed the social history of the Christianity in North-West India since 1800 with what the British census referred to as “The Punjab and its Dependencies”. This book is divided into seven chapters. Chapters I to V deal with pre-Independence period and explain the beginning of Christianity, role of education, and the religious challenges faced by the community. The author also explains the role of the dalit Christians and establishment of the Christian community and their contribution towards political movements. Chapter six and seven deal with the post independence periods and explain the presence of Christian community in the present Punjab. The book also highlights the leadership to the Church by the great Christians of India like that of Golaknath, Kali Charan Chatterjee and S.K. Rudra, in this region. The author also brings out the communal rivalry that existed at the time of partition of India and the positive contribution made by the Christians at that period of time.

John C. B Webster\textsuperscript{20} in this book examines the history of the Dalit Christians and explains in detail the mass conversion of dalits to Christianity in the Punjab and U.P. The author says that the Dalits comprise almost between two-thirds and three-quarters of the entire Christian population of India. He discovered that 90% of pastors were from the Dalit families. He suggests more studies on Roman Christians. His study deals with the
Introduction.

Dalit movements, their mass conversion, especially to Christianity, a powerful and a steady transformation in the Dalit identity. He says that the communal politics of British regime divided the Christians.

Waskom Pickett’s book\textsuperscript{21} extensively deals with the mass movement that took place among the Chuhras and the Megs and how they became Christians. This study is empirical and therefore helpful to understand the background of the Christian community at large.

Frederick and Margaret Stock in their book\textsuperscript{22} have attempted to explain the historical factors leading to the first large-scale mass conversion movement that took place among the Meghs (1854-84) and among the Chuhras communities. They explain that there was a mass exodus to the Church viz. to the various denominations like that of Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, Baptist, Roman Catholic and salvations Army. The Megs and Chuhras were descendents of men and women, born Hindus but turned Christians in chuhras people movements from 1880 to 1930. The Christians grew to 9,00,000. Frederick and Margaret discover how this great movement to the Christian faith took place. This book describes the mass movements from the Mehgs and Chuhras communities to Christianity in a lucid manner.

Frederick in his book\textsuperscript{23} highlights the role of the Christian community. He writes that Christians made a significant contribution to a better social environment and were also involved in the national struggle for independence. The Christians added to the cultural richness of Indian heritage. Protestant missionaries were on the scene in large numbers in the 19th century and played a great role in the field of education and social upliftment of the common masses, and thus to the Indian society, but the book does not reflect the role of community in the political matters.

Catholic calendar and directory of the Archdiocese of Agra and its Suffrage Diocese\textsuperscript{24}, which was published in 1907 gives the numerical strength of the Catholics in Punjab. The undivided Punjab was part of the Lahore diocese which gave us a number of educational institutions and the mission stations they were looking after. Punjab was elevated into a vicariate on 18\textsuperscript{th} of September 1880 and constituted into a diocese under the hierarchy with the title of Lahore, on the 1st September 1886. This booklet is useful in understanding the presence of Christian community in undivided Punjab and gives us an overview of the presence of Roman Catholic Church in Punjab.
Avril A. Powel’s study describes the people who were converted from other religions to Christianity. It was not only from the Chuhras and Megs, and Chamars that the conversion to Christianity took place but there were high caste people from Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs who embraced Christian faith by the end of nineteenth century. Those who became Christians from the upper caste were more fervent and enthusiastic to propagate the new religious faith. Some of the prominent ones are “Imad ud-din”, Nilakhanta Goreh, K.M. Banerjea, Ram Chand, Tara Chand etc. In Punjab the outstanding person who was converted form Sikh religion was “Sadhu Sundar Singh” in 1904. These people who were converted from the other religions began to preach and evangelize their new religion. This study helps to understand the effectiveness of the missionary work among the upper caste and the result it brought to the Church. It proves that it is not only from lower strata of the people that conversion took place but there were some cases of conversion among the higher caste people too.

John C.B. Webster in his article explains that Christianity has not been a movement throughout the history in Punjab. He asserts that the movement took place among the Christians from 1860 to 1920. According to the author it was a movement for sixty years and gradually the converts took the shape of a community. The author tries to trace the origin of Christianity in Punjab and its significant impact there and extensively describes how it took root as a community in Punjab. He analyzes the movement of Christians in Punjab and how it organized into a community.

Brojendra Nath Banerjee’s book is a significant piece of work to understand and to evaluate the struggle the Dalit Christians have undergone to get justice for themselves. Banerjee examines the problems of the Dalit Christians in India. In this regard, various commissions and committees of the Central and State governments for the upliftment of the backward classes are unanimous in stating that the change in religion has not improved the socio-economic status of Dalit Christians in India and the discrimination against Dalit Christians is clearly based on religion in total violation of the Constitution of India as well as of human rights. The author also highlights some demands of the Dalit Christians. Although his study covers all the aspects of Christians like socio-economic and political aspects etc. but it does not say much about the role of Christian community in the political processes of Punjab.
James Massey’s book also examines the problems of the Dalit Christians in India. Dalits, according to him are the descendants of the earliest settlers of India. They have suffered and continue to suffer multiple oppressions, which have always been supported by orthodox religion, directly or indirectly. Tracing the long history of oppression of the dalits, he concludes that they have even lost their self-identity. He also says that there are a lot of problems of Christians in India and they have been neglected throughout because of their religion. They have been deprived of the basic human rights and treated merely as ‘objects’ instead of ‘subjects’ with no identity and social status.

Clarence McMullen in his article highlights the miserable socio-economic conditions of the community and finds it a politically neglected community with no political representation. He writes that the conversion has brought only a mere change of the names of gods and individuals and never an implantation of Christian values. This article explains the overall present conditions of the Christians of Punjab in the rural and the urban areas as pathetic.

C.H. Loehlin in his article gives details about the history of the origin and the development of Christianity in Punjab. According to him, the Christianity began with the arrival of the Jesuit Catholic priests in the court of Emperor Akbar in Fatehpur Sikri in 1579. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries various Protestant missionaries came to undivided Punjab and established various educational institutions. The prominent among the missionaries was John Lowrie who arrived in Ludhiana on Nov.5, 1834. The author does not understand why Guru Nanak Dev, being a great traveller, did not come in contact with the Christian missionaries.

The first Christian scholar and translator, William Carey, had by 1819 translated the New Testament and part of the Old Testament into Gurumukhi. The author then mentions that the native Christians of Punjab, who were converted to Christianity by the work and preaching of the foreign missionaries, produced leaders who were the peers of Christian leaders anywhere in the world. Outstanding among these was Sadhu Sundar Singh, a man of Sikh ancestry and a combination of East and West. The other prominent converts were Goloknath, the first convert from Jalandhar, Prince Harnam Singh, from Kapurthala and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur to name the few.
The Christian religion was confined to the towns and cities initially. However, when the outcastes in the villages and bastis heard about the new religion they showed keen interest to be the part of it. Thus the missionary work took interest in the villages as well. The author says that the new converts were settled in the mission compounds. He concludes his observation by citing various contributions the missionaries have made in the development of literature and also the other developmental works undertaken by them. This article emphasizes the positive and constructive contributions of the missionaries to the people to Punjab, in particular.

Nazir Masihi in his article deals with the literacy level of Christian dalits of Gurdaspur area. The study also analyses the socio-economic conditions of the community. It points out that the Dalit Christians of Gurdaspur are the most backward community neglected by the government as well as by the Church. Even after embracing Christianity, they stand at the lowest rung of the society. His study is particular to socio-economic conditions of the Dalits.

Vidy Sagar Dogar’s work provides a demographic overview of the North West India, the geographical situation, the people, the ethos, the cultural characteristics and the psycho-social traits etc. The social mobility of the Christians can be traced to the conversion during the mass movements in the early twentieth century when mostly Dalits were converted to Christianity. A brief history of the Christians has been presented to understand the predicament of oppression and exploitation that perpetuates even after the conversion of Dalit Christians. They lived in the outskirts of their respective villages having practically no contact with other sections of the people except for their work. The jobs given to them were filthy and loathsome, particularly assigned to a particular caste. Their main job was to work for the ‘Sep’ i.e. the landowner to which the whole family was bonded verbally, psychologically and financially. As the missionaries came to India, the picture began to change. An upward mobility began to take place. The missionaries mostly belonged to the educated urban middle class, and they became an instrument of social and political change in the rural and urban areas. It resulted into a new area of political involvement of the rural church during the end of twentieth century. This study helps to understand and analyze the problems and issues of the Christian community in the North West India.
Fr. Timothy, in his article describes the role of Roman Catholic Church in Punjab. He argues that there are two divisions among the catholic here viz., English speaking group and Punjabi speaking group (mainly concentrated in the villages), which truly represent Catholicism in Punjab. This article explains the role of the Catholic Church in the socio–economic scenario of the border areas.

Emmanuel Nahar, in his work deals with the role and Impact of the Christians in Punjab politics. He has divided his book into eight parts. Part I and II deal with the history of Christianity in India since the arrival of St Thomas the Apostle, in A.D. 52, in south India, the spread of Christians in North India with the arrival of the Western Missionaries. The author tries to explain the expansion of the Christianity in the present Punjab. Part III to VI deal with the socio-economic profile of the community and the problems, the struggle and the difficulties encountered by the Christian community in India in general and Punjab in particular. Part VII and VIII give a comprehensive view of the Christian community in Punjab with special reference to the political awareness of the people in the political processes of the state of Punjab. The conversion to Christianity has not brought any substantial change in the life situations or the economic conditions of these people at large. They are suffering the problems of deprivation and degradation mostly due to the socio-economic weakness, placed as they are at the bottom of the caste pyramid. The economic backwardness of the Christian community is aggravated also because of the lack of political influence. He cites various factors due to which the political power is not achieved by the Christians. The author also gives a detailed description about the discrimination meted out to the Christians by the central and the state Governments.

1.1.1 Research questions

1. What are the factors that led to the rise and spread of Christianity in the Punjab in general and Majha region in particular?
2. What was the role of Christian Missionaries in socio-economic transformation of the region?
3. What is the socio-economic profile of the Christian Community in the villages? What is the role/status of this community in politics at local, district and state level?
4. Why did the Christian community fail to make an in-road into the political arena of Punjab after independence?

5. There were many mass movements into the Christian community before independence. Why is it that there is no mass movement to Christianity now?

6. What are income levels of Christians in the studied villages?

7. What is the pattern of their economic activity i.e. what do they mostly do for a living?

8. Does the Christian community have adequate access to education, health and other services provided by the government?

9. What are the problems faced by the community in these areas? How can they be helped to lead a dignified life?

The present study has been conducted to explain and examine the various aspects of the socio-economic conditions, educational standards and achievements, change in the religious attitude due to the influence of the Christian teachings, political participation and activity and Christian community’s failure to achieve political patronage in the villages.

1.1.2 The objectives of the study

1. To examine the role of Christian missionaries in socio-economic transformation of the region.

2. To investigate the socio-economic profile of the Christian community in the villages especially in the border districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur.

3. The role of the Christian community in the politics at local, district and state level.

4. Why does the Christian community fail to make an in-road into the political area of the Punjab after independence.

5. The level of their political and social aspirations.

6. The factors leading to the changing role of the Christian community’s participations in rural society.

7. The changing patterns and processes of participation at grassroots level politics.

8. Caste and class barriers in the process of their participation.

9. Why even when the Christians are numerically a majority in the village, are unable to get elected as Sarpnches or any other office bearers in a political party?
10. To find out the causes of mass-movement in the pre-independent area and why no mass-movement to Christianity now?

11. To examine the future prospects for the Christian community in the changing scenario of the country.

12. The social indicators (like education health, vocational expertise, economic influence etc) of the community.

13. The number, type, functions and activities of the various social, cultural organizations and societies etc. that the community might have formed.

14. The community’s social interactions and relationships with other groups and segments.

**Part II. Methodology**

Both primary and secondary sources have been used for the collection of data. The study is confined to 18 villages (nine each from Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts). The primary source is empirical information and data collected from 18 villages in 6 blocks, (three blocks each in Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts). The data has been collected through an open ended structured questionnaire and personal interviews with the heads of the Christian families in the studied villages. A total of 20 households were randomly selected in each village, keeping in mind the presence of a substantial number of population of Christians in these villages. The secondary data includes government documents, Census, reports, books, periodicals, articles etc.
Introducing...

**Table (Methodology)**

- **Punjab**
  - **Districts**
    - Amritsar
    - Gurdaspur
  
  **Blocks**
  - **Ajanala**
    - Jassar
    - Phivaria
    - Sheikh Bhatti
  - **Chaugawan**
    - Awan Lakha Singh
    - Nawan Jiwan
    - Thathi
  - **Harsha China**
    - Karyal
    - Kot Sidhu
    - Shahpur
  - **Dera Baba Nanak**
    - Dharamkot Randhawa
    - Pakhoke Mahmaran
    - Megha
  - **Dhariwal**
    - Dadwan
    - Kunjar
    - Shahpur (Rajadian)
  - **Kalanaur**
    - Barila Khurd
    - Chhohan
    - Dostpur

*Villages refer to the studied villages.*
Chapterisation

1. **Introduction**

   The chapter includes an introduction to the topic, framework of the study depicting the review of the existing literature, justification, relevance of the problems and the research methodology to be followed.

2. **Spread of Christianity in Punjab: An Overview.**

   The chapter gives the spread of the Christian religion in Punjab and the role of Christianity in the development of Punjab.

3. **Socio-economic Profile of the Christian Community**

   An attempt has been made to investigate and analyze the status and socio-economic profile of Christians in the studied villages.

4. **Political Participation of the community in the Electoral Process**

   In this chapter an analysis of the political participation of the Christian in the selected villages and their preference-voting pattern and behaviour has been presented.

5. **Problems and Prospectus of the Community**

   This Chapter scrutinizes the problems faced by the community and their future prospects in the present socio-political scenario.

6. **Survey and findings**

   The field work and its findings in the condensed form and concrete steps for the active involvement of the community in socio-political field have been suggested in this chapter.
Introduction.

END NOTE

4. Ibid, p.34.
Introduction.


32 The specific reasons for using the term Dalit in this thesis are the following: (a). They are converted from depressed classes and have past identity. This word means oppressed, broken and crushed, untouchable, Harijans (Children of God), and Scheduled Castes to mention the most common terminologies ascribed to them. In spite of conversion, still they have miserable socio-economic conditions in India.

