

**SOCIAL REHABILITATION OF SURVIVORS OF  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**A Case Study of Suvivors of Domestic Violence in Pokhara of  
Kaski District**

**A Dissertation**

Submitted to MPhil Program in Sociology at Central Department of  
Sociology, Tribhuvan University, in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy  
in Sociology

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2024

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**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **Social Rehabilitation of Survivors of Domestic Violence: A Case Study of Survivors of Domestic Violence in Pokhara of Kaski District**, being submitted by Shristi Bajracharya for the award of the degree of Master in Philosophy in Sociology, Central Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University, is a research work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance. This dissertation is an independent and an original work and I hereby recommend this dissertation for the final approval and acceptance by the MPhil Program in Sociology.

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**APPROVAL LETTER**

The dissertation entitled **Social Rehabilitation of Survivors of Domestic Violence: A Case Study of Survivors of Domestic Violence in Pokhara of Kaski District** was submitted to the Central Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal by Shristi Bajracharya has been accepted as the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Philosophy in Sociology.

We hereby, certify that the dissertation is good and accepted for the degree.

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## **LETTER OF DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work which has been completed after registering for a Masters in Philosophy (MPhil) in Sociology at Tribhuvan University, and has not previously been included in a thesis or dissertation submitted to this or any other institution for a degree or other qualification.

I have attempted to identify any potential risks associated with this research, obtained relevant ethical and/or safety approval (where applicable), obtained consent, and acknowledged my obligations and the participants' rights.

Shristi Bajracharya

Date: 2024

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to express my profound respect and deep sense of gratitude to my research supervisor Dr. Dinesh Prasain for instilling confidence in me through his inspirational words and providing me with invaluable comments and criticism on many issues. I will always be indebted to his constantly interpretation, timely advice and sparing valuable time. I will always indebted towards you 'Sir' for giving me moral support when I required the most throughout my thesis work.

I would like to thank to Prof. Dr. Youba Raj Luintel, Head of the Central Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal as well as administration team of the Department for their help and kind regards.

I am grateful to my expert examiner Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tika Ram Gautam and Dr. Guman Singh Khatri for their encouragement, constructive remarks, and for making time out of their busy schedule for the viva.

I also appreciate and thank my husband Anesh Gurung for his support and encouragement from time to time that have helped me to travel eventually towards the completion of this thesis work.

At last, I feel pride to give thanks to all respondents and professionals from Child and Women Empowerment Society (CWES) Nepal and Antardhoni Nepal who gave me valuable information for this research work.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The process of rehabilitation is of great importance in aftermath of any case of violence. If we are to overlook the acts and causes of violence for now, rehabilitation takes center stage in the present context for successful recovery for the survivors, be it either physically, mentally, socially, economically or all. In the aftermath of any untoward incident, be it a major disaster or a single case of domestic violence, many factors will influence the ability of the survivor to rehabilitate completely. Rehabilitation is extremely important to allow for the survivor to reintegrate in a dignified and safe manner back into their society. And when society itself is an obstacle in complete rehabilitation, we cannot neglect this stage without severe consequences. Violence can happen to anyone but in this paper, I am focusing on the rehabilitation of domestic violence against women as it is the most common forms of violence prevalent in our patriarchal society. Since it takes place in the domestic sphere and perpetrators are their own family members or spouse, it makes it even more difficult for survivors to rehabilitate when their own social milieu are the active or silent perpetrators of the violence against them.

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## ACRONYMS

CBOs	Community Based Organization
CWES	Child and Women Empowerment Society
FWLD	Forum for Women, Law and Development
GOs	Governmental Organizations
HH	Household
HHH	Household Head
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Social Support
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
TU	Tribhuvan University
UN	United Nation
WHO	World Health Organization
WHRDs	Women Human Rights Defenders
WOREC	Women's Rehabilitation Centre

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Violence is “any form of behavior by an individual that intentionally threatens to or does cause physical, sexual or psychological harm to others or themselves” (Stanko, 2000). Similarly, Lawrence (1970) stated that violence includes all actions that can lead to "serious injury to life or its material conditions". Both women and men experience violence but the majority of sufferers are women.

Violence against women has several broad categories which carried out by both “individuals” and “states”. Some of the forms of violence perpetrated by individuals include: rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, reproductive coercion, female infanticide, prenatal sex selection, obstetric violence, and mob violence; as well as harmful traditional practices such as honor killings, dowry violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage. Some forms of violence are perpetrated by the state such as war rape; sexual violence and sexual slavery during conflict; forced sterilization; forced abortion; violence by the police and authoritative personnel; stoning and flogging. Many forms of such violence such as “trafficking in women and forced prostitution are often perpetrated by organized criminal networks” (Prugl, 2013).

Domestic violence is one among many forms of violence, with the key requirement being that it is committed in a domestic setting. Domestic violence is one among the foremost widespread violation of human rights. Mitchell & Hodson (1983) state that women are more at risk of being targeted as a victim than men. It is sadly one of the most well-known fact in our society. Lack of any meaningful rehabilitation program, we see continued victimization even after the survivors have been rescued due to apathy but more so because of misconceptions on rehabilitation in itself. Thus, social rehabilitation is required to truly bring an end to the cycle of violence. Survivors themselves are after all members of the families and communities that were tasked with their protection and well-being in the first place. Smooth functionality of the familial and societal structures requires a peaceful environment devoid of violence or threats of violence.

In the aftermath of any case of violence, rehabilitation takes center stage for the successful recovery for the survivors. In such events, many factors will influence the ability of the survivors to rehabilitate completely. Rehabilitation is extremely important to allow for the survivors to reintegrate in a dignified and safe manner back into their society. And when society itself is an obstacle in complete rehabilitation, we cannot neglect this stage without severe consequences. Thus, rehabilitation is of great importance on the subject of the violence.

At the present moment, there is still lack of detailed information regarding the social rehabilitation program. The paucity of social rehabilitation program leaves survivor to continue to suffer from violence. The bitter reality is that even when survivors are separated from the perpetrator, they still have to face economic challenges and have to live in isolation as the survivors, usually women, have very little money of their own and few people on whom they can rely when seeking help. This has been shown to be one of the greatest obstacles facing survivors of domestic violence, and the strongest factor that can discourage them from leaving their perpetrators.

Moreover, the mainstream sociological theory have been much concerned with and broadly effective in analyzing social conflict, but much less so the specifics of interpersonal violence, domestic violence or violence in intimacy (McKie, 2006). Hearn (2013) concluded that while ‘violence is a persistent feature of social life. It has not been central to sociological concerns’, and that sociology has tended to focus upon social cohesion and consensus with violence ‘as a residual category of power’. But this understanding of domestic violence neglects the relative violence in intimacy between known persons as a central concern in mainstream sociology. Thus, the detail sociological study on domestic violence and rehabilitation is important in order to explore the condition of domestic violence survivors.

## **1.2 Conceptualization of Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence is a traumatic incidence entailing abusive behavior by a person against their partner. Globally, the survivors of domestic violence are overwhelmingly women, and women tend to experience more severe forms of such violence (Moreno &

Stockl, 2013). It is often understood as the violence occurring between husband and wife. Wallace (2005) states that it may be also termed as *intimate partner violence* when committed by a spouse or partner in an intimate relationship against the other spouse or partner. It is among the most underreported crimes worldwide for both men and women due to social stigmas (Riviello, 2009).

Domestic violence further takes a number of forms of violence including physical, verbal, psychological, economic, and sexual abuse which can range from subtle, coercive forms to violent physical abuse that has resulted in serious injury or even death. Domestic murders can also include stoning, bride burning, and deaths related to dowry (Shipway, 2004).

### **1.3 Conceptualization of Rehabilitation and Social Rehabilitation**

Rehabilitation can and has been used in many contexts and in many different ways. The medical definition of "rehabilitation" may be "the restoration of the handicapped to the fullest physical, psychological, social, vocational and economic usefulness of which they are capable" (Rusk & Eugene, 1951). Rehabilitation starts the day after the injury. It is essential to return to normal work. Cesaire (1956) defined this program of rehabilitation as "a return to the sources". For World Health Organization, Rehabilitation is a set of interventions designed to optimize functioning and reduce disability in individuals with health conditions in interaction with their environment (WHO, 2017).

Although the concept of rehabilitation is broad, not everything to do with disability can be included in the term. Rehabilitation targets improvements in individual functioning – say, by improving a person’s ability to eat and drink independently. Rehabilitation also includes making changes to the individual’s environment (WHO, 2017).

Here, in this paper I am focusing more on social rehabilitation. According to Firdaus (2017), social rehabilitation is “the process of re-functionalization and development to enable one to be able to carry out its social functioning fairly in the life of the community”. Social rehabilitation can involve psychosocial motivation and diagnosis; care and nurturing; vocational training and entrepreneurship coaching; spiritual mental

guidance; physical guidance; social counseling and psychosocial counseling; accessibility services; social assistance and assistance; guidance of resocialization; further guidance; and/or referrals. Social Rehabilitation is carried out by stages: initial approach; disclosure and understanding of the problem; preparation of problem-solving plans; solution to problem; resocialization; termination; and further guidance (Firdaus 2017).

For Kemppainen (2011), the term social rehabilitation also encompasses a very broad range of meanings. The ambiguity of social rehabilitation is natural since societies and cultures are different and, consequently, the content of social rehabilitation varies. Furthermore, the concept of social rehabilitation is not used in all parts of the world. Kemppainen mention three different meaning of social rehabilitation, these are;

- a. The improving of the context of social activities,
- b. The social aspect of any kind of rehabilitation, and
- c. Specific social rehabilitation.

From the above mentioned three meanings, Kemppainen defined social rehabilitation as “the improvement of the conditions of social activities, and specific social rehabilitation as the process of enriching a person's capacity of social activities.”

Rehabilitation in itself is an endeavor that requires inclusive and holistic approach if it is to overcome any survivor from being excluded for the slightest cause. I understand that rehabilitation does not delve into causal analysis nor provide prescription to correct any of the social ills. It is not a preventive measure but a post incident approach that supports the survivors towards recovery. It looks to prevent continued victimization, without which a survivor may endure further stigmatization. Also, such victimization does not end with the individual survivor; it will also affect those near them.

Domestic Violence is outlawed in Nepal and a punishable offence but that has not prevented rise in number of cases. Instead, survivors of domestic violence, who are overwhelmingly women, face numerous challenges in overcoming their plight and fight for justice and rehabilitation. Husbands were the perpetrators of violence in nearly 95%

of cases as per the Nepal Demographic Health Survey of 2016. This complicates the matter with the bond between husband and wife viewed as sacred in religious and cultural terms where the wives are at a disadvantage in terms of power and position. With stigma attached with domestic violence and societal norms weighing heavily against them, escaping the impact of domestic violence has proven challenging to say the least. Laws and regulations have begun to adopt rights-based approach in legal resolution of cases of domestic violence, but rehabilitation of the survivors is still overlooked by the state.

#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

Domestic violence against women is a global phenomenon that knows no geographical, cultural, social, economic, ethnic, or other boundaries. Nepal is not an exception. Although the cases of violence have been heard, seen and even reported in media, the issue still lacks attention by concerned officials and general public. This is the case because of our societal norms which views the family unit as a private sphere guided by socio-religious rules not to be interfered with.

Domestic violence is closely associated with social, cultural, economic and psychological factors. Violence occurs most within stressful environment. When there is any social, cultural or economic problem, stress naturally arises in a person. As a result, the person may try to express his/her stress by committing violence against another person who is less powerful than themselves. In a patriarchal society, there is unequal power relation between men and women. Thus, men commit domestic violence against women when he is going through any kind of problems. Melzer (2002) state that male unemployment may lead to more abuse not only by increasing stress but also by undermining men's feelings of control and economic security, creating an urge to exert greater control over their partners.

In the context of COVID-19 pandemic, the pandemic has heightened the pre-existing inequalities among the people especially the women in vulnerable situation in Nepal. The data of National Women Commission (2020) shows that domestic violence increased almost twofold after the pandemic hit the nation. According to WOREC (2020) among the 624 cases reported and investigated by them, 61% had experienced

domestic violence of both physical and mental nature. Investigation indicates that women were abused verbally, tortured physically and mentally harassed with questions on the character, pressure for dowry, giving birth to a girl child or just being childless after years of marriage. In 67 cases women were deprived of their rights through barring them from basic needs and service. This includes 54 cases where women were denied food and clothes or were thrown out from their home. Also, in 10 cases women were denied citizenship, marriage certificate, or birth certificate of their child. Further 3 cases had situations where the women were deprived from health services when they were ill. Among the documented cases of domestic violence, the perpetrators were husbands in 283 cases whereas family members were the perpetrator in 83 cases (WOREC, 2020). Above mentioned are the evidence of domestic violence in Nepal but there is a lack of information regarding the rehabilitation of survivors after incidents of domestic violence. As we know physical rehabilitation and social rehabilitation are of great importance after any kind of incidence of violence, particularly more so for domestic violence survivors.

When I was working at Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC) Nepal in 2015 (during the post-earthquake period), I met many domestic violence survivors. They had come to the organization in search of immediate relief support such as food and shelter, and for legal support.

One of the survivors I met at a shelter in Tudikhel, Kathmandu during the post-earthquake period, shared her experience of domestic violence. Her husband was very abusive towards her. He violated her physically and sexually as well. Even in the tent which was shared with 10 other people, she was beaten badly by her husband. She shared she remained silent for the years of violence as she feared of how society will look at a single mother. But when she realized her silence encouraged her husband to abuse her more then she came to meet us in search of legal support. She was provided Psychosocial Counseling Services and Legal Counseling Support. She was ready to divorce and the organization was also providing her necessary support. But a few months later, she refused for to proceed further with the legal action. She decided to continue to live with her abusive husband. We inquired her about the decision, and the reason shared was that the divorce would have a social impact on her children.

Another survivor was a mother of one child. I met her in 2019. She shared her stories of domestic violence committed by her husband. She worked as a domestic worker during that time. Her husband had just returned from foreign employment and her husband suspected her of having extramarital affair with other men. Her husband would brutally beat her if she went outside to work or even talk with anyone. She came to the organization after being unable to bear any more abuse. She proceeded with the legal process of separating from her husband but she was also worried for her daughter and herself as they were financially dependent on her abusive husband. I met her a year later, but she had not divorced her abusive husband. I asked the reason behind it, and she responded, it would be difficult for a single mother to make a livelihood. This was a situation where violence and abuse had to be tolerated for lack of an independent and secure livelihood.

Another survivor was an unmarried young girl. She was well-educated and worked as a Radio Jockey and also a social worker. Even she was affected by domestic violence from her alcoholic elder brother. She had to give him money to feed his excessive drinking. She was beaten up if she did not give him any money. One day he threatened her with sexual violence. This made her afraid and finally come to the Tarangini Foundation for immediate support. The organization gave her a safe shelter and provided psychosocial counselling service. The organization also helped her to report the case in the Police Station. She stayed in the rehabilitation center of the organization for a month but later she refused to take further legal action against her abusive brother. She went back to her hometown.

The aforementioned stories represent some of the stories of domestic violence survivors. While working in different women right based organizations, I met many women of domestic violence survivors. Like the aforementioned stories, few of them lived either separately with or without any legal process, while most of them continued to live with the abusive partner or family members. According to the survivors who chose to continue living with the abusive partner or families, insecure livelihood and social stigmas are the main reasons that led them to tolerate the abuse and violence.

### **1.5 Research Question**

The stories mentioned in the ‘statement of the problem’, compelled me to explore the experiences of those affected by domestic violence and why they chose to live with their abusers. Like the stories mentioned above, Are the survivors of domestic violence forced to endure abuse and violence? If yes, why do they chose to endure such abuse and violence? If not, what factors encouraged them to speak up against it? To examine these questions the following key research questions have been formulated which will explore the situation of social rehabilitation of survivors of domestic violence.

1. What are the factors contributing to women’s resilience in the face of domestic violence and rehabilitation process?
2. How are survivors of domestic violence adopting strategies to navigate decisions regarding their living arrangement including staying with or leaving with their abusive relationships?

### **1.6 Research Objectives**

The main objective of the study is to explore the situation of social rehabilitation of women in Nepal, who are living in or survivor of domestic violence. The research wish to focus on the importance of social rehabilitation of survivors after domestic violence. Rehabilitation represents the final chapter in eradication of domestic violence and its stigma in a humane manner and thus cannot be ignored in any study or social service work. The study expects to contribute to the increasing body of knowledge on the importance of social rehabilitation for the survivor of domestic violence against women in Nepal and developing literature on this topic. The findings of this research aims to improve understand and raising awareness along with practices concerning the social rehabilitation of domestic violence in Nepal.

### **1.7 Organization of the Study**

This dissertation is organized into seven chapters with its sub-topics. The first chapter focused on the Introduction part which includes background of the study, conceptualization of domestic violence, conceptualization of rehabilitation and social rehabilitation, statement of the problem, research questions, and objective of the study.

Similarly, the second chapter is Literature Review. It focuses on theoretical perspectives of the study and reviews relevant literature on the survivors of domestic violence and their social rehabilitation to find valid evidence of the study. Furthermore, this chapter included gaps in the literature and theoretical linkages between domestic violence and rehabilitation. It has included conceptual frameworks.

The third chapter has talked about the Research Methodology with methodological approach, study area and its rationale, unit of analysis, sample size and sampling procedure, data collection method and method of data analysis.

In the same way, the fourth chapter is Introduction to Study Area and Respondents. This chapters comprised background of study area, socio-economic characteristics of the women (respondents), and the respondent's experience of domestic violence such as form of abuse.

The fifth chapter is Factors Contributing to Women's Resilience in the face of Domestic Violence and Rehabilitation Process. This chapter covers factors contributing to domestic violence and domestic violence impacts on women. Similarly, the sixth chapter is Strategies Adopted by Survivors of Domestic Violence with highlighted number of respondents staying or leaving their abusive relationship during the interview period, reasons behind staying with perpetrators, disclosing the violence and seeking help, the perception of women (survivors) and service provider (local NGOs) regarding the domestic violence cases, barriers to disclosing domestic violence and seeking support, solution for improve reporting of cases, need and support of domestic violence survivors and challenges of social rehabilitation.

And, the final seventh chapter is Summary and Conclusion. The summary of the findings are generated from the data analysis and interpretation and conclusion are based on findings of the research study.

At the end of this study, selected references and appendix have been placed.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

As discussed in Chapter I, understanding domestic violence and the causes behind the domestic violence needs to be explored. Heise (1994) stated that cultural, economic, legal and political factors have helped to perpetuate domestic violence against women. And only by looking into the different contexts and the inter-relation between various factors can we improve our understanding of the problem of domestic violence.

Structural functionalists like Talcott Parsons viewed the family of husband and wife performing the critical social and cultural functions of ‘breadwinner’ and ‘caregiver’ respectively (Parsons, 1937). Family is the arena for primary socialization of individuals and children. When the systems fail to perform as they should, deviant behavior such as domestic violence or crime will grow. This theory has faced criticism for having inadequate reason for deviant behavior to their idealized social systems. Domestic violence has occurred in families which may fulfill most of the roles described for an idealized family.

Another perspective on cause of domestic violence is proposed by the Social Exchange Theory which describes human interaction as a rational exchange that takes costs and benefits of actions into account. This explains the acts of violence as expressions to reinforce the balance the cost of maintaining a relationship in lieu of its reward or benefits between partners (Cook, et al., 2013). As such it tries to explain domestic violence occurring more among the poorer sections of society which has relatively fewer alternative resources and so will resort more to violence. The theory unsurprisingly has been criticized for placing too much emphasis on the rational decision-making process and reciprocity between partners (Meeker, 1971).

Social Learning Theory proposed that people learn from observing and modeling after others' behavior (Hotaling 1986). Mihalic & Elliott (1997) said that when a child grows up in a family where domestic violence is an ongoing issue, they witness such behaviour and are therefore more likely to imitate those actions as they grow older. “If the family

of origin handled stresses and frustrations with anger and aggression, the child who has grown up in such environment is at greater risk for exhibiting those same behaviours, witnessed or experienced, as an adult.” Rahmatian (2009) had outlined four concept of committing domestic violence in the social learning theory as;

- i. Differential association which identifies interactional and normative behaviour that is rooted from the abuser’s past experiences.
- ii. The abuser develops personal understanding toward a specific behaviour that he or she engaged in.
- iii. Differential reinforcement that explains balance anticipation of the cause and effects of such behaviour committed by the abuser.
- iv. Principle of imitation which defines how the abuser repeats his or her observation of similar behaviours committed by other people.

Another perspective is the Family Systems Theory which sees all individuals in a family interconnected meaning what affects an individual will affect the entire family and what affects the family will impact the individual also (Murray, 2006). What this can entail is that the victim can also be a contributor to the cause of domestic violence. This has been much criticized point of the family systems theory especially by feminists who question the risk of ‘victim blaming’ and overlooking the internal dynamics of relationships in a family (Murray, 2006).

This proposed research is reviewed by sociological theory. Sociological theories look at external factor for violence. For them, external factors such as family structure, stress, social learning etc. are key responsible to bring violence. Within sociological theory we are looking into feminist perspective.

### **2.1.1 Feminist perspective of Domestic Violence**

Theories are important for explaining phenomena like violence against women because they have distinct consequences in different approaches that can help us understand the issue of domestic violence and develop strategies to resolve the issues. When discussing domestic violence, the variables influencing the outcome must also be understood. The variables come in the shape of gender inequalities, cultural norms and values, religious beliefs and economic relations that reinforce the real problem. Therefore, feminist

theory requires for a more comprehensive explanation of the issues of domestic violence. In this research, the issues and challenges that has been faced by survivor can be best explained through feminist perspective to be covered the experience of women. Feminist theory in general emphasizes the gender and power imbalance between men and women as the root cause of all forms of violence.

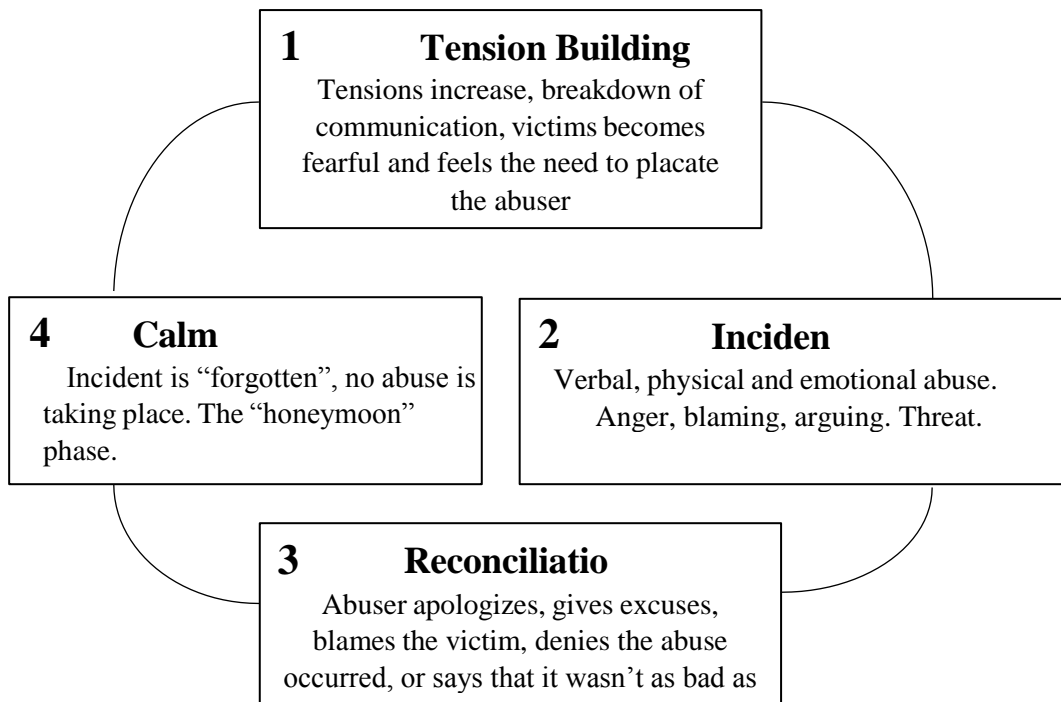
The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women states, one of the most important societal factors that forces women into a subordinate position in comparison to males is violence against women. Violence against women is an aspect of historically unequal power relations between men and women. According to a causality perspective, domestic violence is a tactic used to obtain or hold onto power and control over the victim. (Bancroft 2002).

Similarly, Pradhan (2006) stated that in most cases of domestic violence, “perpetrator are the women’s own husband and their close family members”. Yllo (2005) stressed that the patriarchal society enables unequal participation for women in respect to social, economic and political systems. This in the context of marriage and family, a historically male-dominated social structure has contributed to the excessive concentration of power in the hands of the husbands (as perpetrators) and their subsequent control over their wives. So, we can say that domestic violence has historically occurred within the home.

However, Dutton (1994) claimed that feminism highlights a number of socio-cultural factors such as patriarchal structure values, but to the detrimental exclusion of individual characteristics corresponding to the abuse. The aims of feminist theory approach must be to understand the nature of gender inequality.

Lenore E. Walker developed the model of a cycle of abuse in social cycle theory which consists of four phases such as tension building, incident, reconciliation and calm. Walker described the cycle of abuse as the controlling patriarchal behavior of men who felt entitled to abuse their wives to maintain control over them (Walker, 1979).

**Figure 1: Cycle of Abuse**



Walker's model of a cycle of abuse in social cycle theory describes a cycle of abuse from the tension building to violence to reconciliation that reconciliation made the incident calm and encouraged for repetition of violence. Walker's model of a cycle of abuse has not talked about rehabilitation. As there is a lack of opportunities or access to social rehabilitation, this prevents the survivors to exit the cycle in a safe manner. So we can state that abuse occurs in the cycle only when the choice of a safe exit is missing, which otherwise would have prevented Reconciliation.

From a feminist perspective, a sense of control by a person over their partner is crucial to the perpetration of violence. Most feminist perspectives agree that men hold power and control over women in all areas of relationships, including social isolation, verbal and psychological abuse, sexual coercion, and undermining the victim's self-confidence (Healey et al., 1998). Feminist perspectives has risen in global discussion becoming the dominant theory on understanding domestic violence against women (Gelles 1997: 41). McCue (2008:16) argue that domestic violence will continue to plague our society as long as men and women remain unequal.

## 2.2 Empirical Study of Domestic Violence

According to WHO (2011), globally, as many as 38% of murders of women are committed by an intimate partner. Although both men and women initiate violence, Straus and Gelles cited in Buzawa (2003), using the National Family Violence Survey found that the injury rate for women was 6 times higher than for men.

Domestic violence is a major social and public health issue in many nations, according to a 1994 paper by Heise, Raikes, Watts, and Zwi. In addition to posing a significant burden on the criminal justice system, social services, and medical community, domestic violence causes physical, emotional, psychological, and behavioural injury that is particularly troublesome (Berry, 2000).

Violence against women is universal problem, differing only in scope, nature and degree of violence from one country to another country. Among various forms of violence against women, domestic violence against women is a widespread problem in Nepal. It mean to any form of physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse perpetrated by any person with whom she has a family relationship (FWLD, 2009).

The proportions of Nepalese women who have been subjected to domestic violence are estimated at 60 to 70 percent. Many studies in South Asian countries such as India has focused on the importance of socioeconomic factors, with higher socioeconomic status and/ or caste generally found to be inversely related to the risk of domestic violence (Jejeebhoy & Rebecea, 1997). The National Code, called the Muluki Ain, outlaws murder, attempted murder, and physical assault. However physical assault has been very loosely defined in the law. Assault such as *kut pit*, is not included in this category; thus, state prosecutors do not prosecute these cases of domestic violence since the law affords little protection to women who are assaulted inside their homes by partners (Graham & Johanna, 1998).

According to the survey report of Nepal Demographic Health Survey in 2011, women are most at risk of physical and sexual violence within the home. For physical violence, 26 percent of victim are most commonly married and 28 percent of victim are divorced or separated women. This report claims that every fifth women between the ages of 15

to 49 has faced this form of violence at least once in her life. Similarly, at least 12 percent of women between 15-49 years have become victim of sexual violence. 84 percent of perpetrators are victims' own husband (UN Women, 2015).

In Nepal, even if a woman decides to pursue the prosecution of the perpetrator of domestic violence without the aid of the state, she experiences resistance at each stage of the process. Tradition has overridden legal norms by focusing much on reconciliation in matters of domestic violence. This reflects the patriarchal views of state and society where any action against the husband is seen as an attack on tradition, and on all men as a whole. Even police officials will try and explain that the first step in any intervention is reconciliation. Reconciliation is a process through which the police attempt to convince the victim to return to her abuser in exchange for a written promise that he will not assault her again. Even a police officer who expressed deep concern and empathy for battered women explained that she uses all potential leverage to keep the couple together including stressing to the woman the negative impact separation might have on her children (Graham & Johanna, 1998). No one wants to be seen as responsible for breaking the sacred bond of marriage.

The 2009 Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act established the first legal framework for the recognition of domestic abuse as a crime with criminal penalties, with the goal of ending all forms of violence against women with the provision of slapping up to four months of imprisonment and Rs 6,000 (South Asia Partnership International, 2010). Although Domestic Violence Act is passed, the regulation has not been implemented effectively. Many women are still unaware of this Act (UNFPA, 2007).

### **2.2.1 Consequences of Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence survivors can face several effects after enduring physical and mental abuse. Domestic violence severely affect health and well-being of women both in the immediate and longer term, continuing even after the relationship has ended (WHO, 2002).

A domestic violence episode may result in acute injuries such as broken bones, head trauma, lacerations, and internal bleeding that need to be treated medically and admitted to the hospital (Berrios & Deborah, 1991). Survivors who are pregnant during a domestic violence relationship experience greater risk of miscarriage, pre-term labor, and injury to or death of the fetus (Jones & Deborah, 1997). Violence can have just as significant psychological repercussions as it does physical ones. When compared to women who have never encountered violence, women who are exposed to violence have generally worse physical health and are more likely to experience a variety of health issues (WHO, 2002).

Intimate partner violence has specific, long-term negative health consequences for survivor, even long after the abuse has ended. Financial control, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, verbal threats, and threats against children, or property are examples of coercive control techniques (Cambell & Linda, 1997).

### **2.3 Gaps in the Literature**

From a review of the literature, it is apparent that there is ample research available on domestic violence in Nepal but it is lacking research on rehabilitation of survivors after incidents of domestic violence. In the aftermath of any incident, the justice and rehabilitation are required more than ever to prevent ongoing victimization. The paucity of rehabilitation make women further more vulnerable to violence as they have limited to no option to free themselves from its cycle so they must continue to bear it. Therefore, more research is needed to discover the situation of survivors, are the survivors properly and wholly rehabilitated or not? To know the details we need to study deeply to understand the experience of these women. This research sets out to explore not only the impact of domestic violence on the victims as well as how they are surviving. In addition, the study also aims to discover issues in relation to the rehabilitation of the victims and support by domestic violence service providers in Nepal.

Secondly, these studies also fails to explore why domestic violence occur in the society? Most researches have been of functional and applicable studies, which inadequately explores how gender norms play crucial role to bringing about domestic violence. Social structures and cultural norms are influencing on a macro scale on the lives of

survivors and perpetrators. These play a significant and non-tangible roles in domestic violence and hindering successful rehabilitation in local communities. Previous studies and researches have not delved into these relations in their quest for micro-level field applications, focusing more on legal and economic approaches.

#### **2.4 Theoretical Linkage between Domestic Violence and Rehabilitation**

Among the various forms of violence prevalent in our society domestic violence can be regarded as the worst since it happens inside the domestic sphere and perpetrators are their own family members, spouse. There may have different causes to perpetrate it. So, here we must take a closer look at the cause and recurring nature of domestic violence. Given that it occurs within the private space of a family and the overwhelming numbers of survivors are women, we are forced to question the reality of a correlation if any between a patriarchal structure and domestic violence. Patriarchy in itself does not extend a universal definition and model. Patriarchal structure in all societies has norms and values, but of differing degrees ranging from subtle nuances to institutional commonality. Hence, it is important to look into any incidence of relationship that exists between gender norms of a society and domestic violence.

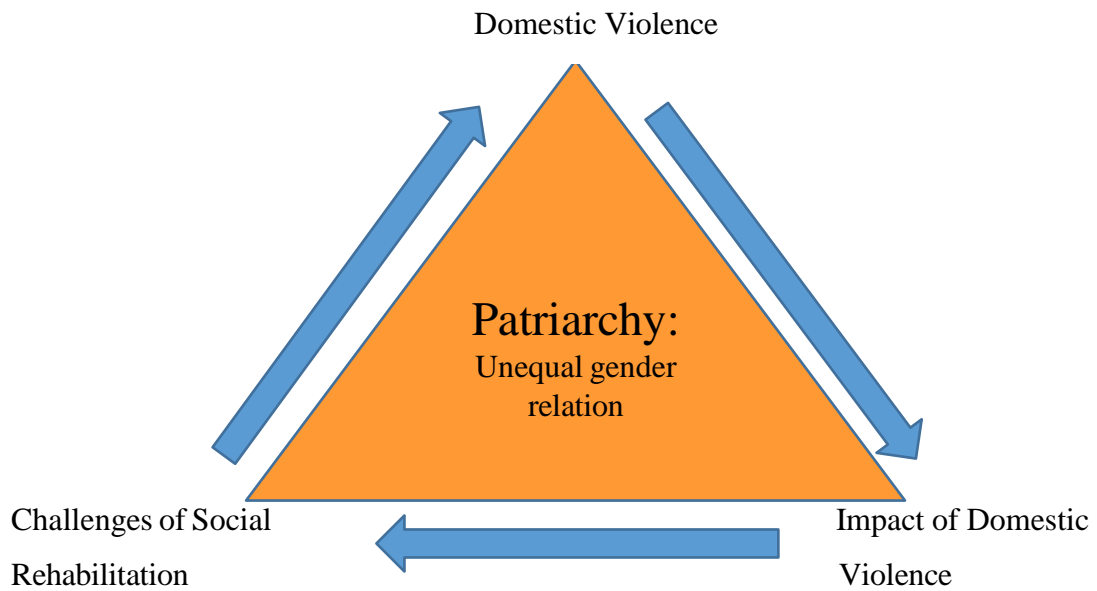
To find a correlational link between domestic violence, gender norms and rehabilitation, it requires some form of empirical data leading to a quantitative path. But as we have seen, “interpretivist/constructivist approach to research did not adequately address issues of social justice and marginalized peoples” (Creswell, 2003). Sociology allows for a world of multiple studies, but may not necessarily be true. The question of domestic violence and rehabilitation stems greatly from and is conjoined with our single reality of a patriarchal society. To not question this link is to surrender a true and transformative academic research.

#### **2.5 Conceptual Framework**

This section presents the conceptual framework for exploring the challenges behind the social rehabilitation of survivor of domestic violence. Conceptual framework guided to conduct this study. It examines the following linkages among the variables such as experience of women of domestic violence, impact of domestic violence and the challenges of social rehabilitation. The linkages among variables was used for

identifying key conditions and dimensions which were the core elements of the conceptual framework. Research questions were formulated based on this model.

**Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of the Study**



## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Methodological Approach**

This chapter explains the methodology used to carry out the research. The discussion starts with the study area selection and its rationale, unit of analysis, details of data collection stage and the method of data analysis. With regard to data collection, the sampling procedure, data collection methods such as interview, key informant interview were presented.

The study is exploratory and descriptive in nature. The exploratory method was carried out because we know the issues of domestic violence but there is still a gap of study regarding the rehabilitation situation of domestic violence survivors as mentioned in the above chapter under the gap of literature title. Thus, the research undertook an exploratory approach using qualitative research methodology as the main objective of the research was to explore the situation of social rehabilitation of survivors of domestic violence which need in-depth explanation of the incidence experienced by the survivors (respondents of the study). The reaction to successful and efficient rehabilitation of domestic violence survivors can be studied with a more qualitative approach.

The research is conducted through in-depth interviews with the respondent to explore the hidden realities of the survivors of domestic violence. The structured questionnaire was used for the in-depth interview. The study also attempted a quantitative approach to create a more comprehensive picture of our social environment. Quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed, categorized and tabulated according to the objectives of the research study.

#### **3.2 Study of Area and its Rationale**

This study was conducted in Pokhara of Kaski district of Gandaki Province. Kaski district is among Nepal's seventy-seven districts. It has one Metropolitan City and four Rural Municipalities namely Pokhara Mahanagarpalika, Annapurna Gaunpalika, Machhapuchhre Gaunpalika, Madi Gaunpalika and Rupa Gaunpalika. There are thirty three wards in Pokhara Mahanagarpalika. The total area of Pokhara

Mahanagarपालिका is 464.24 square kilometers. The total population is 402995. Among them the female population is 210018 and male population is 192977.

The rationale for selecting this area for research was that Pokhara is a capital of Gandaki Province and it is the second most populous city of Nepal after Kathmandu (CBS, 2021). It is the largest metropolitan city in terms of area in the country. It is also considered the market hub to tourism so the inhabitants are from different social and economic groups from working class to middle class to high business class. Selecting Pokhara as the research area a) The cases of domestic violence are higher in the working class and lower middle income class (Nagassar, R.P, et al.,2010) so this research area was selected and b) As being second most populous city of Nepal as mentioned above, the city offered a large and more diverse sample size for research with having resources like counselling center or non-governmental organizations which can be valuable for comprehensive research to investigate the status of domestic violence in the rapid urbanization city like Pokhara.

**Figure 3: Area of the Study**

**Map of Kaski**



**Map of Research Site**



### **3.3 Unit of Analysis**

The process of rehabilitation is of great importance in aftermath of any case of violence. Among the various forms of violence against women, this research was focusing on discussion of domestic violence as it is regarded as the worst forms of violence prevalent in our society since it happens in the domestic sphere and perpetrators are their own family members or spouse. If we are to overlook the acts and causes of domestic violence for now, social rehabilitation takes center stage in the present context for successful recovery for the survivors. So, to achieve results for my study, I have chosen survivors of domestic violence as my unit of analysis. Their lived experience and being in process of rehabilitation in post-violence phase were crucial to the study. The study has also included non-government organizations as unit of analysis. Their inclusion provided me with their institutional knowledge on the issues of domestic violence and ongoing rehabilitation efforts for women survivors of domestic violence.

In the case of domestic violence, many factors were influence the ability of the survivors to rehabilitate completely. Social rehabilitation is extremely important to allow for the survivors to reintegrate in a dignified and safe manner back into their society. And when society itself is an obstacle in complete rehabilitation, we cannot neglect this stage without severe consequences.

### **3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

In this study, purposive sampling was preferred as the sampling procedure because this sampling procedure is done with specific known groups of people and provides me with added prospect to better realize the respondent. Total of 15 women survivors of domestic violence from three study areas within Pokhara Mahanagarपालिका, namely Sundarfeed, Lamachaur and Naagdhunga, were selected as respondents for the study. The selected respondents were the primary victim of domestic violence and their experience of domestic violence helped to gathered data to explore the status of social rehabilitation of domestic violence survivors including challenges associated with it. In addition, this sampling technique was chosen to assure success regarding the participation of abused women as well as to facilitate access to the research area as the sensitive nature of the research as well as the socio-cultural perspective nearly made it unpleasant because revealing issues of spouse to other third person was considered as

immoral in our Nepalese society. Thus, this sampling technique was used in order to make abused women feel safe and confident to share their stories. In addition, the technique of engaging respondents was by approaching survivor themselves and persons who work with abused women such as the social worker of NGOs. In the study, the respondents contribute their time and involvement was on a voluntary basis.

The first visit was carry out on December 2021 in three different locations, namely Sundarfeed, Lamachaur and Naagdhunga. During the initial visit, the objective of research was shared and basic information of possible respondents were collected including the contact number for those who would like to know more information. This first visit gave me a chance to know about the potential respondents and to make them involve in this research study by building good relationship with them. In these first visits interview date with each individual was also scheduled. Seven women from Sundarfeed were participate in this study as respondents. In second location Lamachaur, altogether eight women expressed interest in the study but only five were participated as respondent. At first, three women had shown their interest but they couldn't participate in the research as they were already migrated to another areas and had withdrawn themselves when contacting them on phone due to their busy schedules. In addition three women from Naagdhunga were participate in this study as a respondents. Thus, altogether 15 women were participated in this study. The details of them are;

While interviewing local government authorities can provide valuable insights, local government officials and service providers were overlooked in the study for several reasons. The deliberate exclusion of a key participant in issue of domestic violence in the form of local government will make a severe limitation in my study. However, they have not been selected because:

- They may not have as much direct and day to day interaction with domestic violence survivors in comparison to social workers or NGOs who often work in the frontlines.
- Their understanding may be more policy oriented and less focused on the immediate, practical challenges faced by survivors,
- While they can provide information about policy and program design, they might have limited insights into the on the ground effectiveness and challenges

on these programs,

- Government officials often deal with a wide range of issues and might provide more generalized information, rather than the specific detailed insights needed for focused research on domestic violence and rehabilitation.

**Table 1: Details of the Respondents**

Respondent Code No.	Age	Caste/Ethnicity	Marital Status	Education	Areas/Location
R1	22	Dalit	Married	Secondary	Sundarfeed
R2	25	Janajati	Separated	Higher Secondary	
R3	56	Janajati	Separated	Primary	
R4	23	Janajati	Divorced	Higher Secondary	
R5	54	Brahmin	Married	Illiterate	
R6	48	Chhetri	Married	Primary	
R7	66	Brahmin	Married	Illiterate	
R8	65	Chhetri	Married	Illiterate	
R9	75	Janajati	Separated	Illiterate	
R10	44	Janajati	Widow	Secondary	
R11	33	Dalit	Married	Bachelors	
R12	21	Janajati	Divorced	Higher Secondary	
R13	26	Janajati	Divorced	Bachelors	Naagdhunga
R14	28	Dalit	Separated	Secondary	
R15	36	Dalit	Widow	Secondary	

Additionally, two professionals from different non-governmental organizations, namely Child and Women Empowerment Society (CWES) Nepal and Antardhoni Nepal, who have worked with women survivors of violence, were also recruited as key participants. The reason behind including them was to develop knowledge and understanding of procedure and practice of domestic violence service providers on a local level as well as a more comprehensive grasp of domestic violence and

rehabilitation in Nepal. So altogether, 17 respondents participated in this research as respondents.

### **3.5 Data Collection Method**

The data were collected by in-depth interview method.

#### **3.5.1 In-depth Interview**

The interviews were conducted using both structured and unstructured questionnaires. Unstructured questionnaires were used to make respondent feel comfortable to share their feeling and experiences. The interviews was conducted to gather experience of survivors, and service providing organization to explore the situation of social rehabilitation of survivors of domestic violence. Both open and close-ended questions were included in the questionnaires.

Fifteen women were agreed to be interviewed in this study. Altogether, Seven women from Sundarfeed and five women from Lamachaur and three women from Naagdhunga were interviewed, and there were also another two interviews from two non-governmental organizations such as Child and Women Empowerment Society (CWES) Nepal and Antardhoni Nepal conducted. The interview was conducted with the aim of gathering require information to explore the situation of social rehabilitation of domestic violence survivors and their experiences in research site Pokhara.

The first location of interviews were conducted in Sundarfeed and second and third location were respectively in Lamachaur and Naagdhunga. Prior to starting the interview, the objective of the study were shared with the respondents. Furthermore, respondents were ensured that their identity would be confidential. The first step in the data gathering process involved asking respondents about their basic information such as name, age, marital status, and educational attainment etc. After gathering their basic information, both structured and unstructured interviews were conducted.

The schedule of the meeting for the interview was planned as per suitable for each respondent. The interviews took for 45 minutes on average. Since the subject matter of this study was in delicate in nature, each interview was conducted one by one in their

comfortable areas such as in their room, yard, terrace and balcony of their residence.

Upon ending the interview, requested each respondent for the meeting again if required further information for the study. During the completion of this study, some participants were also contacted via phone call for further clarifications.

In addition to the interviews stated above, two workers from local non-governmental organizations engaged with survivors of domestic violence were also interviewed. The purpose of the interview was to gather knowledge and information about supports provided for domestic violence survivors and the situation of rehabilitation packages in Nepal. Workers from local non-governmental organizations with their particular knowledge and understanding, were chosen to provide insight on the nature of problems at structural and community level. They were selected since they can provide real-life stories of domestic violence and their obstacles and challenges faced during the rehabilitation process. Structured questionnaire was developed beforehand to conduct interview. Both open and close-ended questions were included in the questionnaires. The interviews were conducted as per their convenient. They shared their perspectives on the domestic violence including the number of cases reported, constraint and challenges that prevent women seeking support from outside and difficulties in ensuring services and protection to domestic violence survivors.

### **3.6 Method of Data Analysis**

Qualitative data were collected through structured and unstructured questionnaires and that were reviewed and analyzed to avoid confusion. This research essentially depends on primary data. Primary data collected through in-depth interviews were critically analyzed, thoroughly checked. Collected data and information are carefully translated from Nepali to English with their actual meaning. Collected information were analyzed and tabulated according to the objectives of the research study.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **INTRODUCTION TO STUDY AREA AND RESPONDENT**

The purpose of the study is to explore the situation of social rehabilitation of women, who are living in or survivor of domestic violence. The research wish to focus on the importance of social rehabilitation of survivors after domestic violence. This chapter presents the result of the study along with the background of the study area and demographical characteristics of the women. The chapter also discusses the nature of the organizations that are involved in this research as the service providers for abused women in the research area. The results obtained during the field survey are analyzed and presented in this chapter with the help of the tables and figures wherever necessary.

#### **4.1 Background of Study Area**

The respondents were selected from three different locations within Pokhara, namely Sundarfeed, Lamachaur and Naagdhunga. These three areas are rapidly urbanizing areas of Pokhara Mahanagarपालिका. Thus, the inhabitants are migrants either from different nearby villages or from other different part of Nepal and they all were from different social and economic groups. Generally, they all were from working class group. Respondents in all of those locations were stay in the rented room.

The participants for this study were 15 women who shared their experiences of living in domestic violence relationships. Among them 7 women were from Sundarfeed area, 5 women were from Lamachaur area and 3 women were from Naagdhung area. In addition, two professionals from two different non-governmental organizations, namely Child and Women Empowerment Society (CWES) Nepal and Antardhoni Nepal participated as respondents in this research study.

#### **4.2 Socio-Characteristics of Respondents**

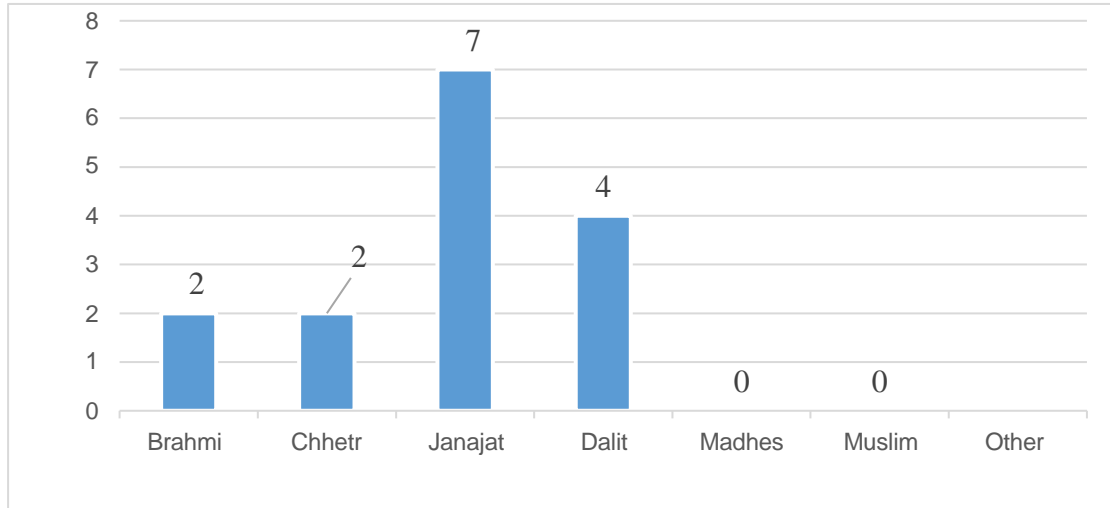
##### **4.2.1 Sex of the Respondents**

As the thesis topic focuses on social rehabilitation of survivors of domestic violence against women, only female respondents were interviewed. A total of 15 women were questioned regarding their experience of domestic violence and social rehabilitation.

#### 4.2.2 Caste and Ethnicity of the Respondents

The respondents were selected through a purposive sampling method based on different castes and ethnicities residing in the study areas. The purposive sampling method was chosen with specific known groups of people and provides me with more opportunity to fully understand the respondent as the research topic is based on sensitive issues usually women do not want to discuss about it with any unknown third person. Thus, a purposive method was applied in order to make abused women feel safe and confident to share their stories. So when following this method, four women were selected from the socially privileged community (two women belong to Brahmin and two women were belong to Chhetri) and four women were selected from the socially disadvantaged group from dalit community while seven women were selected from different Janajati community such as Newar, Gurung, Magar and Tamang. This selection method was made to gather the experience of women from different castes and ethnicities. All of the respondents are the residents of Pokhara Lekhnath Mahanagarपालिका.

**Figure 4: Caste and Ethnicity of the Respondents**



#### 4.2.3 Age of Respondents

In the study, segregation of the participants into age group was found essential in order to analyze the data properly.

**Table 2: Age of the Respondents**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>
15 to 25	4
26 to 35	3
36 to 45	1
46 to 55	3
56 to 65	2
Above 66	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

Among the respondents, four women were from the age group of 15-25 years. The age group of 26-35 years and 46-55 years group constituted three women each followed by the age group of 56-65 and above 66 constituted two women each. The age group of 36-45 with only one women was the smallest group among the respondents. The age of the respondents varied significantly. Different age groups of respondents were selected to explore different experiences of domestic violence situations.

#### **4.2.4 Education Attainment of the Respondents**

Education is essential for everyone. It enables us to learn about our own world i.e., our society which helps to make us stronger in terms of social, economic and intellectual. An educated person is more powerful and empowered than an uneducated one. Thus, in this study, women with different levels of educational backgrounds were selected in order to explore the situation of domestic violence according to their education level. Out of fifteen respondents, four women were illiterate. Similarly, four women had attained Secondary level of education. Two women each had attained Primary and Bachelors level education. Three women had attained Higher Secondary level of education.

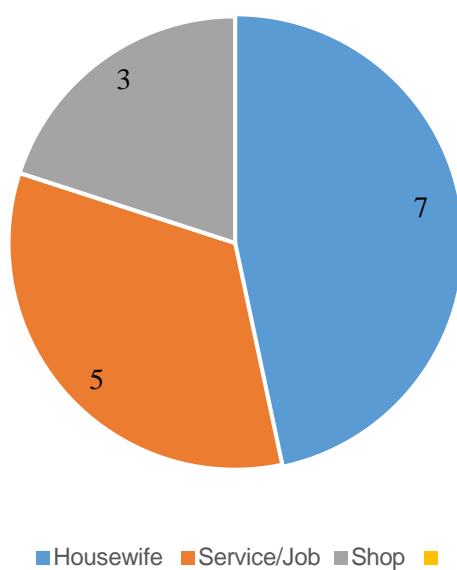
**Table 3: Education Attainment of the Respondents**

<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>
Illiterate	4
Primary	2
Secondary	4
Higher Secondary	3
Bachelors	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

#### **4.2.5 Occupation of the Respondents**

The majority of female respondents in the study were completely dependent on family for their livelihood. According to the respondents, during the period of living in violent relationship, majority of respondents (n=7) were housewives. They had no independent source of income and they admitted being dependent financially on their partners. Five respondents (n=5) were involved in service/job such as working as a domestic worker and laborer whereas three respondents (n=3) had their own small retail shops for example selling foods, fruits and vegetables for their livelihood.

**Figure 5: Occupation of the Respondents**

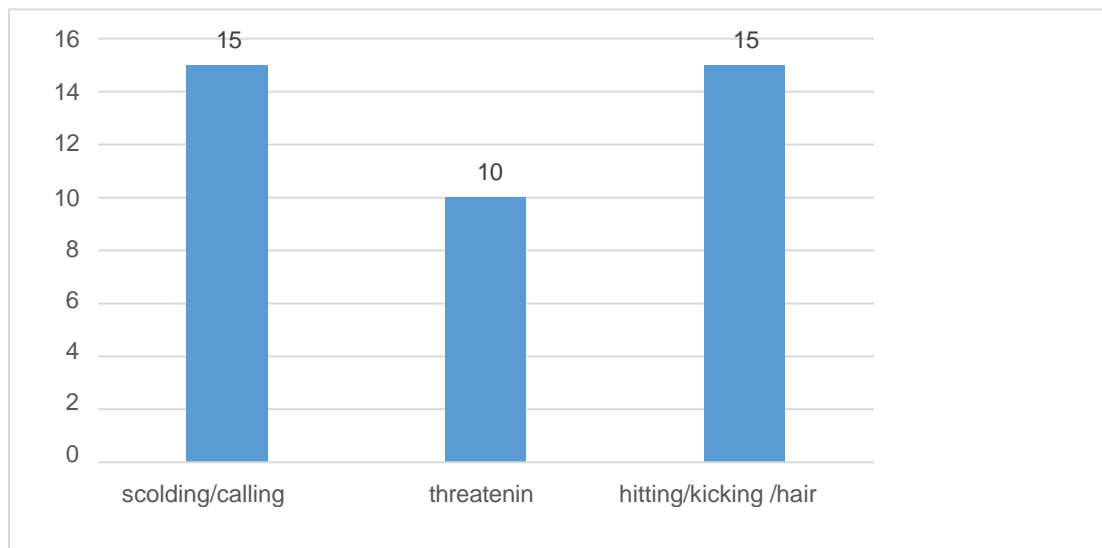


### 4.3 Forms of Abuse

Domestic violence is the violence that is committed within a domestic setting. It is often taken to describe the violence taking place between intimate partners, usually a husband and wife. Domestic violence is in itself a traumatic incident which is further influenced by its surrounding complex socio-cultural, economic, political, and psychological factors. The occurrences of violence can involve physical, sexual, social, psychological, emotional and financial behaviors.

The abused women's experiences with the sorts of violence inflicted by their current or former spouses are detailed in this study. According to the findings, women who reported leaving their partners did so because of violence and abuse they faced from their partners. All of 15 respondents said their partners assaulted them physically and psychologically on a regular basis. They said they were slapped, hit, kicked, had their hair pulled, scolded, called names, and threatened.

**Figure 6: Forms of Abuse**



In the analysis, it was found that out of these 15 women, all 15 experienced the physical violence such as being kicked, hit and pulled their hair along with emotional violence by being scolded and calling names while 10 women reported that they experienced psychological violence with threats of killing or leaving them.

## CHAPTER V

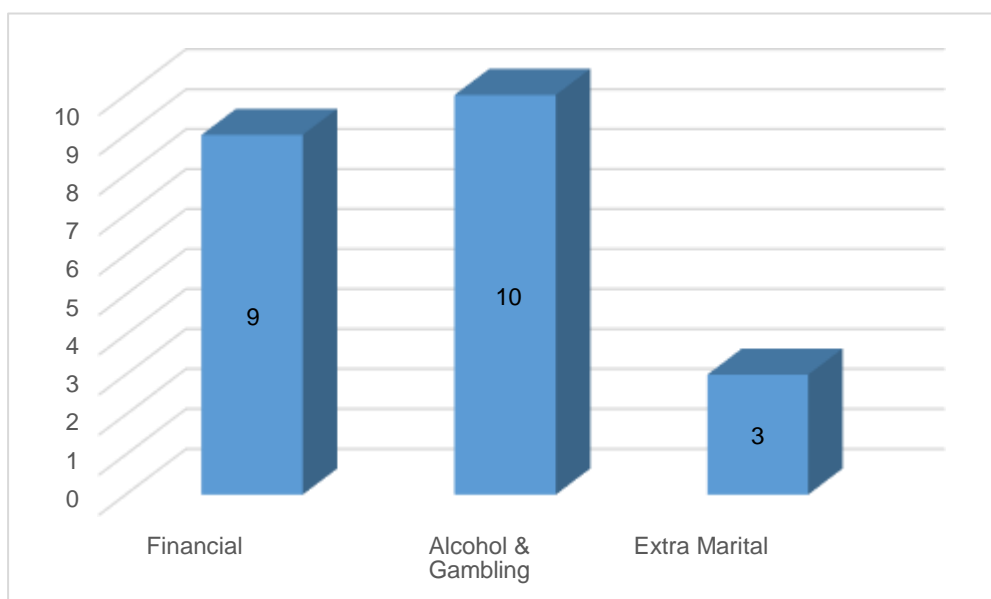
### FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO WOMEN'S RESILIENCE IN THE FACE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND REHABILITATION PROCESS

#### 5.1 Factors Contributing to Domestic Violence

To understand the variable factors related with domestic violence in their relationships, the women were interviewed using a structured questionnaire and their verbal response were recorded and studied. The results showed some risk factors that might be useful in understanding the characteristics of spousal abuse cases faced by women.

Nine women, or more than half of the total number of abused women in this study, reported that they were constantly arguing about money. In addition to being one of the numerous underlying causes of domestic violence, financial problems can exacerbate ongoing interpersonal conflict and create stress for the spouses involved (as well as their families). Financial hardship encompassing insufficient income to support a family, prolonged joblessness, and expenses linked to substance abuse, such alcohol consumption brought about added distress in the relationship.

**Figure 7: Factors Contributing to Domestic Violence**



The reasons of domestic violence have been linked to the husbands' drinking and gambling behaviors, according to a review of interviews with women. Ten women stated that their partner's drinking habits and gambling problems had a significant impact on their partner's violent behavior.

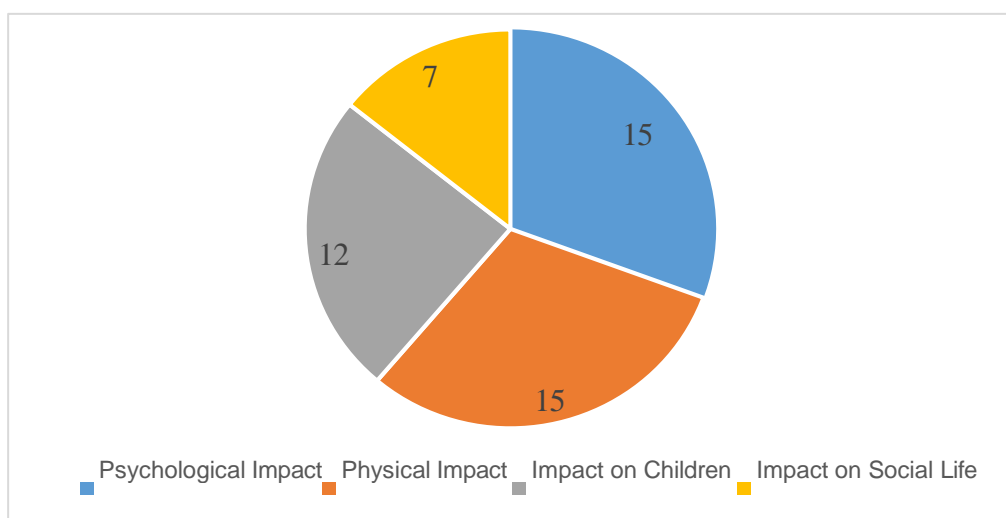
According to some women, domestic violence began when their husbands/ex-husbands engaged in extramarital affairs. However, this characteristic was shown to be rated lower than financial difficulties, as well as drinking and gambling habits. Three of the women's partners had been having extramarital affairs. An extramarital affair is thought to be a prevalent cause of divorce or separation among couples.

Numerous elements that contribute to domestic violence were discovered in the study, which might be inferred. The list of reasons given by the abused women demonstrated 5.25the complexities of abusive relationships in Pokhara Metropolitan City, which can be extrapolated to Nepal as a whole. It's important to note that acts of violence are often driven by multiple factors and tend to grow over time. Women may be more likely to remain imprisoned in abusive relationships if they do not receive sufficient professional support to break the cycle of abuse.

## 5.2 Domestic Violence Impacts on Women

The effects of domestic violence are massive. They range from the physical health impacts to psychological and social problems.

**Figure 8: Impact of Domestic Violence on Women**



### **a. Physical Impact**

All 15 women interviewed in the study confirmed that their husbands/ex-husbands had physically mistreated them. Some women described minor injuries such as scratches and bruises, while five women recounted long-term physical health issues such as recurrent headaches and back pain, as well as hearing loss as a result of partner violence. One of the respondent Binu (name changed) described her experience as follows:

*"I tried to hide my situation from my maternal family and relatives. I would just say that I had fallen down from a ladder. But my constant suffering increased and got worse over time. I finally broke my silence and told my family. Now I'm not staying with him anymore. I live separately and am raising my children as a single mother."* (Binu)

Another respondent Geeta (name changed) shared her story of physical impact and said:

*"It was an arranged marriage. At first he used to be a very nice person. Later he started to argue with me for no reason and then slapped me when I asked for the reason for the argument. As I remained silent and bore the pain his behavior became more violent. He used to drink a lot and when he was drunk he hit me. I was injured many times. Sometimes a neighbor had to come to our room and save me from him."* (Geeta)

Above mentioned acts was not committed to Binu and Geeta only, other remaining thirteen women also experience the same physical violence that were committed by their abusive partners or family members. Among fifteen women, five women shared that they had a long-term physical health issues such as recurrent headaches and back pain, as well as hearing loss as a result of the violence.

One of the respondents shared that *"I am having frequent headaches nowadays. When I started to have the headache, I just lay down on bed all day long. I need to take pain killer medicine in order to get relief from it. When I have a headache I can't go to work and even cannot do household chores."* (Sukumaya)

*"I still feel pain on my back and shoulder, especially in the winter seasons when it hurts more. My children have to give me a massage with balm every night. If they do not give*

*me a massage then I can't sit and walk the next morning which impacts my work. When my children couldn't do it, I gave myself my own massage.*" (Seema)

With the overview of the women's stories above, I found domestic violence increases over time and worsens. The abuse began with minor injuries and leading to more serious one. There are both short-term and long-term repercussions of domestic violence on women's physical health. Minor injuries are thought to typically heal on their own in a short amount of time. As a result, many women do not feel necessity to disclose the incident and because doing so it could make things worse later. However, the majority of the interviewees also stated that regardless of how long they were in the abusive relationship, their decision to disclose spousal abuse was heavily influenced by the level of violence committed by the abuser.

#### **b. Psychological Impact**

The study discovered that all of the women had experienced psychological repercussions as a result of partner abuse. They have marital guilt, fear of an abusive partner, difficulty speaking and communicating with others, a lack of confidence, sleeping problems, and a sense of isolation from social networks. The respondents described their experiences as:

*"This violence has made negative impact in my life. I get sad and angry every time I think about it. This feeling isn't going away anytime soon even though it has been two years now. It is something I will never forget until the end of my life. Even though he is no longer here with me, it will live on in my mind. I'm quite tense. When I hear someone yell or shout, I am traumatized."* (Geeta)

*Sometimes I have nightmares when I sleep. In those dreams, I was with my husband and he wanted to beat me again. When I woke up, I wondered to myself why I would have such a dream of him. Even though we have no fights and he doesn't abuse me at present, I always stay with fears that he will again beat me and I am worried that if he tries to beat me how can I escape and save myself.* (Bhima)

*"Whenever I argued with my husband, I become really anxious. That made me forget*

*about caring for my kids. I cursed my children and blamed them for all the awful things that had happened to me. I know I shouldn't have done that, but whenever I became irritated with him, I lost control. I simply lack self-control. I later expressed regret to them.* (Shanti)

It is clear from the experiences of the aforementioned women that being in a relationship with an abusive partner left the women mentally traumatized and led to the development of stress-related symptoms even years after the assault. Therefore, the women's mental health and wellbeing have gotten worse as a result of these violent encounters. The extracts from the aforementioned stories also demonstrate the long-term psychological effects of spousal abuse on those women. Domestic violence was thought to have psychological and emotional effects on abused women, including social isolation and the deterioration of the women's sense of self.

There is a very strong link between mental health problems and domestic abuse. In our society, domestic abuse is viewed as a "private matter". Women are therefore expected to manage their marital affairs within the confines of the home. When such abuse is revealed, there may be feelings of shame in addition to humiliation. Due to the suppression of these feelings and emotional responses, the woman may later have depressive episodes and indications of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

### **c. Impact on Children**

The study has found that the abused women are not the only ones who face the consequences of domestic violence. Children are found to be extremely vulnerable to the long-term impacts of family violence, just like the mother themselves. Domestic violence issues in their marriages have had detrimental effects on their children, according to 12 of the 15 women. Depressive and problematic issues were discovered in the children. The women also mentioned that their children were less attached to their father and developed hatred for the abusers.

*"Because of the abuse, my daughter dislike her father. When she sees her father outdoors, she refuses to speak with him. She still remembers of how my husband used to beat me."* (Bhima)

*My children didn't bother to inquire about their father or complain that they wanted to see him. Despite the fact that I've never spoken negatively about their father, they don't feel that way about him. However, they are all adults now and are capable of making their own judgements about him. (Maya)*

*Due to my husband's beatings in the early years of our marriage, I experienced two miscarriages. During my third pregnancy, I was more cautious and spent a lot of time with my elder sister, who lived nearby. As a result, my child was born healthy and safe. (Binu)*

*I have had several arguments with my husband, which has prevented me from finding inner peace. I freely acknowledge having ignored my Children's' education. My children's behavior is now beyond my ability to control. They are untamed and go their own route. (Sarita)*

According to several of the abused women in the survey, there is a direct correlation between children and bad behaviors such as physical violence, criminality, and verbal abuse. The kids of women revealed that they started smoking cigarettes and skipping school when they were very little. The following story is cited as proof to characterize the situation:

*I have two sons. They observed their father beating me. They copy it and replicate it outside with their neighbors' friends. They punch and strike them. My neighbor always complains about my kids. I always scold my kids often because I don't want my sons to behave like their father. (Shanti)*

All responders emphasized the harm that domestic violence causes to their children, especially the younger ones. The mothers said that they had feelings of helplessness and are overwhelmed, which made it difficult for them to properly attend to their children's needs. The findings of this study demonstrate that domestic violence has an impact on the bond between fathers and children. Several unfavorable reactions to the father-child connections were revealed throughout the interviews.

Some mothers (respondents) expressed their sadness over their 'negligence' in relation to these young children. The women acknowledged losing their authority and control over their children and not attending to their emotional needs. This might develop into yet another possible problem within the parenting context in families dealing with domestic abuse, one that is worth looking into. In this study, it was discovered that domestic violence fosters negligence towards the children. The women shared that their marital conflict had an impact on their parental capabilities as they failed to spend quality time together with their children.

#### **d. Impact on Social Life**

Disconnection from society in terms of physical, social, and emotional attachment can occur over time as a result of marital conflict. The respondents were all in agreement that they were gradually losing contact with their friends, families, and community. Domestic violence has made them reviled by society. They feel excluded from social networking because their neighbors do not communicate with them well and properly. Also due to a lot of stressful situations in their families they lose their contacts with the society which makes them further vulnerable to the violence in the relationship. Seven women (3 divorced, 4 separated) were concerned that their sons and daughters would not marry into a good house/family. One of the women stated:

*“When I was abused, I sought help from my neighbors. They frequently heard our quarrels. However, instead of responding, they stood by and watched as an exciting incident unfolded, criticizing behind the back. They don't want to get involved in someone else's marital issues.”* (Sukumaya)

*My friends and relatives always stay away from us. They are aware of my domestic issues. They favor watching from the sidelines. They were helpless to stop it. I was in agony at home and was unable to leave.* (Jyoti)

In order to assist victims of domestic abuse, family, neighbors (i.e., the community), friends, and relatives must be aware of the indicators of domestic violence and attentive to them. Although many individuals are only dimly aware of domestic violence when

it affects those who are close to us, they can be a great assistance in this particular case. However, it is heartbreaking to acknowledge that the majority of them continued to take the least risky course, or to put it another way, "did nothing," in order to avoid helping the abused women with the traditional saying "shreeman shreemati ko jhagada paral ko aago, which literally translates to "the fighting of husband and wife is like a burning hay". Like burning hay which quickly burns up and extinguishes itself, such conflicts between couples also quickly resolves itself so any intervention is unnecessary. From these stories, we can also state that because of an unsupportive environment from the informal supportive networks such as family, friends, relatives and neighbors, women themselves want to keep distance from other people (social network) as they won't speak up for the abused women if they share their stories with them . Thus the women do not attempt to disclose their abusive experience with them. Consequently, it encourages the culprit to commit domestic violence on women, particularly against vulnerable wives.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

The 15 participants chosen for this study were all married or previously married women who consented to share about their experiences of living in a relationship with domestic violence. All of them shared that they were suffered from domestic violence. All 15 responded that violence were committed by their own husband while 4 of them also responded that including their husbands their in-laws also committed violence on them.

A total of 15 married women were questioned regarding their experiences of domestic violence and social rehabilitation. The sample age was between 21 to 75 years. Of the 15 women in the study, they all had been married for period ranging between one to 45 years. Out of total 15 women, over a half of the women had cut ties with and were no longer in a relationship with their abusive partner (n=9). Among them, 4 women were living separately without following any legal procedure while 3 women had divorced (with the abusive partner) by the time I met with them for this study. Two women were widows as their husbands had passed away. The remaining six women were still in the abusive relationship (n=6). All the women who had reported of separating from their partners stressed that the it was due to the violence and abuse from their partners.

#### **6.1 Reason behind Staying with Perpetrator**

Those 6 women who were still in their relationships at the time of the interview explained that they were in it because they didn't have any other options. All of them shared that, they all identified their occupation as housewives during the occurrence of violent relationships. As a result, they were compelled to continue their violent relationship. They were unable to find any family or friend support in terms of rehabilitation shelter or other assistance. They were also afraid about social stigmatization.

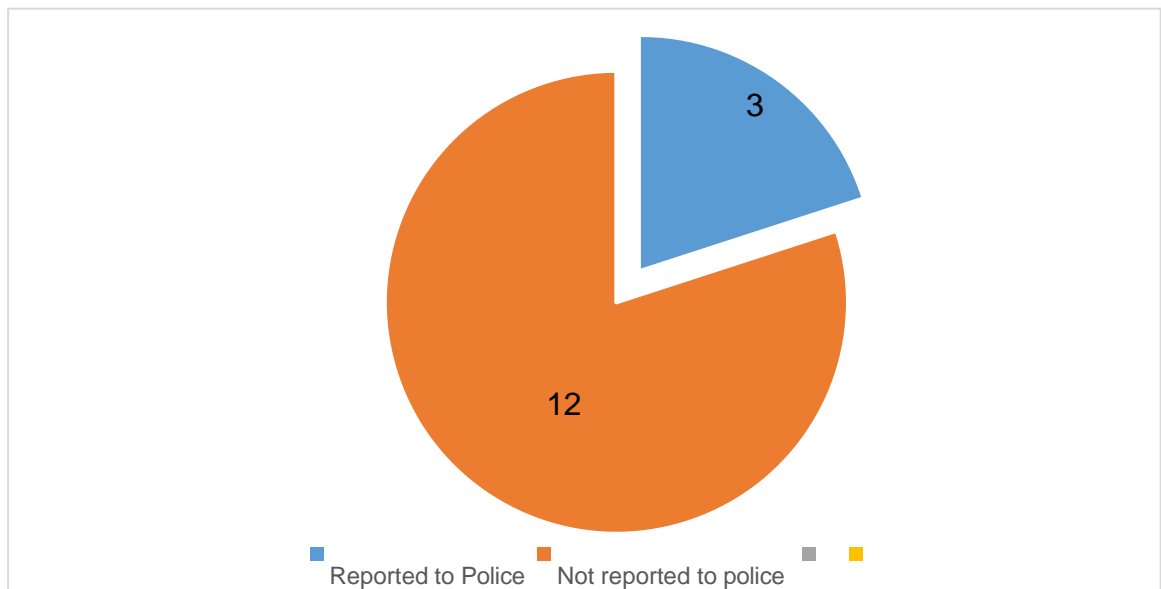
In the analysis, it was found that out of 6 who are still living with their abusive partner, 5 reported that they have been living with their partner since they had no support for rehabilitation, for their children future and fear from social stigmatization while 1

reported that her abusive partner's behavior is changed now so she is living with him.

## 6.2 Disclosing the Violence and Seeking Help

Disclosing about partner violence and seeking help from outside are the first steps in changing the dynamics of abusive relationships. Coming forward and disclosing such assaults takes a lot of courage on the part of the abused women. Some of the women were thought to have admitted to the problem but kept the violent occurrences hidden. During an interview with the women, it was discovered that only three of the fifteen women had reported the abuse to the police.

**Figure 9: Report Incidence to Police**



A significant percentage of under-reporting of domestic violence cases is due to a variety of factors. The women explained that they did not report the occurrence to the police because they were afraid of society's negative social stigmas, as well as a refusal to discuss "private family problems," shame, and rejection (feelings of being disbelieved), safeguarding the children's interest, women's lack of knowledge regarding the helping sources of domestic violence.

All of the participants belonged from the lower working middle class family group who follow the society's patriarchal norms and values. According to patriarchal norms and values, there is the belief that the husband is an avatar of God, as in *Pati-Parmeshwor*.

This belief has made disclosing partner violence even more complicated among middle working-class women. The respondents in this study agreed that they have to be patient while enduring their husband's abusive behavior. For them, the reason behind it was the societal norm for women to be a good and obedient wife toward the husband.

In the interview, the women shared:

*“My mother taught me the importance of being a good wife and being devoted to one's husband. I genuinely hope to be a good mother to my kids and a wonderful wife to him. It didn't, however, come up that way. I made an effort to be patient and not disclose the incidents in the hopes that he might one day develop into a better person. That is the reason I have persisted in this marriage for so long.”* (Bishnu Maya)

When deciding to leave and disclose an abusive relationship, domestic violence victims and survivors confront numerous obstacles. Women in this study shared that majority of people's they met raised the issue of duty towards family, the need to maintain harmony in the family unit for the benefit of the kids. In addition, being a single mother and a divorcee is unfairly been stigmatized in our culture.

The women's strong sense of parental obligations to their children was another factor in why they chose not to disclose the domestic violence, discovered in this study. The patriarchal norms and values led the abused women to believe that the needs of the children should come first. Therefore, for the sake of children's future they remain silent for the violence against them.

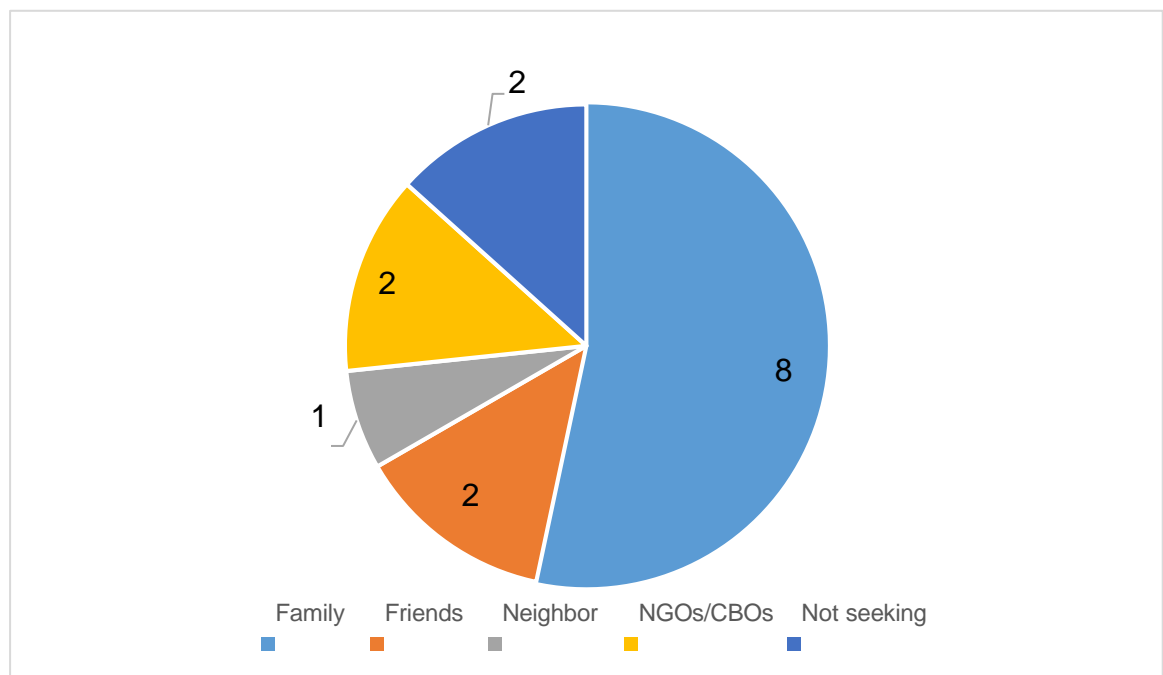
*“I chose to remain quiet and did not disclose the abusive relation to anyone. I don't need anything from my husband. I need to think about the future of my children. A mother's love is not the same as a father's love. The society look at my children with pity eyes if they knows about the violence committed to me by my husband”.* (Seema)

The study has shown that women have not chosen to approach supportive networks such as government agencies or NGOs for help. The stigma of ostracization by community and fear of letting others know about their personal situation of domestic violence held back many women from approaching formal support networks for assistance. Their self-confidence has been undermined and weakened by the constant abuse. Also, the societal habit of focusing more on

the women and their disclosure rather than the abusive behavior of their partner or perpetrator. We are asking the wrong person the wrong questions.

The study has also analyzed that instead of reporting to police about the incident, women had disclosed the incident and seeking support from other informal networks like family, neighbors, friends, and community organization. Out of 15, 8 women had shared the incident to their family (among these 8 women, two women had reported to the Police about the incident), 1 woman had shared to neighbors, 2 had shared to friends and 2 had shared to NGOs (among the 2, 1 women had reported to the Police). While 2 women purposely did not want to disclose the matter to any member of their family for various reasons including shame, fear of being distrusted as well as to avoid the involvement of the family.

**Figure 10: Disclosing the Violence and Seeking Help**



The study discovered that the above networks can be extremely beneficial, although they do have certain limitations. These types of networks can only provide immediate practical assistance, such as accommodation and transportation, as well as financial assistance for a limited amount of time. The women were asked about any helpful resources they got during the distressing experience throughout the interviews. According to the findings, seven women received assistance from family (4 women),

friends (1 woman), and NGOs/CBOs (2 women), whereas eight women reported they received no assistance at all.

### **6.3 Perception of Survivors and their Social Rehabilitation**

#### **6.3.1 The Perception of Women**

This study has also collected the perspective of abusive women on domestic violence and how can domestic violence against women be reduced. From the interviews conducted with the abused women, it was found that there is a lack of supportive environment. When any incident occurs or when they are subjected to violence they need or sought help to counter it but sadly we don't get that help. Most of us live at home and do only housework. Maybe that's why we don't have friends to whom we can share our experiences. So when such an incident happens we share it with the family first, according to the women. But the family also says to us to live together and to endure such incidents as it is normal and take it as personal small matters until a big event or violence happens.

In a patriarchal society, the relationship between a husband and wife is given a high value based on the cultural and religious contexts. But almost all agree that the husband is the more powerful and important partner among the two. The belief that 'a woman's heaven is beneath her husband's feet' makes for disclosing partner violence or any form of complaint about the husband even more complicated among Nepalese society for the woman. Women in the study also mostly agreed that they had sincerely or somewhat believed in that adage of *pati parmeswar*. They hoped to be a good and obedient wife so society would not blame them but this only left them exposed to more violence. The examples herewith of the excerpts from the women interviewed:

*"When he was angry, he lost his mind. I instructed my children to remain in the room. I'm so used to his behavior that I don't even notice him anymore. If I want to be in peace, my mother and family told me not to go against my husband's wishes. That is the only reason I have stayed with him for so long."* (Seema)

During the interviews, the women acknowledged their dissatisfaction with negative stereotypes as well as the societal stigma associated with disclosing violent relationships. Women generally do not dare to speak out against domestic abuse because of the influence of cultural beliefs in the society setting. They were afraid that people wouldn't trust them and would dismiss them as a "disobedient wife." The findings of this study revealed that the idea of approaching supportive networking mechanisms (such as reporting to the police or seeking support from a supportive network organization) was not well-established in the minds of the women. The women's self-esteem was found to be harmed as a result of the stigma associated with disclosing the abuse.

It is not easy for women to leave their abusive partners either. They have to overcome obstacles in form of conservative social norms and unfair state policies which do not provide adequate protection. Women, like the majority of people in every society, have a sense of family obligation to keep the family together for the sake of the children. Being a divorced and single mother has also been wrongly criticized in society. Bhima explained:

*Women like me who are divorced are frowned upon by the community. A divorced woman is forever associated with being a flirt and runs off with another woman's husband. More women are being abused and are reluctant to face reality as a result of our culture. Now that I am not living with him anymore, I feel more secure. (Bhima)*

### **6.3.2 The Perception of Service Provider/Local NGOs/WHRDs**

During interviews with abused women, it was found that abused women also sought support from service providers such as local NGOs or WHRDs when any incident related to violence on them. Thus, the study also gathered some data from two organizations working in Pokhara, namely, Child and Women Empowerment Society (CWES) Nepal and Antardhoni Nepal on service provision for domestic violence survivors. The information was supplied by the staff in the organizations who worked with abused women in Pokhara. This study found that these organizations were non-governmental (donation based), established within the last two decades. These organizations focus on the women's self-development through activities such as

counselling, motivational talks and awareness programs. Three professionals from two different organization were interview to know about the service they have been providing to the domestic violence survivors and capture the suggestion to mitigate such challenges.

Both of these organizational works are related to provide service to the abused women including their children. During the interview, CWES Nepal stated that a total of 10 cases of domestic violence reported in their organization in past one year while in Antardhoni Nepal, there were total of 9 cases reported.

**Table 4: No. of Cases Reported**

<b>S.N</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>No. of domestic violence cases reported</b>
1	Child and Women Empowerment Society (CWES) Nepal	10 cases
2	Antardhoni Nepal	9 Cases

According to the organizations, after such incidents, usually the following impact has been faced by domestic violence survivor and their children or families?

- Family has conflicting situation and children doesn't get proper care and support in that environment.
- Increased incidences of depression
- Risk of health problems such as mental health including depression, anxiety, isolating from group, family and society)
- Lack of confident
- Addiction to drugs and alcohol
- Suicide

### **6.3.3 Barriers to Disclosing Domestic Violence and Seeking Support**

When asking to both these organization regarding their opinion that are women able to report domestic violence easily? Both of them replied No. According to them, abused women are not able to report such incident because of the following reasons;

- Social and cultural structure of our society, Patriarchy thought and behavioral practices are the major barriers which prevent women for reporting the incidents and seeking help.
- Due to Social stigma and discrimination, most of the time women got blame for the any issue related domestic violence.
- Feeling shame, guilt, and embarrassment, not wanting friends, family and relative to know.
- Poverty (majority of the women are highly dependent with male partners)
- Lack of confident
- Lack of knowledge of available services
- Lack of trust in confidentiality

#### **6.3.4 Solution for Improve Reporting of Cases**

Disclosing domestic violence incident takes a lot of courage on the part of the abused women. Most of the abused women kept the violent occurrences hidden due to the above-mentioned reasons. In addition to that domestic violence and conflict in the marital relationship can also cause disconnection in respect to physical and emotional attachments with the society (family, friends and neighbors). The women gradually separated and alien from the social relationship and networking which made them women more vulnerable to the violence in the relationship. According to both of these organizations, we must create an environment that encourage women to report such incident to improve these situations. The organizations have shared their opinion on solution for improve reporting of cases as follow;

*“By increasing lobbying among relevant stakeholders, organize campaign, advocacy and awareness programs.” (Antardhoni Nepal)*

*“We have to conduct outreach event in the community to prevent and increase awareness and make them aware and empower to speak up against the violence. Moreover, we can do door to door visit and educate the women regarding domestic violence and legal procedures. Frequently door to door visit can be helpful to build the trust with them and empower them to report the case.” (CWES Nepal)*

### **6.3.5 Need and Support of Domestic Violence Survivor**

When asking to the organization regarding the needs and support that usually seek by the abused women from their organization, they stated that after committed incidents of violence women seek multiple kinds of supports such as shelter/rehabilitation, legal processing support, divorce process, and financial support. But organization are unable to provide all such kinds of supports.

According to CWES Nepal, they have been providing support of legal processing support, divorce process, and also financial support but they could not support rehabilitation because of resource constraint. However, they refer them to those organizations who have those services. Furthermore, CWES Nepal stated that in the context of our community, most of the women are not well educated and independent. Even though after assisted them for divorce process and legal proceeding support, we have found that they seem to be unhappy, depress and lack of self-confidence due to the social stigma and discrimination. Thus, we are facing challenges to make them independent and confident.

According to Antardhoni Nepal and Kanchan healing, both of these organizations mainly provide Mental Health and Psychosocial Social Support (MHPSS). But according to them, in many cases these help really doesn't work because of family/homely settings and environments. That means cases mostly relapsed and turn into previous problematic stages.

### **6.3.6 Challenges of Social Rehabilitation**

For the professionals of these two organizations, domestic violence is not only a women's issue, it is a social issue, and those women who are the survivors of domestic violence, often need several supports to overcome this situation. But in our society, due to social stigma and discrimination, abused women are more vulnerable in suffering. Society is not easily accepting of the person who is already suffering from the abuse. In addition to this, in Nepal, the government does not have proper planning of social rehabilitation programs, packages and shelter which makes it difficult to provide required support and services to the abused women in a long term and a sustainable way.

For the mitigation of these challenges, the organizations believe that we should raise awareness about the harmful effects on women. These can be achieved through empowering women, strengthening their economic position and changing gender stereotypes and norms. Any interventions at the community-level should not look just to change the way individuals think and behave, but also to mobilize entire communities in efforts to combat violence against women. The Government must also need to address the issue of domestic violence through formulating legislation which can help to mitigate these challenges.

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This section includes the summary, conclusion and theoretical reflection derived based on findings of the research study.

#### **7.1 Summary**

The process of rehabilitation is of great importance in aftermath of any case of violence. If we are to overlook the acts and causes of violence for now, rehabilitation takes center stage in the present context for successful recovery for the survivors, be it either physically, mentally, socially, economically or all. In the aftermath of any untoward incident, be it a major disaster or a single case of domestic violence, many factors will influence the ability of the survivor to rehabilitate completely. Rehabilitation is extremely important to allow for the survivor to reintegrate in a dignified and safe manner back into their society. Violence can happen to anyone but in this paper, I had focused on the rehabilitation of domestic violence against women as it is the most common forms of violence prevalent in our patriarchal society. Since it takes place in the domestic sphere and perpetrators are their own family members or spouse, it makes it even more difficult for survivors to rehabilitate when their own social milieu are the active or silent perpetrators of the violence against them.

This study was conducted in Pokhara Mahanagarपालिका of Kaski district of Gandaki Province. The rationale for selecting this area for research was that Pokhara is a capital of Gandaki Province and it is the second most populous city of Nepal after Kathmandu (CBS, 2021). It is the country's largest metropolitan city in terms of area. It is also considered the market hub to tourism so the inhabitants are from different social and economic groups from working class to middle class to high business class. To investigate the situation of domestic violence in the rapid urbanization city, this research area was selected.

The main objective of the study was to explore the situation of social rehabilitation of women in Nepal, who were living in or survivor of domestic violence. The research attempted to focus on the importance of social rehabilitation of survivors after domestic

violence. The study expected to contribute to the increasing body of knowledge on the importance of social rehabilitation for the survivor of domestic violence against women in Nepal and developing literature on this topic. The findings of this research aim to improve understanding and raising awareness along with practices concerning the social rehabilitation of domestic violence in Nepal.

The study was exploratory and descriptive in nature. The exploratory method was carried out because despite many research on the issues of domestic violence but there was still a gap of study regarding the rehabilitation situation of domestic violence survivors as mentioned in the above chapter under the gap of literature. Thus, the research undertook an exploratory approach using qualitative research methodology as the main objective of the research was to explore the situation of social rehabilitation of survivors of domestic violence which need in-depth explanation of the incidence experienced by the survivors (respondents of the study). The reaction to successful and efficient rehabilitation of domestic violence survivors can be studied with a more qualitative approach.

The research was conducted through in-depth interviews with the respondent to explore the hidden realities of the survivors of domestic violence. The structure questionnaire were applied for the in-depth interview. In this study, purposive sampling was chosen as the sampling framework because this sampling procedure is done with specific known groups of people and provides me with more opportunity to fully understand the respondent. In addition, this sampling technique was chosen to ensure success in terms of involvement of women survivors of violence, as well as to facilitate access to the research site. The sensitive nature of the research as well as the cultural norms in our Nepalese society made it nearly impossible disclosing marital issues to other people is considered inappropriate. Thus this sampling technique was used in order to make respondents feel safe and confident to share their stories.

The respondents were selected from three different locations within Pokhara Mahanagarपालिका, namely Sundarfeed, Lamachaur and Naagdhunga. The technique of recruiting respondents was by approaching survivor themselves and professionals who work with women survivors of violence and abuse. In the study, the respondents contributed their time and involvement was on a voluntary basis.

The first visit was carry out on December 2021 in three different locations, namely Sundarfeed, Lamachaur and Naagdhunga. During the initial visit, the objective of research was shared and basic information of possible respondents were collected including the telephone number for those interested to call for further information. This first visits gave me a golden opportunity to build rapport with them and utilized this occasion for making them involve in the research. In these first visits interview date with each individual was also scheduled. Seven women from Sundarfeed were participate in this study as respondents. In second location Lamachaur, altogether eight women expressed interest in the study but only five of them were actually involved as respondent. Three women had initially expressed their interests but they couldn't participate in the research as they were already migrated to another areas and had withdrawn themselves when contacting them on phone due to their busy schedules. In addition three women from Naagdhunga were participate in this study as a respondents. Thus, altogether 15 women were participated in this study.

The two professionals from two different non-governmental organizations, namely Child and Women Empowerment Society (CWES) Nepal and Antardhoni Nepal who have worked with the women were also included as key participants. The reason behind recruiting them was to develop knowledge and understanding in relation to policy and practice of domestic violence service providers locally as well as a more comprehensive grasp of domestic violence and rehabilitation in Nepal. So altogether, 17 respondents participated in this research as respondents.

The participants for this study were 15 married women who consented to share about their experiences of living in a domestic violence relationships. All of them shared that they were suffered from domestic violence. All 15 responded that violence were committed by their own husband while 4 of them also responded that including their husbands their in-laws also committed violence on them.

A total of 15 married women were questioned regarding their experience of domestic violence and social rehabilitation. According to the findings, women who reported leaving their partners did so because of violence and abuse. All of 15 respondents said their partners assaulted them physically and psychologically on a regular basis. They

said they were slapped, hit, kicked, had their hair pulled, scolded, called names, and threatened.

Out of 15 women, 6 women who were still in their relationships at the time of the interview explained that they were in it because they didn't have any other options. All of them shared that, they all identified their occupation as housewives during the occurrence of violent relationships. As a result, they were forced to continue their abusive relationship. They were unable to find any family or friend support in the form of rehabilitation shelter or other assistance. They were also afraid about social stigmatization.

To determine the factors associated with domestic violence, the women were asked regarding the causes of domestic abuse in their relationships. The findings revealed a number of risk factors that may help to understand the attributes of spousal abuse occurrences among women. More than half of the total number of abused women in this study (9 women) indicated having constant arguments about financial matters. The economic distress includes being unable to provide enough money to meet the family needs, long term unemployment and expenditure connected with substance abuse, such as for alcohol.

The reasons of domestic violence have been linked to the husbands' drinking and gambling behaviors, according to a review of interviews with women. Ten women stated that their partner's drinking habits and gambling problems had a significant impact on their partner's violent behavior.

According to some women, domestic violence began when their husbands/ex-husbands engaged in extramarital affairs. However, this characteristic was shown to be rated lower than financial difficulties, as well as drinking and gambling habits. Three of the women's partners had been having extramarital affairs. An extramarital affair is thought to be a prevalent cause of divorce or separation among couples.

Numerous elements that contribute to domestic violence were discovered in the study, which might be inferred. The list of reasons given by the abused women demonstrated the complexities of abusive relationships in Pokhara Metropolitan City, which can be

extrapolated to Nepal as a whole. It's important to note that acts of violence are often driven by multiple factors and tend to grow over time. Women may be more likely to remain imprisoned in abusive relationships if they do not receive sufficient professional support to break the cycle of abuse.

The effects of domestic violence are massive. While asking about the impact of domestic violence on women, it came to find out that it range from the physical health impacts to psychological and social problems. The study has found out that disclosing such assaults takes a lot of courage on the part of the abused women. During an interview with the women, it was discovered that only three of the fifteen women had reported the abuse to the police. A significant percentage of under-reporting of domestic violence cases is due to a variety of factors. The women explained that they did not report the occurrence to the police because they were afraid of society's negative social stigmas, as well as a refusal to discuss "private family problems," shame, and rejection (feelings of being disbelieved), safeguarding the children's interest, lack of social rehabilitation and women's lack of knowledge regarding the helping sources of domestic violence.

## **7.2 Conclusion**

The current study explores into the lives of women who are involved in domestic violence relationships. Fifteen women were interviewed, and their stories were analyzed qualitatively to uncover their personal experiences with domestic violence and post impact of violence in their lives.

The study has shown that the impact of domestic violence include physical impairment, psychological health issues and social isolation among abused women. The study has also found out that it is not simple to leave a violent relationship. The stages need a lot of courage, sacrifice, and resolve on the part of a woman to keep fighting for her life and the children. Another obstacle that prevents abused women from revealing and seeking help, according to the findings of the current study, is a lack of understanding about domestic violence options available to women. Women's plans to leave abusive situations were frequently obstructed by a lack of information about accessible assistance and support mechanisms.

The only approach to raise the number of domestic violence reports is to offer training on parenting and household management. Apart from that, the government should establish and enforce rigorous laws, policies, and provisions to prevent such occurrences. With the help of local NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) and other authorities, the government should also take steps to construct rehabilitation centers and develop social rehabilitation packages program.

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2. If yes, who committed the violence?

a) Husband/partner

b) b) In-laws/Family..... Who? .....

c) Other (Specify): .....

3. How long have you been suffering from domestic violence?

..... months/years

4. What forms of violence have you experienced?

a) scolding/calling you names                      b) threatening

b) c) hitting/kicking                                      d) hair pulling

c) e) other:.....

5. Brief details of Q.N.4

.....  
.....  
.....

6. What do you think caused domestic violence in your relationship?

.....  
.....  
.....

**C. Impact of Domestic Violence**

1. How do you describe the effects of the abuse in terms of your physical health?

.....  
.....

2. Is this abusive relationship impacting your psychological health? If yes, how?

.....  
.....

3. Do you think that the domestic violence you faced have also impacted on your children? If yes, how?

.....  
.....

4. What impact has this abusive relationship had on your social life?

.....  
.....  
.....

**D. Share or complain about the incidents**

1. Did you share about the incident to anyone?

a) Yes

b) No

Who? .....

Why not? .....

2. Did you report about the incident to Police?

a) Yes

b) No

Who? .....

Why not? .....

3. Did you seek any support from anyone?

a) Yes

b) No

If yes, who?

a) Family

b) Maternal Family

c) Neighbors

d) Friends

e) Police

f) NGOs/CBOs

g) Judicial Committee

h) Other (who)

If not why:

.....  
.....



2. If the answer is No to Q.N. 1, how have you been managing your livelihood?

.....  
.....

3. How does your community perceive you?

.....  
.....

4. Are your children living with you?

a) Yes            b) No

c) No Children If no, why? .....

5. How does your children perceive you?

.....  
.....

6. What plans do you have in mind for your future?

.....  
.....

7. Do you want you share anything further with me?

.....  
.....  
.....

**Appendix 2. Questionnaire for Interview with Service Provider/Local  
NGOs/WHRDs**

**A. General Background Information**

1. Name: ..... 2. Name of Organization: .....  
3. Designation: ..... 4. Contact No: .....  
5. Email Address: .....

**B. Question of the Domestic Violence Issues and Rehabilitation**

1. How many cases of domestic violence reported in your organization in past one

year?

2. In your opinion, are women able to report domestic violence easily?

- a) Yes
- b) No

3. If No, what are the barriers that prevent women from reporting the incidents and seeking help?

.....  
.....

4. How can we address the issue of cases not being reported?

.....  
.....

5. What kind of support does a domestic violence survivor usually seek from your organization?

- a) Shelter/Rehabilitation
- b) Divorce Process
- c) Legal proceeding support
- d) Financial Support
- e) Other:

.....

6. What kind of support do you/your organization have been providing to domestic violence survivor?

- a) Shelter/Rehabilitation
- b) Divorce Process
- c) Legal proceeding support
- d) Financial Support
- e) Other:

.....

7. What constraints did your organization face as a result of delivering these supports to domestic violence survivor?

.....  
.....

8. After such incidents, what are the impact faced by domestic violence survivor and their children or families?

.....  
.....

9. What is the long-term impact of domestic violence on survivors?

.....  
.....

10. What are the challenges of social rehabilitation of survivor of domestic violence?

.....  
.....

11. How can we mitigate these challenges?

.....  
.....

**Thank you!!**