

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Menstruation in general defined as a periodic, healthy shedding of blood exiting from the body through vagina. It indicates the starting of womanhood which starts at the adolescence age of a girl's life as a unique phenomenon. This practice is in existence in followers of Hinduism as well as in Far-Western region of Nepal. In the Nepali term of this region it is called "Chhau" or "Chhui", and taken as a strict rule followed by women and girl's under adolescent in that region passed from generation to generation.

Chhui system has been in practice from centuries till date, instead of different changed occurred in different times. Though society claims women under chhui period are taken as unhygienic or impure and considered as unclear for participation in any type of religious and other ceremonies. Besides women having chhui had to pass their nights in the cowsheds far away from the village where nobody can touch and no matter how the weather or health condition they had to sleep in that shed laying on the straw bed.

During chhui women are supposed to be taken care of cleanliness and good diet where as in the context of our country, it is just opposite that creates negative view on them. One of the negativity to talk about is Psychological effect, which results depression, fear etc. at this period married women are isolated from love, support and care that are very essential in that period from their family members and specially from her husband. Such that for those girl's having chhui for the first time are in excessive need of care and education from their parents for overcoming that difficult moment are also left to suffer saying that father should not see their face and even should not be out on the sun neglecting whatever the outcome might be. Not only that but in medias and other medias such as on internet, F.M stations, T.V., etc. also we get to know about the problems and effects in the remote areas of Nepal

In Far-Western region only deep rooted taboos and superstitions relating to various aspects of human life, myths, belief, etc. are the imposed restrictions towards the

women during chhui have still bound their mind. It is said that women are contaminated, polluted at the time of chhui and are kept far away when they need their family member's support the most. This type of deep rooted tradition are like a thorns endless suffering to girls and women every month till the end of chhui from their life not understanding the positive aspects of beginning of chhui.

There are many more other practices that are still very active and strong due to the support of the member of the society where the women have to pay for it at any cost even by death. Women and girls are left to stay at cow shed just as they are not the part of our society but as they are animals without any care and love at the time of their necessity. These type of extreme level of suffer are still tolerated by women from the ancient times in the research sector as it is way far from the reach of any types of quick advancement or development. As different incidents has occurred to the women during chhui that are still unknown yet until visiting the research sites. Only few of those incidents are out in the media revealed, that clarifies the level of suffering of girls and women in chhui in that region.

This study extracts the attitude and experience of Women regarding Chhui pratha in Kandel VDC of Bajhang District. Women's feelings and their experience regarding Chhui system is the major issue of the study.

The cyclical occurrence of menstruation has generated different myths and superstitions in various cultures over the ages. While some women take it for granted, finding in it a reassurance of womanhood, fertility and freedom from pregnancy but for others it refers to spiritual uncleanliness as stated in the article; 'Menstruation in Rural Igbo Woman of South East Nigeria: Attitudes, beliefs and Practices'. Umeora OUI, Egwuatu VE. (2008)

In the strictest observance of where women are considered as "unclean" during the menstrual period and are prevented from taking part in many normal aspects of their lives. There are clear cultural reasons for these taboos and practices. When a Hindu woman reaches maturity, she is kept in a dark room for four to sixteen days and is forbidden to see the sun. During this period of seclusion, she is often guarded by her relatives. She is not allowed to speak, or if necessary, it should be not above a whisper. (Lamichhane 2012).

Chhui system is traditional practice in which women and girls are forbidden to touch anything and have to live in cowshed during menstruation. It is a widespread practice prevalent in Far West and some parts of Mid-West region of Nepal. In Far West it is prevalent mainly in Achham, Bajura, Bajang, Doti, Baitadi, Dadheldhura, Darchula, Kanchanpur, and Kailali and in Mid-West it is prevalent in Kalikot, Jumla, Humla, Mugu, Dailekh, Jajarkot, and Surkhet Districts. In these areas, family and society do not treat menstruation as natural phenomena as presented by (Amgain, 2011).

This practice stems from the belief that when woman has her periods, she is “impure” and could “pollute” and “contaminate” the house by remaining there during her menstruation periods. So, once a month, during the entire length of their menstruation, women are banished to the chhui goth, which they can only leave once their periods are over. The tradition of Chhui isolation continues unabated in western Nepal. This practice stems from the belief that when she has her periods, the woman is “impure” and “pollutes” the house hold by remaining her menstruations days. So, once a month during the entire length of their menstruation, women are banished to the chhui goth, which they can only leave once their periods are over (Rebaud, 2011).

History of menstruation is said to be from religious practices where it was believed to that god and goddesses were angered at women staying in the family house at such a time. According to religious folklore, Indra the King of Heaven was accused of killing a Brahmin and because of the illicit acts with women that Indra committed during his quest to redeem his sin. For these acts all women were said to be punished through menstruation (Hussain 2012)

The Chhui sheds are very dirty and unhygienic having cattle excreta on the floor. They are also very cold during the winter. The women are compelled to sleep on the floor with only straw bedding and a thin blanket. They have to take bath every day for seven days, but were not allowed to clean themselves at the common tap and had to go to separate tap built for chhui or go to a nearby river for bathing and washing clothes. There are strong traditional beliefs that their family would become sick and bad things would happen in house if the chhui stayed at home, (Kandel, Bhandari, and Lamichhane, 2012).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the strictest observance of chhui, women are prevented from looking at the sun, interacting with males and cattle, drinking dairy products and dealing with their daily chores. It is supposed that the scourges threatening the community and the family of women who do not abide by the tradition: “she could become sick or die; her bones could break; she could become infertile; others could fall ill or even die. She will become sexually dangerous and harm would come to any partners' genitals and person could not have sex and could be harmful to family members, village etc. if the seclusion is broken.” Furthermore, if they “touch the fruit trees, the fruits will fall before they are ripe or the fruits will be dry; if they fetch water, the well will dry up; if the cattle are fed or milked by Chhui, blood will come out of their teats instead of milk” (Rebaud, 2011).

In the Mid and Far Western Regions chhui system is considered as a major problem about women’s health issues. During the period of menstruation, Women face various discriminatory practices in the context of chhui. The tradition is that women cannot enter inside houses, kitchens and temples, women are forbidden to touch men or even to enter the courtyard of their own house. Within Chhui system (called as Chhui pratha in far west), women and girls are kept in Chhuished, which is a little bit far from residual home. Isolated Chhuisheds, cowsheds where women are resided during their menstruation are open and door less. Women and girls have to stay in such huts and cowsheds five to seven days in each month amidst their menstruation (Amgain, 2011).

Most of the women are not aware about their physical and psycho-sexual change of their body. Women are both biologically and socially vulnerable to danger lacking sufficient knowledge of proper hygienic practice and menstruation. In the context of chhui, the tradition is that women cannot enter inside houses, kitchens and temples and women are forbidden to touch men or even to enter the courtyard of their own homes. They are barred from consuming milk, butter meat and other nutritious foods. The women must survive on a diet of dry food, salt and rice but they cannot use warm blankets, and allowed only a small rug. They are also restricted from going to school or performing their daily functions like taking a bath, forced to stay at barbaric

conditions of the shed. Access to water taps and wells is also limited. Chhui women can only bathe or wash clothes in a 'chhui dhara'- a separate well, stream or small rivulet nears the village. With such a strong societal stigma attached, the impact of chhui on the health of Nepali women is traumatic to say the least five days a month; the women are confined to a dark, dirty room without nutritious food in sufficient quantity.

In some cases chhui resulted women's killed by wild animals, rape, sexual assault by drunkards, bitten by snakes or dead of cold during their stay in chhui goth. Chhui women face both physical and mental hardship. As mentioned, women are often relegated to 'chhui goth' or cattle sheds where they stay in very basic, unhygienic and exposed conditions. According to custom, women should not be given milk or ghee while they are menstruating, but should only eat flatbread with salt. This deprives them of nutritious food during their periods as women are not allowed in the house during menstruation, they often engage in harder, manual labor outdoors as a result, including digging, collecting firewood and grasses and farm labor.

These conditions take their toll on women's health and make them more vulnerable to various health problems, including diarrhea, pneumonia and respiratory diseases. In the strictest observance of chhui, women are prevented from looking at the sun, interacting with males and cattle, drinking dairy products and dealing with their chores. It is supposed that the scourges threatening the community and the family of women who do not abide by the tradition that "she could get sick or die; her bones might break; she could become infertile others could fall ill or even die. She will become sexually dangerous and harm would come to any partners' genitals and person could not have sex and could be harmful to family members, village etc if the seclusion is broken." Furthermore, if they "touch the fruit trees, the fruits will fall before they are ripe or the fruits will be dry; if they fetch water, the well will dry up; if the cattle are fed or milked by chhui, blood will come out of their teats instead of milk". Chhui practice violates women's rights because it limits their ability to live safe and healthy lives, and in some cases it deprives girls' opportunities to attend school. Further, it identifies traditional culture and power structures like patriarchy as important determinants for the continuation of the practice.

As a sociological study about suffering this thesis includes all practices which are the cause of the socio-psychological suffering of women through chhui. On the basis of these literature and discussion, I wanted to examine the process and experiences of the women about chhui system. Therefore the study has made an effort to answer the following questions.

- a. How do women perceive chhui system?
- b. How are the women's condition during chhui system?
- c. What are the hygiene practice during chhui?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study were as follows.

- a) To analyze the process, perception and experience of chhui system of women who practice chhui system.
- b) To study and understand the level of Socio-psychological suffering during chhui.
- c) To describe the process of how chhui system is practiced.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

Lots of studies have been conducted among the field of suffering sector sociology basically concerning with diseases and mental health and other health problem and sociopolitical issues. But there is not found any study about chhui pratha which is an interesting issue for sociology. It is hidden issue. This study can give over all information about process of chhui, experience of women from chhui system.

The research was conducted among the people of Kandel V.D.C. There was no study about the chhui system in sociological perspective and its impacts on behavior and their experience in the sector of health of the women of Kandel, in this condition this research was contribution for the people of this place. It helps to identify the cultural practices, norms values, process, and experience of the women and helps to understand local people's cultural system which is closely related with the suffering in which they practice local cultural context to maintain order in their society. So it helps to establish a tradition of chhui and suffering a medical sociological study among the women of these places and facilitates further study on the same group. Chhui is the

very interesting and hidden issues. It has own process and practices. It should be shown this issue in the world, because there is no more literature found about chhui pratha from academic field but few empirical literatures can be found. Among these literature about chhui only few literature are available therefore, in this relation, the need of more researches and studies from social Science perspective in general and Sociology in particular to trace out the local perspective from micro level on chhui and Suffering and recognize their experiences. As this purpose study aim to access the local perspective of chhui and suffering and their experiences, it will be very helpful to researchers, development organizations and organization involved in health research,suffering.

CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

In this chapter, a brief analysis is presented on the suffering theories which deal with illness, disease physical pain and mental health. Some of the suffering theories are women and health relationship and its impact on women lives in specific given society and describes the researches that have been in practice in Nepal.

The term “suffering” is borrowed from medical sector. More than illness, disease, feelings of pain, stress, insecurity, etc. are called suffering. Feeling of uncomfortability, feeling of insecurity, these feeling are came out by many causes i.e. accident of a person, death of a person and insecurity by the society. It is very vague term/concept because it includes different condition of suffering.

2.1 Theoretical Reviews

There are many suffering theories which deal with illness, disease physical pain and mental health. Some of the suffering theories are women and health relationship and its impact on women lives. The suffering theories talk like this:

Kadariya S. & Aro A.R. (2015) have stated in the health impacts of Chhui; it has several health impacts associated with it. The menstruating women are forced to endure freezing temperatures in winter and sweltering temperatures in summer inside the goth. This can cause life-threatening health problems like pneumonia, diarrhea, chest infection, suffocation, and respiratory tract infection. During those days although women are forbidden from going inside the house they are still expected to do more laborious work outside like carrying heavy loads, digging, collecting firewood and grass despite the lack of a nutritious diet and comfort. As a consequence, the rate of prolapsed uterus is high among this group. Even the mothers who have recently given birth are confined within goth. Postpartum mothers are weak and feeble and to make it worse, they have to look after their newborn child by themselves. Because of poor nutrition and vulnerable living conditions, neonatal and maternal mortality is high in those regions where chhui is common. Chhui also has an impact on psychosocial well-being of the women and girls. Isolation from family and

social exclusion results in depression, low self-esteem, and disempowerment among girls. Furthermore, there is also a fear of sexual abuse and assault at night alongside the attack of wild animals and snake bites. Most of the deaths due to wild animals are not revealed and neither are the cases of rape, fearing for the future of the unmarried daughter.

Khan .N and Gokhale .K (2013) highlighted about the suffering of women during menstruation with the incident of gang rape in India, of a female medical student in a bus. In that article a girl named Sushma stated that she was never molested when she left her house at night to bury her rags though she was fearful.

Dhingra .R et al (2009) found that the community depict strong web of social and cultural practices through several generations that there were many social and religious restrictions to girls during menstruation. Girls received instructions from mother, elder sisters and friends for the things to do and not to. Restricted to go to religious places, offerings, praying and keeping fast were there but reported by sample girls and exported taboos by all girls by avoiding going near water as "it creates problem in the regular cycle because of a belief that reflection of water creates problems" but also instructed not to look at the mirror as well.

Thakre .S.B et al. (2011) concluded in menstrual hygiene; that among the adolescent school girls in urban and rural areas, the knowledge on menstruation in poor and the practices are often not optimal for proper hygiene. Menstrual hygiene is an issue needs to be addressed to all levels by building the mechanism to address and for the access of healthy menstrual practice.

Reboud (2011) stated that the term "suffering" is borrowed from medical sector. More than illness, disease, feelings of pain, stress, insecurity, etc are called suffering. Feeling of uncomfortability, feeling of insecurity, these feeling are came out by many causes i.e. accident of a person, death of a person and insecurity by the society. It is very vague term/concept because it includes different condition of suffering.

The acute superstition and irrational traditions are put forth as excuses to compete all women of menstruating ages to live their life is seclusion for seven days every month. Leading the several normalizes in society as well as rise in their reproductive health

problems. Women in Nepal are driven into isolation during their menstrual cycle forced by their superstitious families and the society to live in dirty, isolated sheds where they risk contracting diseases and faced other dangers such as rape and which was become a great cause of women physical as well as mental weakness, their ill health of their personal belongings, molestations as well as deaths by infectious diseases or by accidental snake bites or accidental attacked by ferocious animals (www.drnirmal.tripod.com)

Kleinman, A. and Kleinman, J. (1997) in “Suffering and its Professional transformation: toward and ethnography interpersonal experience” define experience as an inter subjective medium of micro cultural and infra political processes in which something is at stake for participants in local worlds. Experience so defined mediates (and transform) the relationship between context and person, meaning and psychobiology in health and illness and in healing. Building on this theoretical background, an approach to ethnography is illustrated through an analysis of suffering in Chinese society. The embodied memory of a survivor of serious trauma during the Cultural Revolution provides an example. From there, the authors go on to describe a framework of indigenous Chinese categories for the analysis of experience- mianzi (face), quanxi (connections), renqing (Situating emotion), bio (reciprocity). The paper concludes with a discussion of the existential limits of this and other sociological approaches to the study of experience as moral process.

(Ware 1992) stated that suffering engendered by the socially constituted nature of illness through the delegitimation of illness are shown to be reflected in interactions with others to construct an illness reality in which chronic fatigue syndrome is defined as either nonexistent or psychosomatic. Disconfirmation of the subjective experience of illness leads to suffering arising from the threatened stigma of psychological disorder, the alienation resulting from a decision to keep the illness secret, and the shame of being wrong in one's definition of reality. Patients also develop strategies for contesting the definition of chronic fatigue syndrome as “not real.” Delegitimation merits further exploration as a category for experience- near analysis of suffering in medical anthropology.

(Schmitt,1988) mentioned in religious faith that the transcendent dimensions of suffering may be understood to come together with other transcendent dimension of experience in a more distinctive or focused encounter with transcendent reality. The conception of god that is suggested by the transcendent dimension of suffering, however, differs from the mourning may take problematic forms, and this can lead to chronic denial or embitterment or despair or stagnation. On the other hand, mourning may occur in such manner as to facilitate meaning in life, empathy, caring, and perspective. One's "myths" and beliefs often affect the mourning process and may themselves be influenced by that process. Different myths accompany or influence different identity patterns and life- styles. The core concepts of religion are often associated with certain myths and beliefs that may inspire meaning and courage, caring and wisdom.

Dahal,K. (2010) in "widowhood" Life Situation and Suffering stated; A Medical Anthropological Perspective" has shown how Maoists leading war put the people specially widow women in the situation of suffering from their society itself and ultimately impacts occurred in the life hardship of the widow women as well as physical health and created socio-psycho stress on them. Dahal has discussed the coping strategies followed by displaced widows of the war. He has mentioned that these widows have altered the ways of their lives to cope with their newly emerged social, economic and cultural situations. He has described that many men were killed during this battle and their killing had several effects on the lives of their relatives, family members, and wives. And the culture- untimely demise of husband cause a woman to be a guilty of her husband's death and often is called Bokshy or Allachhhini in hindu social context- is tied to our society which claiming a woman as misfortune to her husband make them compelled to leave their family, relatives and society.

2.2 Empirical Reviews

Chhui Pratha generally prevails in Far western region of Nepal. There is only few literatures can be found related to the Chhui pratha among them few of the literature I found.

Costos, D. et. al. (2002) stated in the article, a daughter found out about her mother's menstruation from the hint that she got, such as her mother not performing any religious activities, not washing hair, resting due to headache, etc. and the major thing is that mother didn't talk about the menstruation keeping it as much secret as they could and the daughter was not able to understand until her menstruation. Her grandmother told her not to swim, to sit on the stairs, on the cold surface; the only reason was that due to the deep rooted taboo among the society.

Chhui literally means "Menstruation women". They are isolated from family, relatives, and Society and kept in a small cold and dark shed where most often cattle were kept in other time. They are considered as "impure" or "unclean" or "untouchable" during menstruation and postpartum periods. According to this practice, when a girl has her first menstruation, she stays sequestered from her family members for 11-15 days. In the case of mature woman, she stays in shed for 5 days and married woman has to stay for only 4 day. The most disturbing fact is that the confined women do not get nutritious food. They believe that they should not drink and eat milk, curd, yogurt, and ghee (clarified butter). In addition, they will make their bed on some hays and do not get proper care. It is reported that many infants die during their stay in the shed. Even if those infants escaped their fate of death, they had serious health issues and complications that developed on account of hypothermia. Some women have pneumonia and other viral infections due to cold and unhealthy food. Others are killed by snakebite. (Maharjan 2010).

Kandel, et.al. (2012) analyzed in their article "Chhue, Chhui and Chueekula Pratha"- Menstrual sheds: Example of Discriminatory Practices against Women in the Mid- and Far- Western Regions of Nepal: Considering women as "Impure" or "Unclean" During Menstruation and Post-Partum periods" "Chhue, Chhui and Chueekula Pratha" are discriminatory practices against women during their menstrual periods and the post-partum period in Nepal. Observational and open discussion studies were carried out in areas of the Mid and far western Regions of the country. These practices are continued through cultural norms, social taboos and superstition. During these periods, women are considered "impure" or "unclean" and are prohibited from taking part in many normal aspects of their lives. These practices are a violation of human rights and are a form of gender discrimination against women and children, in turn

leading to negative effects on health, education and the country's socioeconomic development.

“Chhui pratha” is a social ritual followed by people in some regions of Nepal. This ritual regards as women “impure” during their menstrual cycle; it is known to have initially originated centuries ago from a belief that gods and goddesses become angry if any woman stays in her home during that time. Following the ritual, women are made to live in sheds outside their homes called “Chhui Goths.” A menstruating woman cannot touch anyone; if anyone touches her, the person need to be purified by taking a bath and drinking cow's urine. Specially, she is not permitted to touch pregnant women or trees, because of the idea that the “fruit” each are bearing will die or will be malformed. Menstruating women are not permitted to participate in religious ceremonies, nutritious food is forbidden, and warm clothing are not allowed. Yet, they are still expected to participate in hard labor, carrying out the daily chores that they would normally do, such as working in the fields, fetching firewood, washing clothes, and so on (Sharma 2010). Sharma mentioned the process of chhui and how is it practiced. In this article Sharma also mentioned the Challenges which are the chhui women are faced.

Rebaud, (2011) explains that practices and taboos surrounding menstruation according to the region, the community, the village, and are not confined to Nepal. In the strictest observance of chhui, women are prevented from looking at the sun, interacting with males and cattle, drinking dairy products and dealing with their daily chores. Furthermore, if they “touch the fruit trees, the fruits will be dry; if they fetch water, the well will dry up; if the cattle are fed or milked by chhui, blood will come out of their teats instead of milk”. The impact of chhui on women's health is obviously devastating. Five days a month, the women are confined to a dark, dirty room without nutritious food in sufficient quantity.

There are often cases of women becoming seriously ill from the cowsheds. The worst case scenarios involve suffering from diarrheal and respiratory diseases and also malnutrition. Whilst in sheds, women are not able to wash or even comb their hair. In some areas, women are not even taught or aware of the use of sanitary towels and so

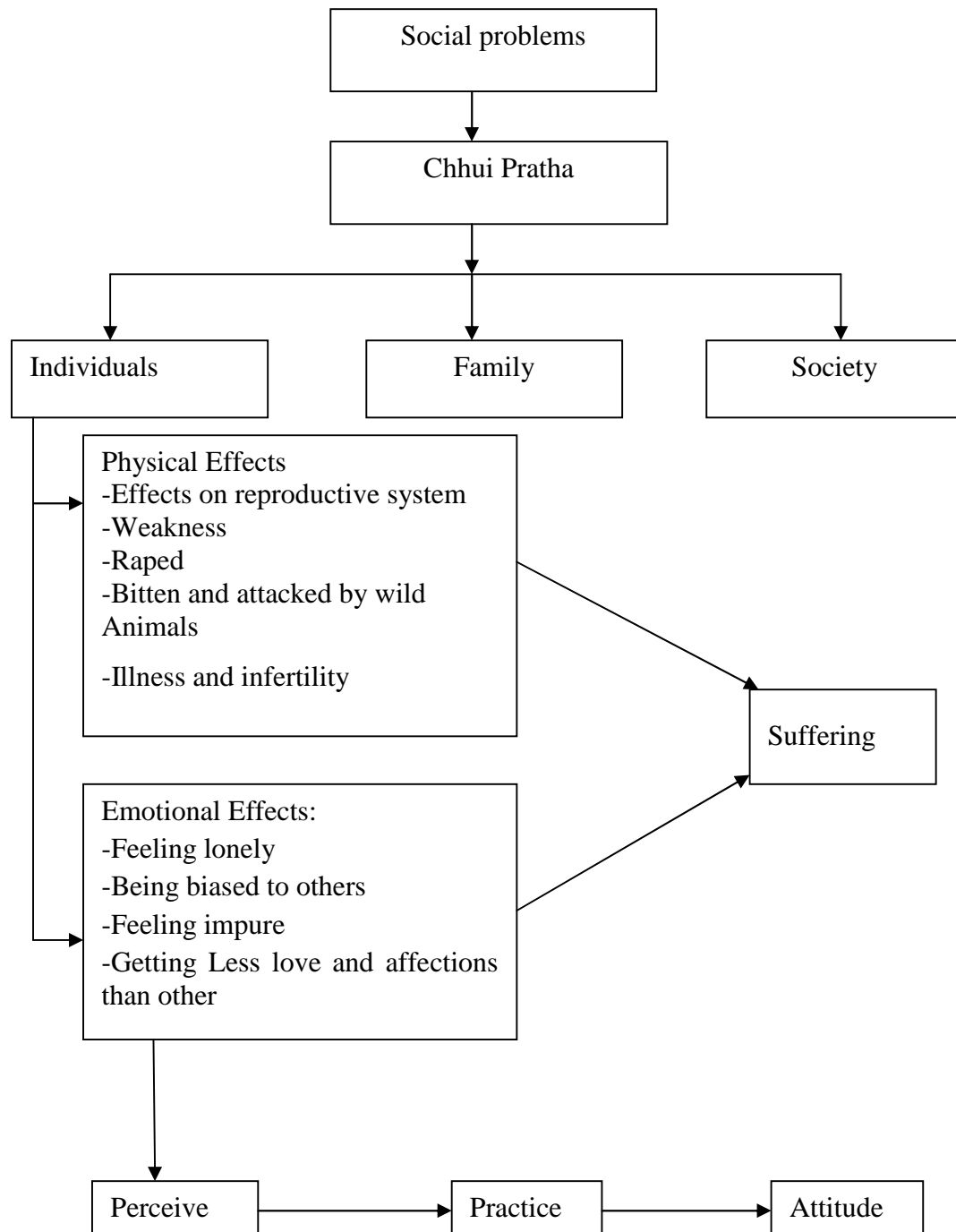
are forced to bear the “condemned” stains on their unwashed clothes. Furthermore girls are restricted from even going to school during such a time (Hussain 2012).

Practices and taboos surrounding menstruation vary according to the region, the community, the village, and are not confined to Nepal. A Study done in India by Rajni Dhingra, Anil Kumar and Manpreet Kour with a title of ‘Knowledge and Practices Related to Menstruation among Tribal (Gujjar) Adolescent Girls’ has reported that Gujjar girls did not brush their teeth or take bath during the day of menstruation period. They were also instructed by elders not to wash/comb their hair during these days.

Likewise, a report prepared by African journal of reproductive health, in Nigerian Igbo community, menstruating women were discouraged from carrying female newborn babies as this was believed to attract menorrhagia to the growing girl in later life.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The following conceptual model represents the key elements that shape process of the chhui and experience of women and the local context, which will make the study easier and more systematic during the interpretation of the findings. The conceptual framework of this study is given below,



The above figure shows existing social problem in Bhajang which is known as chhui pratha. Within the chhui pratha women should follow such process of norms and values: should live in chhui goth, should stay far from everything, should Keep busy to hard work, Should keep low voice to other, should have without nutritious food. Chhui pratha affects Individual as well as family and society. Chhui pratha directly affects in individual Health. Individual affects can be divided in two types' Physical affects and Emotional affects. In individual such physical effects are shown. Weakness can be seen in women health, she can be raped, can be bitten and attacked by wild animals, can be ill or infertile and can affect reproductive system of the women. Emotional effects are like this woman fills lonely herself, she is being biased, fills impure and gets less love and affections. The woman is suffering cause of these physical and psychological effects. So this figure shows how a woman suffers from chhui pratha clearly.

CHAPTER-III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Without proper methodology we cannot reach in destination point our research. The study of “Chhui Pratha: A Study From Kandel VDC of Bajhang” is new. Especially this chapter deals about research design, source of data population of the study, tools and instruments, standardization of instrument data collection procedure, sample size and sampling procedure and analysis and interpretation of data.

3.1 Research Site Selection

Chhui is a long held and widespread practice in the Far and Mid Western Region of Nepal among all castes and groups. There are many societies which are still in practice chhui system that among them Kandel community of Bajhang district is one. So like other society, Kandel could be suffering from such system by which Kandel VDC of Bajhang district. Bajhang district is located in the Seti zone of Far western region of Nepal. It is culturally very important place where festivals and customs can be seen among of them are Danshai, Holi, Bhuwa, Gaura, Deuda Khel, Shiva Ratri, etc. and it is also environmentally beautiful palace because there is Khaptad National park, Surma sarobar , Saipal himal etc. are located in the study area. Most of the people of this district have been practicing in chhui pratha. Although most of the younger are educated, they were not trying to change their behaviour towards chhui, the people of the Kandel VDC have strong beliefs towards traditional culture so the researcher had chosen Kanel VDC to identify the socio-psychological suffering of women towards chhui pratha because no researcher have observed the aspects of suffering of woman during chhuiand the change that are in keen need to change for betterment of women in the society.

3.2 Research Design

This research was based on descriptive research design with both the qualitative and quantitative techniques depending on the nature and source of data and information. The variables of socio-economic characteristics and psychological concept of the respondents were analyzed on the basis of quantitative techniques and other practice reared variables were analyzed on the basis qualitative techniques. Therefore, this

study has used both the qualitative and quantitative techniques depending on the nature and source of data and information while analyzing the data. Similarly, cross sectional analyses was applied based on the experiences of different age group's women with in the reproductive age and education.

3.3 Nature and Sources of Data

This study has used only primary sources of data; the respondents female were taken as the primary sources of data. The primary data were generated in by using the ethnographic methods and its techniques such as field observation and case study use in order to gather information from the study area. Primary data was used in the study to make the study more qualitative rather than the quantitative according to the nature of data collection tools. The required primary data was generated through the field study. Both qualitative and quantitative data were used, but major concern was paid on the quantitative information, as of the research is to explore and document the local people's experience at the period during chhui.

3.4 Population, Sampling Method and Sample Size

All the women who were of age 15-49 years living in Kandel V.D.C. of Bajhang District were taken as the population for this study. From the total population, 140 female respondents were sleeted from ward no 4 by applying convenient sampling technique who have experienced the bitter reality of their day-to-day life.

3.5 Data Collection Tools

Mainly the interview schedule and attitude scale were used as the tools for data collection with direct observation. The interview schedule was applied to find out the socio-economic characteristics and practice of the respondent in chhui pratha. Similarly, the attitude scale was applied to identify the psychological suffering of the respondents towards chhui pratha. Therefore the researcher had applied those tools and techniques to collect the information of women experience about Chhui system from the study area.

3.5.1 Participation Observation

The observation method was applied to get the primary data and relevant information. Despite the fact achieved from respondent's reply, the researcher herself had observed the chhui goth and chhui which are made for chhui women. Moreover, researcher had also observed the social and cultural behaviors of the people and attitude towards chhui.

3.5.2 Interview Schedule

The tool interview schedule was applied to find out the socio-demographic and educational condition of the respondents and that was also used find out detailed information and opinion based on her knowledge and practice of particular issues.

3.5.3. Attitude Scale

A set of Likert attitude scale was developed with included the various statements about chhui that was administered among the women who were of age 15-49 yrs living in Kandel V.D.C. of Bajhang District, who have experienced the bitter reality of their day-to-day life. The statements were asked to find out their feelings i.e. agree and disagree level which was helpful to find out the psychological suffering of the respondents towards chhui pratha.

3.6 Data Analysis

Analysis is necessary for the data interpreting and analyzing so that analysis was a continuous process of reviewing the information as it was collected, classifying it, formulating additional questions, verifying information and drawing conclusion. All the collected data were analyzed by using quantitative and qualitative approach. For the meaningful generalization of the unorganized qualitative data, the researcher made systematic and thematic classification in other words all the collected qualitative data were thematically categorized. Then, the categorized data were described and interpreted. Similarly, the quantitative data were checked carefully and edited errors after that those data were coded in master chart and converted into simple statistical measures i.e. percentage, frequency, mean etc. The converted data were presented

various tables, figures and charts after that the presented data were analyzed and interpreted on the basis of the objectives of the study.

3.7 Limitation of the Study

This study does have its constraint of its own context, situation and its frame. Like other, this studies also no exception. Due to the lack of sufficient time, budget, supports and others sources, the study was delimited in Kandel VDC of Bajhang. This study was focused only the respondents age group 15 to 49. This study has not included any male attitude. Only female perceive, practice and attitude were taken as the main variables of this research. The study content was delimited on socio-psychological suffering of women towards chhui.

CHAPTER-IV
PROCESS, PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN
TOWARDS CHHUI

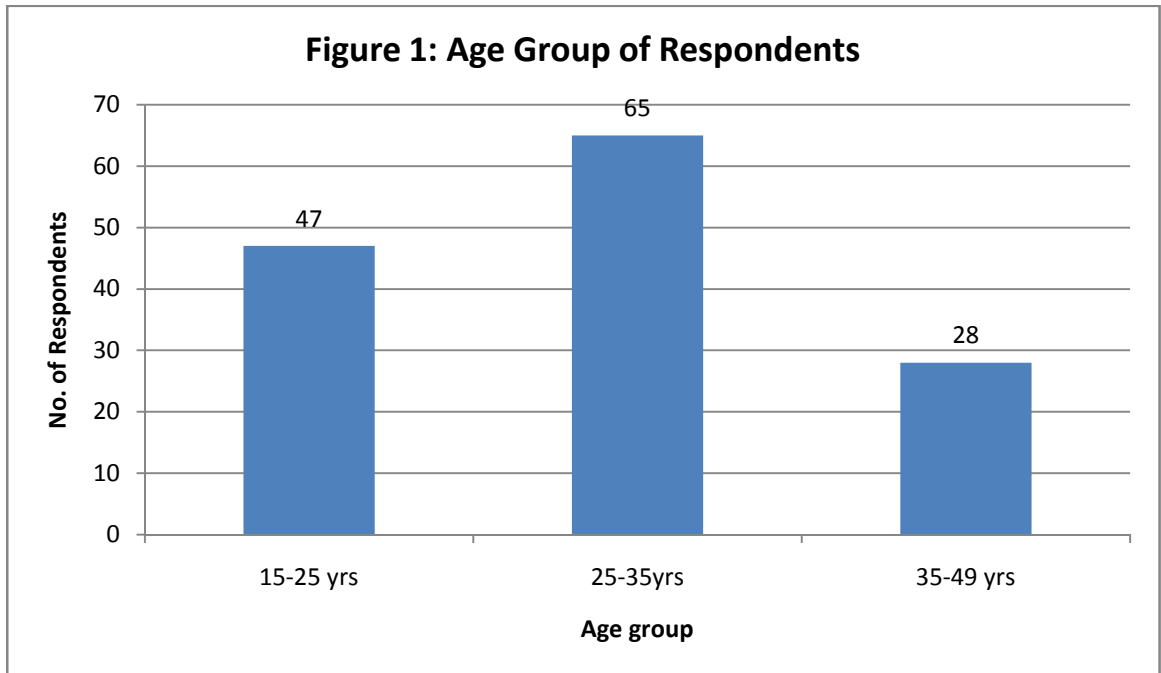
This chapter includes the analysis and interpretation of the result obtained from the research site. The researcher took the letter provided from the central department, TU Kirtipur and visited the targeted area and the respondents in order to collect the essential data for the research. In order to make the research work more efficient obtained data was transformed into tables and figures according to their necessity. In total 140 respondents were interviewed and their attitude was examined. Thus obtained raw data is systematically arranged in different headings and subheadings which are as follows.

4.1 Socio-demographic Characteristics

This subheading deals with the socioeconomic characteristics like age, sex, occupation, education level etc. Since sociological factors directly affect the attitude and practice of the respondents, the researcher felt necessity to examine the sociological status of the respondents. The sociological factors are serially listed in following subheadings.

4.1.1 Age of the Respondents

Age is one of the sociological factors. The age of respondents vary their level of thinking and their practice regarding various factors. This study was delimited with the respondents of age group of 15 to 49 years females who is practicing or had practiced chhui. The following figure shows the age group of the respondents.



The above figure shows the distribution of respondents according to their age group. Among 140 interviewed respondents 33.57 percentages were of age group 15-25 years. Majority of the respondents i.e. 46.42 percentages were of age group 25-35 years and the remaining 20 percentages were of age group 35-49 years.

Analyzing the data, majority of respondents were of age group 25-35 years because maximum respondents practicing chhui were of same age group in the research area.

4.1.2 Main Occupation of Respondents

Simply occupation is known as the identity of a person in our society. Peoples are found to engage in different professions which affect their standard in the society. This study has included the respondents of age 15-25 years so some of the respondents were found to be students. Some major occupations of the respondents in the study area are as follows.

Table: 1
Main Occupation of Respondents

Main Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentages
Students/No occupation	33	23.57
Agriculture	42	30
Business	20	14.28
Public Service	8	5.71
Labor	28	20
Others	9	6.42
Total	140	100

Table 1 shows the main occupation of the respondents in the study area. Since our country is an agro based country maximum respondents were found to engage in agriculture. Among 140 respondents 23.75 percentages of respondents were students i.e. they don't have any source of income. Furthermore 30 percentages of respondents were engaged in agriculture, 14.28 percentages of respondents were engaged in Business, 5.71 percentages respondents were public servants, 20 percentages were labor and the remaining 6.42 percentages of respondents were engaged in other activities for income generation.

The result shows that the percentages of respondents engaged in agriculture were higher than any other professions. Among total 20 percentages were labors which mean that they are involved in heavy physical activities which have negative impact on their health as well as menstruation. Students are also found to practice chhui in the study area.

4.1.3 Educational Level of Respondents

Education is the third eye of human beings. Education is considered as the backbone of development. So, it plays a vital role for the reduction of different health problems of Nepal. Educated personnel will be aware in health problems and menstrual

problems. So, the researcher administered interview to find out educational level of respondent, the result is presented below:

Table: 2
Educational Status of Respondents

Educational Level	No. of Respondents	Percentages
Illiterate	34	24.28
Below SLC	67	47.85
Above SLC	39	27.86
Total	140	100

The above table shows the educational status of the respondents. Out of total respondents 24.28 percentages of respondents were illiterate. Furthermore 47.85 percentages of respondents were literate and had educational level below SLC, 27.86 percentages of respondents had above SLC level of qualification.

It is well known that the education level of females is comparatively less in our country. Analyzing the result the educational level of respondents was not satisfactory in the study area. Among 140 respondents 24.28 percentages respondents were illiterate i.e. they did not had any formal education although some of them could read few letters.

4.1.4 Family Income

One's income directly affects his/her health. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. In every sector like social, political, health as well as economical, their per capita income which is very low in comparison to other countries. So, family income also affects in various socio-economic aspects and health practice of a family. The family income of the Respondents is illustrated by following table:

Table: 3
Monthly Family Income of Respondents

Income (in 0000 Rs)	No. of Respondents	Percentages
5-10	26	18.57
10-20	49	35
20-40	52	37.14
40+	13	9.28
Total	140	100

Above table shows the family income of the respondents. The monthly income of the respondents was categorized into four different categories. The researcher found 18.57 percentages of respondents had 5-10 thousands rupees per month, 35 percentages of respondents had 10-20 thousands, 37.14 percentages had 20-40 thousand and only 9.28 percentages had more than 40 thousands monthly income.

Majority of respondents had 20-40 thousands monthly income which is satisfactory regarding the case of our country. Very few respondents were found to have monthly income more than 40 thousands rupees.

4.2 Variance in Attitude Towards Chhui Regarding Educational Status

This subheading includes the attitude of respondents towards chhui pratha. Carl attitude test scale was used to determine the attitude of respondents. Initially the researcher made some statements regarding and then the respondents were requested to reply their attitude in each statements. The researcher had 12 statements (see appendix) to which the respondents were requested to reply their attitude. The attitude scale included 5 negative statements and 7 positive statements. Respondents were given five options to choose for each statement. The attitude of respondents regarding different statements is as follows:

4.2.1 Isolation of Women During Menstruation

The terms ‘isolation’ means separation from each other, it is long practiced in chhui pratha that makes lonely feeling among the female which may be the cause of psychological problem so the researcher included the statement the statement “Women should be isolated during Menstruation.” The response of the respondents regarding this statement is shown in the figure below.

Table: 4
Isolation of Women During Menstruation

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	22	64.70	7	20.58	2	5.88	3	8.82	-	-
Below SLC	18	26.86	26	38.8	5	7.46	11	16.41	7	10.44
Above SLC	7	17.95	4	10.25	-	-	21	53.85	7	17.9
Total	47	33.57	37	26.42	7	5	35	25	14	10

Above figure shows the attitude of respondents on the statement “Women should be isolated during menstruation.” In order to examine the difference in attitude regarding the educational status the researcher categorized the attitudes of the respondents. Among the total illiterate respondents 64.70% strongly agreed, 20.58% agreed, 5.88% were undecided, 8.82 disagreed the statements. Evaluating the overall attitudes of the respondents it was found that 33.57% respondents strongly agreed, 26.42% respondents agreed, 5% respondents were undecided, 25% respondents disagreed and remaining 10% respondents strongly disagreed towards the statement.

Somehow the variance was seen in the attitude of the respondents regarding their educational status. Majority of the illiterate respondents were found to have the positive attitude towards the statement but the attitude gradually moved from positive to negative as the educational level increases in this statement.

4.2.2 Women Should not be Touched During Menstruation

Menstruation in women is also called *Nachhuni hunu* in some local languages in Nepal where *Nachhuni hunu* means untouchable. This somehow explains the condition of untouchability among the menstruation women. Furthermore there is a belief that the women would be cursed by god if she touched anyone during menstruation. So the researcher included the statement, “If women touched other during menstruation she will be cursed by god.” The attitude of respondents towards this statement is shown in the table below.

Table:5
Believe Towards Curse and Untouchability

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	6	15.65	12	35.29	3	8.82	6	17.65	7	20.58
Below SLC	11	16.41	8	11.94	13	19.40	18	26.85	17	25.37
Above SLC	4	10.25	9	23.07	-	-	10	25.64	16	41.02
Total	21	15	29	20.71	16	11.42	34	24.28	40	28.57

The above table shows the attitude of the respondents regarding the feeling of untouchability and believes towards curse. Illiterate respondents were found to show positive attitude towards this statement. Among 140 respondents 15% respondents strongly agreed, 20.71% respondents agreed, 11.42% respondents were undecided, 24.28% respondents disagreed and the remaining 428.57% respondents strongly disagreed the statement that. “If women touched other during menstruation, she will be cursed by god.” The percentages of literate respondents having positive attitude towards this statement is comparatively less than that of illiterate respondents.

Although the majority of illiterate respondents were found to have positive attitude towards this statement, few of them were found to disagree this statement, which shows the slow awareness generation among the illiterate respondents in the study

area. Few literate respondents were still found to believe in curse and untouchability due to the ritual aspects prevalent in the study area.

4.2.3 Impurity During Menstruation

Since menstruation is a natural phenomenon among women, people have feelings of impurity. The researcher included the statement, “Women are impure during menstruation” to examine the attitude of the respondents. The following table shows the attitudes according to their educational status.

Table: 6
Feeling of Impurity

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	11	32.35	16	47.05	7	20.58	-	-	-	-
Below SLC	24	35.82	17	25.37	9	13.43	13	19.40	4	5.97
Above SLC	6	15.38	9	23.07	2	5.12	10	25.64	12	30.76
Total	41	29.28	42	30	18	12.85	23	16.42	16	11.42

Above table shows the attitude of respondents according to their educational level. Majority of illiterate respondents are found to have positive attitude towards the statement. Out of 34 illiterate respondents 32.35 percentages strongly agreed the statement, 47.05 percentages agreed and 20.58 percentages of respondents were undecided. This obtained data indicates that the illiterate respondents have traditional attitude. Regarding the case of respondents below SLC, 35.82 percentages strongly agreed, 25.37 percentages respondents agreed, 13.43 percentages were undecided, 19.40 percentages disagreed and remaining 5.97 percentages respondents strongly disagreed the statement. A slight difference in attitude was seen among the illiterate respondents and below SLC respondents. Furthermore, among 39 above SLC respondents 15.38 percentages strongly agreed, 23.07 percentages respondents agreed,

5.12 respondents were undecided, 25.64 percentages respondents disagreed and remaining 30.76 percentages respondents strongly disagreed the statement.

Evaluating the overall attitudes of the respondents, majority of respondents were found to have positive attitude towards this statement. This indicates the lack of knowledge among the respondents in the study area.

4.2.4 Nutritious Diet During Menstruation

Due to the excess of discharge of blood during menstruation, there is loss of energy. Nutritious diet plays a vital role in maintain the regularity of menstruation. The women having proper balanced diet are found to have regular and less painful period. Various studies show that the daily diet of common Nepalese is not sufficient regarding health issues. The researcher examined the attitude of respondents regarding the necessity of nutritious diet during menstruation. The following table shows the result.

Table: 7
Nutritious Diet During Menstruation

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	9	26.47	16	47.05	4	11.7	5	14.70	-	-
Below SLC	21	31.34	27	40.29	-	-	14	20.89	5	7.46
Above SLC	14	35.89	19	48.71	-	-	6	15.38	-	-
Total	44	31.42	62	44.28	4	2.85	25	17.85	5	3.57

Above table shows the attitude of respondents on the statement, “Nutritious diet should be provided during menstruation.” Among 34 illiterate respondents 26.47 percentages respondents strongly agreed, 47.05 percentages agreed, 11.76 percentages were undecided and remaining 14.70 percentages strongly disagreed the statement. Although the educational status of these respondents are very low majority of them

were found to have knowledge about the balanced diet and its effect on menstrual health. Among 140 selected respondents 31.42 percentages strongly agreed, 44.28 percentages agreed, 2.85 percentages were undecided, 17.85 percentages disagreed and only 3.37 percentages of respondents strongly disagreed the statement. The knowledge level of respondents regarding nutrition and balanced diet was found to be satisfactory in the study area.

4.2.5 Chhui Should be Emitted

Chhui is being practiced for a long time in the western region of Nepal. Although it has been eradicated from some area it is still being practiced in the study area. Since the women of the study are practicing chhui, they can have different attitudes regarding chhui. Chhui is believed as a social culture also. Due to the lack of awareness among people, women were found to be forced to practice chhui despite their interest. Although some efforts were done from NGOs, INGOs and Nepal Government it doesn't seem to be sufficient to eradicate chhui. The following table shows the attitude of the respondents regarding the emission of chhui.

Table: 8
Eradication of Chhui

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	4	11.76	14	41.17	6	4.28	8	23.52	2	5.88
Below SLC	18	26.87	28	47.79	5	7.46	11	16.41	5	7.46
Above SLC	21	53.84	13	33.33	-	-	5	12.82	-	-
Total	43	30.71	55	39.28	11	7.85	24	17.14	7	5

The above table clearly shows that the majority of the respondents have positive attitude towards the eradication of Chhui. More than 50 percentages of illiterate respondents were found to have positive attitude towards the statement, "Chhui is a social problem it should be emitted." Among 67 below SLC respondents 26.87

percentages respondents strongly agreed, 47.79 percentages respondents agreed, 7.46 percentages respondents were undecided, 16.41 percentages respondents disagreed and 7.46 percentages of respondents strongly disagreed the statement. Regarding the case of above SLC respondents about 70 percentages of respondents felt that chhui should be eradicated from the society. Although the respondents were practicing chhui they were in oppose of chhui. This somehow indicates the generation of awareness among the respondents of the study area.

4.2.6 Chhui Goth Should be Far From House

The place where the women stay during her chhui period or menstrual period is called chhui goth. Generally it is a small hut or cow shed with stones wall and roof made up of dry grasses. There is no availability of proper beddings inside chhui goth. Chhui women are compelled to sleep over dry grasses inside chhui goth. Chhui goth is generally located with the territory of house. The researcher included the statement, “Chhui goth should be far from house.” In order to examine the attitude towards the location of chhui goth. The following table shows the result.

Table: 9
ChhuiGoth Should be FarFrom House

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	12	35.29	14	35.89	2	5.12	6	17.64	-	-
Below SLC	11	16.41	18	26.86	6	8.95	22	32.83	10	14.92
Above SLC	4	10.25	7	17.94	2	5.12	19	48.71	7	17.94
Total	27	19.28	39	27.85	10	7.14	47	33.57	17	12.14

Analyzing the above table it was found that the majority of illiterate respondents were found to have positive attitude towards this statement. But regarding the case of above SLC respondents, majority had negative attitude towards this statement. Among 39

above SLC respondents 10.25 percentages respondents strongly agreed, 17.94 percentages agreed, 5.12 percentages were undecided, 48.71 percentages respondents disagreed and the remaining 17.94 respondents strongly disagreed the statement. Although the attitude of above SLC respondents was found to be satisfactory, the overall attitude of the respondents was not satisfactory. Only 45 percentages of respondents had negative attitude towards this statement.

4.2.7 Chhui has Negative Impact on Health

During menstruation women are compelled to stay in chhui goth or cow shed. Women were not found to get proper balanced diet during chaau. They are restricted from doing household works but they were found to perform heavy physical activities during chhui period. Women work on fields, carry heavy loads and stay in cowsheds. The researcher included the statement. “Chhui has negative impact on health” to examine the awareness among the respondents regarding the impact of chhui. Following table shows the result.

Table: 10
Impact of Chhui on Health

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	3	8.82	8	23.52	11	32.4	5	14.70	7	20.58
Below SLC	18	26.86	23	34.32	6	8.9	17	25.37	3	4.47
Above SLC	11	28.20	18	46.15	-	-	3	7.69	7	17.94
Total	32	22.85	49	35	17	12.4	25	17.85	17	12.14

The above table shows the attitude of respondents regarding the impact of chhui on health. Majority of respondents had below SLC level of qualification. Analyzing the result of below SLC respondents, the researcher found that the majority of respondents had positive attitude towards this statement. More than sixty percentages of respondents agreed the statement. Among 34 illiterate respondents around 25

percentages had negative attitude towards this statement, which shows the low level of awareness among the uneducated respondents in the study area. Out of total respondents 12.4 percentages were unknown about the impact of chhui on health. The attitude of respondents in this statement was not satisfactory.

4.2.8 Restriction in Ritual Functions and Ceremonies

Different religion has different formalities to be done during menstruation. The practice of chhui also differs according to their religion. Generally among Hindus, women during menstruation are found to be restricted from conducting and participating in ritual activities. Women are not allowed to worship gods and goddesses during menstruation. The researcher requested the respondents to reply their attitude to the statement, “Women should be restricted in ritual functions and ceremonies during menstruation.” The researcher obtained the following result.

Table: 11
Restriction in Ritual Functions and Ceremonies

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	9	26.47	21	61.76	-	-	4	11.76	-	-
Below SLC	12	17.91	28	41.79	7	10.4	12	17.91	8	11.94
Above SLC	5	12.82	11	28.20	1	2.56	13	33.33	9	23.07
Total	26	18.57	60	42.85	8	5.71	29	20.71	17	12.14

Table No. 11 shows the attitude of respondents towards the restriction of women during menstruation. Like other statements the researcher has distinguished the attitude according to their educational status of the respondents. Among 140 selected respondents, 18.57 percentages respondents strongly agreed, 42.85 percentages respondents agreed, 5.71 percentages respondents were undecided, 20.71 percentages respondents disagreed and 12.14 percentages respondents strongly disagreed the statement. Comparing the attitude status between illiterate and below SLC

respondents, significance difference in attitude was seen. The study area seems to be highly inspired by the religious aspects.

4.2.9 Awareness Regarding Chhui

The respondents of this study are practicing chhui. Effort should be made from local level in order to eradicate chhui. Respondents have different attitudes regarding chhui which is directly affected by their awareness level. Various NGOs and INGOs had launched different awareness generating programs for various times. The government has also made plans to generate awareness among people of Bhajang district. The researcher included the statement that women should be made aware about chhui in order to eliminate chhui. The following table shows the attitude level of respondents.

Table: 12
Awareness Regarding Chhui

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	10	50	7	35	3	15	-	-	-	-
Below SLC	14	34.14	22	53.65	2	4.87	3	7.31		
Above SLC	13	38.23	21	61.67	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	37	38.94	50	52.63	5	5.26	3	3.15	-	-

The above table includes the attitude of respondents who think that chhui should be eradicated from society. This attitude is towards the statement, “Women should be made aware about chhui so that they can eradicate chhui.” There were 90 respondents out of 140 respondents who think that chhui should be eradicated from the society. Among 90 respondents 20 respondents were illiterate, 41 respondents were under SLC, 24 respondents were above SLC. Out of 90 respondents 38.94 percentages respondents strongly agreed. 52.63 percentages agreed, 5.26 percentages were

undecided and 3.15 percentages respondents strongly disagreed the statement. Majority of respondents showed positive attitude towards this statement.

4.2.10 Women Should be Given Opportunity to Visit Health Centers During Chhui

Women face different problems during menstruation. Problems of over bleeding and pain usually occur during menstruation. In some conditions women need to visit health centers also. Women need proper counseling and care during menstruation but the women in the study area were found to visit health centers very few. So the researcher included the statement, “Women should be given opportunity to visit health centers during chhui” to estimate their attitude. Thus obtained result is shown in the table below.

Table:13

Women Should be Given Opportunity to Visit Health Centers During Chhui

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	6	17.64	14	41.17	4	11.7	7	20.58	3	8.82
Below SLC	16	23.88	27	40.29	3	4.47	13	19.40	8	11.94
Above SLC	10	25.64	25	64.10	1	2.56	3	7.69	-	-
Total	32	22.85	66	47.14	8	5.71	23	16.42	11	7.85

According to table 11, 47.14 percentages of total respondents agreed that women should be given opportunity to visit health centers during chhui. Only 7.69 percentages of above SLC respondents disagreed the statement, which shows the better knowledge level with comparison to below SLC and illiterate respondents. Few respondents were undecided towards the statement. The overall evaluation of the obtained result shows the satisfactory level of knowledge regarding necessitates of health centers during chhui.

4.2.11 Personal Hygiene During Chhui

Personal hygiene is most important during menstruation. Women need to take proper care during menstruation. The table below shows the attitude of the respondents towards the statement, “Personal hygiene is most important during chhui.”

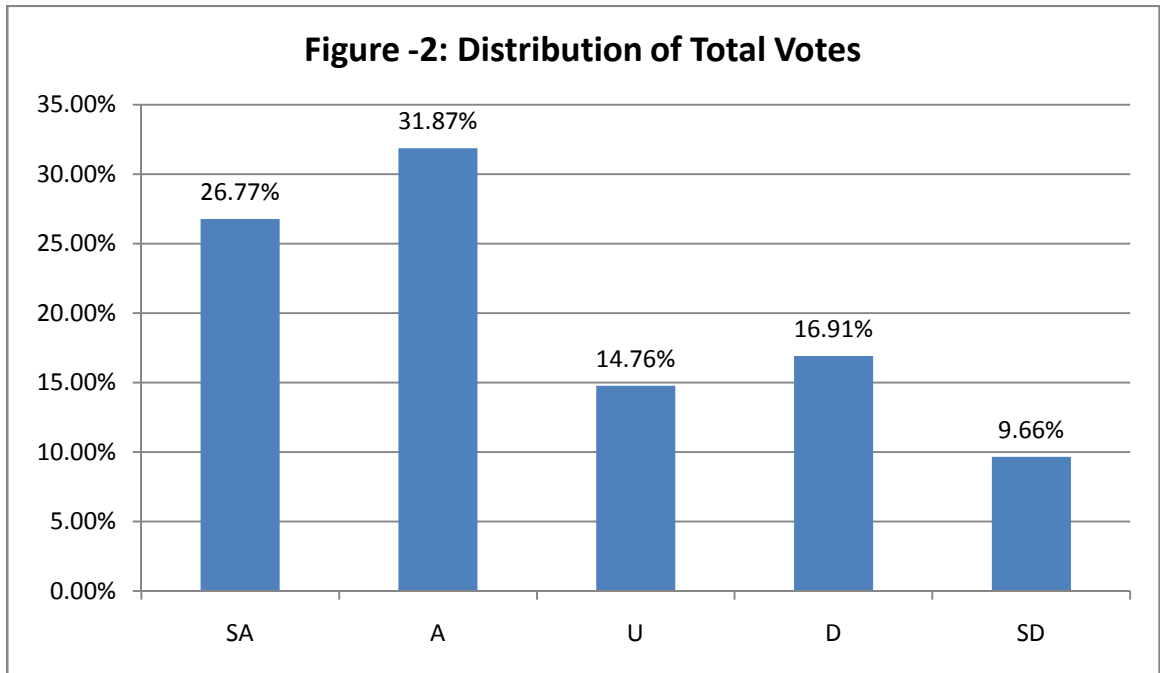
Table: 14
Personal Hygiene During Chhui

Attitude → Educational Status ↓	SA		A		U		D		SD	
	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.	No.	Pr.
Illiterate	10	29.41	19	55.88	3	8.82	2	5.88	-	-
Below SLC	18	26.86	35	52.23	9	13.4	5	7.46	-	-
Above SLC	21	53.84	18	46.15	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	49	35	72	51.42	12	8.57	7	5	-	-

Table above shows the attitude of respondents regarding personal hygiene during chhui. All above SLC respondents had positive attitude towards this statement. More than 85 percentages out of total respondents think that personal hygiene is most important during chhui. The respondents of the study area were conscious to personal hygiene during chhui.

4.3 Overall Attitude of Respondents

The researcher examined the attitude of respondents using 11 different statements. Altogether there were 1490 votes in different attitude scales. These votes are of all six different attitude scales. Among 11 statements there were six negative statements and five positive statements. The following figure shows the distribution of total votes.



The table above shows the overall attitude of respondents in 11 different statements. Among 1490 votes, 26.77 percentages votes were on strongly agree, 31.87 percentages votes were on Agree, 14.76 percentages votes were on Undecided, 16.91 percentages votes were on Disagree and the remaining 9.66 percentages votes were on strongly disagree. Since there were 6 negative statements and the overall votes on agree and strongly agree were found to be more than disagree and strongly disagree, the overall attitude of the respondents in the study area was not found satisfactory. Although responses in some statements were better the attitude level was not satisfactory.

4.4 Perceive and Practice of Chhui

The respondents for this study were practicing chhui pratha. The researcher made a questionnaire to find how chhui is done. The experience and perception about chhui was examined by the 14 question included in Appendix-II. The response of respondents for different questions is serially given below.

4.4.1 Process of Chhui

These practices are driven by culture, its taboos and superstitions, in particular. A Hindu girl or women are secluded, believing that it will not bring any harm to community and the family. If the custom is breached by any means then it will create

problem both on women and other member of the community like becoming sick, infertile and even the death. During this period they defer from the sex believing that the period is dangerous and may harm the genitals of the partner and making him sterile or impotent.

Menstruating women must not see light. She must not touch neither water nor earth. When a girl gets her period for the first time, she is separated from her community and is not allowed to see light. At the end of her bleeding, she reemerges and is taken around and shown the earth, water, flowers and friends as if seeing them for the first time. Girls are secluded in a darkened section of the house and forbidden to look upon men and allowed to go outdoors only on a dark night. At the end of the cloistering, the family and villagers celebrate with a feast. The sheds are very dirty and unhygienic, having cattle excreta on the floor. They are also very cold during the winter. The women sleep on the floor, with only straw and a thin blanket for bedding. They have to take a bath every day for seven days, but they are not allowed to clean themselves at the common tap. They have to go to a separate tap built for chhui or to a nearby river for bathing and the washing of clothes. Frequently, "Chhui" are not allowed to enter the household compound and are not allowed to touch other people.

4.4.2 Perceive of Chhui

Educated families are also in favor of the continuity of chhui and they were not being able to break down the culture of chhui being educated. In this modern era also the menstruation staying girls are also in favor of continuing the culture of chhui. Menstruation is a natural process. Girls were given priority to their cultural and religious values the chhui system being bad cultural, the adolescents are pressurized to continue the culture of chhui asked question their opinions were given below.

This is the tradition from ancient and has been followed up to now and it must be continued in future otherwise god would be displeased and became the destruction of home (opinion of Phulmaya Thapa).

The system of menstruation should be improved but not eliminated because old and elder do not accept the elimination (opinion of Shanti Bohara).

According to the above mentioned view chhui system should be carried out improving but not by sudden illumination most of the respondents perceive the chhui has cultural value.

4.4.3 Problems Faced During Chhui

If women touch forbidden things during their menstruation period then it is believed that it brings disaster. It brings cholera, diarrhea, sandstone, landslides, heavy rain etc. Most of the chhui women I have talked with were living at the small shed far from the home. Like other Nepalese women, they don't do household works. They lack nutritious food during chhui due to which women gets problems of weakness and fainting due to the heavy discharge during menstruation. Some rape cases also took place with the women practicing chhui. Some of them are compelled to do heavy farm works during their menstrual period.

Generally women faced different kinds of problem during menstruation, i.e. physical, mental, social and emotional. In our culture, chhui girls have been keeping at different place-cowshed, katero, where they have been facing different problems. They have been victimized by existing superstitions norms and values of the society. All those problems related to menstruation are categorized & presented under the following topics.

4.4.3.1 Safety Place Where You Have Stayed

Most of the women especially from FWDR knew that menstruation is an untouchable phenomenon. However it is not justice and moral act. The women have to stay in chhuigoth, katearo, cowshed and so on. Are those places safety? This was asked by the researcher and their reply was only 12.86 percent said the place is safe and other 78.14 percent said there is unsafe place when we become isolated.

After analyzing the above data it can say that the chhui women are conscious about their living place during the period. They are feeling unsafe at Goth, Katero and so on. Despite the feeling and knowledge they had to stay there that was there compels on but not their desire. Traditional norms and values of the society and superstitions beliefs do not allow them to stay at their home during chhui period.

4.4.3.2 If No, What is the Problem

The system of keeping menstruating women away from the house has led to more dangerous consequences living in a dirty place increase the risk of contracting and infectious disease and many women have respiratory disease if no what is the problem was asked question they replied different answer which are listed below.

According to the above 78.14 percent of the respondents replied that there would be cattle disturbance while living in cowshed, replied that there would be problem of snake bite, that might cause rape cases and would be disease infection if we stay in goth. The research showed that all of the respondents are aware and fear towards unsafely place.

4.4.3.3 Seasonal Problems Living in Chhui Goth

Menstruation women have to live 6/7 days in chhui goth which is made a bit far from house. There were different kinds of seasonal problems but also they have to live compulsory in it feeling such problem. The answer of respondents of the question what seasonal problems were occurred to live in 'Chhui goth' are given as below:

There were various kinds of problems living in 'Chhui goth' such as fear to live alone can't call other member of homes bad things happened in midnight. Sunburnt and fear of feeling down chhui goth by storm and stress (opinion of Chandra B.K.)

Leakage of water from roof during rainy season. Due to these there occurs problems of cloth and become infections of disease (opinion of Bishnumaya Kandel).

Aforementioned view clarity that there occurs problem in chhui goth as in summer, winter and rainy season.

4.4.3.4 Types of Physical Problem in Chhui Period

Women faced different kinds of problem during menstruation i.e. physical, mental, social and emotional in our culture. Menstruate girls have been keeping at different place. Those all menstruate associated problems are categorized and presented under the following.

The researcher found different types of problem during Chhui, some women said suffered from lower abdomen ache, some suffered from excess bleeding and some suffered from headache during menstruation period.

After analyzing the above result it can be concluded that most of the respondents are facing common problems of menstruation. That may be the lack of proper care; health facility and nutritional food were rare at that whereas work had to be done. That is why they suffered from such problems.

4.4.3.5 Mental Problem Faced by Respondents

Most of the adolescent's present problems relating to normal physical or psychological changes of their period. Adolescents many often experience distressing and disabling emotions that were sometimes parts of their normal development. However, there was an increasing incidence of mental illness globally mental problems were collected about menstruation related mental problem from the selected respondents. From the above figure about 63 percent respondents said 'yes' about mental health problems and 37 percent respondents replied 'no' about the mental problem faced by respondents during menstruation period.

According to the above data, most of the young female felt shy at the menstruation period because they are considered impure, they are not allowed to touch temples, homes, and cows and so on. Young boys teased them. They banned from performing ritual activities. These types of mental problems were faced by respondents during chhui period.

4.4.3.6 If Yes Which Types of Mental Problem

When period first start they were usually painless. However, later on most girls notice a pain in their mental problem i.e. no intended to talk, no intended to work and fear mental problem which types of collected from the selected respondents which were suffered from not intended to talk, likewise suffered from not intended to work as well as suffered from fear during menstruation period. We can say that during menstruation period the menstruation women have suffered from such mental problem.

4.4.3.7 Did You Felt Any Stress During Chhui

In the first time of menstruation they accepted that they fell fear, but during the regular cycle of menstruation didn't feel fear and shyness and different types of stress. Did you fell any of stress in your menstruation was asked question they replied answer about 71% respondents felt stress and 29% did not fell stress during menstruation period.

4.4.4 Food Behavior During Chhui

All chhui women I have talked with were not allowed to eat dairy product food. They were not allowed to eat meat of sacrificed goats, buffalos, hens and ducks in temple during any festival. They did not touch fruit trees. The chhui women only ate rice, daal, vegetable and chapatti during her monthly period. In the monthly period the women need more Dietary food but in case of Kandel VDC the chhui women have prohibited to eat such dietary food (Milk, Curd, Ghee, Butter and meat).

Answering my question why do not you get drink milk? A respondent said if they drink milk, the cow or buffalo leave to give milk. And answering my question why do not you get to eat meat of sacrificed animal? Respondents replied, if they eat sacrificed animal, the god will be angry so bad acts happen in their life. Rachana Thapa said “*Chhuihyako bela dud, dai, chhai, ghiu kei khana millaina sukhkha bhat daal tarkari matrai khana paido chha, kasai deota lai chdayaka kukuda bakhra ko masu pana khana millaina*”.

Answering my question why do not you get drink milk? *The Dilmaya B.K has said if they drink milk, the cow or buffalo leave to give milk. And answering my question why do not you get eats meat of sacrificed animal? SunitaKami has said if they eat sacrificed animal, the god will be angry so bad acts happen in their life.*

4.4.5 Work Burden During Chhui

Menstruating women are not permitted to participate in religious ceremonies. They have to bath everyday and wash clothes using cold water. Answering my question what types of works should you do in your chhui periods maximum respondents said that they collect foddors, fetch firewood, dig fields, etc. Entering the house is strictly

prohibited during chhui. Some respondents also clean dishes and wash clothes of family members.

4.4.6 Residence During Chhui

A chhui goth is sometimes built within the household premises, but in other cases, they are isolated from the homes, up to a 100 yards away from the houses. Most sheds can barely fit two people: they tend to be around six feet wide and four feet high and made of mud, stone and wood with no windows. A chhui shed or hut is a simple stone, grass, or stick shelter. The sheds are very unhygienic, unventilated and poorly built. During their seclusion, women have to remain within the shed, often without sufficient clothes or blankets. In some places, there are small sheds built specially for the purpose of seclusion. These tend to be very small and unventilated. Women and girls are barely able to stand up inside them.

4.4.7 Ideology of Purity

The ideas of pollution, purity, auspiciousness and inauspiciousness are central concerns of caste and gender. The concepts of Purity (Suddha, Chokho), and impurity (Asuddha, Jutho) are found in Hindu culture. Particular events such as birth, death, and miscarriage are treated as impure and contacts between people during these periods are prohibited from impure to pure. Bodily substances such as saliva, phlegm, seamen, and blood are considered as impure. Women are treated as bodily polluted during the period of menstruation. Agricultural work such as digging, ploughing, and fertilizer bringing and the household work such as washing, cleaning, and child caring activities are considered as impure. In most cases, women are involved in household, child caring, and agricultural related impure work.

4.4.8 Practice of Dhami and Fulpate

Many lives are depending up on the power of local deity if cholera and other social and natural disaster broke out in the region. Most of the people believe that they will be saved from many unlucky happenings because of the power of their local deity. Dhamis are the form of their God. They are known as Masto and Bandali in this region. The people in the region overly believe on Masto and Bandali deity. Masto and Bandali is the hope of the hopeless and power of the powerless. The person whom

some supernatural power made shacking becomes the Dhami through the means of some public function and gatherings. The person, who exercise the power of deity and shack if some unlucky things happen are called as Dhami, the bearer of Masto and Bandali. They are considered as pure people and have to remain farfrom the contact of bodily impure people such as Dalits and Chhui women. Thesupposed pure people Dhamis and Phulpates are not allowed to eat the meal made by others

4.4.9 Duration of Chhui

There is different rule for married and unmarried regarding the duration of Chhui. According to the respondents unmarried girls stay at chhui goth for 5-6 days and married women stay for 4-5 days.

4.5 Findings

After conducting the research work the researcher had following findings listed serially. Among 140 selected respondents 34 24.28 percentages were illiterate, 47.85 percentages were below SLC and only 27.86 percentages had above SLC level of qualification who were practicing chhui in various ways. Majority of respondents i.e. 37.14 percentages had monthly family income of 20-40 thousands. Only 9.28 percentages respondents had monthly family income more than 40 thousands. As the researcher has distinguished the attitude level according to their educational status, majority of illiterate respondents were found to have positive attitude towards the statement, “Women should be isolated during menstruation.” Overall attitude was also found positive towards this statement. Out of total respondents 35.71 percentages respondents think that women should not be touched during menstruation which is due to the believe towards curse and untouchability. As obtained data, 50.28 percentages think that women are impure during menstruation, which shows the lower level of awareness among the respondents. Among the selected respondents, only 30 percentages respondents think that nutritious diet should be provided during menstruation. More than 70 percentages of respondents want chhui to be eradicated from the society. The respondents had satisfactory response towards the statement, “Chhui has negative impact on Health.” Since more than 55 percentages of respondents agreed the statement. Only 32 percentages of respondents think that women should be given opportunity to perform ritual tasks during menstruation. The

response towards the statement, “Women should be made aware about chhui so they can eradicate chhui.” Was found above satisfactory. More than 90 percentages of respondents had positive attitude towards this statement. Out of 140 participated respondents 70 percentages respondent think that women should be provided opportunity to visit health centers during chhui. Since majority of respondents i.e. 86.42 percentages had positive attitude towards the statement, “Personal Hygiene is most important during chhui.” The result was satisfactory. During the first menstruation girls are prohibited from seeing the sun, men and touch water also. Due to the unavailability of proper diet women face the problems of restlessness and fainting also. The practice of Dhama and Fulpati was found in the study area.

CHAPTER-V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

The practice of isolating women during menstruation is called chhui pratha. Nacchunu, the Nepali word for menstruation also translates as 'unotouchable'. The ritual regards as "impure" during their menstrual cycle. Following the ritual, women are compelled to live in sheds outside their homes called chhui goths. Chhui pratha are discriminatory practices against women during their menstrual cycle. These practices are continued through cultural norms, social taboos and superstition. During these periods, women are considered impure or unclean and are prohibited from taking part in various social aspects of their lives. They are isolated from family, relatives and society and kept in a small, cold, dark shed where most often cattle are kept. In the strictest observance of chhui, women are prevented from looking the sun, interacting with males and cattle, drinking dairy products and conducting their daily chores. The cause of chhui, there is many cases of women raped, killed by wild animals, bitten by snakes or dead due to cold during their chhui period. Chhui women face both physical and mental hardship. These women believe that any breach in such practice will bring bad omens upon their family, community or society.

5.2 Conclusion

This study is entitled "Chhui Pratha: A Study From Kandel VDC of Bajhang". Attitude is influenced by various components like, socio economic status of respondents, age, educational level etc. So the researcher collected related data about various variables. Major finding were shown above.

The society also is itself bended towards those perceptions that the modern time do want to erase with the light of education and enlighten the society with new concept towards chhui and enhance the young generation be free of the boundary of suffering created by society though many other girls or women had suffered mentally in a very core level way beyond their capacity.

While observing the above findings, it is concluded that the attitude among the respondents regarding chhui was satisfactory. Although, there is wide gap between the attitude level of above SLC respondents and illiterate respondents, the overall attitude was satisfactory. The influence of awareness generating programs was not effective in the study area. Almost all of the respondents were found to be restricted from conducting and participating in ritual activities during chhui period. The researcher also found few changes in chhui pratha. Previously women were forced to stay in cowsheds and chhui goth during their menstruation, but now majority of them have separate room in their houses to stay during chhui period.

Chhui system limits women's capability to live a safe, healthy, and educated life forbidding women from anything to touch during their menstruation period. Women are considered as polluted during the period of menstruation face various restrictions. In terms of capability to be educated, well nourished, healthy and longer life, access to health facilities, and capability to be free the region lies in the bottom rank in comparison with eastern and western part of Nepal. So, the Superstitious practice chhui is also connected with abovementioned dark situation. The food denial during their menstrual cycle is a part of the overall food deficiency situation in the region. Above mentioned chhui practices are cause of suffer for women of Far Western Region. In the name of religion, tradition, rules, norms and values the women of Far Western Nepal suffer from social problem as a chhui pratha.

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APPENDIX-A

Attitude of Respondents

Name:

Age:

Education:

Address:

Occupation:

Education:

Dear Respondents,

You are kindly requested to reply your feeling towards the following statements.

EXAMPLE	SA	A	U	D	SD
Women should be isolated during menstruation					

Note:

SA : Strongly Agree

A : Agree

U : Undecided

D : Disagree

SD : Strongly Disagree

S. N.	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Women should be isolated during menstruation.					
2	If women touched other during menstruation she will be cursed by god.					

3	Women are impure during Menstruation					
4	Nutritious Diet should be provided during menstruation.					
5	Chhui is a social culture so we should preserve it					
6	Chhui is a social problem, it should be emitted.					
7	Chhui goth should be far from house					
8	Chhui has negative impact on Health					
9	Women should be restricted in ritual functions and ceremonies during menstruation					
10	Women should be made aware about chhui so that they can eradicate chhui.					
11	Women should be given opportunity to visit health centers during chhui.					
12	Personal hygiene is most important during chhui.					

APPENDIX-B

Interview Schedule

Experience and Perception about Chhui

- 1 How do you perceive Chhui system? And what do you think about it?
.....
- 2 What type of problem do you face in Chhui periods?
.....
- 3 What type of problem do you face in chhui goth?
.....
- 4 What type of food do you eat during chhui period or not? And Why?
.....
- 5 Do you think you are impure during chhui? Why?
.....
- 6 Why you restricted from are touch the things like cow, fruits plant, temples,
performing rituals and eating foods etc?
.....
- 7 What kinds of effects of chhui system occur in your family and your society?
.....
- 8 What kinds of work should you do while you are inchhui? And is it different
than Other times?
.....
- 9 How do you feel living detached from family members, collective works and
specially your child?
.....
- 10 What do you want for existence of chhui system in your society? Why?
.....
- 11 Do you have any movement have you ever faced during chhui which you want
to share with me?
.....
- 12 Do you think any changes in chhui system? What types of changes have you
seen in chhui system till now? What is the cause of changes?

-
- 13 How many days do you stay in chhui Goth?
.....
- 14 Do you perform rituals during chhui period like worshiping god/ Goddess,
Marriageceremony, death rituals, birth initiation, festivals etc?
.....
- 15 Do you have any idea about from when did the chhui system and how?
.....