

Dowry Violence Among Women

**A Sociological Study
of
Lahan-11 & 24, Siraha District**

**Submitted to
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LETTER of RECOMMENDATION

The thesis entitled “**Dowry Violence among women (A Sociological Study of Lahan -11 & 24, Siraha District**” has been prepared by Mr. Shailendra Kumar Sah under my guidance and supervision. I hereby recommended this thesis for examination committed for approval and acceptance.

.....

Ishwor Shyangba
(Supervisor)

Date:

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ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Constituent Assembly
CAM	Constituent Assembly member
CDO	Chief District Officer
CDS	Central Department of Sociology
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CREHPA	Center for Research on Environment Health and Population Activities
DFID	Department for International Development
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FIR	First Information Report
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GO	Government Organization
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Center
KII	Key Informants Interview
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
NDHS	Nepal Demographic and Health Survey
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
OPMCM	Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers
SAWF	South Asian Women Forum
TV	Television
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAW	Violence Against Women
VDCs	Village Development Committees
WHO	World Health Organization
WHR	Women for Human Rights
WOREC	Women's Rehabilitation Centre

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

This study is about the dowry violence under the domestic violence. It is specifically about how dowry creates multiple forms of domestic violence. The deeply rooted patriarchy is prevailing in the Terai region in such a manner that it has taken a very disastrous form which some time occurs overtly and sometime covertly. This thesis tries to explore the experiences of married women regarding dowry system and why in the 21st century the malpractices like dowry is flourishing against women still now. The thesis also explores about the people who are involved to augment this malpractice in very systematic way.

"From the mythological period to the present, violence exists in the world. Such as domestic violence, communal violence, physical abuse, mental abuse, sexual abuse, rape, sexual harassment, honor killing (killed by family members), dowry violence, acid throwing, forced marriage, human trafficking, forced prostitution, mistreatment of widows, accused of witchcraft, state violence etc. especially women are there to tackle the violence". Most of the newspapers which cover the news related to violence always show that only sometimes, women or girls are abused by strangers but most of the time they are tortured by the family members or relatives.

Throughout the life cycle women are tackling the violence. Most of the time we find the newspaper coverage is filled by different kinds of women violence in different country including Nepal. During the pre-birth phase, sex selective abortion takes place as the form of violence. Further when they come in the phase of childhood, they are discriminated and abused physically, mentally and sexually as well. In addition, child marriage, child prostitution and pornography also take the form of violence in this phase. Similarly, in the adulthood phase, acid throwing, sexual abuse in the work place, rape, sexual harassment, forced prostitution, pornography, trafficking in women, partner violence, dowry abuse, murders and forced pregnancy etc. are the violence faced by women. "Forced suicide or homicide of widows for economic reasons, physical, sexual and mental abuse are also tackled by elderly women".

It is not surprising that domestic violence is widespread worldwide. Over the past three decades, women's organizations have created a paradigm shift in understanding and acting to end violence against women. Gender-based violence was once considered a taboo subject, expressed in whispers or suffered in silence. Now it is part of the public agenda. Where perpetrators could commit atrocious human rights violations with impunity (for example, by

marrying the victim), the majority of countries of the world now explicitly outlaw gender-based violence. Activist organizations, with or without the support of governments, have developed innovative efforts: providing services; drafting and lobbying for legislation; raising awareness through advocacy, education and training; and developing strong national, regional, and international networks to end violence against women (Fried, 2003). Despite these initiatives undertaken worldwide, the criminal activities against the violation of women rights are still hurdled by the patriarchal norms and the unequal power relation deeply rooted in social network of our life.

Poudel (2011) writes as violence Against Women (VAW) occurs in all societies and at any stage of a woman's lifecycle. It can even occur before a girl is born through sex selective abortion and menace women throughout their old age. Some types of VAW such as sexual violence and domestic violence occur in all cultures, although they are more common in some than others.

Domestic violence, one form of gender-based violence, is defined in Nepal as any form of physical, mental, sexual, or economic harm perpetrated by one person on another with whom he or she has a family relationship, including acts of reprimand or emotional harm (Ministry of Law and Justice, Nepal, 2009). It is accepted that occurrence of domestic violence is very common than any other types of violence against women. There are many mechanism of domestic violence in which dowry related violence is very common particularly in the South-Asia. This thesis focuses on domestic violence in general and dowry related domestic violence in particular. In below section I discuss on the dowry and its historical background.

1.1.1. Domestic Violence due to Dowry

"In current marriage system, bride's parents pay for dowry, expenses of *barat* (bridal party), a truck full of furniture & other stuffs including jewelries, clothes and household chores. If any mistake or weakness is found during the marriage process then all faults go to bride's parents and they are accused/ blamed of all ill circumstances occur as being the parents of girl and bride is a big sin" (Sah, 2014:16). The marriage ceremony is equally important to bride and groom and their families. However, the responsibility of caring and maintaining each and everything by bride parents at the time and during the process is not rational because the bride and groom both are getting married to each other at same time. Almost all expenditure is paid by bride's parent. The groom's expenses are paid as dowry by bride's parent so, they do not need to spend from their saving or elsewhere. Exceptionally, some groom's parents spend from own. This is the real discrimination in this system. In new dowry free marriage culture, girl's parent will not pay dowry and boy's parents should buy all the furniture as it stays at groom's house. Since all the gold jewelries stay at groom's house all the money spent on jewelries should be paid by groom's parents. Better buy other yellow jewelry rather than gold

& family saying no to gold jewelry should be praised on national media. Exchange of gifts from both sides should be in equal amount. "Let the father decide what gift and how much love he wants to show to his daughter. Groom's father doesn't have any right to decide the same. They both should share the expenses. Or else get married in temple without furniture and bridal party" (Sah, 2014:29).

According to Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, mentioned in article 3 of chapter 1 "violence against women" is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life; "domestic violence" shall mean all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim (conventions.coe.int/Treaty).

According to a 2013 global review of available data, 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence (apps.who.int). However, some national violence studies show that up to 70 per cent of women have experiences of physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime from an intimate partner (atimysore.gov). Poor women are at the bottom of social hierarchical ladder that are more vulnerable to violence. Violence are in different forms worldwide; domestic, social and sexual violence and human trafficking. Beside these, there exist other forms of violence which may be due being HIV infected or due to cultural and traditional violence as allegation of witchcraft, female genital mutilation, honor killings, forced early marriage, female infanticides and many others where women undergo huge mental and physical stigma.

Violence against women is considered as the hidden obstacle for the overall economic and social development (atimysore.gov.in/trg.ppt/2014-15). Gender violence is also the serious public health concern that prevents women in development. Due to the poor health facility during pregnancy and post-pregnancy women, most women from poor socio-economic status tend to be more likely to lose their lives. Women are not only victimized due to male hegemony but also due to being from different ethnicity and caste. News of women being abused verbally, physically and mentally and sometimes in extreme cases women are burnt alive of different reasons have been publishing since long ago.

According to census 2011, total population of Nepal is 26,494,504 of which Tarai/Madhesh region constitute 50.27% of the total population i.e. 13,318,705 including 67, 72,323 of women population (cbs.gov.np/wp, 2012/11). Violence against women was recognized to be a development issue since 9th five-year plan in Nepal. The most common form of violence against women in Nepal is domestic violence then other types of violence as rape, attempted rape, witchcraft allegations, and murder and so on according to Nepal police data of 18 years (women-children-service-directorate). Such violence is no exception for women living in Tarai also. They also suffer the similar violence based on dowry, superstitions such alleged witchcraft, sexual harassment, polygamy and child marriage (Mandal, 2008). Madheshi women are set ablaze in many incidents of dowry issues as this system has become the culture which has been deeply rooted mostly in Tarai/Madhesh districts among Madheshi community (Karki, 2014). But this doesn't mean that the practice is totally absent among other communities or in other parts of the country. Historically, this practice came into existence as a fair distribution of wealth among son and daughter and in current time it has become an "evil" cultural practice. This culture is basically human made as no scripture has been there in Hinduism (women-children-service-directorate).

Domestic violence is leading among different types of violence. It takes in different form-physical, mental, sexual, and emotional. It is deeply rooted in patriarchal and traditional Nepalese society. Whatever the situation comes, women have to face violence. "Unemployment, extra marital relation of husband, suspicious attitude, gambling, dowry, preference of son in the family, drinking habits of husband, supremacy feeling of men, inter-caste marriage, child marriage, sexual dissatisfaction, battering of mother during pregnancy and widowhood are fundamental causes for domestic violence" (Khatri and Pandey, 2013:50). In addition, women are victimized due to such violence are in the large number.

Out of these different causes of domestic violence against women, dowry system is one of the main causes of violence and is deeply rooted in Nepal (Sharma, 2015:10). Dowry is also known as '*Daijo*' in Nepal which is generally referred as '*Tilak*' among Madheshi communities. Dowry is anything such as property, land, money, bike, car, etc. that is given to bride from the side of her parents and relatives (Sah, 2014). This is not a wrong system when bride parents give dowry by their wishes. But the problem arises when bridegroom and their parents start to demand something that the bride side cannot provide. Then, it becomes vulnerable in conjugal life.

The dowry system is one of the examples of social evil practice to women in Nepalese society and has become a culture. Giving and taking dowry has turned into the status for the society. One, who gives more, will boost the high status in the society. Even, the educated person

saves money after the birth of daughter for her marriage. If educated family faces such problem, then what will be the situation for uneducated one. For this, parents have to take loan or sell their properties and assets to give dowry to groom, in case of poor. Unfortunately, for the rich, it brings destruction in their life. "They carry burden of debt fulfilling groom demand. On the girl's part, they bear physical and mental torture in numerous aspects, if their parents fail to give promised amount of dowry. They are beaten and burnt alive by their husband and in-laws. The consequences of this system bring death for women as it has become fate of women. This death refers as the dowry death" (Sharma 2015:15).

It seems bitter reality that even in 21st century; women are suffering from domestic violence especially for dowry. In the calendar, March 8 is marked as International Women's Day. This day is also celebrated in Nepal. The global theme was, "Equality for women is progress for all. But all this has gone in vain. After celebrating different days for women and launching various programs, they are still facing numerous problems. Moreover, in today's world, some women are courageous to speak and seek for justice. But those who are weak and timid are afraid to speak against their family and their tortures. In addition, they tolerate that violence in silence.

Dowry violence mainly exists in Tarai Region. This is so because due open boundary between Nepal and India, the cultures and tradition is similar between these two countries. So, it is expanding in a great speed. Siraha district can be taken as an example where dowry violence exists in large number.

1.1.2 History

It is uncertain that when this dowry system gets started. Dowry system is very old in practice. It was started from the Kings of the contemporary period. In those time Kings used to provide jewelry, property and gold to their daughters and it was given willingly in most of the countries. But dowry as economic benefits is prevailing only South Asian countries. In South Asian countries like India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Shree Lanka dowry is rampant as a system in the time of marriage (INSEC 2012).

Lerner writes that in second millennium in Mesopotamia societies, the poor people sold their daughter to advance the economic interests of their family whereas rich people command bride price to become financially more advantageous and secure that money to get the bride for their son. (Lerner, 1986: 213) Even in Indian society bride price was persisted in lower caste while in upper caste people provide gift to the daughter (by bride's family) but that gift belongs to bride only not to the groom anyway. It is not certain that when it the bride price practicing in ancient time converted into the dowry system. However, it is deemed that the shifting of communal property into private property sowed the seed for dowry system. The

monogamy marriage in Western society and Polygamy marriage in Asian culture has established the deep patriarchy structure everywhere. The practice of dowry can be found in almost every culture and has a long history. The dowry system and bride price, property given by groom parents to bride, was practiced from the ancient period. In Babylon, it was practiced for the security for women and their children. The dowry which was given was kept separately in their husband house. In case, if they got divorced, those properties were given to wife and children. Similarly, in Greece, same process was there but it was exchanged by later classical period during 5th century. A husband had property rights on wife's dowry. Not only the bride's property was brought dowry but bride should bring their own property. In addition, Roman also practiced this system. The dowry was transferred by the bride to the groom or his family. It had become common in that time and begun out of desire to get bride dowry. (Botticini, Maristella, and Siow, 2003)

The dowry system in India has been drawn among high castes in North India (Srinivas 1984; and Lardinois 1996a, 566). Until the end of the medieval period, Brahma marriage, high castes practiced the system of giving dowry from the bride family to the groom family, whereas in the *Asura* marriage, in lower castes, a bride price was paid by the groom to marry the bride. During the colonial period, marriages with dowries have been accepted among all social groups and castes (CA plan 1993; Madan 1993; and Sheel 1999).

In cross-cousin marriages, mainly in Dravidian cultures, a man marries his mother's brother's daughter, or his father's sister's daughter, or his elder sister's daughter. Thus, exchange of daughters and marriage among close kin is the preferred pattern in south and central India among Dravidian cultures whereas it is strongly opposed in the Hindu marriage in North India. (Dumont, 1993 and Trumann, 1993a and 1993b).

Due to open boundary between India and Nepal, especially in Tarai region, the tradition and cultures are similar. In Nepal people of Tarai have similar culture with the people of north India. Since the dowry system is widespread in India, it is also well practiced by the people of Southern Nepal. The practice of dowry has become burden for grooms who result into risk of extortion and dowry death. It is rampant in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and has begun in Nepal (UNICEF, 1999).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There are various forms of violence; the extent of domestic violence is also wide which was rooted very deeply in traditional Nepalese community. There are various causes of domestic violence against women in Nepal, Unemployment, extra marital relation of husband, suspicious attitude, gambling, dowry, preference of son in the

family, drinking habits of husband, supremacy feeling of men, inter-caste marriage, sexual dissatisfaction and widowhood are fundamental causes. (Khatri and Pandey, 2013). And women victim of these kinds of domestic violence are very large in number. However, in Nepal, only from few last decade, this issues have been started openly discussed and addressed. Because, people thought this issue is personal as well as related to the status and prestige of their family. Though, it reported less, it is still huge number of women are suffering from domestic violence which we can see recent statistical data.

Among all these various causes of women domestic violence, "Dowry System" is one of the main cause which is deeply rooted with social and religious system of Nepal. Dowry is something given to bride from the side of her parents and relatives. Actually it is not any wrong system but if this gets priorities in conjugal life, then become vulnerable and ultimate results different violence in married women lives.

In a patriarchal society, women are considered as the secondary creatures. Dowry system is deeply rooted in the society mainly with cultures and religion. In every aspect, women suffer from domestic violence such as beating to death, scolding, giving less amount of food, poisoning, torture, burnt alive etc. It has become a social evil but still it is practiced as culture. In the name of prestige, people are looting each other where women have to suffer from every side. In a patriarchal society, women are considered as the secondary creatures. Dowry system is deeply rooted in the society mainly with cultures and religion. In every aspect, women suffer from domestic violence such as beating to death, scolding, giving less amount of food, poisoning, torture, burnt alive etc. It has become a social evil but still it is practiced as culture. In the name of prestige, people are looting each other where women have to suffer from every side.

Based on the above mentioned statement it was quite necessary to add on some more scenario of the dowry system which is triggering the domestic violence in the Tarai region. The block of the population is not studied domestic violence caused by dowry malpractice in the Tarai region. Considering the above problems and facts, this research had tried to analyze the answer of the following research questions:

- How are married women in Nepal experiencing the dowry system?
- How dowry system is operating in local communities in Nepal?

- What factor causes the dowry system is strongly/deeply rooted in modern Nepalese society yet?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

General Objectives:

- To explore dowry violence against women in Siraha district of Nepal.

Specific Objectives:

- To study the trend of violence against women due to dowry.
- To identify the reasons behind the existence of dowry violence.
- To describe the effects of such types of violence on women.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

There are some rationales behind the selection of this study area. Domestic violence is widespread worldwide in general and in South Asian context in particular. There are different reasons behind the domestic violence where dowry is one of them. In Nepal, particularly in Tarai area, dowry is very disastrous practices which are damaging the dignity and existence of women as human beings. So the first rational of this study is that this disastrous practice is not studied broadly yet by Nepal government. The second reason is that though Nepal government has endorsed law against women violence but this practice is not under control yet. Thus I want to know the reasons of prevailing dowry system in Tarai area.

1.5 Limitation of the Study

This thesis mainly focuses on the domestic violence related to dowry. The concept for the dowry violence is deemed reality with the theory of patriarchy deeply rooted particularly in South Asia. The thesis builds up its concept that due to patriarchy domestic violence is very commonly prevailing everywhere. In addition, dowry also sprouted because of patriarchal society and since dowry practice mainly held under marriage institution it is a kind of domestic exercise. Further it believes since dowry creates violence, it is under domestic violence.

The study is carried out in Siraha district. This study focuses on the dowry violence and consequences occurred in Siraha district. This study covers the trend of violence against women, reasons of dowry violence existence in Siraha district. The research

has adopted ethnographic qualitative method and is also based on few cases in two districts therefore the findings cannot be generalized to the whole nation.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The whole thesis is organized into six chapters, including this introduction. Chapter two reviews the several bodies of theoretical and empirical literature which builds the analytical framework of this thesis. The first section reviews the different literature related to feminism and the second section on theory of patriarchy which is the main theoretical base of this study. Next, it reviews the violence related issues which is occurring due to the patriarchy. And the last one discusses the empirical research and study of Nepal related to domestic violence and dowry preceding concept of dowry.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology, and shows how the present research is designed. This chapter also shows the nature of the data, site selection and different data collection tools administered in the field.

Chapter 4 includes research sites and cases detail. This chapter essentially describes the scenario and context of dowry violence in Siraha district.

Chapter 5 presents the main body of research. It discusses the picture of the dowry related violence of Siraha district. It also presents the causes of the prevalence of dowry system which is triggering the domestic violence. The chapter also portrays effect and minimizing way of dowry.

Chapter 6 is the concluding chapter which presents the summary and conclusion of this thesis. This chapter is very important because it will co-relate the findings with its conceptual ground.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theory of Feminism

Feminism is an awareness of patriarchal control, exploitation and oppression at the material and ideological levels of women's labour, fertility and sexuality, in the family, at the place of work and in society in general, and conscious action by women and men to transform the present situation" (Bhasin and Khan, 1999: 3). It is a struggle to achieve equality, dignity, rights, freedom for women to control their lives and bodies both within home and outside.

Feminists have different political positions and therefore address a range of issues such as female suffrage, equal legal rights, right to education, access to productive resources, right to participate in decision-making, legalization of abortion, and recognition of property rights and abolition of domestic violence.

In 1909 the Russian Alexandra Kollontai published a book "The Social Basis of the Woman Question" arguing that feminism was not just a matter of political rights, or rights to education and equal pay; the real problem was the way the family was organized and imagined. In England the women deeply engaged in fighting for women's rights, were regarded as feminists so their movements were called as women's liberation during 1960s and 1970s. Though the 'feminist' was the name given to the disliked or despised woman, much as 'man-hater' or 'castrating bitch', 'harridan' or 'witch', were used before the 1960s. This was often shortened, sometimes affectionately, sometimes in a derogatory way, however, the word 'feminism' began to bring into general use, and its meaning was extended. Though there was still a justified concern that civil and legal equality had not been fully achieved, the new movement tended to concentrate on problems specific to women in their reproductive and social roles.

Natasha Walter, in her book "The New Feminism (1999)", while admitting that women are 'still poorer and less powerful than men', argues that the task for contemporary feminism is to 'attack the material basis of economic and social and

political inequality'. She further adds 'it is very important to work with men to change society and not against men therefore, we must join hands with one another and with men to create a more equal society' because after all, especially if things are to change in the domestic arena, that's about men taking on a fair share of decision on household and external matter as well.

2.2 Theory of Patriarchy

Gender refers to social, cultural and psychological traits linked to males and females through particular social contexts. Sex makes us male or female and gender makes us masculine or feminine. Sex is an ascribed status while gender an achieved status (Person hired).

Gender violence is the violence based on gender, either male or female. Gender violence are often being understood or used interchangeably with violence against women (Paul Bywaters, 2009), but which doesn't under estimate the fact that male too undergo violence from women, which is well recognized as Human Right Violation. Gender violence is either inflicted by immediate family members or any other organs of the state. It includes any act of verbal or physical force, coercion or life threatening deprivation, directed at an individual woman or girl that causes physical or psychological harm, humiliation, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty and that perpetuates female subordinate.

The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly defines discrimination against women as "...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field" (women watch). Nepal ratified CEDAW in 1991(CEDAW) so she is bound by international laws to bring about positive changes to women's lives.

The aim of my research is to capture the situation of dowry and reason enforcing that dowry in Nepal. Simultaneously, I believe that the deeply rooted patriarchy norms and

the unequal power relation is the main foundation of this occurrence of dowry violence against women in South Asia including Nepal.

In this section, I highlight some literature from the research publication and the perspective towards patriarchy by some of the well-known authors which can provide some insight to direct my aim of the research. So in this section, I put forward some empirical evidences from Nepalese context and equally present the notion towards patriarchy. It also comprises some other literature review particularly focusing on dowry.

According to Walby, "patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices, in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women". The term 'social structure' is important because it clearly implies rejection both of the biological determinism and the notion that every man is in a dominant position and every woman in a subordinate one. Patriarchy is both a social structure and an ideology or a belief system according to which men are superior and in dominant position. She distinguishes between two different main forms of patriarchy: private and public. The former is based upon household production as the main site of women's oppression. The latter is based principally in public sites such as employment and the state (Walby, 1990:20). Under patriarchy, different kinds of violence may be used to control and subjugate women and such violence may even be considered culturally legitimate.

Different theory analyses patriarchy in different way but the discourse is subjugation and domination of female by male.

Walby (1990) has presented four theory of patriarchy very well. According to Silvia Walby Radical theory believes that "men as a group dominate women as group and are the main beneficiaries of the subordination of women. This domination is called patriarchy which is not the byproduct of any other system." Radical feminists prefer to see gender inequality independently related to the discourse of male and female. They believe that sexuality is the major site where men dominate women and impose the notion of feminity on women. Women have not control on their own body. They are the puppet of male group.

Marxist drives the concept of gender inequality from capitalism. It believes that 'Men's domination over women is by product of capital's domination over labour'. Here, family is the unit which produces benefit to capital by providing day to day care of workers like food and clean cloths and produces next generation workers (children). But in return women get no wages except maintenance from their households. This is the way a capital benefits from unequal sexual division of labor within the home. However, there are sub-variations in Marxist where one is from material basis and another is from ideological basis.

Liberal does not believe the women's subordination in terms of overarching social structure. It mainly focuses that denial of equal rights to women in education and in employment are the main concerns of women's subordination.

The fourth theory that is dual- system theory is the synthesis of Marxist and radical feminist theory. Sylvia Walby has mixed the ingredients like wage work, housework, sexuality, culture, violence and the state are the point where patriarchy rooted and get enforced.

Towards the notion of patriarchy Learner (1974) states, "Today, historical development has for the first time created the necessary conditions by which large groups of women – finally, all women– can emancipate themselves from subordination. Since women's thought has been imprisoned in a confining and erroneous patriarchal framework, the transforming of the consciousness of women about ourselves and our thought is a precondition for change. She further says, "System of patriarchy is a historic construct; it has a beginning; it will have an end. Its time seems to have nearly run its course – it no longer serves the needs of men or women and in its inextricable linkage to militarism, hierarchy, and racism it threatens the very existence of life on earth."

Learner (1974) is giving importance of history because history is such a storehouse where we can look our past and reinterpret in to present. But this history from the very beginning is written by male and so they interpreted only the deeds of male.

She says that women had been participated in maintaining the oral tradition and religious and cultic functions in the preliterate period and for almost a millennium

thereafter; their educational disadvantaging and their symbolic dethroning had a profound impact on their future development. According to Behavior for women history seemed for millennia to offer only negative lessons and no precedent for the significant action heroism or liberating example. History shows that there are no women who had lived without male protection. So this interpretation about women history is, according to Behavior is not right. In myth and fable women are presented as amazons, dragon-slayers, women with magic powers. But in real life women had no history- so they were told and they believed. And because they had no history they had no future alternatives.

About class struggle she asserts that the revolutionary ideas can be generated only when the oppressed have an alternative to the symbol and meaning system of those who dominated them. The cultures of oppressed consisted of collective memoirs of prior state of freedom and alternatives to the masters' ritual, symbol, and believes. But in women case this thing does not matter because within women there is no oppressed and oppressor. Learner says that vast majority of women could not confirm and strengthen their humanity by references to other females in position of intellectual authority and religious leadership. Very few noblewomen are seen in the history. And when there is no precedent, one cannot imagine alternatives to the existing conditions. And so she says that denial of their history had reinforced their acceptance of ideology of patriarchal and has undermined the individual women's sense of self-worth.

Further Learner says that women of all class had less leisure time than the men due to child-rearing and family service function and what free time they had was not their own. And this is happening because of that women have educationally disadvantaged and deprived. She meant to say that thought is not based on sex but it is inherent in humanity and it can be fostered or discouraged but it cannot be restrained forever.

All most all the women before 18th century were discouraged for thinking as men. She says that creative women, writers and artists have struggles against a distorted reality. The Bible, the Greek classics and Milton all ha distorted the reality of women and buried the significance of women. In 19th century women's thinking was based on eighteenth century female novelists.

She further says that women's literary voices, successfully marginalized and trivialized by the dominant male but still exists. And in stitch, embroidery and quilting women's artistic creativity expressed an alternative vision. She says that 'revolutionary thoughts have always been based on upgrading the experience of the oppressed. In this way peasant had to learn their significance of life before challenging the feudal lords; industrial worker had become 'class-conscious', the black as 'race-conscious' before challenging their oppressor. And in this way how women has also understand the significance of their life. But before that they have to leave the patriarchy thought and they should be women-centered.

In the above concept over system of patriarchy Learner says that history is necessary for liberating an oppressed person. And since women is also an oppressed one, they should have their history but pathetically in the history women are always created by male historians and so the history of female is not identified clearly. The male historians only because conscious of their own male deeds. In the creation of patriarchy, the male historians had great role.

There is not her-story but his-story created by the male living in patriarchal structure of the social network and thus women are subordinated to the male from lots of years to till the date. And this violence is the consequences of those patriarchal norms. It was not that women were not victimized in the past time but in those time there have been adjusted with that system but now some of the women started thinking and they felt that they are subordinated and thus these types of events now upsurge in public debate.

This statement by Learner shows that how the structure of Patriarchy is deadly which is threatening the human life on the earth. The exercise of patriarchy is historical construct and it compels women to seat in certain hierarchical position created by those patriarchy systems.

Both above great feminist thinker has provided the concept of patriarchy which is still working in every society in certain variation of its degree. This patriarchy is the very strong factor for the occurrences of all kinds of violence in our societies where one dominates, oppresses and subjugates other. And since the patriarchy is rampant, of

course a female is always the victims for every kinds of violence occurring in our society.

2.3 Recent Study in Nepal

Government of Nepal, Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers (2012) reports asserts that Nepal has imitated lots of international VAW provisions and made its own legal provision as well but there are still widely recognized gaps in the evidence base regarding prevalence and determinants of GBV and VAW in Nepal. There is also a gap in understanding the knowledge and attitudes of women, men, service providers, and key decision makers towards the laws, policies, and services that address GBV in general and VAW in particular(Government of Nepal, 2012)

The study is very comprehensive survey of the context, prevalence and consequences of GBV against women in Nepal, exploring the perspectives of multiple stakeholders. The study also highlights the all-pervasive nature of GBV in the country, and the heavy burden it inflicts on the lives of women and girls. It has also analyzed the policy and programmatic responses to this blight on women's lives exposes the (not entirely unexpected) gaps between policy and implementation. The study attempt to draw the levels and consequences of VAW and cataloging women's experiences in seeking help and also assesses knowledge and attitudes amongst a wide range of stakeholders regarding policies and services that seek to address VAW in Nepal(Government of Nepal, 2012).

The quantitative survey of 900 women aged 15-59 years in Dadeldhura, Nawalparasi, Makwanpur, Siraha, Sindhupalchowk and Sankhuwashava districts draws the findings that majority of women (61.3%) were unaware of any laws that address GBV.Only 9% of the 900 women in the community-level surveys were aware that rape within marriage is illegal, and only 13% were aware of a specific law against domestic violence. More women were aware of laws combating trafficking (35%) and protecting “untouchables” (45%). Similarly, women were less likely to be aware of laws protecting them from acts of GBV if they had low levels of education, belonged to disadvantaged indigenous, Dalit or religious minority ethnic groups, had low levels of exposure to mass media or low levels of autonomy or mobility, had poor social

networks, lived in the Tarai, or belonged to the lower wealth quintiles. And those women who were aware of the existence of laws against GBV, most were unable to state the exact content of the laws.

The report further says that knowledge of services available to GBV survivors is also low where only about one quarter of women (24.8%) were aware of services available to the survivors of GBV, and most were unable to name the specific services. A very small percentage (5.6%) of women knew of shelter homes at the district level, and the same percentage of women (6.1%) knew of the desk at the District Development Committee dedicated to handling GBV cases. Five per cent were aware of the women's and children's center at the district police office. Only seven women were aware that there is a GBV focused District Resource Group led by the Chief District Officer.

About prevalence of violence is the report says that almost half of women (48%) had experienced violence at some time in their lives, and 28% had experienced violence in the past 12 months. Emotional violence (40.4%) was most commonly reported, followed by physical violence (26.8%), sexual violence (15.3%) and economic abuse/violence (8%). Social exclusion was less commonly reported, but 11% of women had been denied access to health services, and 8% had been denied access to places of worship.

In inter-ethnic group, Dalit or religious minority groups, widows, divorced or separated women, and women living in hill regions were more likely to report violence in their lifetime than other women. Women who had experienced violence reported that almost three quarters of the perpetrators were intimate partners (including husbands). Other commonly mentioned perpetrators included family members (35.2%) and neighbors (22.9%).

The report also mentioned that there are lots of negative consequences of VAW particularly as psychological issues (fear, tension, depression and suicidal ideation, with 1 in 25 attempting suicide); reproductive health problems, symptoms associated with sexually transmitted infections, and other physical ailments (Government of Nepal, 2012).

The vast majority of women disapproved of wife-beating on the grounds of dissatisfaction with household work (93%), refusal to have sex (95%), enquiring if the husband has other girlfriends (95%) or disobeying the husband (81%). However, over half (55%) thought that wife-beating was justified if the wife had been unfaithful. A large percentage of women (61.3%) who had experienced violence had not shared or discussed their experiences with anyone. Women who faced economic violence were more likely to share their experiences with someone than those who faced sexual, emotional or physical violence. Family and friends were the most commonly mentioned persons with whom women sought help when they faced violence. Very few sought help from institutions such as the police, the health system, and NGOs. Women who had experienced violence but did not seek care most commonly cited *laaj* (embarrassment) (52.5%), belief that help would not be forthcoming (25.2%), fear of rejection (12%) and fear of further violence (Government of Nepal, 2012).

Not only female but male are also not aware of the VAW prevalence and they say that the underlying causes of violence are patriarchal norms, unemployment, lack of awareness of women's rights, consumption of alcohol, and changing lifestyles or modernization as important drivers of violence. Like female respondents, men were largely unfamiliar with policy and programmatic responses to GBV (Government of Nepal, 2012).

Regarding key stakeholders at the district and national levels the study mentioned that they perceived VAW occurring frequently in Nepal in both public and private settings. These key stakeholders also say that the occurrence of violence are due to patriarchal values, social and cultural norms (including use of alcohol), women's lack of education and employment opportunities, and low levels of awareness of legal rights. Out of the 53 district-level respondents 50 were aware that there are national laws to combat GBV, but fewer were aware of specific laws and 37 out of 53 knew of the Domestic Violence Crime and Punishment Act, 2067, and 19 out of 53 were aware of laws dealing with human trafficking. Majority of district level stakeholders were not aware of laws addressing "untouchables," sexual harassment in the workplace or marital rape, nor were they aware of the GBV Elimination Fund, 2067. However, for many respondents, knowing that the laws exist did not necessarily translate into knowing the laws' specific provisions. National-level stakeholders noted

several areas where current GBV laws may need revising: Domestic Violence Crime and Punishment Act does not cover unmarried cohabiting couples or couples in same-sex relationships; there is a perceived lack of police power to keep alleged perpetrators in detention, and there is inadequate legal recourse for victims of sexual harassment in the workplace. In addition, the study mentioned that interviewees noted the frequent gap between the existence of a law and the delivery of an effective response, particularly at the village level. Even when a response is initiated, interviewees voiced concern that implementation is often hampered by factors such as official corruption and bribery to release suspects. Interviewees had a generally positive perception of the national government's overall response to GBV issues (Government of Nepal, 2012).

The study also mentioned that violence exacts a heavy toll on women's emotional, physical and sexual well-being. Among the 432 women who reported ever experiencing violence, over four fifths reported at least one health problem. Over two thirds (69%) reported psychological problems (fear, depression, tension) and 6% had attempted suicide — a rate 10 times higher than reported by women who had not experienced violence. Almost a third of women reported suffering reproductive health problems — also a rate significantly higher than that reported by women who had not suffered violence (Government of Nepal, 2012).

The report also mentioned that some of the factors leading to violence were located at the social and structural levels. For example, women's relative poverty compared to men, and their isolation from the wider community, were said to underlie many of the vulnerabilities exposing them to the risk of violence. Exclusion from educational and employment opportunities was identified by the key stakeholders as an important contributor to women's vulnerability to violence. Moreover, key national- and district-level stakeholders agreed with the women and men in the focus groups that women's position within male-dominated social structures (family, community, social and economic structures that privilege men over women, and socio-cultural practices such as dowry and polygamy) contributes both to women's vulnerability and to their lack of autonomy and agency to respond to threats of violence (Government of Nepal, 2012).

In addition to social/structural drivers of violence, men respondents identified several factors at the individual level, including abuse of alcohol and increasing access to “modernization” (e.g., pornography on mobile technologies).

The study further says that majority of women knew of specific services in their community offering support and care to women victims of violence. Most women named government hospitals and police posts as sites where help can be found. However, women also noted the potential negative consequences of seeking care, such as increased risk of further violence from the perpetrators (36.9%), as well as other reasons for not accessing care, including distance to travel (15.9%) and concern about the effect on their reputation (4.8%). Perhaps as a consequence of these and other barriers, a majority of women who had suffered some kind of violence had neither discussed their problem with others nor sought outside help. Only 30% of women who had been exposed to violence had sought help, and this figure varied by the type of violence a woman had experienced. Women who had been sexually assaulted were the least likely to seek help; women who had been economically excluded/ disadvantaged were the most likely. Among the 30% of women who had sought help when they suffered violence, a large majority turned to family members or friends rather than formal, state or non-state services (Government of Nepal, 2012).

Regarding policy, the study writes that there is a consistent pattern of high policy priority and robust policy formulation, but weak patterns of implementation, resulting in relatively weak knowledge of and use of services. The Government of Nepal has placed gender-based violence in general and violence against women in particular high on its policy agenda. The OPMCM has a dedicated cell for addressing violence through inter-ministerial collaboration. Many decision makers at the national level, and some at district level, are aware of the specific contents of new and existing laws that can be used to protect women against violence and punish offenders. The Domestic Violence Law, anti-trafficking law, the law recognizing rape within marriage, and laws to protect women from sexual harassment in the workplace were all identified as providing Nepali women with a legal environment that, in theory at least, protects them from violence, stigma, discrimination, and exploitation. In practice, however, the study analyses that implementation and public knowledge of these laws have been less than ideal. It says that at the district level, more

interviewees were unaware of this specific content of laws, and they were presumably less clear therefore about their own responsibilities under the law. At the community level, perhaps unsurprisingly, people have little knowledge of the specifics of laws and policies. The study mentioned that in the community-level survey, women were more likely to know about protective laws if they had higher levels of education, were richer, and had strong social networks and more autonomy of movement outside the home. Knowledge of the law need not be a prerequisite for seeking help when violence occurs, but lack of knowledge that protective mechanisms exist can inhibit women's ability to seek care and support (Government of Nepal, 2012).

The report also shows that majority of respondents were unaware of any government programs to specifically address violence. This lack of knowledge is likely due to the relative lack of visible implementation activities below the central level, a fact acknowledged by the national and district-level interviewees as well.

The report at last suggests that a rights-based framework with a multidimensional approach is needed to address both the structural causes of women's vulnerability and the impact on individuals, at the *community, program* and *policy levels*.

For the first time in 2011, a domestic violence module was included in the NDHS, recognizing the seriousness of the problem of gender-based violence in Nepal. The NDHS 2011 findings show that about 22 percent of women (between the ages 15-49 years) have experienced physical violence at least once since the age of 15 years, and 9 percent women experienced physical violence within the 12 months prior to the survey. Twelve percent of women of the same age group report having experienced sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. Overall, 1/3 of ever-married women report ever having experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence from their spouse and 17 percent report having experienced one or more of such violence in the past 12 months (MoHP, New Era and ICF International, 2012).

Among ever-married women who had experienced spousal violence (physical or sexual) in the past 12 months, more than two in five reported experiencing physical injuries. It is not common for women in Nepal to seek assistance from any source to fight against violence they have experienced. Nearly 2 in 3 women have never told

anyone about the violence they have experienced. The NDHS 2011 results also show that 23 percent of ever-married women report ever experiencing physical violence from their husband, 14 percent report sexual violence, and 16 percent report emotional violence (MoHP, New Era and ICF International, 2012).

Overall, more than a quarter of ever-married women (28 percent) have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from their husband, while nearly one-third have experienced (32 percent) physical, sexual, and/or emotional violence. Nine percent of ever-married women have experienced both physical and sexual violence, and 6 percent have experienced all three forms of spousal violence (MoHP, New Era and ICF International, 2012).

NDHS 2011 provides that are Women in the Tarai are more likely to have ever experienced physical violence (28.1 percent) than women in the other ecological (17.4 percent in Mountain and 16.8 in Hill. Twice as many women in the Tarai (12 percent) as in the mountain zone (6 percent) experienced physical violence in the 12 months prior to the survey.

The SAATHI with collaboration with TAF and DFID had done preliminary mapping which comprised mainly of secondary research using literature review and data collection in cooperation with 36 Kathmandu-based NGOs who work on GBV issues in different parts of Nepal. It has mainly assessed the government response to GBV and NGOs response to GBV. It tried to find out the gap in legal provision, and activities of different NGOs regarding the awareness and advocacy, prevention, and support provided by different NGOs working in Nepal. It said that although the Domestic Violence Act has been passed, it has not been implemented effectively due to lack of knowledge and capacity on the part of local authorities. It reported that experiential evidence from SAATHI indicates that more than 90 percent of domestic violence cases are not prosecuted and they are settled on the basis of mediation. All 36 NGOs are providing awareness and advocacy program, 23 out of 36 organizations are in prevention activities, and 20 out of 36 organizations are providing support services in 34 districts.

Except for the Informal Service Center (INSEC) and *Stri Shakti*, none of the consulted NGOs are working in all 75 districts of the country. INSEC also does not necessarily have a physical presence in all districts, but deals with cases of human rights violations via its reporters countrywide. Women for Human Rights (WHR) have organized interaction programs on GBV and the rights of single women in the 54 districts where it has a presence. Kathmandu has the highest number of NGOs working in GBV, whereas Rolpa has only one and Rukum does not have any. Similarly, districts like Sunsari, Lalitpur, Kapilvastu, Banke, Bhaktapur and Jhapa are receiving services from at least seven NGOs working in GBV. This indicates that services are focused mostly in accessible and more developed districts. The report includes that GBV, particularly domestic violence, goes unreported in many cases as it is considered to be a 'family affair'. Financial dependency, lack of education and fear of social exclusion are some of the reasons for reluctance in reporting incidents of GBV. In the reports reviewed, many women preferred social pressure to stop violence and improve marital relationships rather than taking any legal recourse. The patriarchal society shuns divorced women and a woman's identity is highly dependent on her relationship with a man. (Saathi, TAF, DFID 2010).

This report clears that the government responses is not working well. Similarly the patriarchal norms are the main catalyst for augmenting the violence. All most all the study shows that domestic violence is high in all other kinds of VAW but there are lots of barriers to settle the problem.

The SAWF 2012 study writes mainly about the women right in Nepal. The study includes surveys and interviews, among selected organizations working on women's issues; interviews with activists and donors. It says that women in Nepal live under a highly patriarchal society, with various rungs of hierarchies imposed by historical marginalization of various caste groups and ethnicities. Gender inequalities along with caste, class and ethnic disparities have been identified as root causes of the decade-long conflict in the country, which has promoted both, the government as well as donors, to acknowledge the various disparities and historical exclusion and take steps to address them. (SAWF 2012)

It further says that in the current period in Nepal, the Government has adopted a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion strategy and several donors have developed strategies and policies for correcting the historical injustices. These initiatives, such as the Gender Equality Act (2006), Domestic Violence Act (2009), Action Plan Against GBV (2010), Gender Responsive Budgeting (since 2007/2008), and several initiatives of various donors, are relatively new in the country. The resources available for promoting women's human rights in Nepal need to be understood within the context of historical marginalization and exclusions in the country and the recent acknowledgment and initiatives that are trying to respond to these. (SAWF 2012)

UCL and CREHPA 2013 tried to map women's experiences of seeking care, support and redress when they have suffered GBV, and thereby to identify barriers and opportunities to both women's care seeking, and to improving the policy and programmatic environment. This report is about the empirical finding of six women (case selected on the basis of advisory group suggestions and supplemented by media analysis) who have suffered abuse (ranging from trafficking through accusations of witchcraft, to dowry-related violence) and who came into contact with service providers who were mandated to provide help to them. The six women in the study generally suffered abuse from people within their own family and community. Two women suffered violence (domestic violence and dowry-related violence) from their husbands, three were abused by members of their community, and 2 women (accusations of witchcraft and widow abuse) were abused by their own children (along with others). Abuse from family members (particularly husbands) was often long-term, and only when women suffered an acute and severe episode of abuse did they seek any kind of external help. Thus, the woman who suffered violence related to unmet dowry 'expectations' noted that the abuse started shortly after marriage. The study also reveals that the legal treatment provided for sufferers are inadequate to handle the problem of mentioned two women informants out of six of this report. This study also collected the information from different sources also. In all the collected information, the rate of domestic violence is high such as the reported case in Police headquarter, Naxal, Kathmandu, Nepal is 55.4 % in 2009/10, 57.2 % in 2010/11 and 67.4% in 2011/12. This filed domestic violence case is higher than other kinds of

violence filed case. In National Women Commission 155 no. of domestic violence is reported in 1010/11 and 273 No. in 2011/12 (UCL and CREHPA 2013).

The above discussed five reports are big survey done over the violence against. Particularly the study done by Government of Nepal, Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers (2012) is very comprehensive and informative. The NDHS 2011 survey has first time included the chapter domestic violence. Further, all the reports acknowledge that the main reason enforcing the violence is deep rooted patriarchy in society. Our social structure is patriarchal though whatever amendment has been done. But this report seldom explores much detail about the dowry violence which is massive in the Tarai region within Madheshi community and most of the domestic violence occurs because of the dowry issue in family.

2.4 Concept of Dowry

From the beginning of human civilization, dowry was in the process. It was given for the protection of the women and their children. Till now, it is following but in a forced way. Now, it has become forced financial where groom family forced the bride family to provide them dowry. In addition, groom family tries to claim their rights in that property. Some of the groom family depend on the bride's family properties and want to sit idle without doing any work.

Now a day, dowry has become the main problem in the family. When a girl is born in a family, they are considered as a burden. So, they focused to collect something for dowry. On the marriage, bride parents provide dowry so that their daughters can live happy married life. Even though, those parents who cannot afford dowry, they force their daughters to marry elderly men, married men or illiterate young men (Hayward, 2000). Unfortunately, if bride family fails to give promised dowry, bride faces different violence.

Arul (2010) writes that dowry has become a malpractice in our society and for its eradication the law should be strong. Along with that the different campaign should be run to make the women aware as well as to change the attitude of the persons in society. He has done the study of marriage system of Bangalore and the dowry prevailing in that society. But he has not talked anything about the dowry system of Nepal particularly of Nepalese Madheshi community.

Das (2008) has provided three reasons of Dowry, i.e., social, economic and educational. Dowry has increased the inequality of male and female. He also writes that other malpractices can be alleviated from education but dowry cannot be because as much the girls are educated so much she needs to pay to get her matching groom. Particularly, parents are living a fearful life from the very beginning of their daughter. Parent has a sort of economic as well as psychological pressure if they got a girl baby. But still he has not touched the other issues like dowry as others imitation and dowry as the prestige in Madheshi community which is also the objective of this research.

A National Survey of violence against women in Canada had shown that one third of all women had been physically assaulted by their partners. It is also mentioned that the weapon used by perpetrators develops upon their cultural factors and availability of weapons. In the United Nations, more murder of women is committed by guns where as in India, guns are used but beating and death by fire are common. Then perpetrators of the crime claimed that she died in a kitchen accident (WHO Report, 2000)

A National Survey by women's aid organizations of Malaysia has conducted in-depth interview with 60 women in 1990/1991. The report shows that among 60 women, 92% were kicked, punched or slapped, 22% had suffered attempts of strangulation and 10% had been stabbed or threatened with knife or instrument. Furthermore, 68% had reported being beaten when pregnant and 50% experienced sexual coercion in the form of physical force during sexual intercourse (Josiah, 2000 cited in Sharma Sarojini 2007)

A research done by Subekshya Karki on 'A Study on Dowry Related Violence in Nepal' states that in neighboring country India, 91,202 dowry deaths were reported in the country from JRimpuary 2001 to December 2012. The highest incidences of dowry deaths are reported in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the belt that shares a border with Nepal's southern plains. Their culture, tradition and language are similar, and the dowry practice is just a part of that tradition. The international demarcation makes no difference in this patriarchal regime (INSEC). The study has not touched so many issues like dowry as prestige in Madheshi community.

An editorial, 'Dowry and violence against women' written by Binaya Ghimire in Gorkhapatra states," Dowry is an indispensable part of Nepali weddings which has

been the cause of violence against women across families in Nepal." She has illustrated the life of a woman, Mamata Das who lives in Rautahat, Brahmapur VDC was murdered. This happened because her parents could not give a bicycle demanded by the groom during the marriage. The dowry culture is deep rooted in the Tarai. Moreover, in the same editorial of the newspaper, media has also reported on the same issues. Dowry deaths are increasingly being reported in the media. Such horrific acts are particularly reported in the Tarai, in Madheshi families and Muslim communities. In Nepalgunj, a Muslim woman was burnt alive by her husband and in-laws for not fulfilling the demand of dowry. Motorbike was fixed as dowry to be given in the marriage but one year passed and still bride family could not fulfill. Media also added that instead of dowry, the Nepali law guarantees the girl's equal share to parental property but nobody has followed this. Despite of giving property rights, they are given heavy dowry.

As in other Muslim societies in Bangladesh, the traditional custom of payment of bride price by a groom's family at marriage was observed until the 1960s. Since then, a transformation has taken place in the spread of the dowry system as a customary practice, proliferating from the upper and middle classes to low-income families, particularly after 1980. Traditionally, too, the dowry was provided by the bride's family to ensure her future well-being, but increasingly the process of giving and receiving a dowry has become a commercial transaction which negates the personhood of a woman and creates hardship for parents (Huda, 2006 cited in Shahidul, S.M. 2012). This research has provided some reflection of the Nepalese dowry system but since it has been done focusing to Bangladesh, in Nepal the dowry related research is must to explore the dowry related picture of Nepal.

International Health Impact factor increased dowry death (2011) published report shows death and suicide due to dowry. It shows that in India, in 2007, 8093 deaths were due to dowry and 3148 has done suicide due to dowry. It particularly focuses on death, suicide and health effect due to dowry. But it did not touch the aspects like social, cultural related to dowry which is the main aim of this research.

Third Alliance (2070 B.S.) has published a report 'Women violence in Madhesh' where it has displays that victims due to dowry are 36 % of the women aged between 10 to 20 years. Similarly, 36 % women are victim due to dowry are aged between 21

to 30 years, and 48 % victims due to dowry are of age between 31 to 40 years. Further it shows that 91 % poor female are suffering from violence whereas 9% medium economic level females are victim from dowry. In terms of education, it shows that 36% literate, 28% of higher education of, 18% of secondary education and 18% illiterate female are suffering from the dowry malpractices. These are the contents explored by this report but this report is basically based on the secondary information which could not accommodate the real feeling of the women directly. This research has tried to display the real scenario of the victims directly.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Selection of the Research Area

Dowry prevalence is rampant in the whole Madhesh. Most of the domestic violence occurs because of this dowry system in Madhesh (Tarai). Siraha is of the concentrated areas of Madheshi community in Nepal and most of the dowry related incidents come out through media time and again from this district. Moreover, villages like Govindapur, Padariya and Hanumannagar Kurba were areas of prime focus of the study because news of dowry violence was covered by national media of Nepal from this area time and again. So, these villages have been mainly selected as research site for data collection of this study.

3.2 Research Design

The study is primarily based on qualitative approach since the nature of the study is very sensitive issue on women discourse. The study is based on both descriptive and explanatory method. The situation about the dowry prevalence in Madhesh is described and the different reason behind this dowry prevalence is explained following critical social science and feminist approach.

3.3 Sources of Data

Data refers to a collection of natural phenomena and its descriptions including the result of experience, observation or experiment. Collecting data is connecting link to the worlds of reality for the researcher. The purpose of collecting data is to enable as to see quickly all the possible characteristics in the data we have collected. For this research, the data is gathered from both (Primary and Secondary) sources.

3.3.1 Primary

The primary data has been collected by using interview, case history and focus group discussion. The key informants for interview were youths, social activists, police personnel and the lawyers. The Focus group was conducted with women, youth, and one with mix group people which comprises men, women, teacher, and organization working for such victims, neighbors of victim, and community leaders. Case study

was conducted with the victims/survivors of the dowry violence and their family members.

3.3.2 Secondary

In addition to Primary source, the books, news-paper, article, unpublished research, the history about Madheshi women, online portals, journal and online information and other unpublished reports have been consulted and used as secondary sources of data.

3.4 Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

During the field work, case study, focus group discussion and interview methods were applied in order to generate the necessary information for this study. For all these different methods, different checklist/tools were administered for collecting the different area of information. All the discussions and interviews were recorded in tape recorder so that their valuable information would not have missed while analyzing and writing the report. The researcher was aware about that she may not be able to note and jot down all the information shared by the informants and cases. Therefore, with prior consent with them recorded the information and captured some snaps in her camera as well.

The present study is mainly based on the primary information collected through case study, interview with key informants and focus group discussion. The following table Consists of the brief description of the methods/tools and the focus of that method.

Methods/Tools	Description	Focus
Case Study	3 Cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal detail • spousal • family • mother's family detail • marital detail • situation of dowry • context of the event • action of handling it • agreement/disagreement • effect • problem solving technique
Focus Group Discussion	3 FGDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ youth, ▪ women, ▪ men ▪ students ▪ other professionals
Key Informant Interview	4 KIIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ social activist (13 questions) ▪ lawyer (11 questions) ▪ police personnel (11 questions)

3.4.1 Case Study

This tool was used to bring the detail experiences and perception of those survivors and their family members as well. This method comprises total 12 types of information (see annex A) like personal detail, spousal, family, mother's family detail and marital detail, this also includes situation of dowry, context of the event, action of handling it, agreement/disagreement, its effect, problem solving technique along with their remarkable statement. Three case studies were done. The cases are Punita Yadav, Ramni Yadav and Renu Karna. The researcher kept his five sense organs wide open to observe their behavior and other internal information which was not shared verbally. I was always conscious about the sensitiveness of the case because none of the cases shared their information without bursting into tears. Before, eliciting data from the cases, I informed my objective of presence and took consent of further communication with them. I always asked them about the place and situation of comfort to share the information smoothly and I did accordingly. I got the chance to change myself with the circumstances that I was not aware about such sensitivity before going to the field. Moreover, I did not have any concrete understanding that the level of grievances will be such high. This field study has encouraged me to study further in this area so that, I can put a brick on the pile of contribution against dowry violence in future.

3.4.2 Focus Group Discussion

This tool is used to bring the qualitative information from the informants. This tool is helpful to bring the collective perspective of the community towards dowry violence. Total 3 FGDs were conducted with three different groups of participants. Two focus group discussions were conducted focusing on women, two among youths and two among mixed groups of participants including, youth, women, student, male and other professionals. This tool has been used in the Govindapur Malhanma, Padariya and Hanumannagar Kurba villages. The total 13 types of questions (see annex B) were prepared for the discussion which comprises situation of dowry, method of provide, which caste group in Madheshi has more system of dowry practice, its effect, its remedy etc. The participants participated the discussion very actively with wide variety of knowledge and experience on the theme.

The villages were selected following purposive sampling methods based on high number of incident regarding the dowry violence. The group of participants was also selected purposively however, the participants were selected based on the information they have education, sex, age and area of professions were the basic criteria of consideration. This method really helped the research to gather different perspectives in group because all information used to be shared individually and get approved in groups. I always preferred public place for focus group discussion so that none of the participants will have hesitation to come and participate the discussion. However, I conducted FGDs at participants' convenience like in school, under a big tree, in the yards wherever they said.

3.4.3 Key Informant Interview

Interview method was one of the three methods of data collection for this study. The researcher visited organizations like WOREC Nepal which is working for the betterment of women focusing on against women violence. They suggested certain people's name to be consulted as interviewee because they are contributing against gender based violence since very beginning. The researcher developed semi-structure questionnaires before going to the field and took appointment with some identified interviewees. Three types of professionals were selected as interviewee, for example social activist, lawyer and police personnel. Three different sets of semi-structure questionnaires/checklists were developed for each professional differently to conduct interview of this study. The rest of the informants were selected by adopting snow-ball sampling methods. Since this research is qualitative in nature, different people's perspectives are very important so the researcher conducted interview with different area of professionals with different angles. This method remained very helpful for data elicitation.

i) Social Activist

Dowry has direct relation with the individual, family and community. However, youth plays a vital role regarding dowry practice, particularly, unmarried youth because they are the direct recipient of the dowry. For this study youth activist, professor and social worker were selected for the interview. Some of them have established NGOs through working against dowry. Total 13 types of questions (see annex C) were prepared to gather the information from the people of this category.

ii) Lawyer

There are so many cases of dowry in Madhesh. Rules and Laws of the country have also defined the dowry as the illegal activities. But many people are not aware about the legal provision and constraints. In this regard, the researcher realized to seek the information from legal institution whether there is case of dowry in legal institution or not. Lawyer is the main stakeholder for providing data regarding the dowry which is under legal process. So, lawyers were also included to gather the information for this study where total 11 questions (see annex D) were administered with the law professional.

iii) Police Personnel

Police of the district police office were also interviewed for this research. Nowadays, women cell has been established at district police office to hear women's problem directly because some of the issues are very confidential and sensitive from gender perspective. I sought the information about the FIR against dowry violence of Siraha district. In this regards, total 11 questions (see annex E) were administered to conduct the interview for data elicitation from the police personnel. The reason behind consulting the police personnel is they are closely related with women cell and rules of law as well.

3.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation

All collected information had been orderly analyzed. All information was presented descriptively and explanatorily. Qualitative data which were collected through case history, FGD and key informant interview methods were analysed thematically. I have followed the descriptive and explanatory methods to interpret that collected data.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Since the study is based on critical social science and feminist approaches, the domestic violence issue is highly sensitive so the ethical consideration is highly important. In this study, data collections are preceded only with informed consent of the informants. Informants were coned as they are free not to take part, or to withdraw from the study at any point. Data were collected and stored with no personally identifying information. The tapes of qualitative interviews are kept confidentially.

All computer files are password protected to ensure confidentiality. All study participants were given information about, and access to the findings of this research if they require.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH SITES AND CASES

4.1 Research Sites

Siraha district is expanded into 1188 Sq. Km area. The total population of the district is 637,328 including male (310,101) and female (327, 227). According to Census (2011), the total household is 117,962 and average household size is 5.4. The census of 2011 presents that there are 341 incidents have been reported altogether. 77 incidents have been reported under homicide and 71 under suicide. Women and children related incidents have been reported as 10 in total (District and VDC Profile, 2014.15).

1. Govindpur Malahanma

The area of Govindpur Malahanma is 14.4 Sq. Km. The total household number is 1320 where average household size is 5.52. The total population of the village is 7289 incorporating male (3668) and female (3621). The village is distinct with district demography. The average household size is bigger than the district where is number of female is lesser than male. Moreover, the literacy rate is 51.5(District and VDC Profile, 2014.15).

2. Padariya

Padariya covers 7.4 Sq.Km. area where total population is 6073. The number of female is greater (3242) than number of male population (2831). The total household of the village is 1147 where average household size is 5.29. The literacy rate of the village is above (60.7) than the district ratio (District and VDC Profile, 2014.15).

2. Hanumannagar

Hanumannagar village occupies 9.4 Sq. Km. area where total household number is 1254 with 5.22 average household size. The number of total population is 6544 where female number is greater (3601) than male (2943). The literacy rate of the village is far below (39.7) than the district and country data (District and VDC Profile, 2014.15).

4.2 Case Study

Total three case studies of Siraha were collected in detail and presented here.

Case Study 1

Punita Yadav was married with Shyam Yadav of Siraha district. From the very beginning day of wedlock she started being undermined and dominated by her mother in law and father in law. According to her, the reason for undermining was the fewer dowries than demanded. In spite of domination by parent in law, her husband used to love her at the beginning. After six months of her wedlock, she became pregnant. She later found the truth from the neighbor about her husband regarding his after marital affair with the other women of the same village. During the days of her pregnancy, her husband used to go outside in the night time. Later she knew the fact that her husband has relation with his own brother in law. Whenever she tried to verify about this, her husband convinced her that he has no relation with anyone. Her marital relation was however well during two years from her wedlock.

In the later days, Punita's husband who was involved in political activities pressured her to bring land from her parents. After some time, Shyam became the secretary of a CAM (Constituent Assembly Member). Having got such a position, Shyam ignored the caring of Punita. Punita is mother of two kids-one son and another daughter. She was dominated more as she got her second baby as a daughter. Her husband even blame that these children are not from his. She tolerated lots of mental as well as physical torture from her husband in the later days. He denied to accept the children as his own particularly the daughter one. All the in laws- father (Sasura), mother (sasur), sister (jethani) used to torture her mentally as well as physically. At last Shyam pressurized her for signature in the divorce paper since he wanted to do second marriage.

Punita was always motivated by the police and villagers to live together. And again they used to live together. Her parents assisted with 50 thousand to her in her black days of life. Just after six/seven month she was again tortured. She was mediated by village elite, police and local politicians so she had lived together with the family. But the conflict did not end. After all, she left her home and went to parent's home.

Further she was pressurized to sale the land which she has got from her parents. She refused to sale that land which resulted into more physical torture. She said by crying, “One day I was battered to such extent that everyone has declared me as dead and right activists rescued me. From that day onwards my mouth was dislocated which is still not healed.

After some days Shyam did second marriage. She filed the case against her husband of polygamy but due to lack of documents the case was not registered. However, she got her children back. Even now the perpetrator had not got any penalty and the victims had not got any compensation. Punita is living in her parent's home with her two kids whose future is uncertain.

She has not got any alimony and not even her jewelries back which was given in wedlock. She is unable to forget the torture she got in past days. She feels her life burden and attempt to suicide whenever she thinks about past and future. Shyam has still continued making strategy to get money from the Punita’s father. But Punita is hopeful that her husband should get punishment along with his second wife. She is requesting everyone to make her husband and his second wife punished.

Case Study 2

Ramani Devi Yadav, of Siraha Manikdah, married with Hari Prasad Yadav of Jagatpur. Ramani Devi is illiterate and her husband is only ten class passed. In her wedlock, 20 thousand cash, furniture and other utensils were provided as dowry. After two years of marriage, the black days of married life started on the issue of dowry. Ramani Devi started tolerating different accuses as not bringing the abundant dowry. Later, it increased into battering and scolding. Having not given satisfactory meal, Ramani Devi tolerated lots of battering whose spot are still in her body. Being abandoned by in laws she had to tolerate lots of scold when she tried to phone to her parental home on this matter. Once she was rescued and have treatment by her mother in law when was in dead like condition. Now she is living with her parents from three years back.

Ramani Devi’s parents' economic condition is not well so she started her livelihood with a grocery shop which was in the village. But it did not give her well income and

added burden in her livelihood. Later she started liquor/wine shop but the villagers accused her as she is ruining the life of villagers by selling the wine. And the villagers' pressure made her to stop the business of liquor. Now she is working as a labor and maintaining her livelihood. Her kids are deprived from the education. She has not filed any case against her in laws yet. But her livelihood condition is very bad. She is unaware of any legal process and she does not have any document like citizenship, marriage certificate or others.

Case Study 3

Rimpu Karn of Nahararigol and Lakhan Yadav of Bhagawatipur Tamasuiya had studied at the same school. They were affair. Rumour about their affair spout over the village. Because of this love affair, they were targeted by the Maoist activist also and they were not agreed by family for their wedlock due to their different caste background. After all, they married in temple. Just after 10 days of marriage, her mother in laws started scolding with the reason that not bringing any dowry in wedlock. She was even abandoned by the parents because of doing inter-caste marriage. Having the disharmonious environment in home, she along with his husband left to reside in Kathmandu. Her in-laws did not send any expenses to them and started pressuring to her husband for the next marriage. She faced very hard time during the pregnant. Further they left Kathmandu and shifted to Lahan. They both taught in one school and anyhow managed the livelihood. Even in her delivery no one from the family came to see. She is remembering her days when she had to live alone in hospital and her husband had to work. Rimpu was exploring her experiences of mental and economic problem due to dowry. Now she is working as women activist against dowry in different organization.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Practice of Dowry

The women of Govindpur of Siraha district participated in focus group discussion expressed that they have lots of information on dowry. They reported some incidents of dowry violence also. A man of Pandit title (surname of a person) of Govindpur Malhanma made his daughter married six year before. There was 13 thousand amount remained to pay as dowry. Consequently, his daughter was killed but the perpetrator has not got any punishment till the date. They are poor and weak in power relation so he did not get justice regarding his daughter's murder.

Another participant has described the story of Rupa Karn where the husband, mother in law and father in law of Rupa killed her together and they are still eloped. They also added that the dowry system is very common in the Tarai. They further shared that in the season of marriage, dowry matter used to be a great discourse among the Tarai region.

In the same topic youth replied as: A Sah titled girl of Siraha Padariya was married Seven year ago. Her name was Sita Sah. Her husband was a labour migrant to the Gulf and she had to bear lots of physical and mental torture in dowry case. She was living in her father's house because of that tension. Similarly, a girl was battered and sent out from the house in the case of dowry. In the marriage her parents committed to provide the money but as per the agreement father of bride did not pay and as a result she endured the physical pain given by her in laws. Currently the girl is living in her father's house. Similarly, in Nakatahi 3, four years ago a girl was killed due to dowry. That woman was first killed and hanged on the tree of field. At starting there was doubt of suicide but later investigation revealed this murder with reason of dowry. Perpetrator has not been punished till the date.

The FGD with mix group also added some of the incidents of dowry. In Fulkaha katti of Siraha, three hundred thousand cash was handed in wedlock. In marriage altogether expenses were five hundred thousand comprising feast and other miscellaneous. But just after one month of the marriage, the groom's family started torture to her saying

that they don't like the girl. Further the Panchayat (meeting) was held in the village and the decision was taken to separate that relation on the condition that the groom will pay back all the dowry money to the bride family. But the groom was run away and the bride has to live in her father's house. Similarly, Sunita Yadav is compelled to live in father's home because of dowry. Her husband has done next marriage. However, the case against groom is continued for dowry and polygamy.

Regarding the way/medium of dowry, the participants of the FGD of Govindpur shared that it is very open. Both parties of groom and bride sit together and decide the amount and other stuffs of dowry. Similarly, when the both family decide for marriage relationship sometime the middle man facilitates for the dowry too. In case of affair exist between a boy and a girl, the boy reluctant to take the dowry but his parents including father compel him to ask for dowry.

While considering the opinion of youth, it was somehow different than the women. Youth participants of Padariya expressed that dowry arrangement is occurred sometime very secretly and sometime openly as well. The youth participants also shared that this dowry system is prevalent because of imitation of others in the society. As soon as the son born in the family, the parents conceptualize for the dowry. And the moment the daughter born in the family the parents conceptualize to pay the dowry. And the dowry is open system. They also mentioned that the dowry prevails secretly more than openly in urban area. None of the cases of dowry has been registered. Cases of dowry come out when women face domestic violence. In absence of proper law and act on dowry, the cases of dowry are not registered with the same title. Dowry victims are not getting chance to register their cases as they lack sufficient proofs. The main psychological reason of demanding dowry is to get back the amount whatever they have invested for son's education. Though their daughters are not much educated they expect well educated son in-law. This trend has been popular like a business. Their mentality was to marry their daughters along with the rich family. There have been many cases of physical harassment, blaming character, giving torture, divorce and polygamy due to dowry.

The participants of mixed group, shared that the miff leman generally negotiate for the dowry. Sometime the relatives help in dowry agreement. It happens both way

openly and secretly. Sometime the leading person of the marriage helps for the agreement. Mother, Father and relatives are direct figure to involve in dowry.

5.2 Causes of Dowry Practice

In response to the involvement in dowry negotiation, the participants shared that groom's parents, bride's parents, Panch or the marriage mediator (middle man) and sometime boys himself are involved. Similarly, they also shared that parents of grooms and brides, relatives and boy himself are involved in dowry agreement.

Sometime the parents compel to their son to ask for the dowry with in laws. Sometime middle man lies regarding the suitability of boys or girl which results women violence. In another FGD also the youth revealed that the middleman or the leader of the wedlock parents of both party and relatives are directly involved in the dowry negotiation and agreement.

But in FGD of the mixed group, the opinions in this regard were something different. They shared that in dowry matter the women particularly the mother has more interest in dowry because she has more investment in the bringing up of children. Mother actually thinks that the son would go in the daughter in law's hand after being the marriage and so she wants to take dowry as its compensation. Generally, the middleman (lami) or the leading person negotiates for the dowry. Some of them lie for the suitability of groom and bride and take dowry. Parents and relatives are also involved in dowry matter.

Due to the dowry practice, women violence like physical and mental torture, banishment and forcing to commit suicide happen in our society. Mostly, in-laws-parents and husbands are found guilty in these women violence cases. In Madheshi community, dowry culture is rooted but no sufficient actions/campaigns have been operated against it. Moreover, political parties and leaders have not been so friendly to run such a social campaign. Heads of the tribal people and community stand against the movement. When police run the campaign against dowry; people respond that they are against the dowry practice. But they are taking dowry secretly. Laws against dowry practice must be implemented into action. It's been urgent to help and advocate for the sake of dowry victims. Dowry related laws are very complicated. Act-1976 has

a provision of legal punishment to both dowry negotiators. Therefore, victims are always discouraged to come up with their problems. In addition, lack of specific institutional body and process-oriented legal system has made the justice on dowry challenging. Thus, a court of fast track can be the best way to make the process effective and treat the issues of women violence in proper way. Legal process should be shortened, made easier and accessible. The provision of legal treatment on dowry should be arranged at the local level. Safe house, shelter and treatment fund for the dowry victim should be established. And the provision of legal counseling is the most.

Generally, cash, motorcycle, TV, watch and clothes are provided as dowry. Concomitantly, gold, silver, furniture, and also land are given as dowry. Apart from that, kitchen utensils, and jewelries are also provided. In some cases, the groom is kept in the bride's home and handover all the assets if the bride's parent has no son. Some of the parents who are able to provide dowry easily they do not take it as extra burden but those who are not able to provide even though by taking the loan is a big burden for marrying daughter.

Relatively dowry practice is same in both urban and rural area. Mixed group shared that ethnically it is more prevalent in Madheshi community than in Pahadi one. However, rich and educated people practice more though they are educated and so on.

Women participants shared that the dowry practice is more in Baniya, Mahato, Yadav, Brahman caste relatively Tharu and Musahar. In Tharu community they provide dowry as per their own happy and choice. They also shared that Teli, Sudi and Yadav has more practice of dowry but nowadays in Muslim community also it started to be practiced. The main reason is that these people Muslim people including others has good earning nowadays because of foreign employment and so they can easily pay the dowry. In the latest period even the poor people are practicing this dowry because of their foreign employment income.

Youth people shared that Sah, Yadav, Mandal and Thakur caste has more dowry practice. Computer and motorbike has been commonly taken by most of them. Previously in Tharu, they used to provide dowry as per their will but nowadays they have also started asking for by imitating others (neighbours). In Dalit the practice is increased due to foreign employment. Madheshi castes have more dowry practice than

other. Dowry is related with the richness, more the rich more the dowry. Dowry has created a greedy. Mahato, Yadav has more dowry practice. Sah people take more dowries relatively with others. Youth of Janakpur shared that this practice was started by the Rana and exploiting people.

Mix group in Hanumannagar shared that previously Teli, Sudi and Brahman have more practice of dowry but currently Dalit has also practiced the dowry more because of their involvement in foreign employment. Dowry practice in general in Madheshi community but relatively Mahato caste is top on them. The mix settlement of Mahdeshi and Pahasi has relatively less practice of this system than in the Madheshi community only. Surprisingly this tradition is started assimilating even in Pahadi community because of imitation of Madheshi community around them. Groom's parents take dowry as a chance to compensate the invested money for their son's education. They demand dowry money as equally as they have spent for their son's career. So, the parent of well-educated groom is likely to demand heavy amount of dowry. Groom's mother has a high interest in dowry. Sometimes, brides are also found demanding with her parents. In dowry related violence, normally groom's family and relative are involved. Insufficient dowry becomes the cause of women violence like physical and mental torture, remarriage, murder and banishment.

In early days, when I was involved in the campaign; people used to laugh at me. Politicians used to prevent us from campaigning. Guardians and women often complained that activists motivated young people to have love marriage. But these days, police and young people have fully supported to the campaigning. Common people have positive attitude and support for this movement. There are still frequent hindrances that we get from the politicians and local people. Despite all these troubles, police administration and most of the people cooperate with the movement and support it.

Dowry transaction is normally done secretly. Therefore, a separate detective agency within police administration is essential so that this mechanism can be mobilized to get the right information on time.

We see 'Saurath fair' in Madhuwani district of Bihar, India. In that occasion, we see the meeting of Maithil Brahmin and grooms' market. There was a practice of

bridegrooms' auction. The one who would pay the highest money could marry with the groom. But these days, negotiation of dowry practice depends on education and the property. As parents give dowry in daughters' marriage so they take dowry in son's marriage. Hence, dowry system moves around 'Give & Take' cycle. During dowry negotiation and transaction, mostly groom's mother and other female character play a decisive role.

Dowry gradually motivates people to destroy marital and family relation, damage mutual love and respect which finally lead them to commit terrible crimes like murder, suicide and other offensive domestic violence. Because of insufficient dowry, bride and her family must bear the pain of insult, suppression, negative abuses, bitter experiences and biases, brutal treatment from in-law's family. These types of mistreatment and domestic violence are more likely to happen in joint families.

Nowadays, police and administration have been more positive and cooperative to handle these issues. But the dowry campaigning must be conducted by the government instead. Public awareness must be disseminated and raised through media. Dowry practice must be legally defined as the crime. The existing laws must be amended to make it dowry sensitive laws. Moreover, the part of implementation should be exact and effective. Right to inherit property must be ensured for the daughters. We must educate and empower them. We must socially boycott the family if they are involved in dowry transaction and practice.

5.3 Effect of Dowry System

The women participant shared that educated people take more dowry relatively than uneducated because educated girl has to marry with more educated groom. They shared that in one marriage for a master degree girl, they have to spend 10 hundred thousand Nepali rupees. Actually the groom family takes all the investment such as bringing up to educating to their son. More the educated more they have to expend the money. A girl search more educated than her and in that course they have to spend more money. The parents become afraid of eloping their daughter so they paid the money as per demand do their daughter's marriage soon. Education triggered in the increment of dowry practice. The mentality of grabbing the investment of education of children and feeding to wife for life long has increased the practice of dowry. In

Tharu community most of the marriages are love marriage. The practice of dowry is high in educated but if both bride and groom are equally educated then sometime there is minimization of dowry. There is also a mindset that they have to pay in their daughter so they want to recover it from son's marriage. They want to return the education expenses of their so through dowry also. They want to compensate the expenses of their daughter's marriage through taking the dowry in their son. They want to demonstrate their status through dowry in society. If they don't take dowry then the family and son is suspected as being some weakness in him. If a boy doesn't take dowry then they become victim of violence in society.

Actually the bride parent has to pay more money if they marry their daughter richer than themselves. Concomitantly there is thinking that if they pay dowry in their wedlock then they have to fulfill its compensation by taking dowry for their son. Recently the foreign employment has become the big reason for dowry increment. Similarly, education has added the fuel in dowry increment. There is thinking that the marriage should be done on same status. The participants (of youth FGD) shared that instead of bride gifting there should be groom gifting tradition. They shared that dowry would be given on both party agreement then it becomes gift otherwise it is dowry.

The mixed group shared that dowry is increased as per the mahangi. Foreign employment has added fuel on dowry increment. Some parents take dowry to make their off spring happy. There is a thinking that after marriage the daughter in law has rights on groom's house so she must come with dowry. Imitation is also a good reason and they gave dowry so that their daughter can spent a happy life in house for lifelong in their husband's home.

The first thing to reduce the dowry is that the strict law should be endorsed. In the leadership of politician and elite group, there should be campaign against dowry. Law should be amended. Police should do their duty without political influence. Sometime almost all of the husbands dissolve the case by pressurizing their wives by taking help with women rights activists. FGD among women shared that dowry taker and giver both should be punished and jailed.

The youth of Paradiya shared that the campaign should be run and the strict punishment should be made against dowry. They also added that the different nongovernmental organization should also conduct the awareness program. Where, the youth added that broadcasting of the message through media should be done and, daughter should be educated and employment. 'Firstly job then girl' like slogan should be implemented, the marriage should be held in similar status, and instead of daughter gifting, the concept should be like groom gifting added by youth. If dowry is taken in the both party consensus then it is gift otherwise it is dowry. So the daughter should be empowered and made capable.

The youth of shared that there is no way to reduce dowry. There is thought that marriage without dowry degrades the status of women in the family and society as well. Social pressure is good way for change and marriage should be done in simple way. Love marriage should be encouraged. Both girl and boys should be employed and marginalized group should have access on job. However, they also shared that the elope marriage should be discouraged. Participants shared that the implementation of dowry law should be initiated by government staff, and in each village there should be campaign against dowry, inter-caste and love marriage should be encouraged, girl education should be encouraged to make them empowered. Due to the low amount of dowry, the marital relation of my friend's niece could not last long. They divorced and bride's money was returned back. I had a strong determination against dowry system. Because of my stance against dowry, my marriage was not possible in my caste and community. Finally, I accepted inter-caste marriage. Now, I am involved in a campaign against dowry.

In our society, the identity and the value of daughters are usually dismissed which has eventually sensitized the dowry practice. As a result, cultural tendency to give priority to the sons and deprive daughters from their inherit property has risen up. In marriage, groom side usually creates a trap or obligatory situation to take advantage of maximum dowry.

During dowry negotiation in marriage, the expectation and interest of groom's parents is very high. Even the groom silently supports his parents. Mediators and neighbors also play the role in dowry exchange. Dowry transaction invites domestic violence

and other offensive acts of giving mental torture, murder and forcing to commit suicide. Consequently, the rate of polygamy, divorce and abortion of baby-girl is going up higher. In anti-dowry campaign, bride's parents are found comparatively positive than groom's parents. GOs and NGOs are alleged of corruption. For this sector, the allocation of budget is very poor and the availed sources are also mostly spent at the central level. Only the 20% of the total resources is mobilized at the district level. It has been very difficult to campaign with limited resource at the local level. Activists are compelled to work with low wages or as volunteers. We do not have enough resources, proper legal provision and safe houses to work in this sector. Sometimes, activists get different charges if they fail to help the victims. The so-called social leaders, politicians and groom side people play the hidden role to conspire allegations against the activists. Women face physical harassment and mental torture which cause them to commit suicide sometime. The incident of polygamy also starts which pushes women towards depression. Social structure should be prime concern while reviewing the current rules and laws of different violence. The rules and laws should be developed with no harm to the social structure. Awareness campaign should be given priority to inform the rules and acts. This type of program should be launched by government itself and nongovernment organizations too. Marriage with no dowry and court marriage should be promoted. There must be the provision of detectives for searching the dowry practice.

5.4 Minimizing Way of Dowry System

The different group shared that scolding, battering, throwing out from house, next marriage by husband for the property, divorce, social humiliation and compelling the women for suicide are the main side effect of dowry. Women are the main victim of dowry. However, the women in FGD shared that dower brings quarrel between daughter in law and mother in law. Boys very easily get marriage by leaving his wife whereas a girl and her parents get so many problems from it.

We must have certain laws against dowry. The implementation of these laws must be effective even at the local level. The government should arrange the vocational trainings and safe houses to rehabilitate the victimized women in the societies. Women friendly education should be introduced so that it can educate them to be

independent and strong to take their life decisions. We should create a social environment that inspires women for their remarriage with dignity. To make dowry campaign more effective, love marriage and inter-caste marriage should be encouraged. We should encourage people to spend little money in weddings. The government should allocate budget to operate various anti-dowry campaigns and awareness programs. National education system should incorporate the issues of dowry through curriculum. Concrete laws on dowry must exist in the country.

The youth of Paradiya also shared that girls are more affected by dowry. Barring, mental torture, burning, throwing from house, next marriage and divorce are the common problem which a bride has to face. The boy which committee do marriage without dowry is accused and point the finger on their character and their mother father are also falsely accused. Married women and her parents are one who get directly affected. Relationship disharmonized. They also shared that the relationship is disturbed in both side. Mental torture and suicide are also prevailing. Similarly, the youth shared that the girl and her parents get affected directly. Sometime the marriage without dowry also sprouts violence to the boys and they have to face the humiliation and degradation. They shared that one person has to sale their few hector land to marriage their four daughter.

Dowry brings violence in women. Girl's parents get problem and sometime even suicide occurs. Female embryo crime, infant killing and divorce are the major problem. So, inter-caste marriage should be encouraged. The daughters are connected with the prestige so girls are highly affected. They also shared that girl and her family is highly affected. Society humiliated those types of person. The immediate law is not possible. There is problem in issuing the cases, and without shelter house there is problem of livelihood.

In Govindapur FGD, women shared that women should start from one's own home. State should take action. School's curriculum should reflect this dowry discourse. All the political party manifestation should include this. Street drama and door to door campaign should be started against it. The caste elite person should take action against it. And the youth class should be aware. They also added that dowry giver and taker

both should be punished by law with cash and jail. A girl should be encouraged for education and job, and dowry taker should be punished and cased in police.

They even shared that one should stay without doing marriage than giving the dowry. Parents should marry their daughter as per their own capacity without imitating others. But the youth opined that a daughter should make self-dependent by education; daughter should be provided education instead of dowry, should do love marriage with low expenses and inter-caste and love marriage should be promoted.

They also focused on giving property as parental property to daughter instead of giving the dowry. Law should be properly ruled. Continue campaign should be run. Political party, Staffs and the elite should take the lead role for function the law properly. We should encourage the Anandmargi (a religion of being happy) as follower, who marries without taking dowry. Love marriage and ideal marriage should be encouraged, said by the youth participants of FGDs.

The mixed women group shared the view that the low role of women in dowry practice so the youth should come take the lead role and raise their voice. Even girls should form the committee for not giving the dowry and watching them. Law should be strong. Both male and women should change their mind set and the law should be amended and the implementation part of the law should be strong. These types of voices are shared by the women.

Dowry victim women need to be empowered through education and rehabilitation program in a society. In fact, mitigation of dowry system requires campaigning and movements that can revolutionize the way of thinking amongst the people. Ideal marriage, temple marriage, court marriage and inter-caste marriage should be encouraged in the societies. Police need pressure to register the issues on dowry. Only the honest police get ready to help. The judges and the courts have realized the significance of these issues. Moreover, police and judges need to be more responsive, serious and positive towards these issues. Besides, politicians and social leaders should unite and stand together against dowry system.

There should be the fast track court to implement dowry related laws. Police investigation should be strengthened. Police should be trained on gender-sensitive

issues and there must be a unit of female police. It becomes easier to punish the criminal if an evidence of dowry money is preserved. The government should reward the person who gives information of dowry money being transacted. Legal assistance should be given to the dowry victim women. Awareness programs should be targeted to the youths. Daughters should be enriched with the right to inherit property. To some extent, inter-caste marriage and court marriage can be the ways to discourage dowry practice. Above all, the most important thing is to change the way of thinking.

Anti-dowry campaigns must be operated from all directions. Dowry related issues can be incorporated into the courses of school and college. Frequent talk shows on dowry can be conducted in radios and TVs. Movement should be well-organized and result-oriented. New trends of marriage like stage marriage, progressive marriage, court marriage and mass people's marriage should be highly encouraged.

The dowry related laws needs amendment. The punishment should be pointed out based on the amount they take as dowry. It is very tough to produce the proof of dowry violence. The victim can't get justice because there is no written document regarding the dowry taken and given. Police administration also do not support for this issue. They mostly enquire some deviant type of questions which are difficult to be answered by women. The victims of dowry get much difficulty in lack of witness and proofs. Moreover, they face economic burden due to lengthy judicial process. VDC's recommendation is required to get compensation which is quite complicated. Sometime even organizations do not take as a serious matter and victims are forced to go back from their objectives.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

Any type of violence against women is detested crime. It also opposed to women human rights. Dowry system is also a type of woman violence. Rules restrict entirely to give and take dowry. However, this system is still being established in a society. Mainly, it seems to be more dominant in Madheshi community compared to other communities. The dowry system has been practiced traditionally in Madheshi community. The main reason to increase dowry system is discrimination between son and daughter. Women are regarded as a second class of citizen. Daughter is not enjoying property right. Daughter is regarded as a caste of going to other's house. Some people feel proud while offering a big amount and stuffs as a dowry to well-educated men in order to secure the life of daughters. But they do not educate their daughters, so they could be independent.

The laws and acts are not relevant with the present context. For example, society improvement act was developed 32 years before, therefore, it cannot address the current situation and issue. The dowry related bill was made 64 years before so, it seems more complicated and confusing. In one hand dowry related rules are complex where as the implementation of rules and laws not very effective. Neither bride supporter nor bride herself complains about dowry system. It is becoming very challenging to the government to punish until and unless there is no any complain against dowry. The main reason of not complaining against dowry is the provision that both dowry giver and taker will be punished. If there is any violence made by dowry, the information regarding the dowry will get publicity. There is no effective laws and acts based on dowry. The prosecutors of dowry are not punished due to lacking the proofs dowry given and taken.

6.2 Conclusion

To conclude, in the light of dowry violence, Madhesh/Tarai in general and Siraha in particular, are suffering from massive problems. When victims try to share the

problems faced to their parents then parents will try to convince them to hide the issue and back to the same house. The victim's parents do not go to complain because it is very difficult to gain the things and money back. The main reason of not getting the money back is no written documentation of dowry. They also do not want to take burden of remarry to the daughter.

Most of the women were found to be murdered by their own family members in domestic violence inflicted by dowry issue and disputes between couples in different other pretext. Women even suicide and attempted suicide after dispute with their respective husbands. This shows how woman are not only physically but mentally tortured to take their own life due to such violence. Women were even found to be murdered by people outside their home too in different pretext. Even Brijesh Kumar Gupta, Constituent Assembly member was accused of involving in domestic violence due to dowry issue. This case was however yet to solve the actual truth it represents dowry tradition's prevalence in every class and caste. Prerana RL Singh's case too is one of them.

Dowry tradition was also found as a serious cause of child marriage or unmatched marriage. In such case girls were generally married to a man who is double or triple times older than them. Such cases generally happen when groom is ready to marry without dowry for the sake of marrying the girl as a second wife. Child marriages and halting such marriages were taken this quarter as well. Such marriage should also be made punishable legally.

Daughters have a dependent life as they do not have property right. Groom's parent wants to take dowry which will be compensation of investment made for son's education. This mentality has also helped to increase dowry system in a society. Some parents do not educate their daughters but expect good educated in-laws. This type of challenges will never help for eradication of the dowry system. Nowadays, dowry has become a subject of social prestige. These families follow the dowry system are regarded as prestigious families. The position of the bride will be high if her parent offers good amount as a dowry in her marriage. In order to promote the prestige and make happier life of daughter, her parent gives more priority to the dowry in Madheshi community. Woman violence is increasing from simple quarrel to murder,

suicide, domestic violence, divorce, polygamy or female embryo crime. Nobody wants to give birth to female child in Madheshi community. After giving birth to female child, they start to collect and save money for dowry in her marriage whereas the education of daughter is not remain in priority.

There is no information that dowry is evil of the society. Dowry system is regarded as a regional problem by the government whereas social campaigners take this matter as a problem of Madheshi community. This is a problem of entire Madhesh. The society is more responsible for this miserable problem. Such a bad practice of dowry is widening towards other region, community, caste and class of people throughout the country. This is not the problem of Madheshi community only but it is the opposition of all women human rights. We should change our attitudes in this regard.

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Annex A

Checklist for Case Study

1. Personal Detail

Name:
Address:
Profession:
Age:
Education:
Caste:
Mother tongue:
Religion:
Economic Status:

2. Spouse Detail

Name:
Address:
Profession:
Age:
Education:
Caste:
Mother tongue:
Religion:
Economic Status:

3. Family Detail

Name:
Address:
Profession:
Age:
Education:
Caste:
Mother tongue:
Religion:
Economic Status:
Political involvement:

4. Mother's Family Detail

Address:
Main Profession:

Number of members:
Main sources of livelihood:
Educational status of other family members:
Guardian's profession:
Mother tongue:
Religion:
Economic Status:
Political involvement:

5. Marital Detail

Address/place:
Type of marriage:
Role of mediator:
Status of feast:
Status of divorce:
Status of living:

6. Dowry Detail

Given as dowry:
Demanded as dowry:
Remained to be given:
Things given till now:
Money given till now:
Other:

7. Event Detail

- a) When, how, why, where, by whom, what started to happen?
- b) Types of incident
- c) What continued to happen?
- d) What is happening now?
- e) Relation between victim and oppressor

8. Stepping Measures of Solution (if any)

- a) What measures did you follow?
- b) Where did you plea?
- c) What decision made?
- d) Anything more?

9. Agree/Disagree

- a) Things of agree or disagree
- b) Things of help or stifle
- c) Compensation or punishment

10. Effects

- a) What effect does bring to oppressed family?
- b) Any severe effect to oppressed family?
- c) Up and down in victim's life

11. Solutions

12. Other

Annex B

Checklist for FGD

1. Do you know about dowry system? If yes, say in detail.
2. What is the situation of dowry practice?
3. Who are involved in dowry practice?
4. What things are given and taken as dowry?
5. In which area people practice dowry more?
6. Is which caste, class, group, community or ethnicity people practice dowry much more?
7. What effect does education bring on dowry? How?
8. Is dowry practice decreasing or increasing nowadays?
9. If it is decreasing/increasing why?
10. Who are most vulnerable of dowry system? Why?
11. What mechanism could be adopted for minimizing dowry system?
12. What could be done to abolish dowry system?
13. Do you want to say something more against dowry system?

Annex C

Checklist for Interview with Social activists

1. Do you know about dowry system? Do you remember any incident regarding dowry system?
2. What causes practice of dowry in marriage?
3. What causes dowry to take and give in marriage?
4. Who are more interested to take dowry? Groom or his parents?
5. Who are involved in violence due to dowry?
6. What problem does dowry cause?
7. What types of problems are faced on campaign against dowry?
8. What causes these problems occur?
9. What types of cooperation and support are received from police, court, politician and people while problems occur in campaign?
10. What types of cooperation and support are expected from police, court and politician?
11. Are the existing laws against dowry sufficient? If not, what type of amendment is required?
12. What can be done to empower the roles of dowry victim and his/her family?
13. What types of campaign against dowry should be launched?

Annex D

Interview with Lawyer

1. Do you remember any case against dowry?
2. Where was the petition registered?
3. In your opinion, what causes dowry to take and give?
4. What types of cases do you deal against dowry?
5. Are the existing laws against dowry sufficient?
6. What problems do the victimized women have to face for submission of proofs?
7. Do police and court cooperate and support?
8. Do victims experience justice? If yes, how much people are benefited yearly?
9. What effects does dowry bring on women?
10. Do you see any area of improvement in existing laws against dowry?
11. What can be done to abolish dowry?

Annex E

Interview with Police personals

1. What is the situation of dowry practice in Siraha district?
2. What types of complains do people come with due to dowry?
3. What types of violence against women occur due to dowry?
4. Who comes at police with complains of violence against women?
5. In which class or caste do the issues of dowry occur?
6. Mostly, where do the incidents happen?
7. How do you proceed to solve dowry related problems?
8. What types of pressure do you have to face on dowry related problems?
9. What types of problem do you face while investigating on dowry related problems?
10. How the proofs are produced and availed on dowry related cases?
11. What can be done to control dowry?