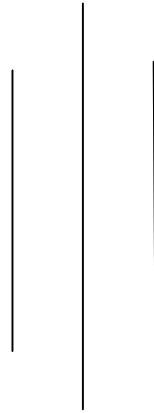
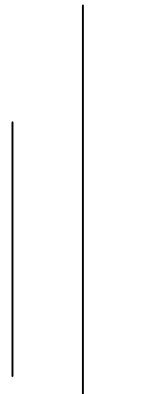


**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: EXPERIENCES OF  
MARRIED WOMEN OF KAPILVASTU DISTRICT**



**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
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Even at the beginning of the new millennium, violence against women remains a global problem. In Nepal, it is only during the last decade that violence against women has become recognized as a gender issue. Consequently, a number of non-government organizations as well as some government have begun to address the issue. However, there still exist many gaps, among which the lack of adequate information and factual data prevent the development and implementation of appropriate programmes targeted towards reducing violence against women. This study was undertaken in response to this gap. The researcher is optimistic that this endeavor will come to good use to all those individuals, institutions and organizations from all sectors working towards eliminating violence against women in Nepal.

First of all, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my research advisor Mrs. Neeti Aryal Khanal for supporting me in undertaking this study. Without her guidance, the research would not have been possible.

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## ABSTRACT

In this study the researcher has tried to discover the nature and condition of women victims and non victims of domestic violence in ward number 3 of Motipur, Kapilvastu. The research is an initiative to explore and describe the condition of female victims and women who are suffering from domestic violence in the hands of their husband and in-laws and are not able to raise their voice against them. Simple random sampling method has been used as the primary tool for study and the required data has been obtained through structured interview schedule.

The study was carried out among 41 married women of Motipur VDC-3, Kapilvastu who were aged 15 to 50 years.

Majority of the respondents that is, 12.2% belong to the age group of 29 years, 56.1% are Brahmins and 63.4% of the respondents are housewives while the lowest percent of just 2.4% are engaged in service sector

During research it was found that among the women interviewed, 82.9% had experienced some type of domestic violence in their lifetime with 63.4% each facing physical and mental violence respectively on the other hand, 48.8% had undergone sexual violence. While 68.3% of the respondents had faced domestic violence from their husband, 51.2% were made the target of domestic violence by other members of the family.

Out of 54.1% of the women who had shared their experience of physical violence with others, majority of them 61.50% had shared it with their relatives.

Among the interviewed women who have faced sexual violence from their husband, 50% of them have adopted various coping mechanisms while 60% of the mental victims shared their ill experience with their relatives and 40% with their friends.

The study highlights that majority of the respondents have been victimized and want to share their incidences with their relatives and friends as there are no NGO's and INGO's and furthermore, the police station is 20 kilometers away. There are various psychological and physical problems that women have been suffering due to domestic violence.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
<b>FWLD</b>	Forum for Women, Law and Development
<b>INSEC</b>	Informal Sector Service Centre
<b>IRIN</b>	Integrated Regional Information Networks
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
<b>UNICEF</b> Fund	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Domestic violence against women is partly a result of gender relations that considers men to be superior to women. Given the lower status of women, much of gender based violence is considered normal and enjoys social sanction. Manifestations of violence include physical aggression, such as blows of varying intensity, burns, attempted hanging, sexual abuse and rape, psychological violence through insults, humiliation, coercion, blackmail, economic or emotional threats, and control over speech and actions. In extreme, but not unknown cases, death is the result. These expressions of violence take place in a man-woman relationship within the family, state and society. With different processes of socialization that men and women undergo, men take up stereotyped gender roles of domination and control, whereas women take up that of submission, dependence and respect for authority. The family is where the child is exposed to gender differences since birth, and in recent times even before birth, in the form of sex-determination tests leading to foeticide and female infanticide. The home, which is supposed to be the most secure place, is where women are most exposed to violence. In Nepali society we see differences in work division, food allocation, decision making and in many more areas.

Women often put up with men's violence because they see no acceptable alternatives and their lack of alternatives is often part of a cultural norm that allows violence. Domestic violence against women prevents women from exercising their legal rights to property inheritance, constrains their ability to take advantage of economic opportunities and keeps them in their home. Their isolation within the private sphere makes them particularly vulnerable to violence.

Nepal consists of diverse ecological, ethnic, cultural and multi-language societies; in general our country is predominantly a Hindu country, where it has its own cultural practice and value regarding the states of women and men. The status of men and women are unequal. Women are considered as second – class citizens in this patriarchal society. The combination of poverty and gender discrimination results on

many unpleasant problems in their own family. Our cultures are patriarchal in nature. Thus, in the socialization process while women are taught to be non – aggressive, submissive, soft spoken and timid. Men on the other hand are taught aggression, violence and boldness. In addition Nepali law does not address domestic violence, despite its high prevalence in all sector of the society. Generally speaking, domestic violence is regarded as family business, which does not require intervention of law. Hence many cases remain unreported and it will continue to remain as long as the society continues to regard domestic violence as normal, or to dismiss it as a private matter. Then women continue to suffer gross violations of human right within their homes. Violence can result in injury to victims. It continues to destroy families and affects society at large. So, the issue of domestic violence needs to be a mainstreamed in the government policies and a program with high priority (SAATHI, 1997).

In Nepal the belief that men are superior is manifested in religious doctrine, historical tradition and the current laws and customs of society. The primacy, indeed supremacy, of the male in the every sphere of current life in Nepal cannot be overstated. A Nepalese writer, Gauri Pradhan, states that with regard to violence against women, we have reached the conclusion that the existing problems of poverty, illiteracy, religious superstition, subjugation, conservative tradition, social injustice, legal discrimination and cultural invasion are responsible for the increasing problems of sexual abuse and violence against women. In fact, these are the consequences of the existing socio-economic and cultural practices of our society. The main root cause of all violence against women is the male dominated and feudal socio-economic structure of the society in which we live (Graham and Bond, 1998).

Up to 70 per cent of women, experience violence in their lifetime. It is one of the most persistent of human rights violations, denying women and girls equality, security, dignity, self-worth, and their right to enjoy fundamental freedoms. Domestic violence against women is present in every country, cutting across boundaries of culture, class, education, income, ethnicity and age. Even though most societies bar violence against women, the reality is that violations against women’s human rights are often the result of cultural practices and norms, or through misinterpretation of religious belief. Domestic violence against women and girls continues to be a global issue that kills, tortures, and maim – physically, psychologically, sexually and

economically. Violence against women and girls takes many forms – physical, sexual, psychological and economic. These forms of violence are interrelated and affect women from birth to old age and is one of the most pervasive human rights violations. Some types of violence, such as trafficking, cross national boundaries. Women and girls who experience violence suffer a range of health problems and their ability to participate in public life diminishes. It harms families and communities across generations and reinforces other violence prevalent in society impoverishing women, their families, communities and nations. It stops women from fulfilling their potential, restricts economic growth and undermines development. Domestic violence against women and girls is not confined to a specific culture, region or country, or to particular groups of women within a society. Its roots lie in persistent discrimination against women (UNICEF, 2000).

Domestic violence is a very serious societal problem. Women from all classes and ages experience it. However, they hesitate to report it though it is life threatening for many of them and have grave consequences not on their physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual well being but also on families of victims and survivors. Thus, domestic violence is a hidden problem. It might have a long lasting effect (Deuba, 2000).

The magnitude of gender-based violence in Nepal is extremely high. Several research projects in Nepal have indicated that 66 percent of women have endured verbal abuse, 33 percent emotional abuse, while 77 percent of the perpetrators were family member (UNICEF, 2001).

According to paragraph 112 of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms... In all societies, to a greater or lesser degree, women and girls are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse that cuts across lines of income, class and culture.

Some historians believe that the history of domestic violence against women is tied to the history of women being viewed as property and a gender role assigned to be submissive to men and also other women. Historically, violence against women has

been in existence since long and is widespread in Nepali society. It has started being openly discussed and addressed only in the last decade. The way of looking at women has changed significantly that shifted from being child bearers and providers of health care in the 60's and 70's to a slow understanding of their important productive role in rural economy in the 80's, and to the recognition of women as citizens in need of equal legal and political rights in the 90's. Domestic violence against women is not a very new phenomenon; it was as old as the origin of the family, though its nature was changed according to place and period of time. As in the market, similarly in family the resourceful person dominate to the resource less ones, which ultimately results into the violation of the rights of the weaker one and therefore a violence. However, due to the lack of reporting of these kinds of matters in the public and also it being considered from the very beginning as something that is “private” and “non-interferable matter” was not defined as crime and therefore was not address by the procedures of the law (Pradhananga and Shrestha, 2008).

Unnecessary and continual violence against women has been largely overlooked by Nepali culture in the name of keeping a woman in her place, to obstruct her right to speak, to make decisions and to control her sexuality. The World Health Organization stated that at least one in five women is physically or sexually abused by a man at some time of her life; and research suggests that up to a third of all women are more at risk from their husband, fathers, neighbors or colleagues than from the strangers. In 1993, the United Nations Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women which states that "violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men." The Declaration provides a definition of gender-based abuse, calling it "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life"(Joshi, 2008).

Although numerous programs have been launched in Nepal against domestic violence, women still continue to suffer from it in Nawalparasi district. Several non-governmental organizations are operating in the district to work for the welfare of the women but incidents of gender discrimination and domestic violence against women continue unabated. With the efforts of the NGOs, the district was declared as women violence free zone two years ago but no NGO is found to be working seriously for the implementation of the declaration. When asked, Mina Poudel, Women Development Officer stressed on the need to hold awareness progress on violence against women to make the district free from gender discrimination and domestic violence. "The society should be appraised of women's rights and their condition to minimize the cases of violence against women," Parbata Pandey who is actively working for the women's welfare, said, adding, "Women are facing violence against them over issues as minor as unsatisfactory cooking and washing clothes." Similarly, violence against women is still in practice due to the trend of second marriages by husbands, she added. The Nawalparasi Women Development Office operates eight rehabilitation centers to help women victims of domestic violence. There is no massive practice of filing case due to lack of social pressure and public awareness drive even though the incidents of domestic violence are ascending day after day. Public prosecutor Binod Pokharel said the victim side has not proactively come forward to register cases of gender-based violence when there was no adequate awareness among people in the community. Registrar of Dhanusha District Court, Jawahar Prasad Singh informed that only two cases related to domestic violence have been so far registered in the court in line with the Act. Deputy Superintendant of Police (DSP) Tek Bahadur Gurung said the implementation of the Act against Domestic Violence is suffering as cases are generally mediated on consent between the two sides keeping in mind to promote harmony rather than rivalry inside home. Speaking at the programme, Chief of District Women Police and Children Shell Subhadra Ale, WOREC Nepal Chief Namrata Giri, Ajit Thakur of National Human Rights Commission, advocates, Bal Krishna Karki and Pawan Kumar Karna shed light on the status and challenges of the implementation of anti-domestic violence act (The Himalayan Times, 2010).

Violence against women is a universal phenomenon that persists in all countries of the world, and the perpetrators of that violence are often well known to their victims. Domestic violence, in particular, continues to be frighteningly common and to be

accepted as “normal” within too many societies. Since the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the same year, civil society and governments have acknowledged that violence against women is a public policy and human rights concern. The WHO study challenges the perception that home is a safe haven for women by showing that women are more at risk of experiencing violence in intimate relationships than anywhere else. Violence against women by their male partners is common, wide-spread and far-reaching in its impact. According to the study, it is particularly difficult to respond effectively to this violence because many women accept such violence as “normal”. Violence against women has a far deeper impact than the immediate harm caused. It has devastating consequences for the women who experience it, and a traumatic effect on those who witness it, particularly children. It shames states that fail to prevent it and societies that tolerate it. Violence against women is a violation of basic human rights that must be eliminated through political will, and by legal and civil action in all sectors of society (WHO, 2011).

It has been more than two years since the country endorsed the Domestic Violence and Punishment Act to address violence against women and penalize perpetrators, but its implementation is still an uphill task. Experts said the government is yet to take serious action against perpetrators despite a provision in the Act. They said even the concerned sectors such as security personnel, social workers and women bodies are not that aware of the Act. “Domestic violations are increasing by the day for want of implementation of the Act, but the concerned sectors have turned a deaf ear to the issue,” said Basnet. The Act, passed by Parliament on April 19, 2009, defines physical, mental, sexual, financial and behavioral violence as domestic violence. Ananda Raj Pokharel, secretary, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, said cases of violence against women were rife. He said the ministry has established 84 safe homes for domestic violence victims in 15 districts and eight rehabilitation centers in different parts of the country for victims of trafficking. “Minor cases of violence are sorted out by the PLC while serious cases are sent to the court,” he said. The Act provisions up to four months of jail and Rs 6,000 fine for perpetrators of domestic violence and half the punishment for accomplices. In the case of physical or psychological injuries, the perpetrator has to bear all medical expenses. As per the law, victims have to file complaints with police,

a local body or National Women Commission within 90 days of facing domestic violence (The Himalayan Times, 2011).

## **1. 2 Statement of the problem**

Domestic violence against women has continued throughout history unreported and unchallenged. It has profound effect on women. After marriage, the greater risk of violence for women continues to be in their home where husband and family live together. Domestic violence has been taking place primarily within the home and among members of a particular household. Thus, domestic violence has been treated as a private matter and not of social concern and there is a cultural practice not to interfere by any outsiders.

Victims of domestic violence are often married women. Incidence of home based violence against women is high though it is unreported. Violence is unacceptable and no women deserve to be beaten, sexually abused or made to suffer emotionally. However, domestic violence is a sensitive issue. This study will try to determine and fulfill the gap leading to violence against women.

Family members, village elders, police, quasi- judicial administrators, and even women advocates and lawyers retained to represent victims work to reconcile the victims of domestic abuse with their abusers. This pressure to reconcile is due in part to the pervasive view that there is no place for a woman to live outside her family; a woman is completely dependent on her husband for food, clothing and shelter for herself and her children. Perpetrators of domestic violence are generally not prosecuted in the Nepali criminal justice system. The risk of violence at home is common to women regardless of their social position, creed, color or culture. More than 67 existing laws provide discriminatory provisions against women. Because women lack the financial resources to seek private legal relief and given the non-public nature of most assaults on women, domestic violence has been relegated to a second-class crime (Graham and Bond, 1998).

Women rarely report incidents of domestic violence to the police. When a report is made, an arrest is very unlikely and police usually encourage the woman to reconcile with her partner. Unless domestic violence rises to the level of murder or attempted



murder, state prosecutors will generally not pursue the cases. The psychology of a battered woman is such that it is not easy for her to leave the man or to file a civil or criminal case against him. Rarely would they seek help. Battered wives want to protect the reputation of their husbands or are afraid of the consequences of a criminal conviction, such as unemployment for the husband and financial instability for the family. Loyalty to the family would always take precedence over the woman's own safety. This general idea refers not only to the inadequacy of the law in the protection of women from male violence. It also reflects social values and attitudes regarding the relative position of man and woman. These ideology-based laws prohibit women's mobility in public places and social interaction. Women are denied access to public office and positions of power in public institutions such as the judiciary, the legislature, religious bodies and various other institutions of government. This sets the scene for male domination in the public sphere and in turn influences the nature of gender hierarchy in the private sphere (Graham and Bond, 1998).

There is a growing recognition that countries cannot reach their full potential as long as women's potential to participate fully in their society is denied. Women's participation has become key in all social development programmes, be they environmental, for poverty alleviation, or for good governance. By hampering the full involvement and participation of women, countries are eroding the human capital of half their populations. True indicators of a country's commitment to gender equality lie in its actions to eliminate violence against women in all its forms and in all areas of life. Violence is a major obstacle to development. Violence against women in particular hinders progress in achieving development targets. Violence against women is a major threat to social and economic development. This was recognized in the millennium Declaration of September 2000, in which the General Assembly of the United Nations resolved "to combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" Violence against women is a major threat to social and economic development. This was recognized in the Millennium Declaration of September 2000, in which the General Assembly of the United Nations resolved "to combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women"(WHO, 2005).

Due to the social, cultural norms and values domestic violence against women is considered as a family matter. Women themselves also do not perceive violence against them as a violent act and consider it as a result of their bad fate. Also, there are plenty of cases where women, who make effort to raise their voice against the violence that occurs within the private domain, are not supported by their family and society and they were given the connotation of “deviant women”. All these factors affect the reporting of the acts of domestic violence, which ultimately give the wrong interpretation of the crime not being prevalent in our society and therefore a challenge for the enactment of appropriate law to address the problem. Most of the research done earlier were at the national level and focused on violence against women, and identified domestic violence as one of the components. These studies ignored the nature of violence and threats inside the house. A national level study on the incidence of domestic violence against women must be undertaken to identify accurately the dimension and the magnitude of the problem. A study on the impact of the government and NGOs’ initiatives to address domestic violence problem should also be conducted and there is a need to see the effectiveness of related legislation and mechanisms for implementation of policies and plans of action proposed by the government (Pradhananga and Shrestha, 2008).

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

Women of Nepal are suffering from various forms of violence, which directly affect their enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedom. Nepal is a party to 16 International Human Rights Instrument including the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Law-makers, policy-makers and law interpreters need to enact and interpret national legislation in consistency with the standards embodied in this Convention. Nepal cannot use ‘culture’ as a justification to keep violating women’s human rights and the definition provided by the CEDAW Convention cannot be ignored. Section 9 of the Nepal Treaty Act, 1991 states that the international treaties to which Nepal is a party, which are inconsistent with national laws, will supersede national law when inconsistencies exist. The Constitution of Nepal promise equality and even special measures for the advancement of women. However, in reality we do not have any specific mechanism to address the domestic violence against women and to fulfill the international

obligations for the advancement of society free from inequality. Women's right continues to be violated inside the home physically, emotionally and sexually, despite its resultant consequences to women's mental and physical health, and the economic cost to society and its intergeneration effect (Pradhananga and Shrestha, 2008).

The following are the underlying objectives of this study:

1. To analyze the extent of domestic violence experienced by women.
2. To analyze the effects of violence on women.
3. To analyze how the survivors cope and respond to domestic violence

#### **1.4. Justification of the study**

Domestic violence is a home-based violence, which strangely affects women than men. This includes physical & psychological abuse, deprivation and marital rape. In the Nepali context domestic violence stems from the assumption that once a man marries women he has absolute control over her. It is usually due to the right to domination of males. This is principally owing to the influence of the traditional idea of men "Men are senior to women". It has severe effect on human rights and dignity of women. It is the result of unequal power relation between women and men.

In fact, the family should be the safest place for women in time of trouble. The family is an institution where one should get emotional support, comfort, care, food and shelter. Yet this institution can be the unsafe place for women. It can be a battle zone, full of conflicts and strife. Because it is perceived as a closed and private space, the home allows for atrocities to continue undetected and sanctioned by the community. Domestic violence is one such atrocity.

Domestic violence is a problem, which is usually hidden from the public view. It is therefore an issue which is largely unrecognized and unacknowledged in our country. The most important thing is that they protect their beloved husband from having criminal records, which could jeopardize his career and future livelihood.

Violence against women has gained increasing recognition as a human right issue, as a reproductive health issue, and as a developmental issue that affects not just women

themselves but society as a whole. So it is necessary to say that if women do not report the incidence of domestic violence, it may become the most unreported crime in the society. It may be very widespread and dangerous to leave domestic violence un-intervened; our society is condoning the culture of violence, which has women and the country's socio-economic well being as its hostage. So it is necessary to bring out the matter, as it is always hidden inside homes.

In the Nepali context, no one intervenes during domestic disputes at homes due to our cultural practices. One more backdrop of this pervasive culture where perpetrator of domestic violence receives legal, judicial and cultural impunity, a handful of organizations have recognized a need for concrete and effective means to address domestic violence.

This study has been designed to explore the root cause, consequences, types and ways of coping domestic violence. The findings of this study may help to sensitize program designers to conduct further studies to explain in more details for planning regarding legal protection of women especially married women.

### **1.5 Limitations of the study**

Though an effort has been made to discover various aspects of domestic violence against women, but the study has the following limitations.

1. The study is only about domestic violence against women, it does not deal with other severe kinds of violence committed against women.
2. The researcher was not able to understand the psychology of the perpetrators thus the study lacks the perspectives of the perpetrators which are in fact equally crucial in understanding domestic violence against women.
3. Information bias may have occurred due to sensitive issues regarding hidden problems. Similarly, due to the sensitive nature of the study, participants had hesitated to answer all the questions.

### **1.6 Organization of the study**

This study is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1 deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, justification of the study, objectives of the study, study limitations and organization of the study.

Chapter 2 focuses on review of the related literature especially overview of domestic violence against women worldwide, prevalence in South Asia and Nepal; types, causes and consequences of domestic violence against women; perpetrators, mechanism to control violence, government's policy to address domestic violence; and coping and responding mechanism.

Chapter 3 deals with methodology. Methodological part includes rationale for the selection of the study area, study design, nature and source of data; universe and sampling design, tools of data collection, five case studies, key informants and, methods of data processing and analysis.

Chapter 4 deals with the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the respondents and their spouse.

Chapter 5 deals with the experience, effect and types of domestic violence against married women.

Chapter 6 emphasizes on the situation of sharing and coping of domestic violence against married women by husband and other members of the family.

Chapter 7 presents summary, conclusions and recommendations. The summary includes a brief description about the objective, methodology and data processing. Conclusion is focused on the briefing of the overall study findings. Recommendations are suggestions made on the basis of the findings to reduce violence in the society.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I have taken the initiative to discuss explicitly the available data on domestic violence against women. Definitions of violence, violence against women worldwide, in South Asia and in Nepal, types of violence, causes of domestic violence as well as its effects and ultimately the perpetrators of violence have been covered in this section of my research.

#### **2.1 Definition of violence**

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993, defines violence against women as *“any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”*.

Domestic violence against women includes physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, dowry related violence, marital rape, physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere; trafficking in women and forced prostitution.

According to World Health Organization, *“Domestic violence includes physical acts of violence within the family including sexual coercion by the husband, physical threats, psychological abuse and controlling actions such as enforcing physical isolation and/or controlling access to information and services”* (WHO, 1997).

*“Violence not only harms women physically, it also leaves deep psychological impact on both the victims and their families. Even their communities and nation as a whole affected by violence against women”* (SAATHI, 2001).

Domestic violence against girls and women is a global problem that kills and tortures women physically, psychologically, sexually and economically. Domestic violence can include economic scarcity and isolation which may harm the safety and health of women.

Gender- based violence is a deadly fact of life for many women and girls around the world. Domestic violence is an insidious form of gender-based violence. In the place where women should feel the greatest safety and security-the family women and girls often face terror from physical, psychological, sexual and economic abuse.

Violence against women has come to be recognized as a legitimate human rights issue and as a significant threat to women's health and wellbeing (Mary and Heise, 2005).

Domestic Violence in Nepal, a study conducted by Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights in 2008 revealed that in Nepal, violence against women frequently takes the form of verbal harassment and emotional abuse in addition to physical violence. In the opinion of several women's human rights advocates, psychological abuse (mental torture) is more prominent than purely physical abuse. Domestic violence against women, including beatings by husbands, dowry-related murders, and physical and psychological harassment by families is rampant in Nepal (Joshi, 2008).

Domestic violence against women can be defined as “*violation of a woman’s personhood, mental or physical integrity, or freedom of movement*”. It is the result of unequal power relation between women and men. Underlying this power relation is patriarchy, the social structure that is constructed, reinforced and perpetuated by socio-political institutions put in place by men which ensures that men, by virtue of their gender have power and control over women and children (Acharya, 2010).

## **2.2 An overview of domestic violence against women worldwide**

In the United States, a woman is battered, usually by her intimate partner, every 15 seconds. Physical violence is nearly always accompanied by psychological abuse, which can be just as demeaning and degrading. Among 613 abused women in Japan,

for instance, close to 60 per cent had suffered from physical, psychological and sexual abuse at the hands of their partners; only 8 per cent had experienced physical abuse alone (Schuler, 1992).

Around the world, at least one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or abused in some other way — most often by someone she knows, including her husband or another male family member; one woman in four has been abused during pregnancy. Millions of women require medical attention or otherwise suffer the impact of gender-based violence; fear of violence inhibits discussion and constrains the health choices and life opportunities of many millions more. Psychological abuse almost always accompanies physical abuse. In addition, one third to one half of all cases involves sexual abuse. A high proportion of women who are beaten are subjected to violence repeatedly. Accordingly, the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, and the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, gave priority to this problem (WHO, 2005).

International research has signaled that violence against women is a much more serious and widespread problem than previously suspected. A review of studies carried out prior to 1999 indicated that between 10% and 52% of women reported being physically abused by an intimate partner at some point in their lives, and between 10% and 30% reported they had experienced sexual violence by an intimate partner. Between 10% and 27% of women and girls reported having been sexually abused, either as children or adults (WHO, 2011).

### **2.3 Domestic violence against women in South Asia**

The status of women in India is not equal to the status of men in terms of access, participation, and reward. This situation owes its existence to the patriarchal and feudalistic structure of the society. Violence against women within the family is a global phenomenon. Alcoholism, poverty, property dispute, extra-marital affairs, drug addiction, dowry, economic crisis and divorce related issues are the main causes of domestic violence in India.



According to the National Family Health Survey, 2000 (NFHS-2) one in every five women experience domestic violence from the age of 15 onwards. Very often, women used to suffer violence against them in silence for fear of adverse repercussions (Ahuja, 1987).

The National Crime Report of 1991 reveals that in every 33 minutes a woman is abused by her husband. Women in North India have relatively less autonomy and enjoy fewer opportunities for control over economic resources than their counterparts in the South ( Mahajan and Madhurima, 1989).

According to the study undertaken by INCLEN, domestic violence in India comprises 36.9 percent physical violence and 35.5 percent psychological violence respectively (Celine, 2003).

In South Asia, one in every two women experiences violence in her daily life. There is no acceptance that domestic violence against women is a serious human rights issue; that it impacts on women's socio-economic well-being, health, sexual and reproductive rights; and, significantly, that it reduces women's contribution to the gross domestic product. In Pakistan, 80 per cent of women experience violence within their homes. Forty seven per cent of Bangladeshi women experience some physical violence at the hands of their intimate partners. Every week, more than ten women in Bangladesh suffer from an acid attack that leaves them brutally disfigured, and often blind and disabled. According to the Chairperson of the National Committee on Women, violence against women is on the increase in Sri Lanka. Sample surveys reveal that 60 per cent of women suffer domestic violence in Sri Lanka. There is no accurate figure of the scale of sex-trafficking of women and girls from Nepal. Despite published figures suggesting that between 5,000 to 7,000 Nepali women and girls are trafficked for sex work each year, and that 200,000 Nepali women and girls are working in the sex industry in India (Human Rights Watch 1995:6), the actual magnitude of women and girls who are trafficked from Nepal is unknown. In Afghanistan, there is a significant incidence of rape, forced marriage, abductions, and assaults. Women are also attacked and imprisoned by armed groups without due process, for not complying with their Taliban- style edicts on dress and behavior (Mehta, 2004).

Amnesty International report indicated a high incidence of such violence. Due to the sharp gender, there has been a higher rate of mortality among women in South Asia than in many other parts of the world. Currently an estimated 50 million women are 'missing' from the population due to gender-discriminatory practices. One in six deaths of a female infant in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan is due to neglect and discrimination. Despite introduction by the State of extensive constitutional and statutory safeguards, women in South Asia remain disadvantaged in their quest for a life free of violence (Mehta, 2004).

Every six hours, somewhere in India, a young married woman is burned alive, beaten to death, or driven to commit suicide. It is estimated that more than 15,000 women suffer from dowry-related violence ever year. In a nation-wide survey in India, nearly 50 per cent of women reported at least one incident of physical or psychological violence in their lifetime (Mehta, 2004).

#### **2.4 Domestic violence against women in Nepal**

In Nepal, violence against women is one of the major factors responsible for the poor health of women, livelihood insecurity, and inadequate social mobilization. The magnitude of gender-based violence in Nepal is extremely high. This fact indicates that women are at high risk of facing violence from their family members and that even their home is not a safe place. Social relations of power place women in a subordinate position, giving many women few rights in the family, community and society in general.

In a research conducted by SAATHI in 1997 on violence against women in Nepal, gender specific violence against women occurs in all sphere of society. It revealed that 93% were exposed to mental and emotional torture, 82% were beaten, 30% were raped, 28% were forced into prostitution, and 64% reported polygamy.

Similarly, in another study undertaken by SAATHI in 2000 revealed that 66 per cent of the women in the country endure verbal abuse, 33 per cent emotional abuse, and in

all cases 77 per cent of the perpetrators were the family members. Fifty eight percent of women who suffered domestic violence confirmed daily abuse (SAATHI, 2001).

A reference kit on violence against women in South Asia (2001) has presented the data of Nepal on domestic violence faced by married women.

- In a period of 6 months starting from June to December 2000, the women's right help line in Katmandu received 624 calls from women. Out of these call, 107 were from battered wives.
- 58 % of the domestic violence cases reported daily abuse.
- 77 % of the violence perpetrators were family members, and
- 66 % of the women endured verbal abuse, 61 % sentimental torture and 33 % emotional torture etc.

A report on Violence by Amnesty International (2001) has also reported that women have been the victim of mental and physical abuse, rape and other human rights violations. The census recorded half million women living in polygamous marriages and other studies have shown that polygamy is a serious cause of depression for women in Nepal.

According to Asia Foundation, Nepal almost five hundred cases of suicide were reported to Nepal Police in 2003-2004 (Joshi, 2008).

The Nepal Human Development Report 2004 also reinforces domestic violence to be a grave and unaddressed problem. Most perpetrators of domestic violence escape persecution under the Nepali criminal justice system. A survey by a Kathmandu-based NGO CWIN found a majority of children who run away from home do so because of violence within them. And, a media monitoring team, National Network against Girl Trafficking has confirmed an increase in the cases of domestic violence in 2004.

Population Briefs, a newsletter of the Population Council (September 2005), reports a high level of physical abuse in homes among pregnant women in Nepal.

A report commissioned by the NWC revealed startling discrimination against women in terms of ownership of assets and properties. The report, which assessed the situation in 68 of 75 districts in Nepal, exposed the skewed nature of property

distribution. It revealed that only 0.78% of houses were actually (legally) owned by women (about three women in 500 had houses in their names). Only 5.25% of women had land-ownership certificates in their name. Likewise, only 5.45% of women owned livestock. About 17% of women had some kind of assets in their name such as ornaments, jewelry, property, or land. Only 16% of women had a regular income. And, only 8% of the civil-service and private-sector workforce is made up of women. “Because the women of Nepal suffer from various kinds of discrimination, they have landed in such a pathetic socioeconomic condition”, said Babita Basnet, a prominent women’s rights activist in Nepal. The central cell for women and children at Nepal’s police headquarters has recorded 1100 cases of domestic violence against women in the past year. Since these reports consist of only the formal complaints lodged by women, officials concede that they are only the tip of the iceberg. As these violent episodes occur within family settings, often the women end up with no-one and nowhere to turn to in a society that is still overtly patriarchal (Dhakal, 2008).

Likewise, Deuba & Rana in 2005/6 mentioned that domestic violence has been reported to result in high maternal death, preterm birth and high prenatal mortality, abortion, miscarriage and impact on long-term health of women. A study conducted by them among 300 mothers of hospital deliveries and 50 mothers who delivered in the communities showed that domestic violence was a frequent phenomenon during pregnancy. Most frequent types of injuries included black eye, bruises, sprains and face injuries because of hitting, slapping, kicking, pulling hair, burning with cigarette etc. Some 42% of women reported forced sexual intercourse during pregnancy. These findings show that violence against women is prevalent and often results in severe physical and psychological ill health to the pregnant women and children. Women are thus denied the most fundamental of Human Rights: namely life, liberty, bodily integrity and dignity of the person. All these socio-cultural factors are seen as laying a strong foundation for the existence and continuity of violence against women in Nepal (Joshi and Kharel, 2008).

Domestic Violence in Nepal, a study conducted by Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights in 2008 revealed that in Nepal, violence against women frequently takes the form of verbal harassment and emotional abuse in addition to physical violence. In the opinion of several women's human rights advocates, psychological abuse is more

prominent than purely physical abuse. Despite rising political awareness, most women in Nepal are still subject to violence. “Of the total incidence of violence against women, domestic violence constitutes over 80%”, said Dhana Kumari Sunar, a member of the National Women’s Commission (NWC). Among the various causes of domestic violence, dowry-related hostilities, second marriage by husbands, assaults on women accused of being witches, and disputes involving properties top the list. “Often, police and local people try to settle the domestic dispute by pressing the women into accepting their ‘fate’ as the society is still dominated by Hindu patriarchy with its own set of strict codes—many of which are in conflict with basic rights for women”, said activist and former NWC chairperson Bandana Rana. However, in recent times, conflict related traumas such as rape and forced displacements have reduced, but domestic violence continues to grow. “We have not seen the incidence of violence against women drop at all. Although the level of awareness among women regarding their rights has increased, sadly the situation has not improved so far as violence against them is concerned”, said Rana, who is also the vice president of Saathi—an organization that runs a shelter home for abused women in Kathmandu. Sita Gurung (name changed), from Bhojpur district in eastern Nepal, found shelter at Saathi. “My husband used to beat me every day. Unable to bear the beatings even at minor causes, I ran away from my house”, said Gurung. Half a million children are out of school and more than 60% of them are girls. The overall literacy for women is 42.5%, compared with 65.1% for men, according to recently released government statistics. Women have received the short end of the stick on the economic front as well (Joshi and Kharel, 2008).

The Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC) said that 648 women across Nepal were subjected to violence in the year 2011. INSEC Nepal Human Rights Yearbook-2012, said they recorded 272 cases of domestic violence, 114 polygamy cases, 111 rapes, 54 witchcraft accusation cases, 31 sexual abuses and 30 cases of women trafficking, among others. Besides, 379 girls under the age of 18 were affected due to these. The book mentioned that Janajati women were most affected by domestic violence. From an economic point of view, women from low economic status were worst-hit, said the report. It estimated that 60 to 70 per cent of women in Nepal face some sort of domestic violence. Physical and mental trauma inflicted by domestic violence is not perceived with due sensitivity. The book mentioned that domestic violence against

women is a deep-rooted traditional practice. Most domestic violence cases are not made public while women tolerate violence against them because of economic, social and cultural reasons, said the yearbook (The Himalayan Times, 2012).

A 2001 survey by the Government National Level Nepal Demographic and Health Survey said a large number of women including those in urban areas- thought it was acceptable for a husband to beat his wife for burning food, arguing going outdoor without permission or refusing to have sex (IRIN, 2012).

## **2.5 Types of violence against women**

A woman experiences various forms of violence at six different stages of her life. During prenatal phase a women faces prenatal sex selection, battering during pregnancy and coerced pregnancy (rape during war). Similarly, during infancy ; female infanticide, emotional and physical abuse, differential access to food and medical care are the violence she faces; on the other hand, during childhood stage , a woman has to overcome genital cutting; incest and sexual abuse; differential access to food, medical care, and education; and child prostitution. Likewise, during adolescence, her fourth stage of life, a woman faces dating and courtship violence, economically coerced sex, sexual abuse in the workplace, rape, sexual harassment and forced prostitution. Moreover, her reproductive stage is filled with abuses by her intimate partners, marital rape, dowry abuse and murders, partner homicide, psychological abuse, sexual abuse in the workplace, sexual harassment, rape and abuse of women with disabilities and finally, during her last stage of life she experiences elder abuse and mostly abuse of widows (Heise, 1994).

The different types of violence experienced by women are:

**Physical violence:** The severity of a physically violent act was ranked according to its likelihood of causing physical injuries. Being slapped, pushed or shoved were defined as moderate physical violence. Being hit with a fist, kicked, dragged, threatened with a weapon, or having a weapon used against her were defined as severe physical violence. The vast majority of women who had ever been physically abused by partners experienced acts of violence more than once, and sometimes frequently. With the exception of the most severe types of physical violence – choking, burning, and

the threatened or actual use of a weapon – in each site, over half of women who had experienced a violent act had experienced that act more than once.

**Sexual abuse:** When someone makes another do sexual things against her will, this is sexual abuse. Overall, the percentage of women who reported sexual abuse by a partner ranged from 6% in Japan and Serbia and Montenegro to 59% in Ethiopia, with the majority of settings falling between 10% and 50%. Nearly one third of Ethiopian women reported being physically forced by a partner to have sex against their will. This high rate of forced sex is particularly alarming in the light of the AIDS epidemic and HIV infection. In most settings, about half of sexual violence was a result of physical force rather than fear. In Ethiopia and Thailand, however, a larger proportion of women reported having sex because they were afraid of something their partner might do (WHO, 2011).

**Psychological violence:** These types of violence include threat or verbal abuse, threat to kill or harm physically or threatening with knife, gun, and weapon. It can be insulting words, prolonged silence after argument, ordering victim out of house, taking children away, or forcing her to bear child, or forcing her to have abortion.

**Traditional violence:** It includes Deuki, Jhuma, Chhoupadi and Badi custom, bonded labor, child marriage, forced labor, polygamy, and dowry related violence (SAATHI, 1997).

## **2.6 Causes of domestic violence against women**

Social, cultural, economic and religious factors reiterate male dominance and allow systematic discrimination and violence to infuse women's lives. Nepal has one of the highest indices of son preference in the world. A study done by Adhikari and Dahal in 2004 in Banke district among 235 women and adolescent girls revealed that overwhelming majority of the women reported that they were often abused with verbal curse, followed by mental torture (85.2) and harassments because they only gave birth to daughters. Reasons behind underreporting are to save family prestige, and privacy, fear of husband and mother-in-law, love and affection with husband and family members, fear of breaking family relation, fear of social traditional and socio-cultural values, fear of further beating, physically assault, marginalization, uncertainty of justice, lack of faith in justice and support of other.

Lack of infrastructural and legal protection mechanisms have led to further increase in domestic violence. 72 percent of the women facing domestic violence live with their husbands or in-laws where they face violence. In Nepal, 11 per cent of younger men (below age 30) and 8 per cent of men (aged 30-39 years) justified wife beating for refusing sex. Men use threats of abandonment, seeking sexual gratification elsewhere, remarriage and quarrel to force sex upon wives early in marriage. As a result, for most present generation women, married life means depression, mental torture, self immolation; bride burning for dowry demand. The single most influential factor of domestic violence in society is the continuation of a generational cycle of abuse and/or a history of abuse in the family of origin (Graham and Bond, 1998).

There is unequal distribution of power between men and women. Factors contributing to these unequal power relations include socioeconomic forces, the family institution where power relations are enforced, fear of and control over female sexuality, belief in the inherent superiority of males, and legislation and cultural sanctions that have traditionally denied women and children an independent legal and social status. Lack of economic resources supports women's vulnerability to violence and their difficulty in releasing themselves from a violent relationship. On the one hand, the threat and fear of violence keeps women from seeking employment, or, at best, compels them to accept low-paid, home-based exploitative labour and on the other, without economic independence, women have no power to escape from an abusive relationship (UNICEF, 2000).

Another mechanism which institutionalizes male privilege over females is the law. Not only are laws inadequate to protect women from male violence, but there are also many discriminatory provisions in the law which reflects society's values and intentions regarding the position of women and men. The study conducted by Forum for Women, Law and Development has revealed that there are 118 legal provisions, 67 schedules, spread in different laws and the Constitution that is discriminatory against women. A recent report of the high level committee formed by HMG/Nepal to review discriminatory laws against women pointed out 138 discriminatory provisions in various laws (Hayword, 2000).



Children who grow up in an environment where conflicts escalate into physical violence, are more likely to resort to the same methods of abuse as adults. There are, however, a number of causes that may lead to domestic violence. Children who witness or are the victims of violence may learn to believe that violence is a reasonable way to resolve conflict between people. Boys who learn that women are not to be valued or respected and who see violence directed against women are more likely to abuse women when they grow up. Girls who witness domestic violence in their families of origin are more likely to be victimized by their own husbands.

Without exception, religion and culture have a great impact on the lives of women in this region. Although there are many positive aspects of religion and culture, many laws, policies and cultural practices are still influenced by patriarchal values that consider women as inferior to men; or which accord separate and discriminatory roles to men and women based on inflexible concepts of gender. Cultural values and norms that privilege the male child and men are still prevalent in many cultural and religious teachings and traditions, and become the base of societal conditioning. Whether it is Buddhism, Islam, Christianity or Hinduism, the teachings and male interpretations are limiting and inhibiting to women. Increasingly there is a challenge to these so-called divine interpretations and cultural practices that sanction the pattern of gender power relations. The tremendous impact of print media has both negative and positive sides. The problem is that these media publish all the information about the victim, including her picture. As a result of this, she is being identified in the locality and faces social problems. So she becomes victimized by the society for the second time. Women are brought up in such a situation that they have believed that they are inferior to men. Women have a tendency to perceive the violence as a natural behavior that happens everywhere. They have seen their mothers and sisters suffering from violence. As well as, women are economically dependent on men. This dependency causes them to tolerate the violence. Due to the dependency of women for economic support on men or their families, both natal as well as husband's house they have no other option but to meekly follow men. Similarly, women due to illiteracy, lack of education and mobility is unaware of their rights and therefore do not voice against their sufferings rather they take it as their misfortune. Silence of women encourages men to maintain the dominance in every sphere. Cultural norms hold women responsible for keeping the family together. A traditional role expectation of wife is

that she has to assume a subordinate position in the marital relationship. Husband wants to continue with his position of dominance, which is one of the most important causes of women's abused marital status (Pradhananga and Shrestha, 2008).

The WHO Study investigated personal, family and social factors that might protect a woman from violence, or might put her at greater risk. Taking an "ecological" approach, the study covered a variety of factors at different levels and within different contexts of a woman's life. Individual factors included the woman's level of education, financial autonomy, level of empowerment and social support, and whether there was a history of violence in her family as she was growing up. Partner factors included the male partner's level of communication with her, use of alcohol and drugs, employment status, whether he had witnessed violence between his parents as a child, and whether he was physically aggressive towards other men. Factors related to the immediate social context included the degree of economic inequality between men and women, levels of female mobility attitudes towards gender roles and violence against women, the extent to which extended family, neighbors, and friends intervene in domestic violence incidents, levels of male-male aggression and crime, and some measure of social capital (WHO, 2011).

### **2.6.1 Age**

Younger women, especially those aged 15 to 19 years were at higher risk of physical or sexual violence. Younger men tend to be more violent than older men, and that violence tends to start early in many relationships. In some settings younger women may be living together with their partners versus being married which, is associated with higher levels of violence. Also in some settings, older women have greater status than young women, and may therefore be less vulnerable to violence (WHO, 2011).

### **2.6.2 Partnership status**

There was also more partner violence among women who were cohabiting (living with a man) rather than married. In almost half of the settings, there was more violence in the past 12 months among women who were separated or divorced, implying in some cases that violence may persist even after separation (WHO, 2011).

### **2.6.3 Education**

The WHO Study found that higher education was associated with less violence in many settings. In some settings (urban Brazil, Namibia, Peru, Thailand, and the United Republic of Tanzania), the protective effect of education appears to start only when women's education goes beyond secondary school. Previous research also suggests that education for women has a protective effect, even when controlling for income and age (13, 14). It may be that women with higher education have a greater range of choice in partners and more ability to choose to marry or not, and are able to negotiate greater autonomy and control of resources within the marriage (WHO, 2011).

## **2.7 Effects of domestic violence against women**

Domestic violence has wide ranging and sometimes long-term effects on victims. The effects can be physical, reproductive and psychological, and can impact the direct victim as well as any children who witness parental violence.

### **2.7.1 Physical effects**

Many of the physical injuries sustained by women seem to cause medical difficulties as women grow older. Arthritis, hypertension and heart disease have been identified by battered women as directly caused by domestic violence early in their adult lives. Medical disorders such as diabetes or hypertension may be aggravated in victims of domestic violence because the abuser may not allow them access to medications or adequate medical care (Perrone, 1992).

Victims may experience physical injury such as bruises, broken bones, head injuries, internal bleeding), chronic pelvic pain, abdominal and gastrointestinal complaints, frequent vaginal and urinary tract infections, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV.

UNFPA (2005) stated that the quality of life in families and communities is reduced by violence. Children who witnessed or experienced abuse suffer long term psychological effects, and are themselves more likely to become perpetrators of violence. Violence against women directly impacts their participation in the work force and democratic processes. Adolescents girl who have suffered abuse are more likely to experience repeated unwanted pregnancy repeated abortions and to contact

sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. The cycle of violence are generational and also individual, women who have been sexually abused once are more likely to suffer again.

The prevalence of injury among ever-abused women ranged from 19% in Ethiopia to 55% in provincial Peru. Injuries were associated with severe physical violence. In Brazil, provincial Peru, Samoa, Serbia and Montenegro, and Thailand over 20% of ever-injured women reported that they had been injured more than five times. Although the majority of injuries were classed as minor (bruises, abrasions, cuts, punctures, and bites), in some settings, more serious injuries (broken bones, injuries to ears and eyes) were relatively common. At least 20% of ever-injured women in Namibia, provincial Peru, Samoa, urban Thailand, and the United Republic of Tanzania reported injuries to the eyes and ears. In Bangladesh, Ethiopia, provincial Peru, and Samoa, over a quarter of ever-injured women reported that they had lost consciousness as a result of partner violence (WHO, 2011).

### **2.7.2 Mental effects**

Along with depression, domestic violence victims may also experience Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which is characterized by symptoms such as flashbacks, intrusive imagery, nightmares, anxiety, emotional numbing, insomnia, hypervigilance, and avoidance of traumatic triggers (Heise, 1994).

In addition, battered women are at greater risk for suicide attempts, with 25% of suicide attempts by Caucasian women and 50% of suicide attempts by African American women preceded by abuse (Fischbach & Herbert, 1997).

Depression remains the foremost response, with 60% of battered women reporting depression (Barnett, 2000).

Around the world, mental health problems, emotional distress, and suicidal behaviour are common among women who have suffered partner violence. Emotional distress is identified through symptoms such as crying easily, inability to enjoy life, fatigue, and thoughts of suicide. Ever-partnered women who had ever experienced physical or sexual violence, or both, by an intimate partner reported significantly higher levels of

emotional distress than non-abused women. Ever-partnered women who had been abused by their partners were much more likely to have ever thought of suicide, and to have attempted it than non-abused women.

### **2.7 .3 Economic effects**

Victims often lose their jobs because of absenteeism due to illness as a result of the violence. Absences occasioned by court appearances can also jeopardize their livelihood. Victims may have to move many times to avoid violence. Moving is costly and can interfere with continuity of employment. Many victims have had to forgo financial security during divorce proceedings to avoid further abuse. As a result they are impoverished as they grow older (Kurz, 1989).

### **2.7.4 Effects on children**

Children who grow up in families where there is intimate partner violence may suffer a range of behavioral and emotional disturbances that can be associated with the perpetration or experiencing of violence later in life. One-third of the children who witness the battering of their mother demonstrate significant behavioral and/or emotional problems, including psychosomatic disorders, stuttering, anxiety and fears, sleep disruption, excessive crying and school problems (Jaffe, 1990; Hilberman & Munson, 1977-78).

Those boys who witness abuse of their mother by their father are more likely to inflict severe violence as adults. Data suggest that girls who witness maternal abuse may tolerate abuse as adults more than girls who do not (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986).

The long-term effects of child sexual abuse include depression and self-destructive behavior, anger and hostility, poor self-esteem, feelings of isolation and stigma, difficulty in trusting others (especially men), and marital and relationship problems, and a tendency toward re- victimization (Finkelhor & Brown, 1988).

Other effects identified include runaway behavior, hysterical seizures, compulsive rituals, drug and school problems (Conte, 1990).

A 2007 study in the U.S. found that in 38% of incidents of intimate partner violence which involve female victims, children under age 12 were residents of the household (Catalano, 2007).

According to The National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2009 children can be displaced by the domestic violence when they seek shelter along with their abused parent. According to a study of domestic violence shelters and services in the U.S., in a single day in 2008, 16,458 children were living in a domestic violence shelter or transitional housing facility, while an additional 6,430 children sought services at a non-residential program.

### **2.7.5 Effects on reproductive health**

A research report presented on violence mentions that battering is a real problem, with the risk increasing during pregnancy. One more study has shown that physical abuse during pregnancy increases the risk of preterm deliveries and low birth weight infants, etc. Thus violence against women has recently become a priority issue for the ministry of women, children & social welfare (Campbell, 1995).

Sexually transmitted infections (STI), unsafe abortion and even suicide are common consequences due to domestic violence. The maternal mortality and morbidity study of Nepal reported that 4 of 132 maternal deaths were suicides (Ministry of Health, 1998).

Deuba & Rana (2005) mentioned that domestic violence has been reported to result in high maternal death, preterm birth and high prenatal mortality, abortion, miscarriage and impact on long term health of women. A study recently conducted among 300 mothers of hospital deliveries and 50 mothers who delivered in the communities showed that domestic violence was a frequent phenomenon during pregnancy. Most frequent types of injuries included black eye, bruises, sprains and face injuries as a result of hitting, slapping, kicking, pulling hair, burning with cigarette etc. Some 42% of women reported forced sexual intercourse during pregnancy.

Deuba and Rana (2005) in the same study found that the most common complications were miscarriage, abortion, stillbirth, preterm delivery, low birth weight, early neonatal deaths, and other ill health of mother and child. These findings show that violence against women is prevalent and often results in severe physical and psychological ill health to the pregnant women and children.

Violence against a pregnant woman may also result in miscarriage or prenatal death. Some studies have shown strong associations between pelvic pain in women and violence by their male partners (Burton, Duvvury and Varia, 2000).

## **2.8 Perpetrators**

Regarding perpetrators, one of the most disturbing aspects is that many abuses have been committed by people the victims knew or even by relatives of the victim. Women often suffer sexual abuses at the hands of their relatives.

Home is not a safe place for women, yet women and children have no other choice than to stay at home with the perpetrator. Women remain vulnerable and largely dependent on men and this makes it extremely difficult for a woman to report that she is being abused within her home (SAATHI 2000; UNICEF 2001).

Another alarming facet that INSEC's data shows is that the perpetrator is many times an army or police officer. In this situation is very difficult for a woman to seek justice as the people in charge to protect her are often the same perpetrators. Because women are made the objects of revenge, there has been an increase of cases of gang rape (INSEC, 2008).

## **2.9 Mechanism to punish the perpetrators**

Most perpetrators of sexual and other domestic violence escape persecution under the Nepali criminal justice system. Access to justice for victims of such violence continues to be a serious problem. (OHCHR Nepal, n.2, at 19-20) It ranges from medical doctors refusing to give a medical examination in the absence of police report, the police refusing to file a First Information Report (FIR) in the absence of a medical report, to threats against the victim and her family to withdraw the

accusations in the rare case that she manages to press charges. Women who do decide to come forth and demand justice face an uphill task. While mediation may be appropriate in some circumstances, the lack of punishment reinforces the climate of impunity. (OHCHR Nepal, n.2, at 26) Although in a few cases individuals accused of rape have been detained, there is an increasing trend of settling the cases outside of formal justice mechanisms. Attempts by victims of domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse have largely been unsuccessful in seeking redress, with police often encouraging mediation, rather than prosecution. Through community intervention, the victim receives inadequate financial compensation and the perpetrators remain at large (INSEC, 2008).

INSEC's data shows that normally no action is taken against the perpetrator or when he is arrested, he is released after few days. In almost half of cases the perpetrator is not being charged of any criminal offence. Often due to lack of formal justice, the perpetrator is taken under control by the villagers. Local people feel they have the right to take revenge and justice in their hands to establish some sort of punishment for the perpetrator. Hence, risk factors for being a perpetrator include low education, past exposure to child maltreatment or witnessing violence between parents, harmful use of alcohol, attitudes accepting of violence and gender inequality. Most of these are also risk factors for being a victim of intimate partner and sexual violence (INSEC, 2008).

The Nepal government has set up a unit to punish perpetrators of domestic violence and counsel victims. Secretary at the Prime Minister's Office and also the Office of the Council of Ministers Dr Trilochan Upreti, said a ministerial level committee had been formed to make the programme more effective. "We are recording and monitoring cases of domestic violence," said Upreti, adding that victims would also be counseled. The unit was established after a large number of women, allegedly practicing witchcraft, were tortured and forced to eat faeces. In four months, the unit recorded 80 cases of domestic violence. The highest number of incidents of domestic violence against women was 30 a month. Most of these incidents have taken place in urban and semi-urban areas and they are related to matters of divorce, property issues, human trafficking, murder, rape, polygamy, among others. Sumana Aryal, section officer of the unit, said strong action would be initiated right away



against the perpetrators. She informed that the government had set up the unit to eliminate the deep-rooted evil against women in society. “The unit is also working on a gender- balanced budget” added Aryal (The Himalayan Times, 2010).

## **2.10 Government policy to address domestic violence against women**

The history of Nepal entered into a new phase during the second half of the eighteenth century when a unified code of law, known as the Code of Country (*Muluki Ain*). Clause 1 of the Chapter on Husband and Wife obliges the husband to execute the partition of the property and handover the share of wife or wives, provided that he commits physical assaults against them, or fails to provide proper maintenance to them. There was no specific legislation in Nepal country addressing domestic violence against women. However, due to the various efforts and pressure of women rights activist and civil societies the government has drafted Domestic Violence (Control) Bill, 2057. This bill was later improved and reformed by Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Bill (Pradhananga and Shrestha, 2008).

The Bill beyond bringing the private sphere under the purview of law through recognition of violence within the home as a criminal offence provides for compensation to the victim, interim order for the protection of the victim and their dependants, and specific role to service providers as support mechanisms. Violence is defined to cover mental, sexual and economic violence within the Bill. It also requires the perpetrator to cover the medical expenses of the victim. Perpetrators will be subject under the Law to up to four months of imprisonment and a fine of Rs 6,000 (about US\$76); accomplices will receive half of the perpetrator's sentence. Where physical or psychological injury has been inflicted, the perpetrator will be responsible for bearing the costs of the victim's treatment. Repeat offenders will face double penalties for each new act of domestic violence perpetrated. Ensuring access to justice and other resources the Bill requires service centers to provide legal aid and psycho-social counseling to the victim as and when required. Lastly in its attempt to ensure higher level of accountability the Bill stipulates enhanced punishment for repeat offenders and public servants who commit acts of domestic violence. Victims of domestic violence are to file a complaint with the police, the local government, or a women's commission within 90 days of being subjected to the act(s). Hearings on their cases will be in camera. Government-founded service centers will provide victims

with security, treatment, and rehabilitation, as well as such services as legal aid and psychological counseling (Kantipur Daily, 2009).

In Nepal, government policy and its commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) have placed a focus on eradicating discrimination between men and women and to provide with the equal rights. Among strategies adopted is the involvement of NGOs, INGOs and local bodies in the process of preventing all forms of violence against women so that the protection of women's human rights could be possible. The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare has also prepared a National Plan of Action for five years to deal with the gender-based violence, including the review of all discriminatory laws and the enactment of domestic violence legislate (Acharya, 2009).

### **2.11 Coping and responding to domestic violence**

Two thirds of women who have been physically abused by their partner in Bangladesh, and about half in Samoa and provincial Thailand, had not told anybody about the violence. In contrast, about 80% of physically abused women in Brazil and Namibia had told someone, usually family or friends. Women who had experienced severe physical violence were more likely to talk to someone than those who had experienced moderate physical violence. Research in many countries has shown that informal networks such as family, friends, and neighbors usually provide the first point of contact for abused women, rather than more formal services. Indeed, the majority of physically abused women (between 55% and 95%) reported that they had never gone to any of the agencies such as police, women's nongovernmental organizations. Women who left home mainly reported going to their relatives and friends or neighbors (WHO, 2011).

The most frequently given reasons for seeking help were related to the severity of the violence, its impact on her children, or encouragement from friends and family to seek help. The most common reason for not seeking help was either that they considered the violence normal or not serious or that they feared consequences such as further violence, losing their children, or bringing shame to their family. More than half of the physically abused women reported having fought back (WHO, 2011).

After temporarily leaving their husband, women often return home for the sake of their family and children. Many love their partner and believing that their husband would change; they return similarly, they are persuaded by their husband to return. Many perhaps have no place to go therefore; they are compelled to stay inspite of the atrocities from their husband in family members.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Rationale for the selection of the study area**

The study was conducted in Motipur VDC ward number-3 of Kapilvastu district in Lumbini zone of southern Nepal. This VDC is situated across the Mahendra National Highway. It is my home town and hence the area is well acquainted. This study was conducted in the month of Falgun and Chaitra 2068. According to the office of Motipur VDC-3, the VDC presently has a population of 3,783 living in 783 individual households. Majority of the inhabitants of the area are hindus followed by chhetris and the number of females surpass the total number of males residing in this area.

#### **3.2 Research design**

The present study is descriptive in nature. It attempts to describe domestic violence against women. Both the qualitative and quantitative techniques were used for data collection. While the quantitative technique was used to explore the background of the respondents and the perpetrators, qualitative technique was used to discover the physical, reproductive, and mental effects of domestic violence on women.

#### **3.3 Nature and source of data**

The proposed study is based mainly on the data collected from primary sources by using different data collection techniques. Primary data was collected through interview with individual married women aged between 15 and 50.

#### **3.4 Universe and sampling design**

Married women aged between 15 and 50 of Motipur VDC ward number-3 is the universe. Out of 783 households, I had randomly selected only 41 households through lottery system because of lack of time and believing that the number would be sufficient. Initially, I prepared chit of papers with household numbers written on them and once ready, I picked them myself randomly. Those numbers selected were the main universe for research and hence, interviewed them. During the research a few were ready to share while some denied. When the number of respondents fell short, I picked additional lotteries of households.

### **3.5 Tools of data collection**

**3.5.1 Interview schedule:** Married women aged 15 to 50 who wanted to share their experience were interviewed at their convenient time using 41 questions. The questions were both open and close ended. Primarily, the questions were in Nepali and later they were translated into English. The questions were divided into the following segments:

i) General information of the respondents.

ii) Information regarding their husband

iii) Information on whether they were facing problems related to domestic violence by their husband or not and the kind of violence they were facing.

iv) The steps they undertook to cope with the situation.

v) Finally, whether they were facing domestic violence from other members of the family.

**3.5.2 Case study:** The respondents for case study were chosen purposively. Life histories, in-depth interviews of the victims were conducted to understand the impact of domestic violence on them. The first case study is on a victim who had faced domestic violence from her unemployed and alcoholic husband, and mother-in-law. The second case is based on a woman who had separated from her husband because of domestic violence. A respondent suffering domestic violence due to dowry was the third case to be studied. Domestic violence after having failed to deliver a son is the fourth study and ultimately, the last deals with a victim who failed to bring enough money and marital goods from her parental home.

**3.5.3 Key informants:** Interview was arranged with a lawyer, a social worker and a medical practitioner to know their experience and opinion on domestic violence against women. They were self selected by the researcher therefore, no sampling procedure was adopted.

### **3.6 Data processing and analysis**

Collected data was checked and organized manually and later computerized for completeness and accuracy. The collected data has been presented using appropriate tables and figures. The obtained information has been categorized under different subheadings according to the objectives. The data that was collected using various methods such as interviews, and case studies have been coded and tabulated after the task of data collection was performed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

While Nepali society upholds the chastity and virginity of women as the ultimate prestige and dignity of a family, on the other hand, the socialization process encourages women to become victims as it instills in them the values of suffering, silence, tolerance and non-retaliation. Values of being shy and shameful about voicing victimization especially domestic violence further plunges a victim into submission.

This chapter tries to present vividly the social, economic and demographic characteristics of 41 respondents and their husbands. In order to demonstrate these features, respondent's age, caste/ethnicity, religion, marital status and their occupation have been explicitly illustrated.

#### 4.1 Age composition

Due to religious and cultural beliefs, girls are married at a very tender age. Young women are more likely to face or are at a higher risk of physical or sexual violence. Violence among young women in many cases tends to start early in many relationships whereas older women have greater status in the family and society and are therefore, less exposed to violence. Though domestic violence in the study area was found among the respondents of all age groups, but majority of them were between 26 and 30 years of age.

**Table 4.1:** Distribution of interviewed women by age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 20	3	7.3
20-25	11	26.8
26-30	13	31.7
31-35	5	12.1
36-40	2	4.8
41-45	4	9.7
46-50	3	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 4.1 presents the age of women interviewed during the survey and range from the age group of 19 to 50 years. The highest 31.7% were aged 26-30 years, 26.8% were aged 20-25, 12.1% comprised of women between 31-35 years, 9.7% were 41-45 years old, 7.5 % were between 46-50 years, and those below 20 years formed 7.3% of the interviewed women, and finally the lowest 4.8% were respondents of age group 36-40.

#### 4.2 Caste/ Ethnicity

Majority of the women interviewed are from higher caste where the Brahmins and the Chhetris constitute more than 73% of the respondents.

**Table 4. 2:** Distribution of interviewed women by caste/ ethnicity

<b>Caste/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Brahmin	23	56.1
Chhetri	7	17.1
Tharu	4	9.7
Thapa	2	4.9
Rai	2	4.9
Dalit	2	4.9
Newar	1	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

According to table 4.2, there are Brahmins, Chhetris, Tharus, Thapas, Rais, Dalits and Newar. Furthermore, the data highlights that the respondents are heterogeneous in terms of caste and ethnic composition. Among these seven different castes, 56.1 % are Brahmins, 17.1 % Chhetris, 9.7 % Tharus, 4.9 % Thapas, Rais and Dalits respectively; and just 2.4 % are Newars. Maximum of the respondents were from the higher caste. Besides the caste variable another reason for the relatively higher representation of higher caste women among the sample could be less freedom within the family and strong religious stereotypical behaviour in men and tolerance and silence in women.



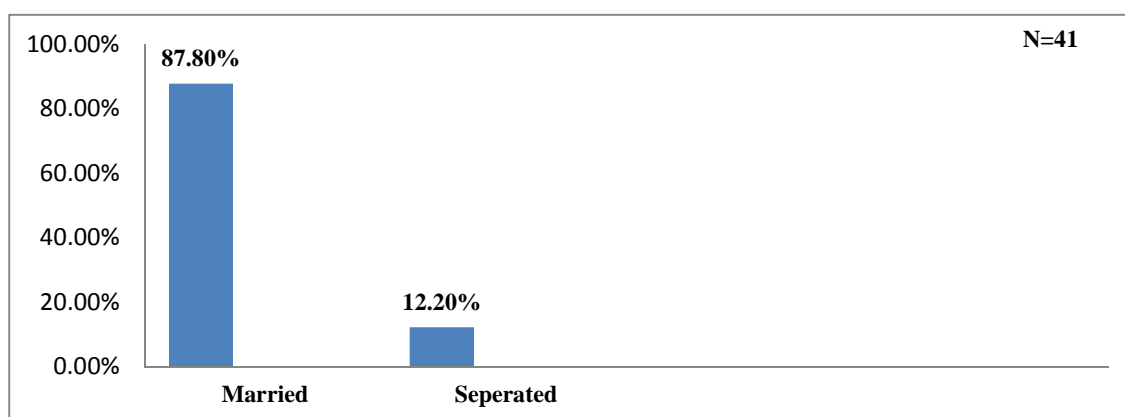
### 4.3 Religious composition

Majority of the people in Nepal follow Hinduism and the data obtained during survey also reveals that all the respondents are Hindus. The patriarchal values promoted by Hindu religion promote the dominance and superior status of men in comparison to women. Religion also encourages stereotypical behaviors, i.e. aggression, power, control in men, and tolerance and silence in women. These, stereotypical roles also influence that has controls over whom and who can explicit whom in a given social context. Study findings reveal that all the respondents (100%) were Hindus.

### 4.4 Marital status

In Nepal, women belonging to hindu religion are married at a very early age as marriage is considered to be very crucial. This is a fact and is clearly demonstrated in the below given table where merely small percentage of the respondents decided to separate and live independently inspite of the atrocities. “छुटिएर के गर्ने छोरा छोरीको भविष्य बिगरिन्छ”- विष्णु, ४२ वर्ष, ग्रहणी (What to do by separating as it may spoil the future of my son and daughter- Bishnu, 42 years old housewife)

**Figure 4.1:** Distribution of interviewed women by marital status



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Figure 4.1 reflects that only 12.2 % of the respondents live separately while the rest comprising of 87.8 % are married and live with their husbands and their family members. Among the married respondents who were from Motipur VDC-3, 7.3% were married at a young age of just 19. However during the survey, no divorced or widow cases were found.

#### 4.5 Educational background

With very less opportunity to study, poor economic condition and with various family obligations, majority of the respondents and their husband have poor educational background. Lack of education can increase vulnerability to domestic violence and exploitation. It could be deduced that as education empowers women, she becomes less vulnerable to domestic violence or more educated victims refuse to be identified due to fear of loss of social prestige. This lack of education is also reflective of the poor economic status of the women.

**Table 4.3:** Distribution of respondents by educational status

<b>Educational Background</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Illiterate	2	4.9
Primary Level	11	26.8
L. Secondary	14	34.1
SLC	7	17.0
Intermediate	5	12.2
Bachelors	2	4.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

The data in table 4.3 explains that out of the total number of respondents, 4.9% did not know how to write or read and the same percentage of women had completed their Bachelor's Degree. In contrast, even though 26.8 % of the respondents were literate upto primary level but the long gap in their education and lack of practice of what they had studied in their childhood lead them to forget everything. Similarly, 34.1 % of the women interviewed had completed their lower secondary studies. Furthermore, 17.0 and 12.2 % of the respondents had completed their school leaving certificate examination (SLC) and intermediate level respectively.

#### 4.6 Occupational status

Because of low educational qualification and the system of relying on agriculture, small business and remittance, we can observe in the given table that equal percentage of men and women depended on these occupations for their livelihood.

**Table 4.4:** Distribution of respondents according to their occupational status

Occupational Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Housewife	26	63.4
Business	6	14.6
Daily Wage (Labour)	6	14.6
Agriculture	2	4.8
Service	1	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100.0</b>

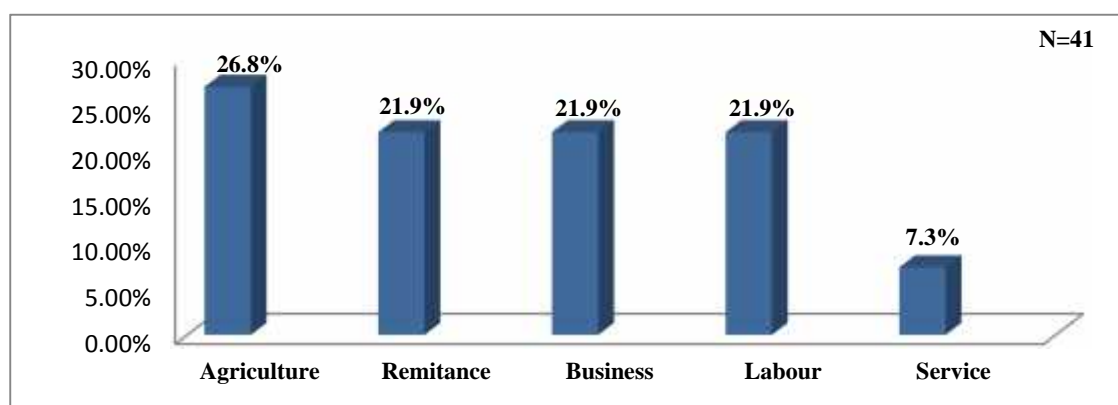
Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 4.4 illustrates that majority that is, 63.4% of the respondents were housewives, 14.6 were engaged in some type of business running grocery, vegetable and fruit shops; and even operating small tea shops. Equal percentage of women that is, 14.6 acted as laborers in agricultural fields, in quarries, in brick factories and in construction sites as daily wage earners on the other hand, 4.8% of the respondents undertook agriculture as their main occupation and lowest of only 2.4 % were associated with educational institutions as teachers and in government offices as employees.

#### 4.7 Family's main source of income

Nepal is an agricultural country where highest number of people depend on it for their daily living and this has been identified in the table below wherein highest number of respondent's family have agriculture as their main source of income.

**Figure 4.2:** Distribution of interviewed women by family's income



Source: Field Survey, 2012

The main income source of the respondents' family was assessed during field visit. Figure 4.2 represents the income source of the family from various areas whereby the highest number of respondents comprising 26.8 % have been sustaining from agriculture, 21.9 % each of the respondents receive income from three different sources viz. remittance, business and their daily wage from various work as labour. On the contrary, the lowest position was occupied by the service sector where only 7.3 % of them were engaged in private and public sectors.

#### 4.8 Husband's educational status

The following table shows the educational background of the respondents' husband. In my finding, I found that majority of the respondents' husband had low education level that is lower secondary and few had completed intermediate.

**Table 4.5:** Distribution of husband's educational status

<b>Educational Background</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Primary Level	5	12.2
L. Secondary	17	41.5
SLC	8	19.5
Intermediate	3	7.3
Bachelors	8	19.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

There is a belief that as the educational level of the husband increases, there is a decrease in domestic violence against women in their family. Comparing table 4.3 and table 4.5 where the educational background of the women interviewed and their husbands is presented, we can find that while 41.5 % of the respondent's husband which is infact the highest percentage in the above given data had studied until lower secondary, just 34.1% of the women interviewed had the same qualification. On the other hand, while 19.5 % each of the interviewed women's husbands had completed their SLC and bachelor's degree respectively, the percentage of interviewed women possessing these qualifications was 17 and 4.9 respectively. In contrast, while 7.3% of the husbands had done their intermediate level, more number of women that is, 12.2% had the same qualification. Though 12.2 % of the husbands were under qualified with

their status of having just primary level, but 26.8% of the respondents had received primary education.

#### 4.9 Husband's occupational status

Occupation of the respondent's husband varied from each other. Majority of the respondent's husband were engaged in business and a few were in service sector, the following table clearly shows this.

**Table 4.6:** Distribution of husband's occupational status

Occupational Status	Frequency	Percentage( % )
Unemployed	3	7.3
Employed	38	92.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Business	9	23.7
Daily Wage (Labour)	7	18.4
Agriculture	7	18.4
Foreign Employment	7	18.4
Teacher	4	10.5
Govt. Service	2	5.2
Driver	2	5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

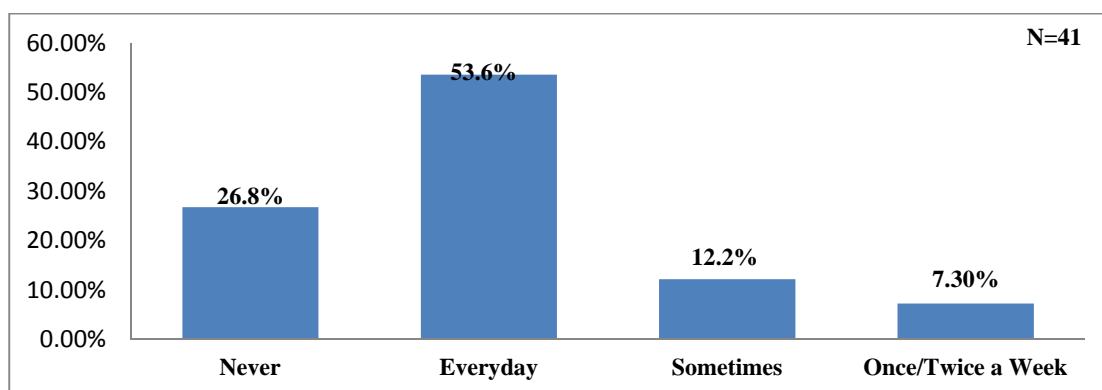
Table 4.6 reflects that while 7.3 % of the husbands were unemployed, majority of them 92.7% were employed. Out of the employed, the highest percentage of the interviewed women's husband that is, 23.7 took up business as their main occupation followed by three sectors such as agriculture, foreign employment and daily wage laborers wherein equal number of men 18.4 % were engaged nonetheless, 5.2 % each of the respondent's husband were associated as drivers and were occupied in government service. Teachers constituted 10.5% of the respondents husbands. Comparing the data provided in table 4.6 with the data presented in table 4.4 where the occupational status of the women interviewed has been given, majority of them 63.4% were housewives, 14.6% each were engaged in business or worked as daily

wage earners and just a handful of them 4.8% and 2.4% were engaged in agriculture and service sector respectively.

#### 4.10 Intake of alcohol by the respondent's husband

Out of 41 women interviewed, 11 respondents (26.8%) opined that their husbands refrained from taking alcohol in contrast, 30 respondents (73.3 %) expressed that their husbands were alcoholic and highest number of them complained that their intake was regular (everyday) in nature. Majority of the domestic violence in Nepal takes place under the influence of alcohol.

**Figure 4.3:** Distribution of respondent's husband by frequency of their alcohol intake



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Figure 4.3 highlights that 53.6 %, the highest number of alcoholic husbands took liquor on a daily basis while 12.2 % said that they drank sometimes and the other 7.3% viewed that they consumed alcohol once or twice a week.

From the survey, it was found that majority of the respondents that is, 31.7% were between 26-30 age group. Brahmins constituted 56.1% of the interviewed women and all the interviewed women followed hinduism as their religion. Though just 12.2% of the women had separated from their husband, but a very high number of them 87.8% were living with their husband. Due to various obligations towards their family and low educational status with just 12.2% and 4.9% having intermediate and bachelors degree as their qualifications, a very large percentage of women interviewed 63.4% had limited roles as housewives. Compared to the respondents, their husbands were better educated with 19.5 % each completing their SLC and bachelors degree respectively. In spite of a higher number having education, 73.17% of the respondents' husbands were alcoholic.

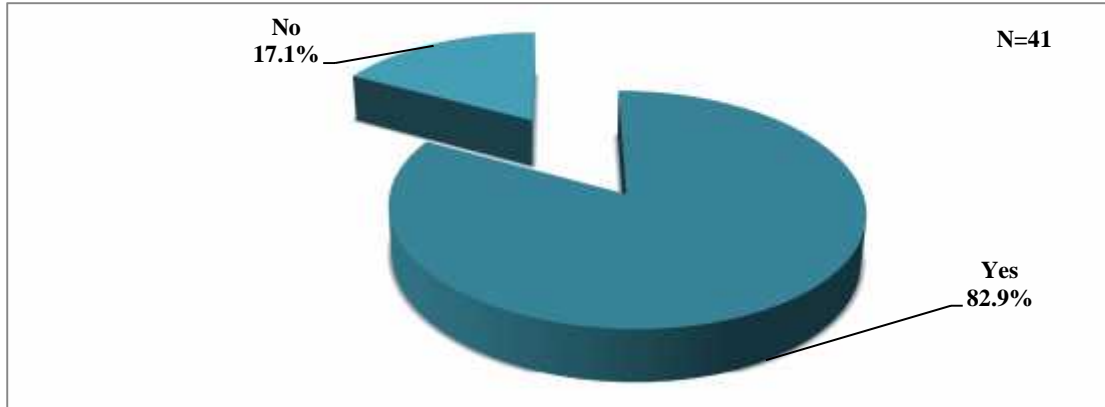
**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**EXPERIENCE AND EFFECT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**  
**AGAINST MARRIED WOMEN**

From the field survey, it was found that most of the respondents had experienced domestic violence in their life. They had experienced physical, sexual and mental violence from their husband on the one hand and physical and mental violence from other members of the family. In this chapter experience of violence, types of violence and effects of violence has been discussed.

**5.1 Experience of domestic violence in life time**

Out of the total number of respondents, maximum number of them had experienced some type of domestic violence in their life and this has been clearly explained in the given table and pie chart respectively.

**Figure 5.1:** Distribution of respondents according to their experience of any type of violence



Source: Field Survey, 2012

**Note:** The data presented above is based on multiple responses

Figure 5.1 explains the data obtained from the field visit where 82.9 % of the respondents had experienced domestic violence while 17.1% denied having faced any. This shows that prevalence of violence against women is high.

## 5.2 Types of violence

The respondents had experienced domestic violence not only from their husbands but also from other members of the family. According to our findings, they had faced physical, sexual and mental violence in their life time.

**Table 5.1:** Distribution of respondents according to types of violence experienced in life time

Types of Violence	Percentage (%)
Physical	63.4
Sexual	48.8
Mental	63.4

Source: Field Survey, 2012

**Note:** The data presented above is based on multiple responses

According to table 5.1, a dominant percentage of the women interviewed had undergone physical and mental violence with 63.4% each facing them in their life time while 48.8% had experienced sexual violence.

Here, physical violence includes cuts, injuries, and broken bones while sexual violence incorporates heavy bleeding. On the other hand, tension, blackmailing, insult, anxiety, fatigue and thought of suicide are a part of mental violence.

## 5.3 Perpetrators

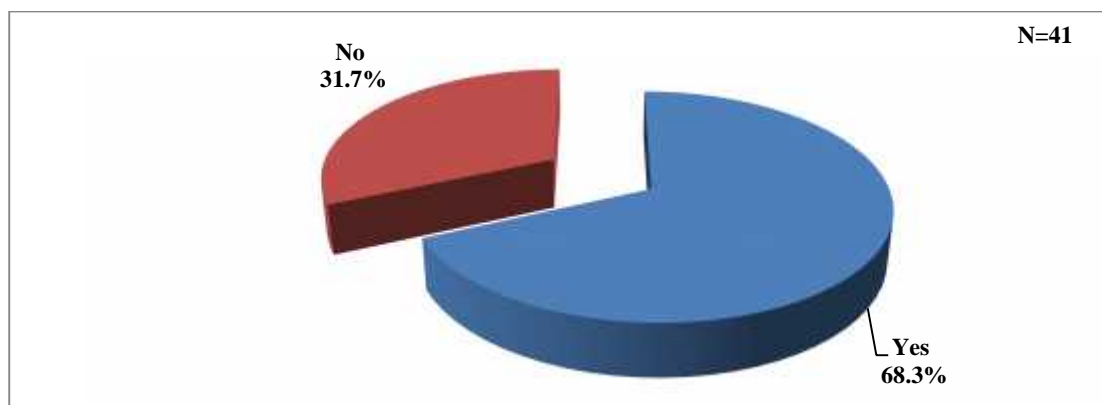
A perpetrator is a person, group, or institution that directly inflicts, supports and condones violence or other abuse against a person or a group of persons. Perpetrators are in a position of real or perceived power, decision making and thus exert control over their victims (UNICEF, 2000). The perpetrators of domestic violence are mainly husband and other members of the family such as mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law and many more.

### 5.3.1 Experience of domestic violence from husband

Most of the respondents acknowledged that they had faced domestic violence from their husband in their life and this has been indicated in the table and pie chart provided underneath.



**Figure 5.2:** Distribution of respondents according to their experience of domestic violence from their husband



Source: Field Survey, 2012

The given data shows that 68.3% of the total respondents had faced domestic violence in the hands of their husbands in their life nevertheless; the remaining 31.7% denied having faced any from their husband.

### 5.3.2 Domestic violence by in-laws

Apart from the husband, women in Nepal often face harassment and violence from the other members of the husband's family for various reasons.

**Table 5.2:** Distribution of respondents according to whether they faced domestic violence from in-laws

Response (Yes/No)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	21	51.2
No	20	48.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Out of the 41 women interviewed, 51.2% of them replied that they have experienced domestic violence from in-laws. On the other hand, 48.8 % said that they did not experience any violence from them.

### 5.3.3 Perpetrators of domestic violence other than the husband

Out of forty one respondents, twenty one agreed that they had experience domestic violence from other members of the family. They were violated by their mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law etc. This has been clearly explained in the given table below.

**Table 5.3:** Distribution of respondents according to the main perpetrators of domestic violence other than husband

<b>Perpetrators</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Mother-in-law	66.7
Sister-in-law(nanda)	33.7
Father-in-law	23.8
Sister-in-law(jethani)	4.7
Sister-in-law(deurani)	4.7

Source: Field Survey, 2012

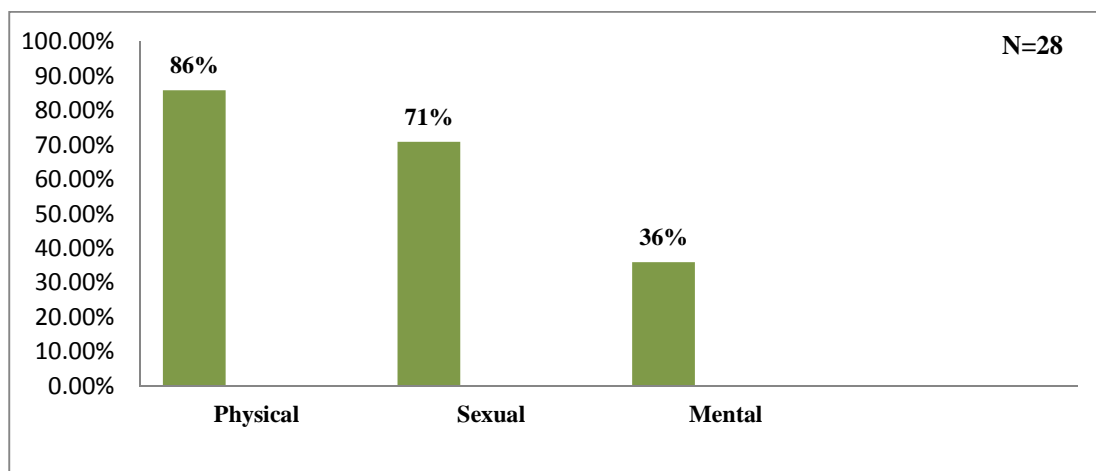
**Note:** The data presented above is based on multiple responses

The provided table states that 66.7% of the respondents faced domestic violence from their mother- in-law which infect is the highest in the given data while violence from sister- in -law comprises of 33.4%. 23.4% of the interviewed women opined that their father- in- law had committed domestic violence in contrast, 4.7% each of the respondents faced ill treatment from the sister- in -laws (deurani and jethani).

### 5.4 Types of violence from husband

Out of the forty one interviewed respondents, twenty eight had experienced domestic violence from their husband sometime in their life. They had experienced violence such as physical, sexual and mental. The figure below clearly defines the percentage of each types of violence.

**Figure 5.3:** Distribution of respondents according to the types of domestic violence experienced from husband



Source: Field Survey, 2012

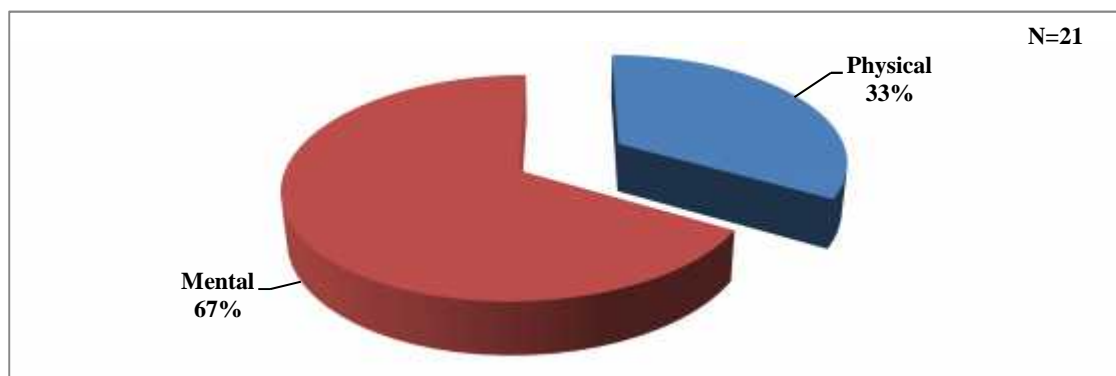
**Note:** The data presented above is based on multiple responses

The provided bar diagram (figure 5.3) shows that 86% of the respondents had experienced physical violence likewise, the second highest percentage 71% of the women interviewed answered that they had faced sexual violence from their husbands in contrast, the lowest of only 36% answered that mentally they were affected from domestic violence.

### 5.5 Types of violence from in- laws

Twenty one out of forty one respondents had experienced domestic violence from other members of the family. Majority of the respondents had experienced mental violence from other members of the family followed by physical violence .The percentage of physical and mental violence have been illustrated below with the help of a pie-chart.

**Figure 5.4:** Distribution of interviewed respondents according to the types of domestic violence experienced from in-laws



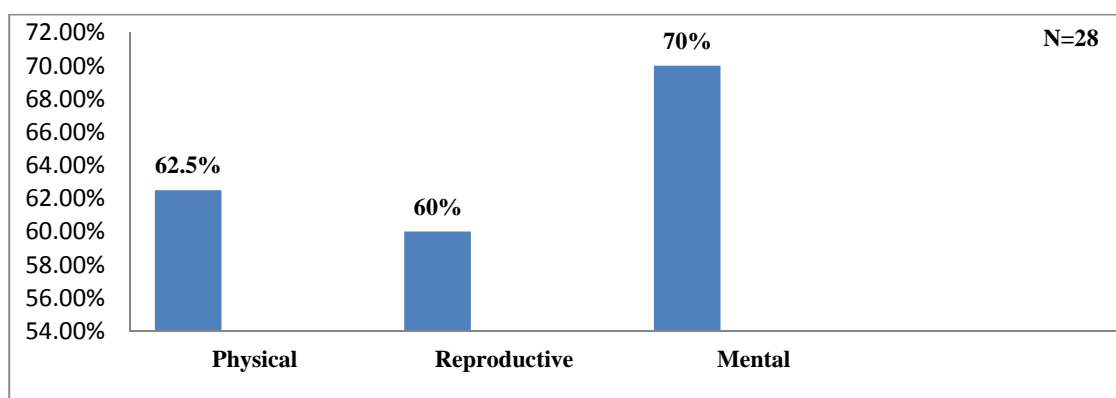
Source: Field Survey, 2012

Figure 5.4 states that 67% the highest number of women interviewed had faced mental violence from other members of the family while 33% had undergone physical harassment.

### 5.6 Effects of domestic violence by husband

Though women in Nepal now and then face domestic violence however, some have long lasting effect while some deny having any. Twenty one out of forty one said that they had experienced effects of domestic violence. They had experienced physical, reproductive and mental effects. Each effect is in different form and has been provided in details in the following figures.

**Figure 5.5:** Distribution of interviewed respondents according to types of effect of domestic violence from husband



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Note: The data presented above is based on multiple responses

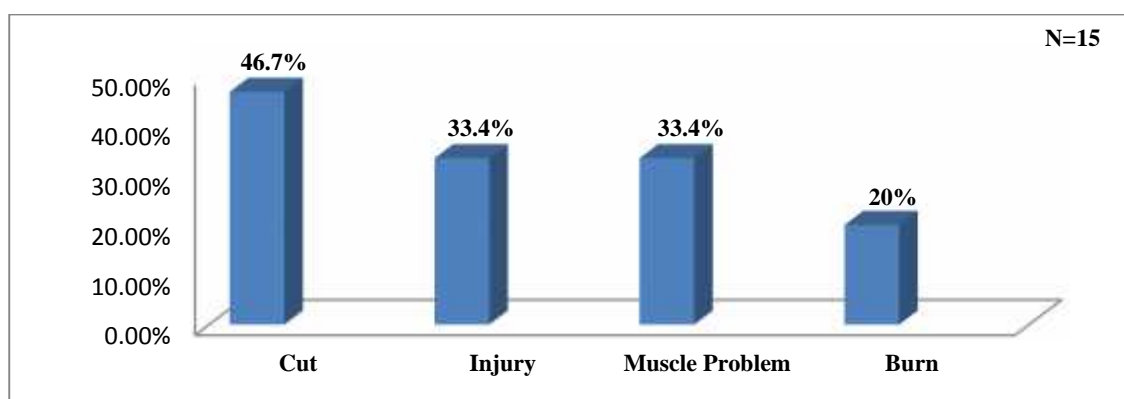
Figure 5.5 which is in the form of a bar diagram reveals that 62.5% of the respondents had severe effect of violence on them from their husbands while 60% and 70% had reproductive and mental effect on them respectively.

### 5.6.1 Physical effect

Majority of the respondents experiencing physical violence from their husband had experienced several effects. Majority had experienced cuts, injury, and burn.

“एक दिन वहाँ ले रक्सी पिएर आउनु भयो र मलाई बिना कारण कुट पिट गर्नु भयो । धरै नराम्रोसँग कांधमा चोट लागेको थियो । धरै दिन सम्म त्यस दुखाईले दुःख दिएको थियो ” - सरस्वती, २१ वर्ष, मजदुरा (One day he came drunk and started beating me without any reason and injured my shoulder very badly. For many days I had to suffer because of the injury- Saraswati, 21years old, labourer).The below given figure shows various effects of physical violence in their life time.

**Figure 5.6:** Distribution of respondents according to physical effect of domestic violence by husband



Source: Field Survey, 2012

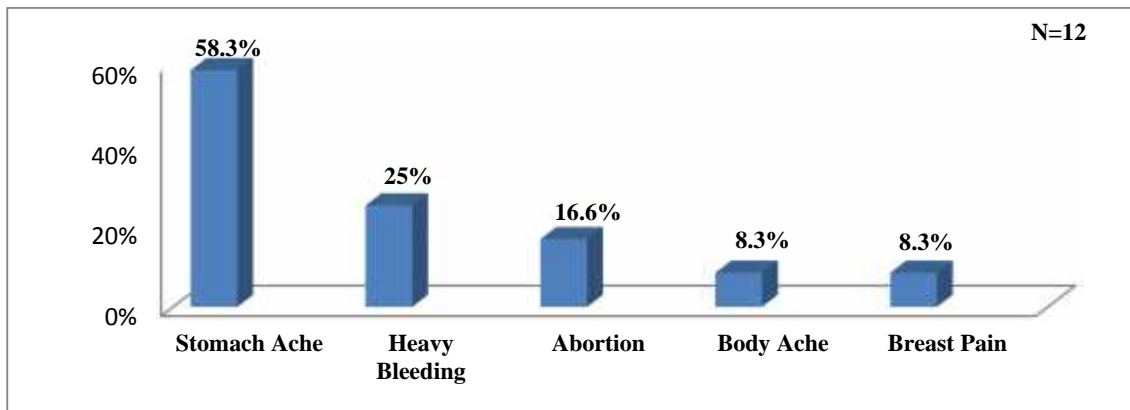
**Note:** The data presented above is based on multiple responses

The figure 5.6 shows that among the physical effects; cut was the major consequence with 46.7% of the interviewed women suffering from it while 33.4% each of the respondents said that they had experienced some sort of injury and muscle problem. In contrast, the lowest number of respondents 20.0% had suffered from burn.

### 5.6.2 Reproductive health effect

Out of the forty one respondents twenty had experienced sexual violence from their husband. Majority of the respondents had experienced stomachache, heavy bleeding, abortion, body ache.

**Figure 5.7:** Distribution of respondents according to reproductive health effect of domestic violence by husband



Source: Field Survey, 2012

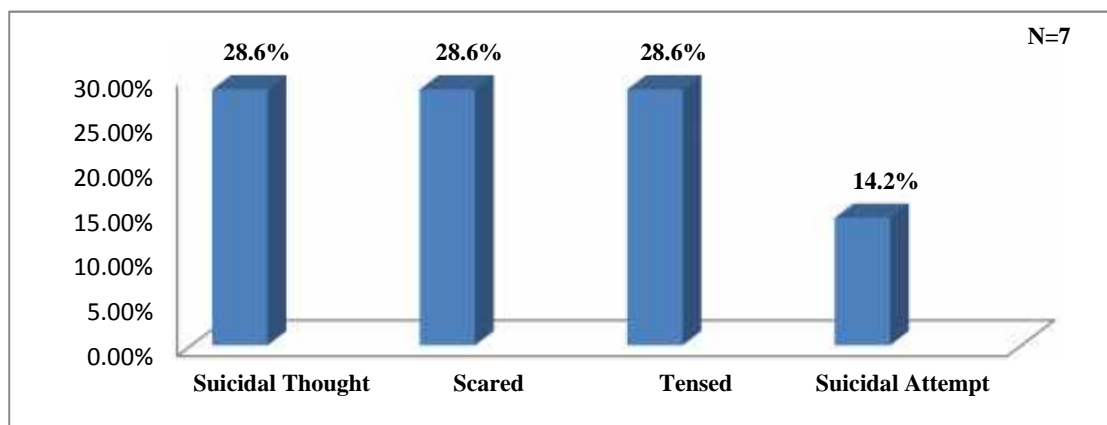
**Note:** The data presented above is based on multiple responses

Figure 5.7 denotes that among those who had faced reproductive problems; the majority 58.3% expressed that they had stomach ache while 25% and 16.6 % respectively opined that they had suffered from heavy bleeding and had to carry out abortion. On the other hand, just 8.3% each had body ache and breast pain after violence from their husband.

### 5.6.3 Mental Effect

The answer on mental were multiple. In field study it was found that those who had experienced mental violence in their life time has experienced many effect such as suicidal thought, scared, tensed, suicidal attempt.

**Figure 5.8:** Distribution of respondents according to the mental effect of domestic violence by husband



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Figure 5.8 informs that those who had undergone mental violence; suicidal thought, sense of fright and tension dominated the effects with 28.6% each of the respondents facing them while just 14.2% attempted suicide.

From the survey, it was discovered that 63.4% each of the respondents had experienced physical and mental violence respectively while 48.8% had undergone sexual violence in their life time. Moreover, the effect of violence was widespread with the highest women 70% experiencing mental effects, 62.5% and 60% each facing physical and reproductive health effects respectively. Overall, it can be said that married women experienced mental violence more than the others.

**CHAPTER SIX**  
**SITUATION OF COPING AND SHARING OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**  
**AGAINST MARRIED WOMEN**

This chapter discusses the reaction of the respondents after facing domestic violence of some kind, and their responding, sharing and coping behavior.

**6.1 Coping mechanism of women**

Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman (1984) defined coping as the cognitive and behavioral efforts allocated to manage specific external and/or internal demands appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the individual.

Many women keep silent after facing violence in the hands of their husband but some seek alternatives when it goes beyond control. In order to get rid of domestic violence against them, women in Nepal accept various methods to cope with it. Research in many countries has shown that informal networks such as family, friends, and neighbors usually provide the first point of contact for abused women rather than more formal services such as health services, legal advice and shelters.

“आफै पनि धेरै सम्झाउने कोशिश गरे तर केहि नभए पछि दाई भाउजु लाई भने, दाई भाउजुले पनि धेरै प्रयास गर्नु भयो तर पनि जस्ताको त्यस्तै भए पछि श्रीमान् लाई छाडेर माईत बस्ने सल्लाहा दिनु भयो । आहिले छोरी लिएर माईत बसेकीछु ” –उर्मिला, २२ वर्ष, व्यापारी । (After having failed to convince him many times, I seeked the help of my brother and sister- in- law who in turn failed even after repeated efforts. When things did not change, they suggested me to leave his home and stay with my maternal parents. Now along with my daughter, I am staying in my parental home- Urmila, 22years old businesswoman)

**6.1.1 Coping mechanism of women experiencing physical violence**

Out of the forty one women interviewed, twenty four had experienced physical violence from their husband. Women’s power to tolerate and their tolerance behavior play a vital role in ignoring violent incidences. But some of the respondents had adopted various strategies to protect themselves.



**Table 6.1:** Distribution of respondents according to whether they undertook coping mechanism and the response mechanism undertaken to avoid physical violence

<b>Response (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
No	15	62.5
Yes	9	37.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Response Mechanism</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Separation	4	44.5
Stayed Back	2	22.2
Stayed Alone with Kids	2	22.2
Convinced Husband	1	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 6.1 demonstrates that out of 24 respondents who had faced physical violence, 37.5% had undertaken various coping methods to avoid any future physical violence from their husband while 62.5% of the interviewed women claimed having kept silent. Furthermore, the highest number of interviewed women (44.5%) who experienced domestic violence in the hands of their husband separated from their husband to live alone or with their parents. 22.2% each of the respondents said that they stayed back with their husband as they had no other alternatives and stayed alone with children. On the other hand, the lowest of only 11.1% succeeded in convincing their husbands to refrain from such violence.

### **6.1.2 Coping mechanism of women experiencing sexual violence**

Sexual violence is also another type of violence that the respondents faced. In our findings it shows that out of the forty one respondents, twenty have experienced sexual violence from their husband. Some of them remained salient about their incidences while a few took some coping strategies. The table below clearly demonstrates various coping mechanisms adopted by them.

**Figure 6.2:** Distribution of respondents according to whether they undertook coping mechanism and the response mechanism undertaken to avoid sexual violence

<b>Response (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
No	10	50.0
Yes	10	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Response Mechanism</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Separation	2	20
Keeping & Staying with Children	2	20
Pretending to be Ill	1	10
Returning after Temporarily Leaving Husband	1	10
Seeking Family Help	1	10
Fighting Back	1	10
Waking up Children	1	10
Sleeping in Separate Bed	1	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Figure 6.2 illustrates that out of those who had undergone sexual violence from their husband, half of the respondents (50%) said that they had used various coping mechanism to avoid such violence while the other half kept silent due to one reason or the other. Furthermore, highest percentage of respondents that is, 25% each said that they separated permanently from their husband and stayed with children respectively to avoid sexual violence from husband while 10 % each opined that they used other mechanisms such as fighting back, taking help from family; leaving husband for a temporary period and returning, pretending to be ill were strategies used by 15% each of the interviewed women.

The respondents had adopted various mechanisms to protect themselves from their husband. Many who had experienced sexual violence had separated as they were unable to bear the torture every day. Few separated from their husband to stay with their children. Pretending to be ill was another coping mechanism utilized by the

women interviewed. Similarly, though a small proportion of the respondents had left their husband however, it was temporary as their husbands were successful in convincing them to return. Equal ratio of women interviewed had sought help from their family, fought back and, woke up their kids when their husband entered the room thinking that their husband may refrain from harming them in front of the children.

### 6.1.3 Coping mechanism of women experiencing mental violence

Another kind of violence experienced is mental violence. Out of the forty one women interviewed, ten had experienced mental violence from their husband, while some of the respondents who had experienced mental violence from their husband had undertaken some mechanism to cope with violence while others did nothing considering it to be normal.

**Table 6.3:** Distribution of respondents according to whether they undertook coping mechanism and the response mechanism undertaken to avoid mental violence

<b>Response (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
No	1	10.0
Yes	9	90.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Response Mechanism</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Spent Time With Family	3	33.35
Kept Themselves Busy	3	33.35
Separation	2	22.20
Convinced Family	1	11.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 6.3 proclaims that while 9 (90%) out of 10 respondents who had experienced mental violence had used coping method to avoid mental violence by husband, just 1 (10%) said that she kept silent. Furthermore, the table notifies that 33.35% each of the respondents coped with their mental violence by keeping themselves busy and by spending time with the family while just 11.1 % convinced the family to refrain from such violence. However, 22.2% of the women interviewed separated from their husbands to live either with their parents or alone.

To protect or to get rid of all tensions, the respondents adopted various mechanisms. They spent much of their time with their family members and kept themselves busy so that they would have no time to think of the violence they had undergone. Some even separated while negligible number of them tried to convince their husband by advising them so that they would stop inflicting any violence.

#### 6.1.4 Coping mechanism of women experiencing domestic violence by in -laws

The respondents have not only experienced violence from their husband but also from their family members such as mother-in-law, father-in-law sister-in-law etc. Twenty one out of forty one respondents agreed that they had experienced domestic violence from other members than their husband sometime in their life. And out of twenty one respondents, twelve of them had adopted some coping mechanism while the others remained silent about the violence they experienced. The data obtained from the field work has been illustrated below with the help of a table.

**Table 6.4:** Distribution of respondents according to whether they undertook coping mechanism and the response mechanism undertaken against domestic violence by in-laws

<b>Response (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
No	9	42.85
Yes	12	57.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Response Mechanism</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Convinced the Perpetrator	5	41.7
Recommended to Stay Together Happily	5	41.7
Stayed with Parents	1	8.4
Separated, Living with Children	1	8.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Table 6.4 informs that while 57.15% of the respondents had undertaken various coping strategies against domestic violence from in-laws, 42.8% denied taking any such coping methods. Moreover, the table signifies that 41.7% each of the

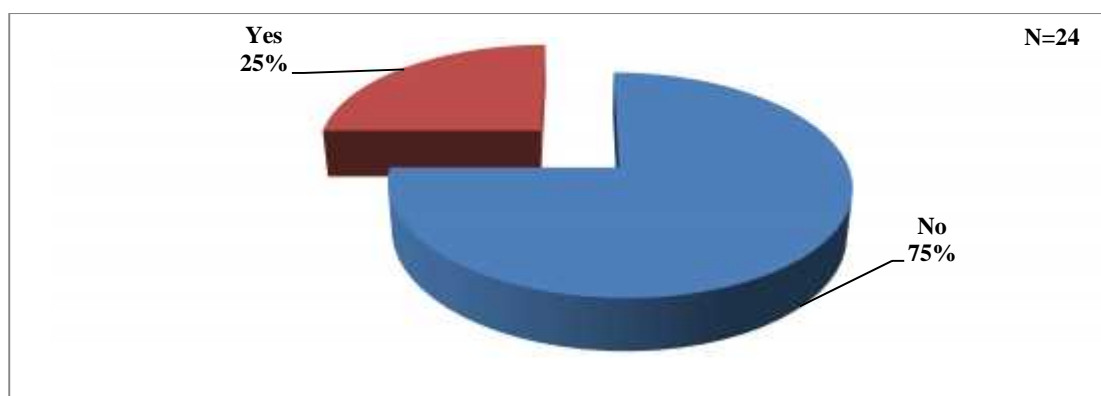
interviewed women had either convinced the perpetrators or recommended to reconcile and stay together happily. On the contrary, 8.4% each of the respondents said that they stayed with their parents or separated from their husband's family to live alone with children.

Many of the respondents who had experienced violence from their in-laws tried to convince them by removing all misunderstandings so that they would refrain from doing so. Those who shared their experiences with others were recommended to stay happily. Many had left their husband and in-laws to stay with their parents and some had permanently separated to live independently with their children.

## 6.2 Success of coping mechanism

Though many women who were interviewed had undertaken some kind of coping strategy, this section of the chapter tries to know their perception as to whether domestic violence stopped or not after taking such a step. In spite of taking various steps to get rid of domestic violence, many women in Nepal still undergo inhuman treatment unabatedly. The figure below gives a clear picture of the number of women who still undergo violence despite taking different steps to cope with it.

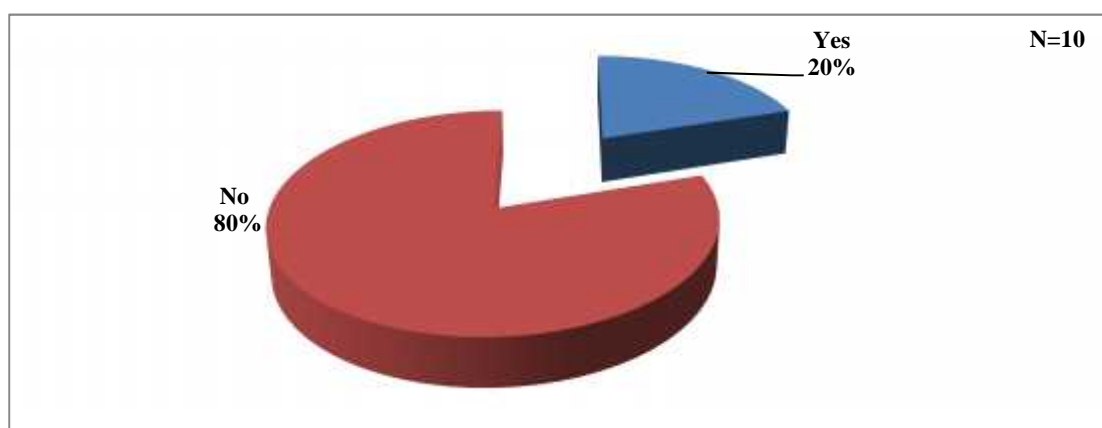
**Figure 6.1:** Distribution of respondents according to whether physical violence stopped or not.



Source: Field Survey, 2012

The given figure indicates that out of 24 women who took various measures to cope with domestic violence, just 6 of them (25%) replied that the coping strategies worked out well and violence against them stopped while three times more than the above figure (75%) said that domestic violence against them continued in spite of undertaking various coping methods.

**Figure 6.2:** Distribution of respondents according to whether mental violence stopped or not



Source: Field Survey, 2012

**Note:** The above presented data is based on multiple responses

Out of 9 respondents who had shared mental violence they had undergone, 7 of them (77.8%) opined that mental violence against them did not stop while just 2 (22.3%) responded that mental violence did stop after using various coping strategies.

### **6.3 Views of various personalities (lawyer, medical practitioner and social worker) on different strategies adopted to cope domestic violence**

This section sets to explore the audience of domestic violence against women and attempts to discover the service delivery to victims of domestic violence through interview with lawyer, social worker and medical practitioner.

#### **6.3.1 Lawyer**

The researcher interviewed Mr. Baburam Bhusal who had fought many cases on domestic violence and considers the following case to be the most challenging one.

Bimala Khadka aged 27 did not have a good relationship with her 39 year old husband, Mr. Rajesh Thapa. She filed a case for divorce at the Rupandehi District Court on the 13<sup>th</sup> of Shrawan , 2066 and was registered as case number 397.

Initially Bimala had difficulties filing the case as she neither possessed a marriage registration card nor citizenship because her husband never took the initiative or bothered to prepare these certificates for her. After a prolonged process, finally, Bimala was able to lodge a case on the basis of her academic certificates.

The case lasted for more than two years and lastly, the court announced a verdict in favour of Bimala thus freeing her from her cruel husband. The primary investigation revealed that the main reason behind divorce was dowry. Her husband and in-laws tortured her everyday as she was unable to bring enough dowry from her parental home. Unable to bear the insult and torture, she decided to get rid of her husband and his relatives by seeking help of the court. Though they were against the idea but at the end she was successful in filing a case with the help of her parents and the result was in her favour.

### **6.3.2 Medical practitioner**

Dr. Gita Bastola who frequently practices in Kamana Medical Hall, Bangain, Kapilvastu narrates a case on domestic violence which she had overcome. She had medically treated a woman with severe injuries, fracture and miscarriage which was a consequence of domestic violence from her in-laws. They not only physically hurt her but left her in lurch showing no sympathy and taking no action to provide her necessary treatment. After the intervention of the women's parents who took the initiative to provide her medical treatment, she finally recovered after a few months.

According to Dr. Gita, even in this post modern era, women are still subjected to various types of violence in this male dominated society. If a woman delivers a girl child she is blamed for it furthermore, she does not even have the right to decide what is good or bad for her. Such type of suppression and violence is much higher in rural areas than in the urban ones. Consequently, women have been the targets of domestic violence in our society since long.

### **6.3.3 Social worker**

Mrs. Deepa, a social worker in Motipur VDC-3 reveals that many women in her society come to her to complain about the domestic violence they face. But after a few steps, they decide to take back the case as they are afraid of the society and their family. They are not supported by their society and family to go against their husband or in-laws. Moreover, there isn't any provision against domestic violence in rural areas.

She talks briefly about a case where she was involved as a mediator to resolve a tension growing between her and her alcoholic husband who repeatedly threatened

and harmed her as well as her child physically after getting drunk. To get rid of such inhuman treatment, Mrs. Deepa suggested her to divorce her husband and live separately. Though the respondent agreed initially and temporarily separated from her husband but later dropped the idea as her husband apologized and promised not to repeat the same. She returned to her husband from her parental home where she along with her children had taken shelter with the hope that her days will be happier.

According to Mrs. Deepa this is the mental status of women in Nepal especially in rural areas where they reconcile with their husband with the expectation that things would improve with the passage of time. Hence, they continue to live with the perpetrators of domestic violence throughout their life.

#### **6.4 Sharing of domestic violence**

“भनेर के गर्ने त्यस्तै हो, भन्नु पनि डर लाग्छ । कसैलाई यस बारे सुनाएको थाह भयो भने हिंसा भन्नु बढी पो हुने हो कि”- रेश्मा, २२ वर्ष, ग्रेहणी । (What to do by sharing, feel scared to share. If they come to know that I have shared this with others, then may be violence may increase- Reshma, 22 years old housewife).

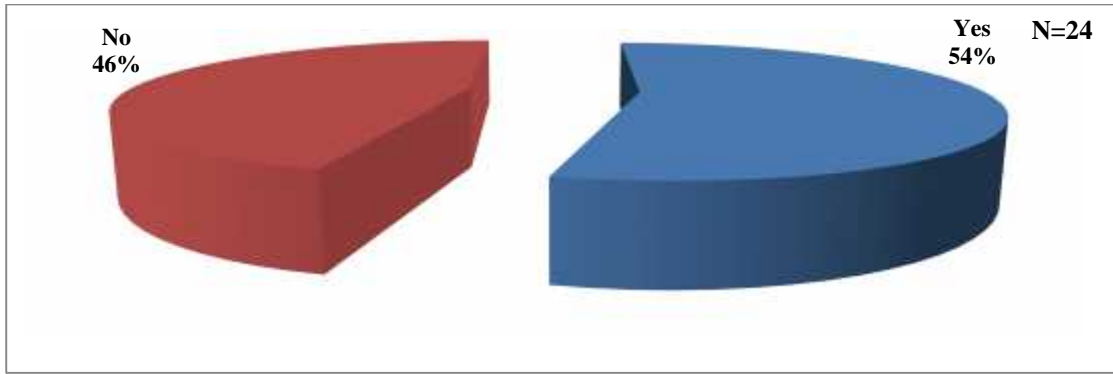
Many women did not share their experience of domestic violence with others. They kept silent in many cases, only a few of the interviewed women share their agonies with those whom they felt comfortable.

##### **6.4.1 Sharing physical violence**

Majority of the respondents experiencing physical violence from their husband agreed that they shared what they faced with others mainly with their relatives and friends while the other few remained silent and did not share with any one because of fear and their tendency to take violence easily.

**Figure 6.3:** Distribution of respondents according to whether or not they shared with others the physical violence they faced from their husband





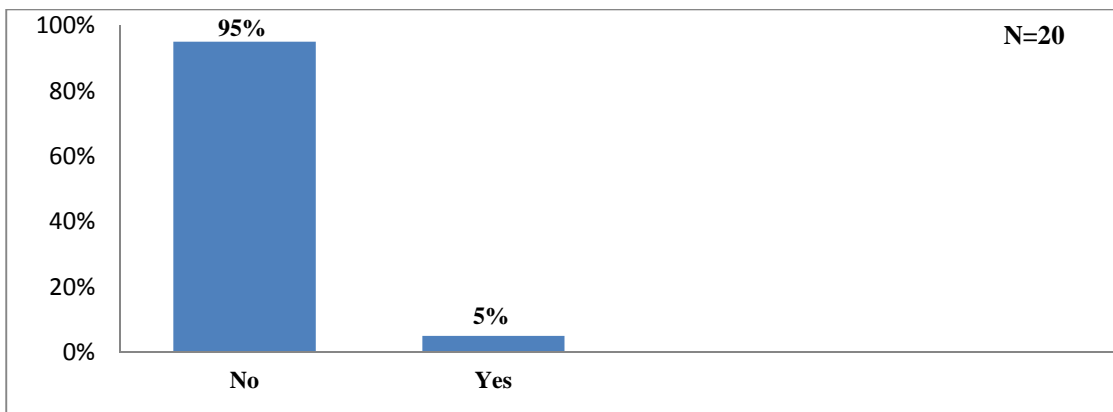
Source: Field Survey, 2012

Out of the total number of interviewed women who had faced domestic violence, 13 of them (54.%) said that they had shared about the violence they had faced with their friends and relatives while 11 of them (46%) keep silent without sharing their situation with anyone.

#### 6.4.2 Sharing sexual violence

Sexual violence is a very sensitive matter may be because of our cultural and religious belief. Majority of the respondents did not share their experience of sexual violence with any one because they felt shy to discuss or share and their perception of considering it as normal.

**Figure 6.4:** Distribution of respondents according to whether or not they shared with others the sexual violence they faced from their husband



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Figure 6.4 states that out of 20 respondents who had undergone sexual violence in the hands of their husband, just 5 % shared the experience with others they felt comfortable with while large percentage of 95% did not share for some reason or the other.

### 6.4.3 Sharing mental violence

Mental violence is also a permanent violence experience by women. Out of the forty one respondents ten of the respondents agreed that that they had faced mental violence from their husband. And out of ten only five said that they had shared their experienced with other while other said that that they did not shared.

**Figure 6.5:** Distribution of respondents according to whether or not they shared about the mental violence they faced

<b>Response (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
No	5	50.0
Yes	5	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.0</b>

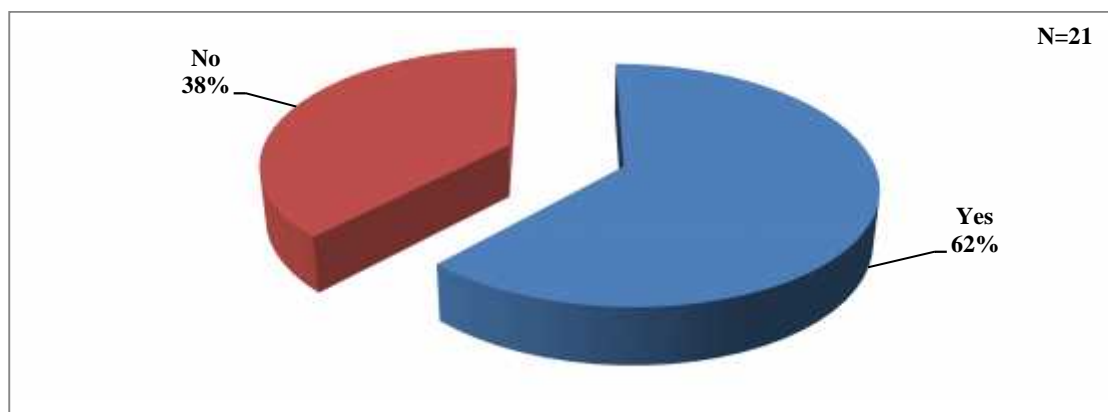
Source: Field Survey, 2012

Out of the total number of interviewed women who had faced mental violence, 50% of them said that they had shared about the mental violence they had faced with their friends and relatives while the other 50% kept silent without sharing their situation with anyone.

### 6.5 Sharing of domestic violence by in-laws

In Nepal, due to various awareness programs, higher literacy rate and law, most of the women have started sharing about the violence that they face from in-laws. Twenty one of the respondents out of forty one had experienced domestic violence from other members of the family. Majority of them had shared what they faced with those whom they felt comfortable.

**Figure 6.5:** Distribution of respondents according to whether they shared or not the domestic violence by in-laws



Source: Field Survey, 2012

Figure 6.5 pictures that out of 21 respondents who has shared the violence that they had experienced from other members of the family, 62 % of the respondents shared with others the domestic violence that they faced in the hands of the in-laws whereas 38% kept silent due to various obligations.

### **6.6 People with whom experiences of domestic violence was shared**

Among the victims of domestic violence, majority of the respondents had shared their experiences with someone whom they knew personally. Relatives and friends were trusted the most, with the highest number of victims sharing their experiences with them while only a few had approached social workers. Details of sharing of each type of violence has been provided in the under mentioned figures.

#### **6.6.1 People with whom physical violence by husband was shared**

Large number of respondents shared with their relatives and friends the physical violence they experienced from their husband with a hope of getting solution. Other reason is that they felt comfortable and secure to share their problem with them.

**Table 6.6:** Distribution of respondents with whom physical violence was shared

<b>Violence Shared With</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Relatives(mother, brother, sister etc)	61.5
Friends	46.1
Social Workers	7.6
Sister-in-law	7.6

Source: Field Survey, 2012

**Note:** The data presented above is based on multiple responses

Figure 6.6 indicates that relatives were closer to the respondents than other people where 61.50% of the interviewed women revealed that they shared their experience of physical violence with their relatives while 46.10% of them spoke to their friends regarding the subject. Social workers and sister in-laws formed the basis of sharing for 7.60% of the interviewed women who had faced physical violence.

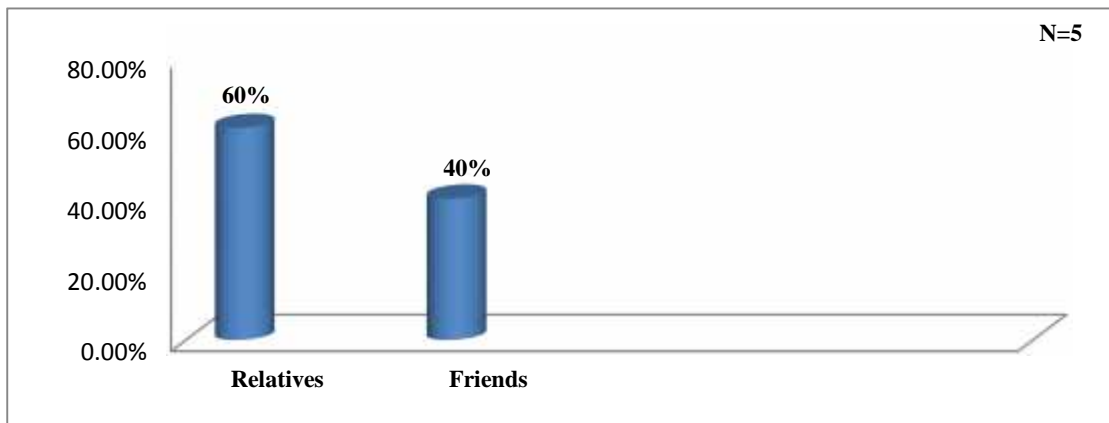
#### **6.6.2 People with whom sexual violence by husband was shared**

Only one respondent (5%) out of the twenty who had experienced sexual violence from their husband came forward and shared her feeling with her mother because she felt safe and comfortable with her. Another reason for sharing was to get some solution for the violence she was facing. Due to religious and cultural restrictions, sexual violence is negligibly shared with others.

#### **6.6.3 People with whom mental violence by husband was shared**

The respondents experiencing mental violence felt safe and comfortable with their relatives and friends. Majority of the respondents who had experienced mental violence had shared the hardships they were undergoing with their relatives and a few of them had shared with their friends.

**Figure 6.6:** Distribution of respondents with whom they shared mental violence



Source: Field Survey, 2012

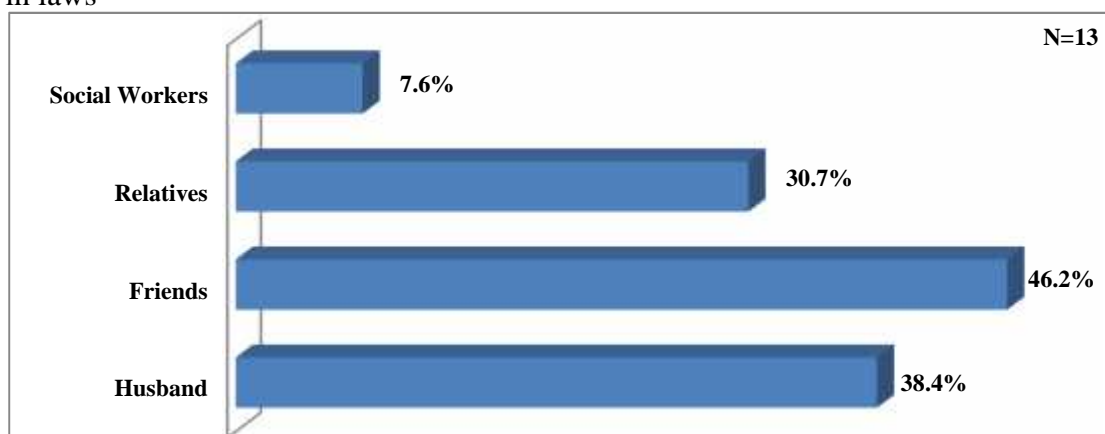
Figure 6.6 highlights that the largest number of respondents, 60% shared their experience of mental violence with their relatives while 40 % said that they corresponded with their friends the ill treatment they were receiving from their husband.

### **6.7 People with whom domestic violence by in-laws was shared**

Respondents experiencing domestic violence from in-laws shared their experience with friends as they were sure that they would never leak out the same with others and furthermore, they were definite that they would get solution to their problem after sharing.

Some of the respondents shared the violent incidences from other members of the family with husband thinking it safe and may get protection from him. Few shared their experience with their relatives. On the other hand, very less number of respondents went to social workers. The table below clearly shows the distribution of the respondents with whom they shared their experience.

**Figure 6.7:** Distribution of respondents with whom they shared domestic violence by in laws



Source: Field Survey, 2012

**Note:** The data presented above is based on multiple responses

Figure 6.7 depicts that highest number of respondents (46.2%) shared their experience of domestic violence with their friends while 38.4% informed their husbands. In contrast, 30.7% and 7.6% of the interviewed women shared their problems with their relatives and social workers respectively.

During fieldwork, it was found that 62.5% of the respondents had undertaken coping mechanism against physical violence, while 50% and 90% of the women interviewed had taken various steps to avoid sexual and mental violence respectively. Though majority that is, 61.5% had shared their experience of physical violence with their relatives, but sexual violence was hardly shared with others. However, 60% of the respondents shared their experience of mental violence with relatives. For those women who had faced domestic violence from other members of the family, 46.2% had shared their feelings and experiences with their friends, husbands were the second trusted person with 38.4% of the interviewed women sharing with them on the other hand, 30.7% and 7.6% had conveyed their experiences with their relatives and social workers respectively.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Domestic violence has evolved as a part of a system of gender relation which points out that men are superior to women. This idea of male supremacy and dominance over female is often reflected by the customs of our society and is considered as private matter. Thus, domestic violence is a belief that grants men the right to control women's behavior among other things, which results in mental, physical and sexual injury, separation, suicide and many more. Women who are victims of violence are unable to perform well in their jobs, so the researcher has tried to identify the experience, effect, coping and response to domestic violence among married women aged 15 to 50. The social structure of our society forces them to be quite and tolerant. Their tolerance and fear make them weak. Their depressed feelings and lack of confidence encourage the perpetrators eager to violate them.

This study was conducted in Motipur VDC- 3. Interview using structured questionnaires was conducted among 41 married women. The study has employed descriptive convenient sampling design. In-depth interview, case study and interview with key informants were adopted to collect information on this study. The questionnaire was directly administered to respondents by employing direct interview methods. The questionnaire and interview guide consisted of socio-demographic background of the respondents and their spouse, effect of violence, coping mechanism employed and its result. Data processing was done manually.

#### 7.1 Major findings of the research

- ) All the respondents are married women aged 15 to 50.
- ) Hinduism as a religion is followed by all the respondents.
- ) Brahmins, Chhetris, Tharus, Thapas, Rais, Damais and Newar are the caste and ethnic groups found in the research area. Among the respondents 56.1% are Brahmins, 17.1% are Chhetris, 9.7% are Tharus, 4.9% are Thapas, Rais and Damais respectively and just a small proportion of 2.4% comprise the Newar group.
- ) Of all the respondents 87.8 % are married while 12.2% live separately.

- ) On the occupational front, 63.4% of the respondents are housewives, 14.6 % are businesswomen and labourers, 4.8% are agriculturalist and only 2.4% are engaged in the service sector.
- ) Related to the educational background, only 4.9% of the respondents are Bachelors Degree holders, 12.2% have completed their intermediate level, 17% have cleared their SLC, 34.1% could study only upto lower secondary level, and 26.8% have primary level education while 4.9% are illiterate.
- ) 41.5% of the respondent's husbands have lower secondary education, 12.2% have primary level, 19.5% could complete their SLC, 7.3% have intermediate qualification while 19.5% have Bachelor's Degree as their educational background.
- ) 7.3% of the respondents' husbands are unemployed while 92.7% are job holders. Out of the employed, 21.9% of the respondent's husband have business as their primary occupation while 18.4% are agriculturalist, foreign employees and are working as labourers respectively, 10.5% are teachers, and 5.2% of them are working as government employees and as drivers.
- ) While 73.17% of the respondent's husbands are alcoholic, 26.8% did not consume any.

## **7.2 Experiences of domestic violence**

- ) 82.9% of the respondents have experienced domestic violence while 17.1% denied having faced any.
- ) 63.4% each of the respondents have experienced physical and mental violence respectively while 48.8% have faced sexual violence in their life time.
- ) 68.3% of the respondents have faced domestic violence in the hands of their husband on the other hand, 31.7% did not experience any.
- ) While 51.2% of the respondents had faced domestic violence from in-laws, 48.8% denied having faced any from them.
- ) Regarding perpetrators, 66.7% of the respondents had faced domestic violence from their mother in-law, 33.4% from their sister in-law (nanda) 23.8% from their father in-law, 4.7% each from their sister in-laws (jethani & deurani) respectively.



- ) Out of the total number of interviewed women who have experienced domestic violence, physical violence has been faced by 86% of the respondents, 71.4% have undergone sexual violence and 36% have experienced mental violence.
- ) 67% the highest number of women interviewed had faced mental violence from in-laws while 33% had undergone physical harassment.

### **7.3 Effects of violence**

- ) While 62.5% of the respondents have had physical effect of domestic violence on them in contrast, 60% and 70% have experienced reproductive health and sexual effects respectively.
- ) Among those who have experienced physical violence, 46.7% of the respondents experienced cut, 33.4% have injury and muscle problem respectively while 20% faced burn.
- ) Regarding reproductive health effect of domestic violence, most of the respondents 58.3% experienced stomach ache, 25% had heavy bleeding, 16.6% had abortion and ultimately 8.3% each had body ache and breast pain respectively.
- ) Among those who had faced mental violence, 28.6% each had suicidal thought, were scared and tensed respectively while 14.2% attempted suicide.

### **7.4 Situation of coping and sharing**

- ) While 62.5% of the respondents took no action against physical violence, the rest that is, just a handful of them 37.5% undertook coping mechanism. Among those who took various coping mechanisms, 44.5% separated themselves, 22.2% each stayed back with their husband and family members , and stayed alone with their children respectively finally, 11.1% convinced and stayed with their husband.
- ) Out of those who had undergone sexual violence from their husband, half of the respondents (50%) said that they had used various coping mechanism to avoid such violence while the other half kept silent due to one reason or the other. Furthermore, highest percentage of respondents that is, 20% each said

that they separated permanently from their husband and stayed with children respectively to avoid sexual violence from husband while 10 % each opined that they used other mechanism such as fighting back, taking help from family; leaving husband for a temporary period and returning, pretending to be ill , waking up children and sleeping in a separate bed.

- ) To cope with mental violence, 22.2% separated with their husband, 33.3% each kept themselves busy and spent time with their family members respectively, and 11.1% convinced their family.
- ) Though 57.15% had utilized various methods to cope with domestic violence by in-laws but 42.8% remained passive.
- ) In relation to the strategies , 41.7% of the respondents tried to convince the perpetrators, 41.7 were recommended to stay together happily, and 8.4% each had either stayed with their parents or separated permanently to live with their children.
- ) While 54.% shared their feelings regarding physical violence with others, 46% kept quiet for one reason or the other.
- ) Just 5 % shared the experience with others they felt comfortable with while large percentage of 95% did not share for some reason or the other.
- ) Those women who had undergone mental violence by husband, 50% shared their feelings with others while the other 50% keep silent.
- ) Those who had experienced physical violence, 61.5% shared their feelings with their relatives, 46.1% with their friends, and 7.6% each shared their pain with social workers and sister in law respectively.
- ) 60% of the respondents who had faced mental violence had shared their problems with their relatives while 40% shared their violence with their friends.
- ) Sharing of domestic violence by other members of the family was done by 62% of the respondents while the other 38% kept silent.
- ) 38.4% of the respondents had shared their experience of domestic violence by other members of the family with their husband, 46.2% with their friends, 30.7% with their relatives and just 7.6% shared it with social workers.

- ) After utilizing various coping methods, only 25% of the respondents said that physical violence against them stopped while it continued for 75% of the respondents.
- ) In spite of undertaking various strategies to cope mental violence, such violence stopped for only 20% of the respondents while it continued for 80 % of them.

## **7.5 Conclusions**

Based on the result after study, it is concluded that violence against women can be defined as violation of women's social, mental and physical integrity, or freedom of movement. Even in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, women are not given equal opportunity for education and employment. Women not only face domestic violence from their husband but also from other members of the family especially in-laws. Domestic violence is particularly insidious form of gender-based violence. There are various factors which are contributing for the domestic violence against women such as excessive intake of alcohol, patriarchal system of the society, polygamy, sexual dissatisfaction and dowry.

In this study, it was found that 63.4% each had faced physical and mental violence respectively and, 48.8% had undergone sexual violence in their life time. Therefore, this finding shows that prevalence of domestic violence against women is high in this study area.

The data obtained from the study shows that the respondents have at least once suffered with some kind of domestic violence in their life time. Due to the society there is fear within themselves about the consequences and hence, are scared to reveal it. Most of the victims remain silent of their suffering because they do not know anything about the procedures of reporting to the police moreover, there is no police station nearby. There are no NGO and INGO's in the study area so victims find it difficult to report their experience and remain silence.

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## ANNEX- A

### Case Study

#### Participant's profile

##### **Manju (pseudonym used):**

Manju was married at the age of 20 and now at this age of 42 she is a mother of three children. She is a housewife and experiences domestic violence not only from her husband but also from her mother-in-law. Her husband is presently unemployed and is alcoholic. Manju often advises her husband to seek a job but due to his habit of consuming alcohol, no one offers him one and moreover, he does not put any effort to search for employment. Due to this, quarrel between Manju and her husband often breaks up leading the former to be threatened and beaten. Manju's mother in-law also supports her son in this endeavor. Very often Manju sought help of her sisters and tried to persuade her husband but in vain.

Her sisters had advised her to separate from her husband and mother-in-law and live alone with her children but her husband reconciled with Manju after promising her that he would permanently get rid of his drinking habits. For a few days life had completely changed for Manju but unfortunately her husband's old habits returned and her life has never seen the light of the day.

##### **Urmila (pseudonym used):**

Urmila, a 22 year old woman is a small businesswoman. Her parents married her against her will at just a tender age of 18. Though life had been happy for the first one year of her marriage, but thereafter she has never known what happiness is.

Urmila, has become a victim of physical torture in the hands of her husband and receives ill treatment from her in-laws too. Even after persistent effort to persuade her husband failed, she ultimately took the issue with her brother and sister in law, who many a times made an unsuccessful attempt to convince her husband. “आफै पनि धरै सम्झाउने कोशिश गरे तर केहि नभए पछि दाई भाउजु लाई भने ।

Though her husband's family supported the ill treatment but Urmila's brother and sister in law succeeded in separating her from the clutches of her husband and these

days she is sustaining separately with her daughters in her parents' home. Urmila's effort to start a small business materialized when her brother helped her in starting a small tea and snacks shop.

**Saraswati (pseudonym used):**

Having come from an affluent family and married at the age of 19 by her own choice, life for Saraswati has never been a satisfying one.

Though her husband initially treated her with love and respect, but as time passed, he started beating her often for denying bringing money and dowry from her parental home. She feels lonely and is scared to share the matter with others. “एक दिन वहाँ ले रक्सी पिएर आउनु भयो र मलाई बिना कारण कुट पिट गर्नु भयो ।

When through an unknown source her family comes to know about the matter, they advice her to come back home but thinking that it is her destiny and personal choice; and should not spoil her children's future, she denies doing so. She feels that if she returns to her parent's home, Saraswati's daughter might face problem getting married later in life and with this fear she declines leaving her husband's home inspite of the pain he inflicts on her.

**Bishnu (pseudonym used):**

After losing her father at a very young age of 10 years and unable to bear her educational expenses, Bishnu was married at the age of 17. Her husband then was employed in a Company in Malaysia.

After his tenure of five years in a blue colour job in Malaysia, her husband returned to Nepal to be unemployed for a long time. His joblessness and his inability to bear a male child made him frustrated and to get a way out, he started drinking alcohol which he has not been able to get rid of till date. With four daughters, life has been a challenge for Bishnu. Her husband often inflicts psychological and physical torture on her. Moreover, his long standing habit of drinking alcohol which developed after the birth of their third girl child has added fuel to the fire.

Though Bishnu had frequently shared about her problems with her in laws, they have always advised her to reconcile and stay together happily and not bring the issue out to other people in the community for fear that it might harm their reputation.

Furthermore, Bishnu has no other option than to live with her perpetrator for fear that she has no one to look after her and her four children, and shouldn't spoil their future.

**Reshma (pseudonym used):**

With her husband presently in Afghanistan, Reshma a 22 year old lady married with her parents choice two years ago after completing her School Leaving Certificate Examination is simply a housewife.

Reshma receives physical and mental torture at the hands of her in-laws. Life has taken a complete turn after her marriage where she needs to take permission from her in-laws even for small activities such as eating and going to market. She is made to do household chores and agriculture work completely by herself.

Having failed to bring enough money and other material goods from her parental home, Reshma receives ill treatment. Whenever she returns from her parent's home, her in-laws expect something and for having failed to bring anything as her parents are not well off, they inflict physical and mental pressure on her. She has not shared this matter with anyone thinking that things will get normal after her husband returns.

Moreover, she is scared that if her in-laws come to know that she has shared her experiences with others, they might be even harsher on her and furthermore, she does not want to return to her parental home for fear of the society. “कसैलाई भन्नु डर लाग्छ” (scared to share with others).

## ANNEX-B

### Interview Schedule Consent Form

Namaste, my name is Bandana Paudel and a student of Humanities and Social Sciences in Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Kathmandu. Presently, I am doing a research on domestic violence against married women for my Master's Degree thesis.

The main objective of this study is to obtain information about various types of domestic violence against women and their consequences. Do you want to participate in this interview? You will not gain anything by participating in this study but your involvement will help me to gain knowledge about domestic violence that women have to face.

I want to seek your permission to record your interview and your life story, if required. I will appreciate your help in answering the questions. I assure you that your name will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of this research study.

---

Signature

### Interview Schedule Questionnaires

#### Personal profile

1. Name of the Respondent: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Locality: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Family Details:

S. No.	Name	Relationship to the Respondent	Age	Sex	Educational Status	Marital Status	Occupation	Others
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								

4. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Caste/ Ethnicity:                    i. Brahmin      ii. Chhetri      iii. Newar  
    iv. Rai            v. Tamang  
    vi. Others \_\_\_\_\_

6. Religion:                                i. Hindu      ii. Buddhist      iii. Christian  
    iv. Muslim   v. Others \_\_\_\_\_

7. Educational status: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Occupation:                            i. Agriculture   ii. Business      iii. Labourer  
    iv. Government Employee   v. Foreign Job  
    vi. Teacher      vii. Others \_\_\_\_\_

9. Marital status:                        i. Married      ii. Widow      iii. Divorce  
    iv. Separated   v. Others \_\_\_\_\_

10. Years of marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Children:                                i. Yes: Number \_\_\_\_\_      ii. No  
    iii. First Pregnancy

12. Family's main source of income:    i. Agriculture   ii. Business      iii. Labour  
    iv. Government Job      v. Foreign Job  
    vi. Others \_\_\_\_\_

### Husband's personal profile

13. Husband's age: \_\_\_\_\_
14. Husband's educational status: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Husband's occupation: i. Agriculture ii. Business iii. Labourer  
iv. Government Employee v. Foreign Job  
vi. Teacher vii. Others \_\_\_\_\_
16. Husband's alcohol or drugs intake:
- i. Yes Everyday \_\_\_\_\_  
Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
Once/ Twice a Week \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_

### Respondent's relationship with her husband and his attitude towards her

17. Has your husband battered you, shoved you or injured you by throwing things on you?
- i. Yes Once \_\_\_\_\_  
Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
Many Times \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_
18. Has your husband tried to threaten you, burn you or dragged you on the floor?
- i. Yes Once \_\_\_\_\_  
Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
Many Times \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_
19. Has your husband ever threatened showing you knife, guns or other weapons?
- i. Yes Once \_\_\_\_\_  
Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
Many Times \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_
20. Have you ever faced any physical problem due to the above given violence?
- i. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_

21. What type of physical problem have you faced due to violence?

- i. Cut    ii. Bone Fracture    iii. Burnt
- iv. Broke Tooth    v. Muscle Strain
- vi. Others \_\_\_\_\_

22. Have you ever sought help or shared your experience of physical violence with others?

- i. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_

23. If yes, whom have you shared or sought help from?

- i. Relatives/ Family    ii. Friends    iii. Police
- iv. Paralegal Committee    v. Social Workers
- vi. Others \_\_\_\_\_

24. What suggestion or recommendation have they given and how have you solved the matter?

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25. Did physical violence stop after the necessary help/action?

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26. Has your husband ever tried to insult you, humiliated you or intimidate you on any issue?

- i. Yes    Once \_\_\_\_\_
- Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_
- ManyTimes \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No    \_\_\_\_\_

27. Have you experienced mental problem due to the above mentioned violence?

- i. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_

28. What type of mental problems have you faced?



- i.Scared      ii. Tensed      iii. Sadness
- iv. Thought of Suicide   v. Suicidal Attemp
- vi.Others \_\_\_\_\_

29. Have you ever seeked help or shared your experience of mental violence with others?

- i.Yes      \_\_\_\_\_
- ii.No      \_\_\_\_\_

30. If yes, whom have you shared or seeked help from?

- i.Relatives/ Family   ii. Friends   iii.Police
- v. Paralegal Committee   v. Social Workers
- vi. Others \_\_\_\_\_

31. What suggestion or recommendation have they given and if you took the initiative yourself, how did you solve the matter?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

32. Did mental violence stop after the necessary help/action?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

33. Has your husband ever tried to have sex forcefully against your will due to which you have felt humiliated?

- i.Yes      Once \_\_\_\_\_
- Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_
- Many Times \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No      \_\_\_\_\_

34. Have you experienced health problem due to such violence?

- i.Yes      \_\_\_\_\_
- ii.No      \_\_\_\_\_

35. What type of health problems have you faced?

- i.Abortion      ii. Bleeding      iii. Severe Stomache
- vi. Others \_\_\_\_\_

36. Have you ever protested against violence that you have undergone?

- i. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_

37. If yes, then how?

- i. Left Husband & His House
- ii. Took Help
- iii. Raised Voice Against It
- iv. Sought Family Help
- v. Others \_\_\_\_\_

**Domestic violence by other members of the husband's family**

38. Apart from your husband, from whom have you experienced violence?

- i. Mother In-Law
- ii. Father In-Law
- iii. Sister In-Law (Nanda)
- iv. Brother In-Law
- v. Steps
- vi. Others \_\_\_\_\_

39. Have these people ill treated you in front of other people?

- i. Yes  
Once \_\_\_\_\_  
Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
Many Times \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_

40. Have they ever tried to slap you, threaten you, batter you, drag you or burn you?

- i. Yes  
Once \_\_\_\_\_  
Sometimes \_\_\_\_\_  
Many Times \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. No \_\_\_\_\_

41. With whom have you shared or sought help from?

- i. Relatives/ Family
- ii. Friends
- iii. Police
- iv. Paralegal Committee
- v. Social Workers
- vi. Did Not Share or Seek Help
- vii. Others \_\_\_\_\_

42. If you have shared, what suggestion or recommendation have they given and if not, how did you solve the matter yourself?

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**Apart from these, is there anything you would like to share with me or ask?**

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## ANNEX-C

### Questionnaire for Key Informant Interview

#### A. Lawyer

- i. Kindly give a short introduction of a case on domestic violence that you as a lawyer had fought and also highlight its consequent result.
- ii. Narrate your experience on undertaking this case.
- iii. How can domestic violence in our society be eradicated?

#### B. Medical practitioner

- i. What type of case on domestic violence have you ever received?
- ii. How did you solve the case and what was its result.
- iii. How do you think domestic violence in our society can be solved?

#### C. Social worker

- i. What type of case on domestic violence have you come across?
- ii. What were the problems you found in solving it?
- iii. How do you think domestic violence against women can be resolved.