

# **Domestic Violence and Women Health: A Study in Shimla District (Himachal Pradesh)**



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# **CHAPTER- I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The constitution of India under the Protection of Women against Domestic Violence Act 2005, enforced with effect from October 26, 2006 guarantees them the right to live a violence free, peaceful and safe life. The domestic violence is explained as an act of omission and commission or any conduct (Section 3 of the Act) which amounts to:

First, harms or injures or endangers the health, safety, life, limb or well-being, whether mental or physical, of the aggrieved person or tends to do so and includes causing physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal and emotional abuse and economic abuse;

Second, harasses, harms, injures or endangers the aggrieved person with a view to coerce her or any other person related to her to meet any unlawful demand for any dowry or other property or valuable security;

Third, which has the effect of threatening the aggrieved person or any person related to her by any conduct mentioned in clause (a) or clause (b);

Fourth, otherwise injures or causes harm, whether physical or mental, to the aggrieved person.

This is worth mentioning that of all the four explanations, even if any aspect of each occurs against the safety of the women, the perpetrator of such an act would be held responsible and will be subjected to the legal provisions dealing with such offences. Notwithstanding the said, the scope of domestic violence also includes various other dimensions which are analysable in relation to socio-economic and other variables, such as age, caste, class, ability, sexual orientation, marital rape, and other realities. Another important component of the definition is the consequential aspect of violence, namely endangering health, indicating thereby a relationship of violence against women with women health.

However, the global as well as domestic scenario suggests the life of women being inflicted with violence, especially by their close ones, including spouse and his kin, and others, includes murders related to dowry deaths, violent honour revenge leading to killings, witchcraft caused, female infanticide and sex selective abortions. The violence also occurs through rapes, marital rape, modesty violation, human trafficking and forced prostitution, invisible domestic violence through infliction of various types and forms of abuse, forced child marriage, acid throwing, abduction, sexual assault, verbal and symbolic abuse, emotional and physical coercion and perpetuation. Although domestic violence is always thought as towards women, but violence in heterosexual or same sex cannot be ruled out. What is the impact of domestic violence on women's health is difficult to say. However violence caused health problems, like anxiety neurosis, psychosomatic disorders, depression, headaches, hypertension, heart disease, stroke, asthma, diabetes etc. cannot be ruled out. The question to what extent the violence at the domestic front affects women's health can be answered by carrying out empirical analysis on the confirmed victims of domestic violence.

The issue of violence, apart from having implications for women health, is also very serious as the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) had found that every three minute a crime is committed against women in India (NCRB 2012). While reported violence in the year 2012 was 2,44,270 crimes in 2015 it increased to 3,00,000. In the year 2012 dowry deaths numbered 8,233, sexual crimes like rape numbered 24,923, insult to modesty accounted for 9,173, human trafficking and forced prostitution 2,563, cases of domestic violence 1,06,527, abductions numbered 38,262 (NCRB 2013). Although the sample based analysis reveal decline in the incidence of physical and sexual violence against women from 37 per cent (NFHS-3) to 29 per cent (NFHS-4). Amrtya Sen observed that the measure of development rests of the relative capabilities and functioning within families. The conventional measure of capabilities within families implies the income, education and health of individuals (may also include here gender equalities) and the

freedoms which the people enjoy being within family (Aggarwal & Panda 2007). According to Sen numerous un-freedoms hidden within families create fundamental barrier to development. In view of which the development must also be seen in terms of women empowerment in the family in terms of their socio-economic profile, increasing autonomy and absence of domestic conflicts. In brief the relationship between socio-economic development, women autonomy, domestic violence, women ill-health and low levels of socio-economic development of women, is polemical as its roots can be traced to India's gender equality index rated as 0.524 in 2017 (UNDP 2017).

Domestic violence, as a matter of fact, is a widespread problem throughout the developed and developing world, affecting adversely the quality of women's life and their overall development. The indications inferred from NFHS- 3, suggest a definite relationship between socio-economic development and liberalisation of lifestyles among men and women causing strained relationships characterised violence in relationships in families and households. The inference, of course, needs an intensive and extensive empirical probe. The increasing number of such incidents also brings out the dualism in the theory and practice at the cognitive and structural levels. This dualism is a visible reality in the Hindu way of life treating Goddesses with reverence and observing *Durga Ashtami* with reverence to small girls on the one hand and the reality of foeticide, neglect of girls by denying them healthy food, dowry deaths and all kinds of brutalities observed against them (see, Sharma 2000). In Indian society the problem of violence against women in the family is not new. Women in our society have been the victims of humiliation, torture and exploitation from the time immemorial irrespective of the fact that they were also worshipped. Human development can only be enhanced by enriching family life. Ironically, family under patriarchy, has been a source of, abuse, exploitation, injustice, discrimination and violence, which Amartya Sen above termed 'un-freedoms'.

Gelles (1983) observed the dual functioning of the family. It is a source of love, sympathy and support as well as also an agency carrying through inequality, exploitation and violence. The incidence and practice of violence in general and domestic in particular cut across caste, class, cultural and religious barriers, impeding the rights of women to participate fully in society. But due to crystallized and legitimized rigid gender biases the fundamental inequalities between men and women continue to surface and resurface even in the making and make-up India. The medieval practices, such as *purdha*, *Devdasi* and other such systems curtailing freedoms within the family and the society continue to a considerable extent. Although the constitution of India emphasises on no discrimination and gender equality, the domestic violence in India acquired the form of an acute problem plaguing the society in 1980s with media according it widespread coverage, highlighting growing incidence of brides' torture and burning, dowry deaths and other forms of crimes against women, including domestic violence.

The 4th World Conference on Women held at Beijing in 1995 with eleven critical areas of concern, the states across the world moved with amendments in their laws to improve upon the status of women, ironically without an effort to affect the structure which was responsible for the existing problems. Since the present study is on the domestic violence and health, it is therefore, desirable to spell out the conceptual framework, indicating the meaning and parameters of the key concepts.

### **Conceptual Framework:**

Domestic violence includes an action amounting to abuse of power by an individual or by a group of individuals by virtue of being in a socio-culturally in a superior relationship against another person socio-culturally in a low position, either economically in dependency relationship or having economic autonomy in the given structure of the family. The occurrence of such an act or series of such acts over a period of time undermine the basic rights of person. The consequences of such actions result in mental and physical torture, simple to grave injuries, at times causing death, thereby becoming cognizable offence punishable under law. United

Nation describes it gender-based-violence physical, psychological and abuse by a family members against women in the family, ranging from single assault to aggravated physical battery, kidnapping, threats, intimidation, coercion, stalking, humiliating verbal use, forcible or unlawful entry, arson, destruction of property, sexual violence, marital rape, dowry or related violence, female genital mutilation violence related to exploitation through prostitution, violence against household workers and attempts to commit such acts shall be termed domestic violence. In India, the culturally defined role relationship between husband and wife create biases, which though undefined bestows more power to men. Given such an inequality the woman who challenges husband's right to control her behaviour often becomes victim of varying degree of violence. Makwana (2009) describes 'domestic violence' as "the overtly threatened or overtly accomplished application of force which result in the injury or destruction of persons or their reputation". It is therefore argued that universally the violence has its root in the socio cultural set up of the society (Heise et al. 1999).

The Domestic Violence Act, 2005 in India, though meant to protect the women but ironically its support starts only after a woman has become the victim of any kind of violence- physical or emotional or mental abuse. It is the physical abuse which is noted whereas the emotional trauma and mental tortures are hardly recognised as proving these acts of violence and the extent and magnitude is difficult to measure. The sexual abuse, also a form of physical violence, includes forced participation in unwanted sexual activity. Coercing a person to engage in sex, against her will, even if that person is a spouse or intimate partner with whom consensual sex has occurred, is an act of aggression and violence. Domestic violence has many forms including physical violence, sexual violence, emotional abuse, intimidation, economic deprivation or threats of violence. There are a number of dimensions of domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Act, 2005 cognises the following acts as 'sexual violence'

- (i) Use of physical force to compel a person to engage in a sexual act against their will, whether or not the act is completed;
- (ii) Attempted or completed sex act involving a person who is unable to understand the nature or condition of the act, unable to decline participation, unable to communicate unwillingness to engage in the sexual act.;
- (iii) Abusive sexual contact has defined sexual abuse as any conduct of a sexual nature that abuses, humiliates, degrades or otherwise violates the dignity of women.

Similarly psychological violence, also called emotional violence involves acts that affect the state of mind of the victim, which may include threats of acts or coercive tactics. Emotional abuse can include, but is not limited to humiliating the victim, controlling victim to withhold information from the victim, deliberately doing something to make the victim feel diminished or embarrassed, isolating the victim from friends and family, and denying the victim access to money or other basic resource. According to Domestic Violence Act, 2005, verbal and emotional abuse includes: (i) Insults, ridicule, humiliation, name calling and insults or ridicule specially with regard to not having a child a male child; and (ii) Repeated threats to cause physical pain to any person in whom the aggrieved person is interested.

In addition, there is also 'economic abuse' in which the abuser completely controls victim's money and other economic resources and prevents their use by the victim. The Domestic Violence Act, 2005 explains this type of abuse as:

- (i) Deprivation of all or any economic or financial resources to which the aggrieved person is entitled under any law or custom whether payable under an order of a court or otherwise or which the aggrieved person requires out of necessities for the aggrieved person and her children, if any stridhan, property, jointly or separately owned by the aggrieved person, payment of rental related to the shared household and maintenances;



- (ii) Disposal of household effects, any alienation of assets whether movable or immovable, valuables, shares, securities, bonds and the like other property in which the aggrieved person has an interest or is entitled to use by virtue of the domestic relationship or which may be reasonably required by the aggrieved person; and,
- (iii) Prohibition or restriction to continued access to resources of facilities which the aggrieved person is entitled to use or enjoy by virtue of their domestic relationship.

### **The Post 2000 Scenario**

The twentieth century witnessed considerable change, especially its last decade marked by liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, projected as a panacea for all ills through socio-economic development and structural transformation. What happened in the case of women and change in their status is examined here through a discussion on some of the works on women in the post-2000 period.

Thakur (2001) argues that around the world at least one woman in every three has been a victim of beating at some or the other point of time or was abused minimum once in her lifetime. Most often the abuser is a member of her own family. Increasingly, gender based violence is recognized as a major public health concern and violation of human rights. In this study attempt has been made to study inter relationship between husband's violence and education of level of wives; husband's violence and occupational status of wives: with various types of tortures and cases of violence against women. It is observed through obtained data from the Ajmer city of Rajasthan that education and occupation are playing an important positive role which suggests that women development, reproductive rights and empowerment are main key factors to reduce gender based violence. The major aim of the study is to gain understanding of the phenomenon of family violence against married women. This study is a micro-level investigation of interrelationship between gender based violence and literacy levels; gender violence and occupational status. The data for the study are collected using well structured exhaustive schedules through personal interview of women covering all aspects of the study. An interview

scheduled was prepared for the selected sample, in which question were made to acquire answers for four main areas

- (a) Inflictors of violence on married women; (b) various type of tortures; (c) cases of violence; and, (d) consequence of violence.

In order to obtain general information and details of women victims socio-economic conditions, a separate questionnaire was used. This questionnaire began with the preliminary information's about respondents information's such as caste, religious, mother-tongue, family type age, employment status and occupation, occupation of husband, other sources in income, educational level, etc. Sample of the study was taken from Ajmer city. Total 500 women respondents were selected randomly. Respondents were selected 50-50 per cent on the basis of employment. The data of the study are analyzed descriptively to meet the objectives of the study. Frequency as well as percentages is used in the presentation of the results. Some people think that men have the right to control their wives behaviour and that women who challenge that right even by asking for household money or by expressing the needs of the children may be punishable in the present study 50 per cent of the respondents were selected from working women and remaining 50 per cent were housewives. In battered wives are higher in comparison to working group. Data are clearly showing that occupational is playing a very positive role towards women.

Pillai (2001) conducted a study on "Domestic Violence in New Zealand: An Asian immigrant perspective", and explored the impact of domestic violence on Asian immigrant and refugee women in New Zealand. Domestic violence needs to be recognized as a crime. Asian men use Violence as a way of securing and maintaining the relations of male dominance 55 and female subordination which is central to the patriarchal social order. It is essential that various theoretical works on domestic violence in New Zealand recognize and understand the variation in cultural and familial constraints experienced by different groups of ethnic-minority Asian immigrant and refugee women. This article is written with the purpose to

explode such myths in relation to domestic violence that exists within the Asian immigrant communities in New Zealand. It is of great importance that it is identified as abuse, its ill effects understood, that the perpetrators take full responsibility and seek help and so also that the victim seek effective intervention and make their safety a priority before it is too late. Since the problem being acute, a unique situation of immigrant women, need continuous research. Despite the fact that a wide range of interventionist services exists and there is an highly progressive legislation against domestic violence in New Zealand due to various cultural and structural constraints, the Asian women due to their limitations find it difficult to access them.

Amin (2002) argues that Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) enforce certain special rights and privileges for women. But it is amazing that only 44 countries have laws against domestic violence whereas the others remain mum on this issue. There are only 17 countries which have made marital rape a criminal offence and only 27 countries have passed laws against any form of sexual harassment.

Jewkes et al (2002) within the framework of underlying assumption that empowerment is the way forward to control violence, however, argues "measures which somewhat empower women may have an immediate impact on increasing the frequency of gender norm transgressions or reduce personal agreement with a subservient position for women. These may in turn place her at a greater immediate risk of violence. Only when empowerment has reached a critical level its benefits would outweigh this. At the same time, they also with a favourable stance argue that risk of violence should not be a reason not to empower women. It needs to be further understood and taken into account in programme planning".

Joshi (2002) pointed out that gender based violence that threatens the well being, rights and dignity of women has only recently emerged as a global issue extending across regional, social, cultural and economic boundaries. According to state statistics, about 18 per cent of women are being sexually abused in the U.S.

According to the UN report on violence against women, the condition in other developed countries such as Denmark, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom etc. is no better. In the U.S., the department of justice reported that, every year; 3 to 4 million women are battered by their husbands or partners. Even in Sweden, which ranks high in the gender-related index, 66 per cent of the 18650 reported cases of violence on women in 1996 were of domestic assault. Further 45 per cent of 681 offences of homicide recorded in England and Wales in 1996 involved women killed by their spouses or lovers.

Butalia (2002) observed that Kashmiri women, whether Muslim or Pandit were not unaware of this 'neglect' at the hands of their sisters from within women' activist groups. Manimala, a journalist visiting Kashmir some year after the conflict began, met a large number of women. Most of them posed on question to her. 'Why is that "Indian" women, the women who have been active in the movement, and who have been quick to extend the hand of 57 friendship of all women affected by violence why have they not come to us. Why they not offered friendship, or even sympathy, to us women in Kashmir? In recent years, activists have sought to change this involving themselves in work with women in Kashmir and taking on the issue of violence of conflict. Because of the nature of the conflict and the conditions on the ground, they have been forced here to use different strategies to make their interventions, a politically volatile place such as Kashmir is hardly the kind of place in which you can tap out processions and carry placard demanding action or change. Instead activists have worked with group on the ground in providing the women counselling, health services, socio-economic support conducting surveys and fact finding and where possible, using advocacy tool with political actors in order to lobby for change.

Agnihotri et al. (2003) conducted a study, "Domestic violence against women—an international concern With reference to the situation in Mauritius". They pointed out that domestic violence is a pattern of assault and coercive behavior including physical, sexual and psychological attacks, by a person against his/her own

intimate partner. Women are more frequently the victims. After a global overview of the prevalence and nature of domestic violence against women especially in Mauritius, this article provides a discussion about health problems and risk factors among the female victims with the objective of giving preventive measures to eradicate it from society. NGOs, along with legislative measures, have proven helpful in improving quality of life and preventing violence-related injuries among women. The health sector also plays an important role as part of multi-sector efforts in early detection and prevention of cases of domestic violence.

Bhuiya et al (2003) in their study, "Nature of Domestic violence against women in a rural area of Bangladesh: implication for Preventive Interventions". This study carried out in a remote rural area of Bangladesh during December 2000 is based on nineteen key informants' inputs on domestic violence against women. Each key informant provided information about 10 closest neighbouring ever-married women covering a total of 190 women. The questionnaire included information about frequency of physical violence, verbal abuse, and other relevant information, including background characteristics of the women and their husbands. 50.5 per cent of the women were reported to be battered by their husbands and 2.1 per cent by other family members. Beating by the husband was negatively related with age of husband: the odds of beating among women with husbands aged less than 30 years were six times of those with husbands aged 50 years or more. Members of microcredit societies also had higher odds of being beaten than non-members. The paper discusses the possibility of community-centred interventions by raising awareness about the violation of human rights issues and other legal and psychological consequences to prevent domestic violence against women.

Sunny (2003) in the study, "Domestic violence against women in Kerala" based on random selection of cases, classified violence into several major categories, namely violence due to alcoholism, insufficient dowry, frustration caused by economic difficulties, extra-Marital affairs, and personality disorders. Most of the wife abusers were in the daily wage category, and alcoholism and insufficient

money were the most frequently cited causes. Spending on alcohol it appears, leads to lack of money and wife torture as a means of ventilating frustration. Insufficient dowry also seems to be linked up to this nexus. More generally, the study documents how, though one cause may be a major one, a multiplicity of factors are at work. The perpetrators are commonly normal people the domestic violence is considerably aggravated by mental disorders. All victims were physically abused, but they were least abused when economic factors were the principal cause. All suffered psychological violence as well as oral and physical, out of 25 victims in the survey, three attempted suicide and 12 contemplated doing so. Overall the victims appear to have taken pains to see that the stressful situations they were in did not affect their relationships with their children or their children's education.

Venna et al. (2003) in their study pointed out that while we have an understanding of physical violence at the macro level, detailed, contextual studies that map family dynamic are required for designing effective interventions for prevention at the household level. The theoretical construct of gender roles provides an analytical framework from which to identify norms and beliefs within a specific cultural context that support violence in a household. The impact of predefined gender role on physical violence against 60 women has been established and gender roles have been identified as the pivot around which power relations between women and men are manifested.

Goel (2004) conducted a study on violence against women: A case study with the objectives: (i) To provide for the development and welfare of women; (ii) Create awareness among women about their socio-economic development with emphasis on health education, etc.; (iii) Provide financial assistance to women for their self-employment; (iv) Start training programmes for women for starting their own business/trade.

She concluded that the need is to enforce its reputation prestige, credibility and viability. Public services properly recruited rightly trained, properly motivated and

given the congenial environmental, can help in fulfilment of the ideals of the women welfare and make them free from violence. Thus, the public service would have to work hard with direction to achieve. The result, i.e. violence free society let us have a great ideal an ideal that will startle us with its grandness, i.e. Eradication of violence against women. That is the only kind of an ideal to hold before our minds and eye and to work for little by little our imperfections and difficulties will vanish and instead of regarding life based on violence as a drudgery instead of shrinking from it, we shall bless this life which offers so many opportunities. We shall find joy even in the little daily tasks and wherever we are placed we shall know happiness. The women's movement in India had over the years faced wide ranging challenges of violence starting rape dowry deaths/murders, sati, female infanticide, female feticide, child sex abuse, sex trafficking incidents of 'acid throwing' sex scandals, etc. obviously through this the multiple manifestations, agencies and sites of violence were unveiled. Apart from the physical aspects of violence, the neglect of the girl child, the gender differential in access to education, food nutrition, health care political participation, training and societal resources are also seen as violence, in other words violation of women's human rights.

Kishor and Johnson (2004) in the context of domestic violence in Cambodia, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Haiti, India, Nicaragua, Peru, and Zambia found that in all of the countries, apart from Egypt, women engaged in paid employment reported significantly higher levels of violence than women who were not currently working. The study also found that violent relationships are characterised by either women or men making decisions alone, as compared with nonviolent relationships which are characterised by joint decision making.

Parashar (2004) pointed out that at the other extreme is the National Commission for Women's (NCW) desire to punish rape by death, which is paradoxically grounded in the patriarchal assumption of domestic chastity. Death penalty presumes that loss of chastity is worse than laudably initiated debate to change existing rape laws by calling for a broader definition of rape and lifting the burden of

proof from the victim, impacting amendments to rape laws. Yet its endorsement of death penalty overlooks that many women who do register rape case withdraw due to police deterrence and social stigma. Death penalty would only curtail the annual conviction rate for rape, which is only about 30 per cent.

Ahlawat (2005) on "Domestic Violence against Women: Emerging concerns in Rural Haryana", argued that any action, policy or attitude which dehumanizes some important observation comes to mind: (i) Can Domestic violence be tackled without addressing the basic question of inequality and patriarchy? ; (ii) What is the prevalence and nature of violence? ; (iii) How do women react to it and what are their attitudes towards domestic violence? She found some significant observations on domestic violence against women. All cases have reflected very serious consequences of domestic violence resulting in physical pain, mental and psychological anxiety leading to several such problems like lack of confidence, insecurity, fatigue, poor self image, depression and desire to commit suicide. Women do not raise voice against inhuman treatment economic insecurity, social stigma attached with separation are some of the important factors that force women to bear domestic violence. For the sake of their children women are prepared to tolerate anything. Moreover women are also discouraged to come back to their parent's home as it would bring a bad name to whole family. Another significant observation regarding domestic violence is that it is never recognized or reported. It may be concluded here that domestic violence needs to be tackled with greater sensitivity as a part of women's empowerment programme. Women will never escape violence as long as they are uneducated, remain financially dependent and derive their social status exclusively from their role as a wife and mother. The socio-economic and cultural factors that perpetrate violence against women will have to be identified and eliminated in order to address this sensitive social issue. There is urgency to change our values and belief system, e.g. that women is the possession of a man, that he can correct her behaviour, hitting is an appropriate way to discipline her, that man's honour is linked to women's sexual behaviour, that



family matter are private and that it is inappropriate for others to intervene. Through various women organizations are working very hard with well defined strategies, yet they have failed to address the issue of domestic violence specifically. The need of the hour is to launch an awareness campaign rigorously, where such issues can be raised and discussed to change the mindset of people which will help women gain greater control over their own bodies, over economic and family resources, over the number of children and spacing among them and over their lives in general. Devi (2005) points out that in Indian society the problem of violence against women is not new. The ever present fact of violence, both overt and covert, physical and non-physical has an alarming influence on the status of 63 women. Violence against women causes more deaths and disabilities among women than any other illness. By 2010 the growth rate of crime against women is likely to be higher than population growth. Further she explains that low income families suffer severe malnutrition. But low income boys fare better than low-income and upper-income girls. Adult women suffer more than men from malnutrition from iodine deficiency, anaemia and stunting caused by protein-energy malnutrition. In most poor countries pregnancy complications are the large single cause of death among women in their reproductive years. An African woman is 180 times more likely to die from pregnancy complications than a Western European Woman.

Pande et al (2005) in "A study of the narratives of Domestic Violence: Reconstructing Masculinities and Feminists," focused on construction of masculinities with an emphasis on male and female sexualities in domestically violent situations. We deliberately refuse to universalize these findings and are quite aware that there are many other patterns in which domestic situations deteriorate into violence. The limited role that we expect this paper to serve is as follows : we would like to ask the question whether particular gender role perceptions work towards strengthening the structural conditions that lead towards violence within homes. A schedule-cum-Interview method was used as a tool. The sample consisted of Mahila Police Station. We had interviewed victims who had

come to lodge complaints in the Mahila Police Station at police control room. We also took the interview of the police personnel and the counsellors in the place. The major finds of the study were : (1) Dowry if demanded acts not only as an economic bargaining mechanism, but also an emotional bargaining Mechanism. Families seem to negotiate with emotional control mechanism using dowry. (2) Another finding that we can draw is that men seem to be more stuck with their families and there seems to be a article to control the newlywed daughter-in-law. Yet another conclusion revolves around perceptions of femininities, by both men and women which seem to be clearly affecting both groups in domestically violent situations. Man's images of women's incapable and women's image of themselves as sacrificing people seem to produce a conducive atmosphere to breed violence. Another important finding was around men's sexual problem's their problems with sexuality seem to be an area which creates a vulnerable home atmosphere. Yet another way in which sexuality seems to be inextricably connected to violence centers around suspicions on the woman's fidelity. Affairs with other women also seem to destroy the peace of many a home. In many ways, we need to get out of the victim-aggressor model which seems to work in most feminist analysis of masculinity and violence. This is not a call to "Understand Men" better the way women have always been asked to do but to actually understand masculinities (and with it, femininities) and their social constructions better.

Ahlawat (2006) conducted a study on "Violence against women: Voices from the field," with the objective to understand whether domestic violence refers to any action, policy or attitude which in any way is a violation of a woman's personhood or dehumanizes her in the process of conjugal relationship. While looking at the whole scenario some important researchable questions are can domestic violence be tackled without addressing the basic question of inequality and patriarchy? What is the prevalence and nature of violence? How women react to it and cope up with the situation? With these question in mind one village district Rohtak, Haryana namely Simili was selected. Case studies were conducted and on the basis of

observations some significant inferences were drawn. In the village in almost every household, women suffered from one from of the other form of domestic violence. Apparently, there were large number of cases but only typical cases were selected where women faced violence quite frequently and regularly. At last some significant observations on domestic violence against women. All the 65 cases have reflected serious consequences resulting into physical and mental torturing insecurity, depression desire to commit suicide. When asked why women do not raise voice against in human treatment? Most of them said, “when can we do alone. This has been happening with our mothers, sisters and other women. Everything is predestined. Whenever we resist, we are asked to leave. Then, where shall we go, who will look after our kids? May be in future things change for the better.” The economic dependence of women, lack of alternative support structures in society, social stigmas attached with separation are some the common factors that free women to bear domestic violence. For the sake of children women are prepared to tolerate anything. Moreover women are also discouraged to come back to their natal home, as it would bring bad name to whole family. Another significant observation regarding domestic violence that it is never recognized to reported. Even the victims themselves opined that,” this is a personal affair and everything depends upon one’s destiny. If you are fortunate then, you have will have no problem in any relationship otherwise bear silently to cope up with the situation.” This, it is inevitable to table domestic violence with greater sensitivity as a part of women’s empowerment programme. Remain financially dependent and drive their social status exclusively from their role as a wife and mother domestic violence against women whether physical or non-physical in nature has for reaching consequences and over all impact on the gender identity formation. This has to do with the socialization process of the two sex right from birth. The outlook of the society determines the kind of treatment given to a boy and a girl opportunities both educational and employment resource allocation within the family and siblings relationship. There is also need to understand at wider level, the societal setup, mind setup and attitudes of the people towards the girl child, violence targeted

against her, the decision of the parents across caste/class lines determining the size of the family particularly sons and daughters.

Bomstein (2006) points out that it is important to realize that links between economic dependency and abuse are bi-directional. High economic dependency may lead some women to tolerate physical abuse, but repeated abuse may lead to economic dependence. Women in violent relationships who do work may have trouble concentrating, be harassed at work by an abusive partner, and have low self-efficacy due to abuse. The abuse can affect work performance to the point where they may lose their jobs, contributing to their economic dependency on their partners.

Devi et al (2006) assert that violence against women should be viewed as a human right violation and a crime, detrimental to the development of women and the society. Capacity building, awareness generation and developing leadership skills among women can help them gain confidence to raise a voice against violence and assert their rights.

Simister and Makowiec (2008) in, "Domestic violence in India: Effects of education" analyse domestic violence between husband and wife in India and attitudes to domestic violence. We use the term 'gender based violence' because some men use violence to control their wives. Data from the demographic and health survey 1998 to 2000 has been analysed. This survey includes women in the age 15 to 49 in 26 Indian states subjected to violence against women and men, such as a wife being hit by her husband's family, or a man being hit by his wife. Evidence in this paper is consistent with previous research indicating that gender-based violence is very whether such violence is seen as acceptable in the perpetrator's family and in the local community. We suggest that there are similarities between the behaviour of some Indian men and the 'machismo' values reported in other cultures. We confirm previous claims that violence is less common if women and men are well educated, we also note that acceptance of domestic

violence appears to be 67 related to the respondents education level. Thus we encourage the government of India to priorities education for both boys and girls.

Kaur and Garg (2008) pointed out that worldwide there has been an increasing concern about violence against women in general and domestic violence in particular. Domestic violence is common across culture, religion, class and ethnicity. Domestic violence can be described as the power misused by one adult in a relationship to control another. This violence can take the form of physical assault, psychological abuse, social abuse, financial abuse or sexual assault. The protection of women from domestic violence act, 2005, says that any act, conduct, omission, or commission that harms or injures, or has the potential to harm or injure, will be considered domestic violence by the law. Even a single act of omission or commission may constitute domestic violence. In other words, women do not have to suffer a prolonged period of abuse before taking recourse to law. The law covers children also.

Matharayappa and Bipplab Dhak (2010) in their study on whether empowerment influences domestic violence against women in Karnataka focused on the factors affecting domestic violence. Keeping this in view, the data available from the national family health surveys (NFHS) 1998-99 and 2005-2006 were used. Data reveals that about three out of every five women agrees with at least one reason of wife-beating justified. The main reason for the women who agree wife beating is justified when the wife neglects house or children followed by the wife who goes out without telling her husband and the husband suspect wife is unfaithful. About 42 per cent of women experienced different forms of violence. Women who experience sexual violence also experience more severe forms of emotional and physical violence. Women who have higher education in the house hold enjoy higher household autonomy and such women experience less domestic violence. Couples who are a equal age and education experience lowest prevalence of physical sexual or emotional violence. When the husband does not earn any money for the family, a higher percentage of women experienced physical, sexual and emotional

violence. Data shows that about two third of women reported physical violence since their husbands do not earn any money. About 29 per cent women who earn more than their husbands experienced physical violence. When women's earnings are equal to their spouses, sexual violence is less.

Sen's (2010) "Women's Subjectivities of suffering and legal Rhetoric on Domestic Violence" focused on: (i) How violence has been understood by the women's movement in India; (ii) An analysis of some legal documents that understand 69 primarily physical violence; (iii) An exploration on the protection of women from domestic violence Act, 2005, which through legal makes a formal provision on translating suffering. A narrative, methodological tool, explains, "between 2007 and 2009, I was going a through a martial break-down and had filed for divorce on mutual consent. What struck me was that throughout marriage and even after 'mutually' deciding to divorce, there had been continuous negotiations on different understandings of every day suffering. It is concluded by going to a personal experience. One of the things that I had to negotiate with over the 2 years between separation and divorce was to 'Look' separated from the husband a look that seemed to be associated with a raped distraught, 'agency-less' women. This is a look of devastation, of despair and not of confidence or the zeal to carry on in a situation of martial crisis. It was not unlike the secondary victimization that a raped woman felt in court". In this case, it seemed that the family, neighbourhood, the work place all were structures extending beyond the court.

Choudhary (2011) explored how women's ownership of land and economic independence can help reduce violence against women. It highlighted three important factors which have the potential to contain, reduce or eliminate violence: (i) property, (ii) education, and, (iii) employment. However, these factors have complex linkages with violation against women. Although they have the potential to facilitate more equitable relationships, the economic empowerment of women (through employment and earnings) challenges the ideology of men as "bread-earners" and can lead to further violence. It is therefore concluded by the author

“only answer may be all round development and creation of jobs which may open employment avenues for both-- men and women”

Kadam and Chaudhari (2011) in “Domestic Violence against Woman: Past, Present, Future” pointed out that the United Nations defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life domestic violence occurs daily in homes throughout the world. The national coalition against domestic violence reports that 1.3 million women are victims of domestic abuse each year. Violence against women is a serious problem in India. Overall, one-third of women age 15-49 have experienced physical violence and about 1 in 10 has experienced sexual violence. It is very disturbing as well as discouraging to think that a country that praises womanhood through epics and their devotion to goddesses can be so demeaning and indifferent when it comes to the common women living in the country. Although there are laws (civil & criminal) to tackle the issues of domestic violence, it is not implemented effectively.

Sen (2012) conducted a study on domestic violence and Impact on women with disabilities. The analysis based on three case studies, it reveals that effects of domestic violence on disabled woman are similar to non-disabled women. This form of violence makes them helpless, more dependent and is mentally devastating. She is a burden on the family and authority. We need to find out how to change the additional barriers- the society crafted images of disabled women as burden in general to change the attitude is the biggest challenge there are provisions for awareness intensifying in both persons with Disabilities Act and the National Trust Act. The draft country report poised for change gives us some ideas on kinds of activities taken up by the government agencies on awareness but unfortunately, most of the programmes seem to be addressing those who are all ready sensitive.

Sinha et al (2012) in their study on, "Domestic violence among ever married women of reproductive age group in a slum area of Kolkata assess the prevalence of domestic violence among the ever married women in reproductive age group and the factors associated with different types of violence. A cross-sectional analysis of domestic violence in a Kolkata slum reveals that the overall prevalence of domestic violence was 54 per cent, of which 41.9 per cent suffered from both current and lifetime physical and psychological violence respectively. Presence of property, higher per capita income and social support were protective factors against domestic violence, whereas alcohol addiction and multiple sex partners were the important contributory factors of domestic violence. The study argues that more social support, awareness and income generation for women in the slum areas can help reduce the problem.

Mahadevappa's (2012) study on gender bias and social justice focused on the nature of facts about the widespread violence practiced on the basis of gender inequality. It is accepted that unless the world's female population is not in a position to practically enjoy the equal social opportunity no social change, economic gain or political authority can lead to peaceful development of human society. Women are considered as a decisive force of social change and social development. Gender bias is deeply rooted in Indian society and it has thwarted serious implementation of the program and policies designed to envisage empowerment of women. The author lays emphasis on imparting education to 74 women with any discrimination and bias so that women can become catalyst in the process of development as equal partner.

Ghoi, Deshpande & Shailesh (2013) in "Violence against women in India: A Case for Research in Tackling the Menace" argue that violence against women has long been a problem, in times of peace and war. This violence ranges from very mild teasing to rape and murder and takes place at home, in the streets, at work places, jails, in short everywhere. Few crimes against women are reported, fewer still prosecuted and a negligent number of accused are actually punished. In the



absence of detailed studies on incidence, it is difficult to come up with suggestions to reduce if not abolish such violence. There is an urgent need for more studies on this violence so that the psychology of the violators is better understood. Instances of violence need to be thoroughly investigated, and ways and means devised to reduce their incidence. There is need for quick and severe punishment for the accused, which would act as a deterrent too. Any society, in which half the population is not assured of safety, needs to reconsider its claim to being civilised. Parikh & Anjenaya (2013) in a Cross Sectional Study of Domestic Violence among Married Women in Asudgaon Village of Raigad District argue that the prevalence of domestic violence is caused by demographic and socio-cultural reasons. The identification of the causes helps the healthcare personnel in formulation of comprehensive and effective strategies to tackle the problem of domestic violence. A house to house visit was done and the women were interviewed personally using a pre-designed, pre-tested and structured questionnaire, designed to determine whether they were subjected to domestic violence and if yes, to assess its causes, including the demographic and socio-cultural determinants. The data collected on the day to day basis was compiled, tabulated and analyzed. Statistical analysis was done using Mean and 75 Percentages. Out of the 250 married women, 83 women gave a positive history of domestic violence, thereby reporting a prevalence of 33.2 per cent. The various causes for domestic violence, as reported by the affected females were conflict over cooking and household work (38.55%), wife's nagging or arguing (32.53%), children related issues (30.12%) and economic distress (26.5%). Slapping (46.98%) was the commonest form of physical violence, followed by pulling hair (14.46%), twisting arm (13.25%) and having things thrown at her (13.25%). Experiences of sexual violence included marital rape (12.05%), being forced to have sex without protection (against pregnancy and STDs) (10.84%), being forced to perform unnatural sex (6.02%) and being forced to imitate acts as shown in pornographic films (4.82%). The most common socio-cultural risk factor for domestic violence, as reported by the respondents, was addiction (42.11%), followed by poverty (38.55%), husband brought up with the idea that wife-beating is

acceptable (36.14%) and visiting brothels (16.86%). Among the reasons given by battered women to stay in violent relationships, most common cause was that the women were unaware about legal provisions (61.45%), followed by the fear of being looked down upon by the society (59.03%), for the sake of their children (54.22%) and the fear of complaining due to the threats received from the bitterer (43.37%). 80.72 per cent abused females were reported to have tolerated the violence. Only 5.26 per cent of the affected females sought legal help to deal with the violence, while 15.66 per cent females tried to convince the perpetrator. A comprehensive health sector response to this problem is needed whereby health sector can play a vital role in preventing violence against women, helping to identify abuse early, providing victims with the necessary treatment and referring women to appropriate care.

The issue involving domestic violence and women health is highly complex which needs intensive analytical inputs and extensive field work, with sufficient time at researcher's disposal, human and economic resources.

In the light of the foregoing review, two significant inferences can be drawn: First, the violence against women is a widespread phenomenon in which domestic violence constitutes the maximum proportion, resulting in far reaching socio-economic, physical and mental implications; and, Second, consequently women's mental and physical health is affected.

### **Hypotheses:**

In the context of domestic violence and health this is hypothesised that:

First, domestic violence is directly associated with increasing socio-economic status and their relative autonomy in relation to others in the family;

Second, the intensity of domestic violence is directly associated with the state of physical and mental health of the women.

## **Objectives:**

1. To identify socio-economic conditions of women victims of domestic violence registered with the counselling centres and police stations in Shimla district;
2. To what extent domestic violence affects women health with reference to the health status of the women victims of domestic violence.

## **Research Methodology:**

The study, given its objectives, revolves around one fundamental assumption that domestic violence causes considerable physical and mental pain leading to different kinds of health problems depending upon the intensity, extent and type of violence that takes place within the four walls of their homes. Whether this is a reality, in order to explore this dimension, the study analysis the health status of victims of domestic violence. Within this descriptive analysis an attempt is also made here to infer the causes leading to violence and health problems. The overall research design therefore remains descriptive and explanatory.

## **Locale of the Study:**

The study was conducted in district Shimla on the victims of domestic violence registered with the police and counselling centres.

## **Sample of the Study:**

The records indicate that there are 273 cases of domestic violence registered with counselling centres and police. However, given the vast geographical locale of Shimla district, a total of 50 cases could be reached due to the given limitation of time and resources. These cases were selected on the basis of random sampling method. Accordingly every fifth case in the list was selected. Wherever, the case could not be contacted, the next case on the list was taken. Ideally, fifty per cent of the total cases could have been the appropriate sample. However, the in-depth interviews with the fifty cases makes an attempt to provide a rationale for taking limited number of cases.

**Sources of Data:**

The data has been collected from the victims of domestic violence by conducting direct interviews with the help of Interview Schedule. Wherever necessary, the data from secondary sources, especially NHFS-3 and NHFS-4 have also been taken

**Data Analysis**

The data has been analysed manually by developing descriptive tables, which are very useful in explaining the facts, especially when the sample size is small.

**Report Writing and Chapterisation**

After analysis of data and putting the same in frequency table format, the discussion has been divided into chapters. The rationale of which is to develop a narrative to explain the relationship between domestic violence and women health by going into the process and precipitating factors.

The following chapters have been developed:

1. Introduction
2. Demographic and Socio-economic Profile
3. Marriage and Family Environment
4. Married Life and Fertility History
5. Consequences of Domestic Violence: Impact on Children and Women
6. Summary and Conclusions

## **CHAPTER- 2**

### **Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile**

This chapter analyses the demographic and socio-economic profile of the victims of domestic violence. The Human Rights Council concerned with the promotion and protection of human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including rights to development under the auspices of United Nations (2014) submitted its report on violence against women (Manjoo 2014: 1-22) with broad focus on causes and consequences. It has been argued that the violence against women is systematic and occurs in the public and private domains. The alarming dimension of this is its continuous occurrence throughout the life-cycle. Its causes are confined to the structural and institutional inequalities characterizing the lives of most women. The public and the private domains include the community and society (state perpetrated) on the one hand, and, family and household on the other respectively.

The objective of this chapter is to identify the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the women victims of domestic violence. The rationale of the analysis is to find out whether the victims who came forward to report to the police and other agencies dealing with such cases come from a particular caste and class background or they represent the entire social spectrum. The other objective is also to understand the background of women victims who exercise their human rights and possess the ability to come out to report against these excesses to law and order agencies without having any fear of social stigma or further victimization by their family members or in the public by way of revenge. There a large number of such cases of physical violence, acid throwing, insults and humiliations and the kind have been reported in both the print and the electronic media as well as in the national crime record bureau reports.

**Table 2.1: Age -wise distribution of self and spouse.**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Total Self</b>	<b>Total Spouse</b>
18-23	6 (12.00)	3(6.00)
24-29	15(30.00)	11(22.00)
30-35	15(30.00)	14(28.00)
36-40	7(14.00)	9(18.00)
41-45	3(6.00)	9(18.00)
46-50	4(8.00)	2(4.00)
50++	-	2(4.00)
<b>TOTAL</b>	50(100.00)	50(100.00)

The age-wise distribution of the women victim respondents (Table 2.1) indicates that among the married women almost in every age-group face the menace of domestic violence. This observed that maximum number of women, 30 per cent each are in the 24 to 29 and 30 to 35 years age groups. The number of women declines considerably after 36 years of age. The data thus indicate that the incidence of violence is among the highly active sexually and reproductive age groups.

In comparison to the women victims, the data indicate that the tendency among men to be violent continues even in their later age. However, the intensity appears more among those in the 24 to 29 age group onward to even up to 41 to 45 years of age. The number of spouses in these age groups amounts to almost 86 per cent of the total sample. On the contrary number of women in these four age groups remain relatively small (80 per cent) of the total. Nevertheless, the occurrence of violence even in small numbers in later age suggests the intensity varies but tendency among men to be violent remain almost throughout their lives. Consequently, for women victims domestic violence is part of their life cycle, especially in the households where it occurs.

**Table 2.2: Education -wise distribution of Respondents and their spouse.**

<b>Education Profile</b>	<b>Total Self</b>	<b>Total Spouse</b>
Illiterate	1(2.00)	1(2.00)
Up to Primary	3(6.00)	-
Up to Middle	8(16.00)	6(12.00)
Matriculation	11(22.00)	-
10 plus 2	9(18.00)	13(26.00)
Graduate(B.A./B.Sc)	12(24.00)	8(16.00)
P.G (M.A./M.Sc)	6(12.00)	12(24.00)
Total	50(100.00)	50(100.00)

The educational qualifications of the respondent victims indicate that they are less qualified than their respective spouse (Table 2.2). The maximum number of them 22.00 per cent and 24.00 per cent has matriculation and graduation qualifications respectively. Whereas the educational qualifications of the spouse reveal them relatively more qualified. The distribution of data indicates 26.00 per cent, 16.00 per cent and 24.00 per cent possess 10 plus 2, Graduation and Post-Graduation respectively. This is observable that except for 1 respondent and her spouse all others possess formal education with maximum number in the post Matriculation education, with larger number of spouses falling in relatively higher qualification categories.

**Table 2.3: Occupation-wise distribution of self and spouse**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Total Self</b>	<b>Total Spouse</b>
Home maker	33(66.00)	-
Agriculture	1(2.0)	3(6.00)
Horticulture	-	2(4.00)
Agriculture /Horticulture Labour	1(2.00)	2(4.00)
Teacher	1(2.00)	1(2.00)
Government Service	4(8.00)	7(14.00)
Private Service	9(18.00)	35(70.00)
Unemployed	2(4.00)	-
Total	50(100.00)	50(100.00)

The occupation-wise one-third of them (33.00 per cent) are homemaker, also joined by another two (4.00 per cent) who state themselves unemployed and doing

household chores. Among those in service include a teacher, 8.00 per cent in government service and 18.00 per cent in private sector service. One each of the victim is doing agriculture and horticulture. In comparison to the victims, almost 84.00 per cent, comprising 7.00 per cent in private and another 14 per cent working in the government sector respectively. The data thus indicate that the spouses of women victims

**Table 2.4: Income-wise distribution of self and spouse.**

Income	Total Self	Spouse
500-5000	3(6.00)	4(8.00)
6000-10,000	6(12.00)	17(34.00)
11,000-15,000	2(4.00)	2(4.00)
16,000-20,000	-	3(6.00)
21,000-25,000	1(2.00)	-
26,000-30,000	-	4(8.00)
31,000-35,000	-	1(2.00)
36,000-40,000	1(2.00)	4(8.00)
41,000-45,000	0	-
46,000-50,000	2(4.00)	14(28.00)
51,000...	-	1(2.00)
Nil	35(70.00)	-
TOTAL	50(100.00)	50(100.00)

The income-wise distribution of the respondent victims (Table 2.4) as could be anticipated from the occupational profile of the respondents (Table 2.3) reveals majority of them (70.00 per cent) being homemaker do not have any income of their own. Among the remaining victims the minimum income is between Rs.500/- to 5000/- a month. Another small number comprising 12 per cent have monthly income ranging between Rs.6000/- to 10,000/- per month. However, in the higher category of income the number of victim women is very small. Whereas in comparison to these women, their respective spouse are having relatively higher income. There is none without any income whereas in the case of women of women majority does not have any income of their own. Even in the higher categories the spouses' representation is more than that of women. In the light of which it is inferred that the women victim of domestic violence are living in a dependency relationship and therefore vulnerable to violence.



**Table 2.5: Caste-wise distribution.**

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Rajput	18	(36.00)
Brahmin	22	(44.00)
SC	10	(20.00)
Total	50	(100.00)

The religion-wise distribution of population in Himachal Pradesh in general is Hindu and other religious denominations, like Muslims, Sikhs, and Buddhist are visible minorities whereas Christian, Jains etc are invisible minorities. In the study 88.00 per cent victims are Hindu, predominantly due to the fact that Hindu population is an overwhelming majority in the state.

The caste-wise, 36.00 per cent belong to Rajput caste, 44.00 per cent Brahmins and 20.00 per cent SC category. The data therefore suggest domestic violence is found among all the castes and communities, though the number varies from caste to caste. The contention that domestic violence is more prevalent among the low caste is somewhat shattered as the data indicate the menace present more among the higher castes.

**Table 2.6: Residential Place-wise distribution**

<b>Place of Living</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Urban	32	(64.00)
Semi Urban	2	(4.00)
Rural	16	(32.00)
Total	50	(100.00)

The residential place-wise distribution indicates the place at which the respondents have been living even before their marriage. Almost two-third of them (64.00 per cent urban and 2.00 per cent semi-urban) have been urban residents with minimum of community presence, whereas almost one-third of the victims (32.00 per cent) have been the residents of rural areas. The lesser representation of women of rural areas is perhaps conditioned by the fact that domestic violence is less prevalent in rural areas than the urban areas. It is also a fact that presence of the community

influences in the rural areas tend to prevent such occurrences whereas in urban setting the individual freedom is relatively more for an individual. Resultantly, more victims of domestic violence from the urban areas are represented among the women selected for the study.

**Table 2.7: Type of family.**

Type of family	Yes	Percentage
Nuclear	25	(50.00)
Joint	25	(50.00)
Total	50	(100.00)

**Table 2.8: Number of Family Members**

Family Members	Adults			Children's	
Adults	Males	Females	Children's	Males	Females
1-5	46 (92.00)	45 (90.00)	1-5	48 (96.00)	49 (98.00)
6-10	4 (8.00)	5 (10.00)	6-10	2 (4.00)	1 (2.00)
10+	-	-	10+	-	-
Total	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)	Total	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)

The respondent victims are equally divided, 50 per cent each, belonging to nuclear and joint households respectively (Table 2.7). Further data on the number of persons living in respondents households (Table 2.8) reveal majority have 1 to 5 members comprising of on an average 92 per cent adult males and 90.00 per cent adult females. The households having 1 to 5 number children represent 96.00 per cent male children and 98 per cent female children. On the other hand, there are only few households having 6 to 10 number of family members. There is only 1 family having more than 10 children members. Normally, the number of members in joint families is larger than the nuclear families. However, in Himachal Pradesh the family welfare measure coverage has been considerably very high and a result of which the average family size is about 5 members,

**Table 2.9: Living conditions and arrangements.**

Type of House	Total	Percentage
Pucca	42	(84.00)
Kucha	3	(6.00)
Semi Pucca	5	(10.00)
Total	50	(100.00)

The information about the living conditions (Table 2.9) shows that majority of the victims (84.00 per cent) of violence have been living in the pucca houses whereas the number of those living in semi-pucca and kutcha houses is relatively very small.

**Table 2.10: Number of Rooms.**

No of Rooms	Total	Percentage
1-3	47	(94.00)
4-6	3	(6.00)
Total	50	(100.00)

Most of the women victims living in pucca houses, 94.00 per cent have 1 to 3 room accommodation and the smallest number has more than 4 to 6 rooms (Table 2.10). The size of the house cannot be stated as most houses have come up in an unplanned way and as per the need room(s) are added to the existing.

**Table 2.11: Facilities available in Home**

Facilities	Yes	No	Total
Separate Kitchen	47 (94.00)	3 (6.0)	50 (100.00)
Bathroom	49 (98.00)	1 (2.00)	50 (100.00)
Toilet	46 (92.00)	4 (8.00)	50 (100.00)
Electricity	50 (100.00)	-	50 (100.00)
Drinking Water	50 (100.00)	-	50 (100.00)
Telephone	48 (96.00)	2 (4.00)	50 (100.00)
Television	49 (98.00)	1 (2.00)	50 (100.00)
Two Wheelers	15 (30.00)	35 (70.00)	50 (100.00)
Four Wheelers	16 (32.00)	34 (68.00)	50 (100.00)

The facilities in respondent victims houses (Table 2.11) reveal that 94.00 per cent have got separate kitchen for cooking food. Almost each house has a wash/bath room except for one. There are as many as 92.00 per cent have got a separate

toilet. Similarly, 96.00 per cent and 98.00 per cent have telephone connection and television in their home respectively. All the households of the respondent victims have electricity and water connections. However, only a very limited number, 30.00 per cent and 32.00 per cent respondent victims have two and four wheelers respectively. It is obvious that all the respondent victims have the minimum facilities which have become essential to provide accessibility, connectivity, mobility and somewhat comfortable living.

**Table 2.12: Land holdings**

<b>Land in Bighas</b>	<b>Total Land</b>	<b>Irrigated</b>	<b>Un-irrigated</b>
0-5	15 (30.00)	13(26.00)	7(14.00)
6-10	23 (46.00)	-	-
11-15	2 (4.00)	-	-
16-20	5 (10.00)	-	-
21-25	1 (2.00)	-	-
No land	4 (8.00)	-	-
Total	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)

In the occupational callings of the respondents and their income, it was noticed that being women agriculture and horticulture were the least followed occupations and low incomes for most of them. This is further obvious from the data (Table 2.12) regarding land ownership and irrigated or non-irrigated type. Maximum of the households in which the women were married had land up to 10 bigha further divided into two broad categories having 0- to 5 and 6-10 bigha of land respectively. Beyond 10 bigha the number of holdings is very small. In the hilly terrain considerable land is lost due to terrace farming.

Normally, the people living in the rural areas supplement their incomes by raising live-stocks. But here there only 16.00 per cent women victims who have stated having cows at their homes. Their milk is used only for household consumption. One of the reasons, perhaps, is the upper castes from which they come that there is very minimum number of live-stocks.

To sum up the foregoing discussion on the demographic and socio-economic conditions of the domestic violence affected women, it is found that the maximum

number 30 per cent each are in the 24 to 29 and 30 to 35 years age groups. This is the highly active reproductive age, the couples are also sexually active and the children are there to look after. It is often observed that due to resource and time constraints the conflicting situations often arise. In the case of these women this is also true as their occupational calling and income levels suggest that most of them are dependent therefore subject to restrictions.

## CHAPTER- 3

### Marriage and Family Environment

After having discussed the demographic and socio-economic profile, the understanding of domestic violence is not possible without going into the married life and lived experience of the women victims after their marriage. Most of the problems which, by and large, remain hidden realities of life after marriage, at first instance includes whether the marriage took place under forced circumstances or it was a matter of choice and willingness. In addition, the other factors, such as emotional and physical and sexual abuse, economic and financial abuse, infertility, and so on. A survey conducted by ICRW (2004) in Bihar and Jharkhand revealed that the girls married at an early age, less than 18 years, are likely to suffer different forms of domestic violence three times more than those who were married after 18 years of age. The common forms of violence include being slapped often, sexually abused- a kind of marital rape, threats of turning out of the home, keeping the women deprived of even the essentials like food etc.

A number of studies conducted in the neighbouring country, like Bangladesh (Khan *et al* 2005) and on African and other nations (WHO 2005) further reveal that at young age the girls have less bargaining power and therefore it becomes difficult for them to be part of the decision making process in the household. Resultantly, they continue to remain at the receiving end in the family. The NCRB (2013) reported crime rate of 46 per one lakh women, women being raped at the rate of 2 per lakh, dowry homicide taking place at the rate of 0.7 per lakh women, and domestic cruelty of husband is around 5.9 per one lakh. India, in fact, has a relatively very low crime rate in comparison to United States where 509 women are abused per lakh and globally 6.2 per lakh. A report on sexual violence rate in India though states it is lowest in India, even then there are 27.5 million are affected by violence over their lifetime (The Lancet 2014).

**Table 3.1: Age at the time of marriage of self and Spouse.**

<b>Age at the time of marriage</b>	<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Spouse</b>
18-23	27 (54.00)	19 (38.00)
24-29	17 (34.00)	21 (42.00)
30-35	4 (8.00)	8 (16.00)
36-40	2 (4.00)	-
41-45	-	2 (4.00)
46-50	-	-
50++	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50 (100.00)</b>

In the backdrop of the introductory note to this chapter above the age at marriage of the respondent victims is highly critical variable. The overall data however suggest that none of the respondent got married below 18 years of age. It is further visible that the age at marriage for more than half of the respondents (54 per cent) was between 18 years to 23 years. On an average they got married at 20 years of age. Another sizable number (34.00 per cent) got married when they were between 24 to 29 years of age. This is also noteworthy that in Himachal Pradesh in general the age at marriage has gone up in the recent years.

In comparison to the women, the number of men in the 18 to 23 years of age is less than that of the women. However, in the higher age group (24 to 29 years) the number of men is higher. This is due to the fact that most women at the time of their marriage are younger to the spouse and resultantly the age at marriage of their respective spouse is higher.

**Table 3.2: Marriage continuity.**

<b>Marriage continued</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	40	(80.00)
No	10	(20.00)
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>(100.00)</b>

Despite the domestic violence the marriage of 80 per cent of the women victims continues. However, in the case of 10 women the marriage has ended (Table 3.2). In the case of 6 out of 10 women who ended marriage, for one of them it first

marriage and for five it was also a second marriage. The reason for their marriage coming to an end was domestic violence due to frequent quarrels. The women who went in for second marriage, frequent domestic violence which included physical and sexual abuse was the reason for break up.

**Table 3.3: Type of marriage and Acceptance**

<b>Marriage</b>	Love Marriage	Arranged Marriage	Inter caste*	Inter religious*
First	13(26.00)	37(74.00)	11(22.00)	4(8.00)
Second	1(2.00)	5(10.00)	2(4.00)	-

\* The inter-caste and interreligious marriages mentioned above from within the First and Second category marriage only.

The data indicate that in so far as first marriage is concerned, almost three-fourth (74.00 per cent) had arranged marriage and only the remaining had love marriage. Amongst all the respondents, 22.00 per cent and 4.00 per cent had inter-caste and inter-religious marriages. In the case of 12.00 per cent women who had second marriage, 2 were inter-caste marriages. The love marriages were accepted by the parents without any resistance. Even the parents of the spouse also accepted. The questions pertaining to the consent of the parents where the marriages involved personal choices of the couples and acceptance by the couples where the marriages were arranged, reveal there was total acceptance from the parents as well as the boy and the girl. However, at times acceptance is arrived at without any problem but there are contentious issues too, such as demand for certain specific goods, dowry or money which later on turn the relationship sour..

**Table 3.4: Contentious Issues.**

<b>Contentious Issues</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No dowry demand	31	60.00
No demand for any money	10	20.00
No issue, all were happy	9	18.00
Total	50	100.00

Both customarily as well as the prevalent trends in the recent decades at the time of marriages various contentious issues emerge between families, mainly due to



unreasonable demands. The analysis revealed that there was no demand for dowry (60.00 per cent), which includes household goods, jewellery, money or any other thing. No one raised demand for the exchange of money at the time of traditional practice of meeting between key members of bride and bride-grooms relatives. The remaining told that there no contentious issue and everyone felt happy about the marriage.

**Table 3.5: Reasons for strained relationships between husband and wife**

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Physical	5	10.00
Mentally Harassment	8	16.00
Abused or assaulted	19	38.00
Drinking	2	4.00
Economic problem	5	10.00
Dowry demand	4	8.00
Relation with other women	5	10.00
Physically & sexual harassment	2	4.00
No	-	-
Total	50	100.00

The relationship with a happy beginning got marred by stresses and strains caused by various incidents which amounted to conjugal violence. Maximum number (38.00 per cent) stated the relationships started worsening with the frequent abuses hurled at wife by the husband, and sometimes the latter also started physically assaulting. The other reasons given are mental harassment (16.00 per cent), physical violence (10.00 per cent), extra-marital relationships, economic strains (10.00 per cent), and other reasons including excessive drinking, physical and sexual harassment and so on.

**Table 3.6: Relationship between Women and mother in law**

Between	Total	Percentage
Severely Abusive	12	24.00
Dowry Harassments Abuse	20	40.00
No	18	36.00
Total	50	100.00

The relationship of the respondent victims also got strained with mother-in-law due basically to two reasons (Table 3.6). First, reason pertained to use of severely abusive language by mother-in-law by taking up trivial issues (Table 24.00 per cent). One of the respondents told that her mother-in-law would always find faults with her way of working. Whenever she went out she would call names. This is also found that before marriage the boy's parents do not put up any demand for dowry. However, after marriage such issues start surfacing directly and indirectly. The respondents (40 per cent) pointed out harassment for not bringing dowry. In the process the women are also accused and abused. However, 36.00 per cent did not have any such problem with their respective other-in-law. The relationship with other relatives in the case of large number of women victims have been cordial as directly they were never involved in any kind of conflicting situation. However, the 38.00 respondent stated that the other family member, even not living in the same household have been, indulging in abusive language and exhibiting taunts, such as, "Very good cloth, you must have brought from your parents".

**Table 3.7: Dowry ever demanded by in- laws**

<b>Dowry ever Demanded</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Before marriage	-	50	100.00
At the time of marriage	2 (4.00)	48 (96.00)	100.00
After marriage	21 (42.00)	29 (58.00)	100.00

The respondents were directly asked whether the demand for dowry was ever made by the in-laws at any point of time. While everyone told no such demand arose before marriage, but just two respondents referred to such a demand at the time of marriage (Table 3.7). Many as 42.00 per cent of the respondents stated that demand for dowry started emerging immediately after the marriage on one pretext or the other. Most often, the demand for cash is raised to meet expenditure on house renovation, buying land, buying two or four wheeler etc.

The pressure is exerted on the women by using abusive language and sometimes even physical beating is not spared. The abusive language against the women or against her parents and family members is used along with hurling of taunts.

**Table 3.8: Continuous harassment by in-laws**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	46	92.00
No	4	8.00
Total	50	100.00

Even after the divorce and separation of 10 women, they find the acts of harassment by their respective spouse and his family members continue through indirect means. These acts include stalking and issuing threats through common known persons. In the case of those (almost 72.00 per cent, excluding 20 per cent cases who have left their spouse) who continue live with the in-laws and spouse whose cases are still pending with the office of the counsellor, face the problem continuously.

**Table 3.9: Family Compatibility**

<b>Compatible</b>	<b>Social Status</b>	<b>Economic Status</b>	<b>Educational Status</b>	<b>Occupational Status</b>
Yes	33 (66.00)	34 (78.00)	34 (78.00)	33 (66.00)
No	17 (34.00)	16 (32.00)	16 (32.00)	17 (34.00)
Total	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)

The problems often also arise due to socio-economic and behavioural incompatibility between the families. The measure of compatibility was overall social status of the families which was also seen in terms of economic, educational and occupational status. Almost 66.00 per cent of the women victims of violence stated that the compatibility was there between the families. Only 34.00 per cent families did not find any economic compatibility between their own and that of spouse's family.

To sum up, the marriage and family environment are very significant in the success or failure of marriage. However, the data with regard to age at marriage, presence of contentious issues in the process of mate selection, the acceptance of the

marital alliance between the boy and girl tying the nuptial knot, acceptance and consensus on the alliance among all the members of the family etc. do not indicate presence of adverse conditions which would have led to break of 10 marriages. However, post marriage blues, primarily surfacing of demand for dowry, behavioural incompatibility, sexual and physical abuse, use of abusive language etc. seem to account for domestic violence more than what has been theoretically stated to be the reasons for domestic violence. However, one thing is obvious that the causes of domestic, whatever may be the case, lies in the structure of the house

## **CHAPTER- 4**

### **Marriage, Domestic Violence and Reproductive Health**

The previous chapter focused on the marriage and family environment in which the respondent-victims have been living continuously since marriage. Only ten of them (20 per cent) completely severed their relationships and left the home due to domestic violence. The differential consequences are, obviously, the result of intensity and extent of violence perpetrated by their respective spouse, availability or non-availability of support system, interventions by public and private agencies, etc. This has also been an acknowledged fact that ability to face violence of any kind varies from individual to individual. The living under conditions of constant domestic violence is completely at times becomes so unsafe for a woman that no other alternative is left than to leave home. It is also observed that even if no life threat exists the expectation still remains in both the partners that the life otherwise is satisfying. There are in fact several reasons which account for why a woman leaves home and why is it that another woman after facing the similar situation does not leave home. This is a highly complex phenomenon and sometimes paradoxical too. Consequently, it becomes difficult to argue whether it is simply because of domestic violence or due to other reasons or personal issues concerned with one's intimate life experiences?

The institution of marriage is an institution, which despite distortions in its patterns, has been since ages been recognized for its social functions. First, it lays down the foundation of family institution, with the interventions of customs and traditions, it assures its continuation. Second, this has been accepted as the legitimate means for establishing sexual union and sex need gratification. Third, marriage is the medium through which procreation and generational continuity is assured. In today's world, these functions may be challenged as without marriage also two persons belonging to opposite sex can adequately perform the functions expected from marriage institution. Notwithstanding the challenges being posed to the institution of marriage and its basic functions for the society, the fact remains that

marriage continues to be the one institution for the development and sustenance of stable human relationship and performing its functions. It is an established fact that domestic violence disturbs conjugal relations due to its ill effects on physical and mental health leading to sleep disorders, depression, anxiety, neurotic disorders, suicidal tendency, tendency to inflict injuries to oneself, psychological distress etc. (Dillon *et al* 2013). The end result is total dis-satisfied conjugal life and unhappiness. In the process of building a narrative on domestic violence and women health, it is importance to examine how the strained relations and consequent violence in the family affects the reproductive life.

**Table 4.1: Duration of marriage.**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1-5	25	50.00
6-10	9	18.00
11-15	6	12.00
16-20	3	6.00
21-25	3	6.00
26-30	4	8.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The data (Table 4.1) reveals that half of the respondent victims have been married for the last one to five years. The other with married life duration between 6 to 10 years and 11 to 15 years account for 18.00 per cent and 12.00 per cent respectively. The remaining almost in equal numbers have been married for the last more than 16 years to 30 years. The data thus suggest that the troubled married life starts even within the first five years of marriage.

**Table 4.2: Inter-personal understanding**

<b>Personal understanding</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Unhappy	44	88.00
Very Unhappy	6	12.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>

A vast majority of the respondent victims (88.00 per cent) further informed that they have not been having a happy inter-personal understanding. Therefore their

relationship has been irritating and making them unhappy. The remaining the smaller number who also constitute the ones who fall among those severing their marital relationships stated they have very unhappy.

**Table 4.3: Sexual life and relationships**

<b>Sexual relationships</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Unhappy	44	88.00
Very Unhappy	6	12.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Like the interpersonal relationships, even the sexual life for majority of respondent-victims has been unhappy (88.00 per cent) and very unhappy (12.00 per cent). In other words, the reproductive health of the respondent victims on this front has been below expectations resulting in the failure of the marriage institution to fulfill its basic function.

**Table 4.4: Economic conditions and living**

<b>Economic conditions</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No Problem	6	12.00
Problems	44	88.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The response to whether the couple or the household faced economic problems which led to the conflicts and domestic violence (Table 4.4), only 12 per cent stated 'no economic problem' whereas the majority of the women point out the economic problems gripping the family often resulted in conflicts. This is also a fact that most often resource scarcity causes strained relationship among the intimate family members.

**Table 4.5: Sociability and socialization in neighbourhood and with relatives**

<b>Sociability &amp; socialization</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Restriction	45	90.00
Dependency on spouse for everything	5	10.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>

This is observed from the data (Table 4.5) there has been complete lack of conditions within the family allowing women to have a social life of their own and socialise with their relatives and friends. In other words, the lack of sociability and socialization basically deprived the women to have psychic gratification and sensory need fulfilment. The other reason which could be applicable to other women, as also observed in the occupational and income levels that the women have been completely dependent on their respective spouse for everything. This is perhaps also the reason that 80 per cent of the women, despite suffering domestic violence, have continued to live with their spouse and those few who had economic independence decided to leave their spouse.

**Table 4.6: Socialization with men outside home**

<b>Socialization</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not allowed	20	40.00
Restriction on staying out late	30	60.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Though asking women whether they had the freedom to socialize with men outside home is a bizarre question. However, given the fact that considerable change is taking place in the society this question was asked only to draw a distinction between the life of women and men. Almost all the respondent victims (Table 4.6) stated that they do not have permission to talk to other men outside their home (40.00 per cent) and stay out for late hours (60.00 per cent). This is a pan India cultural phenomenon that the women have the restrictions in their movement and interactions outside the walls of their homes.

**Table 4.7: Restrictions on spouse**

<b>Restriction on spouse</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	22	44.00
No	28	56.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Contrary to the foregoing analysis (Table 4.6) the data with regard to restrictions on respondent-victim's respective spouse (Table 4.7) suggest that 44.00 per cent



women stated of the restrictions on the free movement as well as socializing out home during late evenings. However, more than half of the respondents stated that there is no restriction on men and their movement. However, those who stated that men are not free is due the fact that in joint family the pressures are always there from kith and kin. But there is often resentment to restriction and the blame is always on the wife even if the source of restrictions is spouse's own family.

**Table 4.8: Sex preferences and responses to child birth**

Relationship	Birth of child			Total	Birth of boy			Total	Not bearing child			Yourself taking decision about bearing child		Total
	Good	Indifferent	No Reaction		Very happy	Indifferent	No Reaction		Unhappy	Indifferent	Total	Y	N	
Spouse	27 (54.00)	18 (36.00)	5 (10.00)	50 (100.00)	27 (54.00)	18 (36.00)	5 (10.00)	50 (100.00)	40 (80.00)	10 (20.00)	50 (100.00)	40 (80.00)	10 (20.00)	50 (100.00)
Mother in law	29 (58.00)	3 (6.00)	18 (36.00)	50 (100.00)	29 (58.00)	3 (6.00)	18 (36.00)	50 (100.00)	3 (6.00)	47 (94.00)	50 (100.00)	3 (6.00)	47 (94.00)	50 (100.00)
Father in law	29 (58.00)	3 (6.00)	18 (36.00)	50 (100.00)	29 (58.00)	3 (6.00)	18 (36.00)	50 (100.00)	1 (2.00)	49 (98.00)	50 (100.00)	1 (2.00)	49 (98.00)	50 (100.00)
Others	30 (60.00)	2 (4.00)	18 (36.00)	50 (100.00)	30 (60.00)	2 (4.00)	18 (36.00)	50 (100.00)	-	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)	-	50 (100.00)	50 (100.00)

The world-wide sex preference is a value attached with child birth. The intensity and magnitude of sex preference varies from society to society. In the Indian sub-continent male child is always preferred over girl child. There are various types of religious, ritualistic and social

values which back son preference. The respondents were asked about the response of spouse, mother-in-law, father-in-law and others (Table 4.8). The data indicate that 54.00 per cent spouses felt good after the respondent-victim conceived the child. A sizable number remained indifferent and a few did not express any feeling. However, the same number of spouses felt very happy at the birth of a son whereas to some it did not make any difference. However, when the birth of a girl took place 80.00 per cent were very unhappy. The response of mothers-in-law (58.00 per cent) whereas for a very small number it was indifferent. However, 36.00 per cent did not react, rather showed their worry what will happen- boy or girl. The similar is true of fathers-in-law. Similarly, at the birth of a son the in-laws were very happy but felt bad at the birth of a girl. The others also go by the society and society's dominant beliefs and practices.

**Table 4.9: The nature and type of responses at the birth of girl child**

Health problems	Total	Percentage
No medical help from Spouse & other-in laws	33	66.00
Help from Spouse & other-in laws	6	12.00
Help from Parents	9	18.00
No problem	2	4.00
Total	50	100.00

This is a matter of serious concern that even today when the government agencies and political leadership claims equality between the sexes, all claims are shattered when on ground the things are very different. A large number representing two-third of the respondents told that no medical help was provided by the spouse and in-laws after knowing that a girl child had been born. The help to 18.00 per cent respondent victims came from their own parents whereas it is the duty of the spouse and in-laws to make available medical help. Only 12.00 per cent received help from the spouse and in-laws. The data therefore suggest that unhappiness among the large number of spouses and their families at the birth of a girl indicate that son continues to be preferred child than girl. The reaction of the spouse and his parents further suggests that this might also be the cause of domestic violence.

**Table 4.10: Decision making in the family**

Decision maker	Social			Economic			Child bearing			Marital alliances			Family matters		Total
	Y	N		Y	N		Y	N	Y	Y	N		Y	N	
Self	11 (22.00)	39 (78.00)	50 (100.00)	11 (22.00)	39 (78.00)	50 (100.00)	14 (28.00)	36 (72.00)	50 (100.00)	11 (22.00)	39 (78.00)	50 (100.00)	10 (20.00)	40 (80.00)	50 (100.00)
Spouse	28 (56.00)	22 (44.00)	50 (100.00)	25 (50.00)	25 (50.00)	50 (100.00)	27 (54.00)	23 (46.00)	50 (100.00)	21 (42.00)	29 (58.00)	50 (100.00)	22 (44.00)	28 (56.00)	50 (100.00)
Parent in law	26 (52.00)	24 (48.00)	50 (100.00)	32 (64.00)	18 (36.00)	50 (100.00)	11 (22.00)	39 (78.00)	50 (100.00)	20 (40.00)	30 (60.00)	50 (100.00)	18 (36.00)	32 (64.00)	50 (100.00)
Others	2 (4.00)	48 (96.00)	50 (100.00)	1 (2.00)	49 (98.00)	50 (100.00)	1 (2.00)	49 (98.00)	50 (100.00)	2 (4.00)	48 (96.00)	50 (100.00)	3 (6.00)	47 (94.00)	50 (100.00)

What position a person holds in the economic structure of the family is important to assess the vulnerabilities to different kinds of problems and person's abilities to affect decisions. An assessment of which in the instant case has to be examined in view of the same. It was noticed women-victims have been dependent upon their spouses and therefore 78.00 per cent of them do not enjoy the power to make decisions on their own. Whether it is about economic matters related to the household or child bearing, marital alliance of the other family members or the general family affairs, the situation is the same. In each category on an average 75 per cent of the women do not have any say in the decision making processes of the family. This is further observed that the 56.00 per cent respective spouse of the

respondent-victims participate in decision making processes of the family which is much higher number than the respondents. In the case of making economic decisions, bearing of child, or establishing marital alliances of the family members and general matters the participation of the spouses is 50 per cent, 54.00 per cent, 42.00 per cent and 44.00 per cent respectively. In other words the spouses are better placed in relation to the women victims. However, the participation of parents-in-laws in the decision making processes is more than 50.00 per cent. But in the case of child bearing the pressure of the parents-in-law is limited. The data (Table 4.10) therefore suggest that the lack of empowerment of women victims visible from the lack of participation in the decision making processes and relatively higher participation of the spouse and the parents-in-law in the general and economic decisions make the women more vulnerable to pressures and domestic violence.

**Table 4.11: The perpetrators of violence against respondents in family**

<b>Violence Perpetrator</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Spouse & in- laws assault & Harassment	35	70.00
Emotional & verbal abuse by spouse	10	20.00
Sibling violence	5	10.00
Total	50	100.00

The violence is perpetrated against maximum number of the respondents (70.00 per cent) by the spouse and in-laws in connivance with each other. The acts of violence include continuous provocative harassment through insults ultimately culminating into violent acts, like beatings. The spouse alone also indulges in emotional and verbal abuses. The emotional abuse is making taunts about wife's parents, brothers and sisters or passing personal remarks and abusive language. There is a small number of women who stated that even the siblings of the spouse joins in the assaults, and even sometimes physical abuse. This all goes on with the connivance of spouse and parents-in-law allege the respondents.

**Table 4.12: Reasons for violence**

Reason of violence	Total	Percentage
Jealousy over trivial matters	11	22.00
Dowry demand	28	56.00
Religion	1	2.00
Unemployment	2	4.00
Extra marital affairs	4	8.00
Sexual harassment	4	8.00
Total	50	100.00

The reported violence, which is a fact, as these cases have been registered with social welfare department as well as in police, the maximum number (56 per cent) allege bringing inadequate dowry is the reasons (Table 4.12). Another 22.00 per cent state that the problems start with anything done better than the mother-in-law or husband or other members of the family is not generally accepted. The reactions spark jealousy and therefore the respondents often found their work or possessions termed as 'bakwas' or nothing etc. at times, when a work is completed by the respondents, the spouse and in-laws start fault finding and ridiculing the efforts made as useless. In the case of 8.00 per cent each extra-marital relationships and sexual harassment also are the reasons for the violence. In brief, it appears that dowry is the main reason which has been the cause of marital disputes and problems. In Himachal Pradesh also these issues become important cause of violence.

**Table 4.13: Initiation of violence**

Violence	Total	Percentage
Self	12	24.00
Spouse	28	56.00
Mother in law	9	18.00
Father in law	1	2.00)
Total	50	100.00

There is a saying the clapping is possible with two hands only. This is also a fact as brought out by data (Table 4.13) that in family violence it is not always the husband but also the wife initiates violence. Almost one-fourth of the women (24.00 per cent) themselves told that because of provocation they became violent first. Such initiation also had the severe reaction from the spouse. The violence therefore increased. However, in larger numbers (56.00 per cent and 18.0 per cent) the spouse and the mother-in-law respectively start with their accusing and abusing behavior, then slapping or punching in the stomach or kicking etc. Only one case reported violence by father-in-law.

**Table 4.14: Frequency of violence**

Frequency of violence	Frequency	Percentage
Regular	47(94.00)	94.00
Sometimes	3(6.00)	6.00
Total	50	100.00

The data on frequency of violence against the respondents (Table 4.14) reveal that majority of the women (94.00 per cent) stated that it became a regular affair till they filed a complaint against the spouse and parents-in-law. After which the physical violence stopped to a greater extent but not in totality. In some of the cases it was stated sometimes. These are the cases who have left their spouse's home. However, they feel insecure too as they continue to receive threat to their lives, though only sometime. There are also occasions when the respondents are humiliated by the spouse or his known ones in the presence of others. There are 92.00 per cent who had stated this when this specific question was raised to them. Because of which they often felt physical and mentally uncomfortable due to the anger and retaliating tendencies caused by their subjection to humiliation in public.

**Table 4.15: Sexual abuse and misbehaviour**

Sexual misbehaviour	Total	Percentage
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Spouse	37	74.00
Bother in law	6	12.00
Father in law	1	2.00
Other relative	6	12.00
Total	50	100.00

The incidents of sexual abuse by the spouse or other family members cannot be ruled out in the families where there is complete lack of personal understanding, unhappiness in conjugal relationships and continuous abusive treatment. The sexual abuse by the spouse is reported by 74.00 per cent of the respondents, whereas 12.00 per cent stated the brother-in-law misbehaving with sexual motives. In one case even father-in-law has been reported indulging in sexual violence. The other relatives, which include cousins of the spouse or spouse's sister's husband is told of making sexual advances. In fact, the men other than their spouse, tried to take advantage of the strained relationships.

To sum up, the married life of the couples and their reproductive health, this is obvious that 50 per cent of the women have just 1 to 5 years of marriage and they are victims of violence. The others having been living a married life for more than six years too have the similar experience. This is perhaps due to the reason that majority of them, almost 88.00 per cent neither had inter-personal understanding, nor a happy sexual and economic life. Resultantly, the women's participation in decisions making processes also remain low, hence vulnerability to pressures and violence. On the other hand the varying degree of participation of spouse and parents-in-law in various decisions also being not very high, though better than respondents put the latter in to a ambivalent situation.

The situation of the couples and the family, as stated by the respondents while narrating the causes of violence, has been caused by the demand for dowry or bringing inadequate dowry. At time jealousy over trivial matters etc. accounted for the problems. The violence in the family is most often caused by the spouse and mother-in-law but 12.00 per cent respondents also stated they as the starter of violence. But there were

reasons, like uncalled for provocations and insults within and outside the family. The respondents have also been sexually abused by the spouse and his relatives, including brother-in-law, even father-in-law though in one case only. The data on married life, reproductive health and domestic violence indicate that by and large the life of the women have been inflicted with violence, including physical, mental, socio-economic and even sexual.

## **CHAPTER- 5**

### **Consequences of Domestic Violence: Impact on Children and Women**

The fear of far reaching consequence of domestic violence and its impact on the safety of women and children the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 has made specific provisions for the children and their well-being. These measures have been initiated obviously due to the fact that the domestic violence has far reaching consequences for children and women. It therefore envisages,

Magistrate can grant temporary custody of any child or children to the aggrieved person or to the person making application on her behalf and specify the arrangements for visit of such child by the respondent. Magistrate can refuse the visit of such respondent in such case if it may harmful to the interest of the child.

Jofore-Bonet *et al* (2016) in a blog on Health and Social Care uploaded an article discussed blow of domestic violence on children's health outcomes in United Kingdom and observed that 'children suffer from a cumulative disadvantage when living in hostile environment'. They are prone to anti-social activities aggressive behavior, have poor self-esteem, risk to drugs, rejection by school peers, internalization of use of violence,



use of physical and psychological violence against their future partners, ay become victims of depression, and various biological and neurological disorders. This is argued that stress early in life may induce changes in multiple neuro-chemical systems and promote multiple alterations in serotonergic system.

The crime survey for United Kingdom and Wales, pointed out approximately 1.4 and 1.1 millions victims of domestic abuse and partner abuse respectively during 2013/2014. The domestic violence also resulted in murder of two women in each week (ibid). In the Indian women context it has been found that about 33 per cent experience domestic violence which impacts the lives of their children as 1 out of 10 children dies due to domestic wealth (Save the Children 2016). In addition, the children undergo psychological trauma and become victims of hunger. It is further observed that while the mortality rate among the wealthiest 20 per cent of the Indians is 26 per 1000, those living in poverty conditions among them it is 56 per 1000. It is argued that this can be attributed not only to access to essential health services but also to violence. The NFHS- 3 observed that violence against women is a significant public health problem in India, prevailing in different intensities in different states. While in Himachal Pradesh it is 6 per cent, in Bihar it is 59 per cent. Resultantly women victims of domestic violence suffer from low physical and mental health. What is the impact of this on the children and women, with special reference to health is examined in this chapter.

**Table 5.1: Abuse of children by the spouse**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	33	66.00
No	17	34.00
Total	50	100.00

**Table 5.2: Nature and type child abuse by the spouse**

If yes	Total	Percentage
Verbal/psychological	19	38.00

Physical	12	24.00
Economic	19	38.00
Total	50	100.00

The data (Table 5.1) indicate that two-third of the respondents reported abuse of children in the family. The further analysis of nature and type of abuse (Table 5.2) revealed by respondents pertains to verbal and psychological inflictions on the children goes on continuously (38.00 per cent). The children are often associated with mother and they are ill treated. They are accused of many things. The physical punishment, slapping and other such incidents often occur, making the children suffer violence inflicted on them (24.00 per cent). They are also made to suffer from economic deprivation, as at time their demands are not met.

**Table 5.3: Nature and type of physical growth and development retardation**

<b>Nature and type</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Social well-being affected	11	22.00
Psychological effect, stress and strains	20	40.00
Feeling of shame and helplessness, mental depression	4	8.00
Leaving home early	2	4.00
Staying away from home and behavioural problems	3	6.00
Alcohol and substance abuse	5	10.00
Cannot describe	5	10.00
Total	50	100.00

The child abuse causes psychological stress and strains among the children due to which they most of the time remain gloomy, do not talk much with parents, and their faces bear the signs of fatigued state 40.00 per cent of the respondents (Table 5.3). Which also affect their social relationships outside home argue 22.00 per cent. The children often complaint that they feel ashamed, helplessness and depressed (8.00 per cent) when confronted by other children with question regarding the ongoing strained relationships in the family. Since some of them do not wish to meet others they leave

their homes early for school and also some of them stay away from home late in the evening. While 10.00 per cent say children get into consumption of alcohol or other substances. The problems are sometimes so acute that it becomes very difficult for the women to even explain. In totality, the responses of the respondent victims of domestic violence suggest negative effect on the children and affect their personalities.

**Table 5.4: Effect of domestic violence on children education**

<b>Negative impact on education</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	39	78.00
No	3	6.00
No answer	8	16.00
Total	50	100.00

A general question regarding the effect of domestic violence on the education of the children was asked from all the respondent victims with specific reference to their own children and about similar problems known to them about other children (Table 5.4). The majority of the women-victims (78.00 per cent) stated that the education of children suffer to a great extent visible from the poor performance and staying away from school. While only a few stated no impact the 16.00 per cent did not answer the question. However, the emotional outburst or tears indicated in affirmative about the possible negative effect on the education of children.

**Table 5.5: The reasons for negative effects on education**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Depression	10	20.00
Anxiety	10	20.00
Self harm	3	6.00
Mental health problem	3	6.00
Child feel stressed	8	16.00
Cannot explain	16	32.00
Total	50	100.00

The data (Table 5.5) indicate that the depression and anxiety caused by domestic violence account for low performance in education, state 20 per cent each respectively. The other reason is the stresses and strains through which a child pass in daily life harms the studies. In certain cases, though very small in number the children try to inflict injuries on their body. Also the mental health problems, like violent behavior and overt reactions to even normal things are manifested. A sizable number of the respondents (32.00 per cent) getting emotional on the issue stated the negative effects but could not explain.

**Table 5.6: Domestic violence and children's peer group relationship and implications for education**

<b>Negative impact on Peer group Relations</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	40	80.00
No	4	8.00
No response	6	12.00
Total	50	100.00

The domestic violence also negatively impact the relationships of respondents' children with their peers (Table 5.6). This is stated by 80.00 per cent of the respondents. There are only one fifth of the total respondents who either told that the relationships are not affected (8.00 per cent) and others who did not give any response.

**Table 5.7: Implications of strained relations with peer**

<b>Negative effect</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Drop out school	8	16.00
Depression	17	34.00
Lower academic achievement	2	4.00
Deterioration in home environment	22	44.00
Impact on children's social adjustment	1	2.00
Total	50	100.00

It was further asked from the respondents about the impact of strained relationships with peer on the life of their own children and children in general. The data (Table 5.7) suggest that the impact of strained relations with peers is also felt on the home environment as the children do not interact much within the family (44.00 per cent). Often there also arise conflicts between the siblings as the peer relationships also cross-cut each other. The children also face depression, first because of the uncertainties they face due to the strained relations between their parents t home, and second, even they themselves find cut off from the friends. The lack of friendship and isolation cause not only depression (34.00 per cent) but also result in dropping out from the schools without completing studies. In other words, the students suffer from social and psychological isolation resulting in long term negative consequences on children.

**Table 5.8: Domestic Violence and Physical health of women**

If yes	Total	Percentage
Frequent headaches	11	18.33
Body aches	34	56.66
Bodily discomforts	2	3.33
Go to toilet	2	3.33
Frequent urination	1	1.66
Other	10	33.33
Total	60*	100.00

\* N increases 39 (78.00 per cent) respondents who expressed physical ailments due to multiple ailments disclosed by the women. The percentage is calculated out of 60.

The data indicate that the manifestation of domestic violence (Table 5.8) in physical ailments disclosed by 78.00 per cent of the total respondents. The ailment-wise distribution indicate that 56.66 per cent complaints pertain to body aches, various ailments, like itching, headaches, bodily discomfort, frequent urination and frequent going to toilet. All these reflect upon the neurotic disorders caused by tensions and anxiety.

**Table 5.9: Fears and disturbed mind**

<b>Fears</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Feeling of uneasiness	28	56.00
Anxiety	11	22.00
Fear of spouse	1	2.00
Fear of mother in law	1	2.00
Fear of father in law	2	4.00
Frequent disturbed sleep	1	2.00
Uneasy dreams	1	2.00
Mental irritation	1	2.00
Getting angry on small thing	4	8.00
Total	50	100.00

The frequent quarrels between husband and wife, depressive domestic environment and the problems of the children cause considerable fear and disturbance in the life of the women victims. The data (Table 5.9) indicate that 56.00 per cent of the respondents feel uneasiness day in day out and another 22.00 per cent have become victims of anxiety neurosis as was also visible from the data in the previous Table. The other problems faced by the respondent are fear of the spouse, frequent disturbed sleep, , fear of father-in-law, uneasy dreams etc.

**Table 5.10: Gynaecological health problem**

<b>Gynaecological problem</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Disturbed menstrual cycle	10	20.00
Heaviness in lower stomach as if something is down	2	4.00
Inability to conceive	2	4.00
Uneasiness after conception	16	32.00
Disinterest in having cohabitation	14	28.00
Getting upset during cohabitation	1	2.00

Irritating and Quarrel after cohabitation	2	4.00-
Sexual dissatisfaction due to lack of orgasm	3	6.00
Sexual abuse by the spouse	3	6.00
Total	50	100.00

The data indicate three major gynecological health problems, namely disturbed menstruation (20.00 per cent), uneasiness after conceiving the child (32.00 per cent) and disinterest in cohabitation (28.00 per cent) (Table 5.10). The other problems told by the respondents included heaviness in lower stomach, getting upset during the course of cohabitation, irritation and quarrel after cohabitation, sexual dissatisfaction and sexual abuse etc. In other words, the respondents have suffered from numerous gynecological problems due to domestic violence.

**Table 5.11: Infliction of injuries**

Extent of violence	Total	Percentage
Beating	11	22.00
Insult	18	36.00
Pushing	5	10.00-
Kicking	12	24.00
Verbal abuse	4	8.00
Total	50	100.00

The data on infliction of injuries by the spouse reveal as many as 80.00 per cent of the respondents suffered (Table 5.11). The physical pain was caused through beating (22.00 pr cent), hurling insults (36.00 per cent), kicking (24.00 per cent) pushing and verbal abuse 10.00 per cent and 8.00 per cent respectively. The similar responses also came earlier while the respondents narrated their woes.

The respondents told the researcher, under such circumstances they often seek the help of the neighbours. However, the impersonal attitude in the neighbourhood is not of much help.

**Table 5.12: Seeking Police Protection**

<b>Police support</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Report to protection officer	45	90.00
Safety planning advice	4	8.00
No help	1	2.00
Total	50	100.00

Rather 98.00 per cent apprised the researcher that ultimately they took help of the police. While 90.00 per cent directly reported to the protection officer for action against the spouse and 8.00 per cent took advice on how to plan for their safety. Only one respondent did not seek police help.

**Table 5.13: Approach to social welfare officer**

<b>Help sought</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Social security for women & children	20	40.00
Protecting family Institutions for breaking up and for being against children	25	50.00
Don't know	5	10.00
Total	Total	Total

The data further show (Table 5.13) that the respondent victims of domestic violence approached social welfare officer. Among them 50.00 per cent asked for protection so that the family as an institution does not break, for this has far reaching consequences or the children. Another 40.00 per cent sought protection from the husband for themselves and their children. Only 10.00 per cent told that they did not know about the social welfare department. This is worthwhile to mention here that the social welfare department is actively involved in finding out the solutions to the existing problems. In addition, people also approach their respective Panchayat at first instance to have a resolution of their domestic problems. The number of such women is only 16.00 per cent of the total respondent victims. They have to go to Sarpanch two to four times then only he or she listens. The reason being the women being daughter-in-law and come from



other place, the spouse also receives protective treatment more than the respondents. The outcome is often positive and the problems are resolved by inviting both parties. However, the partisan role of Panchayat and Sarpanch is not ruled out.

**Table 5.14: The outcome of meeting women welfare officer**

Outcome	Total	Percentage
Filling the case against her husband or against male adult person	28	56.00
Joint counselling spouse or her family member	2	4.00
Approach the court by providing legal and get appropriable relief from the court	20	40.00
Total	50	100.00

The outcome of having meeting with women welfare officer against the acts of domestic violence carried out by the spouse and other family members in connivance with each other, according to the data (Table 5.14) is three fold. First, argue 56.00 per cent respondents, it helps in registering a case either against the spouse or the male adult responsible for violence. Second, there is an opportunity for reconciliation through joint counseling og husband and wife or the couple along with other family members. Third, it helps in filing a suit in the court of law for appropriate relief. This is further argued that the social welfare board is a medium through which the women victims of domestic violence get their rights restored. However, all the women do not have satisfactory outcomes because of the pressures which the spouse and his relatives exert on the officials. The police also plays a partisan role. Because of these factors the women victims often find themselves at receiving end whether it is their physical, social, sexual, economic social well-being is concerned.

To sum up the foregoing discussion based on empirical data, it is obvious that domestic violence has three consequences: First, there is abuse of children due to excessive pressures on them to undergo humiliation at home, outside home and in the peer group.

Resultantly, they suffer from various kinds of complexes, depression, psychological trauma and sometimes physical abuse too. Their health is affected also. Second, the women subjected to domestic violence have tremendous physical, psychological,, sexual and economic sufferings. The data indicated that they suffer social stigma, undergo physical and mental torture, sexual abuse which now-a-days called marital rape. The personal, social and sexual life remains unsatisfied. They even become victims of depression, anxiety and other neurotic ailments. Third, there is limited support system available to them. Those who are able to afford have easy access to social and health care services. The social welfare board which exists in almost all the states of India often comes forward to help these women.

## **CHAPTER- 6**

### **Summary and Conclusions**

This empirical exercise was undertaken in the backdrop of the fact that domestic violence and women health is a highly critical and complex issue which needs intensive analytical inputs and extensive field work, with sufficient time, human and economic resources at researcher's disposal. Nevertheless, given the gravity of the situation and the far reaching socio-economic, physical and mental health implications, it is argued that domestic violence is directly associated with the socio-economic status of the women. Its intensity is directly associated with the state of physical and mental health of the women. It implies, how do women conceive and perceive violence and respond to it.

The study explored the following to develop a narrative on domestic violence..

First, an attempt was made to identify socio-economic conditions of women victims of domestic violence registered with the counseling centres and police stations in Shimla district; and,

Second, what extent domestic violence affects women health with reference to their present health status.

The study was conducted in district Shimla on the victims of domestic violence registered with the police and state women welfare and counselling centres. There were 273 registered cases of domestic violence. However, given the vast geographical locale of Shimla district, randomly selected total of 50 cases were interviewed under the given limitation of time and resources. Accordingly every fifth case in the list was selected. Wherever, the case could not be contacted, the next case on the list was taken.

The demographic and socio-economic profile revealed the maximum number of women comprising of 30 per cent each were in the 24 to 29 and 30 to 35 years age

respectively. This is inferred that the incidence of violence is found more among the sexually and reproductively highly active age groups.

The educational qualifications of the women victims revealed 22.00 per cent and 24.00 per cent had done matriculation and graduation respectively. The spouses on the other hand had relatively higher qualifications than them. Being lower in qualifications one third of them (66.00 per cent) are confined to home as homemaker. Only a small number was found in service which included a teacher, 8.00 per cent in government service and 18.00 per cent in private sector service. In comparison to the women, almost 84.00 per cent of the spouses, comprising 70.00 per cent in private and another 14 per cent were working in the government sector respectively. Similarly, women in maximum number being home makers constituted a socio-economically dependent group. Even their land holdings being limited with agriculturally incompatible topography, a considerable land is lost in erecting boundaries on cultivable land. Hence majority has low incomes.

The social profile, which also includes their public image dependent mainly on their prized possessions, indicates that in majority number they come from Hindu religion and belong to Rajput and Brahmin castes, two prominent caste groups in Himachal Pradesh. More than two-third have urban base and in equal numbers come from joint and nuclear households. The family size on average has five members. Over the decades Himachal Pradesh as a whole has witnessed decline in birth rates, thereby bringing down the family size.

The living conditions show that majority of the victims (84.00 per cent) of violence have been living in the pucca houses, barring a few. The size of accommodation suggest majority in 1 to 3 rooms. Almost all have separate kitchen, bathroom, toilet, electricity, drinking water, telephone, televisions and about one-third transport facility comprising of either a two or four wheeler. In other words, socio-economically, by and large, the

respondent come from low middle income group with the exception of few who are better qualified, have government jobs and some land to support their livelihood.

There has been change in the age at marriage, a feature also reflected in the profile of women victims (on an average 20 years and higher up to 29 years). However, many of them got marriage as late as at 29 years or above. Despite the domestic violence the marriage of 80 per cent of the women victims has continued, except for 20 per cent who broke away due to domestic violence. Most marriages (74.00 per cent) had been arranged and the remaining had love marriages. It reverses the assertion that love marriages break more than the arranged ones.

The reasons for strained husband-wife relations include conjugal violence and abuses. More than one-third (38.00 per cent) stated frequent abusive behavior, physical assault and violence, extra-marital relationships, economic strains, excessive drinking, physical and sexual harassment and so on accounted for the problem. The demand for dowry (42.00 per cent), money for buying land or a vehicle etc. is another type of coercive violence faced by the victims. These women could have left by now, but they are continuing living for the sake of children. The other factors, socio-economic status and behavioural incompatibility between the families also account for marital discords. Otherwise they had been married minimum for one to five years, 6 to 10 years and 11 to 15 years. They account for 18.00 per cent and 12.00 per cent respectively. The remaining almost in equal numbers have been married for the last more than 16 years to 30 years.

A vast majority of the respondent victims (88.00 per cent) neither had appropriate and happy inter-personal understanding nor a complete sexual life. What accounts for their unhappy inter-personal and conjugal relationships is too much restricted life of women to socialize, even meeting their own parents. The lack of sociability and proper socialization hampers their personal growth and development. What to talk of talking and mixing with other men, even talking to their own family relations. In comparison to

the women, even men have restrictions but they still have the choices to enjoy themselves.

The pressures on women also come from the social values, like child birth at first instance, then son preference and so on aided and abetted by religious and, ritualistic and social values which back son preference. The conceiving child by a woman is a positively taken by 54.00 per cent spouses. However, the same number of spouses felt very happy at the birth of a son. At the birth of a girl child 80.00 per cent were very unhappy. Even the response of mothers-in-law (58.00 per cent) was same. This is the reason that even the mothers also wish to have a son rather than girl child, forgetting that without girls birth the society cannot survive.

One of the reasons for domestic violence is limited empowerment of women in the family decision making processes. While more than half of the respondents' spouses (56.00 per cent) participate in decision making processes, the women victims have minimum participation. In the case of making economic decisions, bearing of child, or establishing marital alliances of the family members and general matters the participation of the spouses is 50 per cent, 54.00 per cent, 42.00 per cent and 44.00 per cent respectively. In other words, women have relatively less say in family decision making.

The reported violence, which is a fact, as these cases have been registered with social welfare department as well as in police, the maximum number (56 per cent) allege bringing inadequate dowry is the reasons and another 22.00 per cent state that the problems start with anything done better than the mother-in-law or husband or other members of the family is not generally accepted. There is jealousy factor too that perpetrates violence.

There is no doubt that most often the violence is initiated by the husband and the members of his family. This is true in the case of present study too with 56 per cent spouses and 18.00 per cent mothers-in-law involved. However, 24.00 per cent of the

the women themselves have admitted initiating violence against husband or other members of the family. The frequency of violence in 94.00 households is a regular feature. The feeling of being humiliated and tortured physically as well mentally, make the women react too. The sexual abuse and misbehavior on the part of 74.00 per cent spouses and others though in lesser percentage is a serious issue.

The data further reveal two-third of the respondents reported abuse of children in the family, which includes verbal and psychological inflictions on the children (38.00 per cent). The physical punishment, slapping and other such incidents often occur, making the children suffer violence inflicted on them (24.00 per cent). They are also made to suffer from economic deprivation, as at time their demands are not met.

The child abuse causes psychological stress and strains among the children due to which they most of the time remain gloomy, do not talk much with parents, and their faces bear the signs of fatigued state 40.00 per cent of the respondents which has bearing on their social relationships outside home (22.00 per cent). Apart from suffering depression and other mental pressures the children get into alcohol consumption as well as use of substances. In totality, the responses of the respondent victims of domestic violence suggest negative effect on the children and affect their personalities.

The education of the children of the violence affected families, as reported by 78.00 per cent have is adversely jeopardized.

The depression and anxiety caused by domestic violence accounts for low performance in education (20.00 per cent each) respectively. The other reason is the stresses and strains through which a child pass in daily life harms the studies. Their relationship with the peer group also undergoes severe strains. In other words, the students suffer from social and psychological isolation resulting in long term negative consequences on children. Even the women themselves suffer from physical and psychological problems, stated by 78.00 per cent and 56.66 per cent. The common problems faced by the are

body aches, various ailments, like itching, headaches, bodily discomfort, frequent urination and toilet going. All these reflect upon the neurotic disorders caused by tensions and anxiety. Another 56.00 per cent of the respondents feel uneasiness day in day out and another 22.00 per cent have become victims of anxiety neurosis.

The findings further revealed three types of major gynecological health problems, namely disturbed menstruation (20.00 per cent), uneasiness after conceiving the child (32.00 per cent) and disinterest in cohabitation (28.00 per cent) experienced by women.

The incidents of causing injuries are also found among 80.00 per cent of the respondents. The cause of physical pain is beating (22.00 per cent), hurling insults (36.00 per cent), kicking (24.00 per cent) and pushing and verbal abuses 10.00 per cent and 8.00 per cent respectively.

The findings suggest availability of alternative support system to women is police (98.00 per cent), direct reporting to the protection officer for action against the spouse is done by 90 per cent of women. The outcome of having meeting with women welfare officer against the acts of domestic violence carried out by the spouse and other family members in connivance with each other. This is visible from the data that spouse or the male adult in most cases is responsible for violence. The meeting police or the protection officers provides an opportunity for reconciliation through joint counseling of husband and wife or the couple along with other family members. This is further argued that the social welfare board is a medium through which the women victims of domestic violence get their rights restored.

This is therefore imperative to suggest that there is need to strictly execute the existing law to protect women, their families from breakdown and children to stay healthy.



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