

# The Prevalence of Gender Inequalities and Violence in the Eastern Nepal

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## ABSTRACT

### Background

Gender inequality and gender based violence is more established in societies with stratification and stronger gender norms.

### Objective

To determine prevalence of gender violence, perception on gender issues and awareness on sexual trafficking and rights among men and women in Morang district of Nepal.

### Method

This cross sectional study was conducted among 810 men and 1190 women in twenty different VDCs of Morang district using self-administered computer based self-interview methods during October-November 2016.

### Result

Male in comparison to female reported more physical abuse during their lifetime. Females (n=259, 21.7%) reported more severe lifetime emotional abuse (n=148, 18.2%) compared to the males. Lifetime severe sexual abuse was reported by a close to five percent (n=95) of both sexes. The severe forms of partner violence include choking, threat or use of weapon and setting on fire was identified to be perpetrated by both the sexes. More than 50% (n=1095) of the respondents had known someone using physical violence against their partner in the community. The involvement of female in key economic decision-making was reported by less than 12%. Nearly 72% (n=1441) were aware of occurrence of sexual trafficking from Nepal while only 46% (n=918) were aware of sexual trafficking occurring from their vicinity.

### Conclusion

The study confirms that despite awareness on gender equality and sexual trafficking, the prevalence of violence and adherence to stronger gender stereotypes, stigmas and roles indicates much need of awareness for establishing equalities and reducing gender violence.

## KEY WORDS

*Gender inequalities, Trafficking, Violence*

## INTRODUCTION

Gender is recognized as a multifaceted cultural construct determining the meaning of being female or male and also influences the existing asymmetry of power relations in any given social contexts.<sup>1-3</sup> Gender is identified as a resilient construct of masculinities and femininities producing various organized social lives.<sup>4</sup> Gender as an ideology have legitimized differences between the sexes as a natural biological differences in many instances.<sup>5</sup> Gender differences has produced varied status and position for both sexes in different social contexts assigning female with comparatively lesser power, privilege, and resources than male.<sup>6</sup> This belief system and practice transcendent men to a higher status and provides a mechanism for the control over the women.<sup>7</sup> The associations between gender-based power relations and violence are widely spread, with violence identified as the manifestation of power inequities and methods to enforcing it.<sup>8</sup> The male perpetration of gender violence is also found to be influenced by childhood experiences of violence, use of alcohol and drugs, strong acceptance of the belief that violence is the only way out and also expressed as supreme male authority.<sup>9</sup> Violence thus becomes a determining factor for positioning sexes and performing socially expected roles.<sup>10</sup> Gender-based violence also operates by the belief system that males has to be more powerful than females, and the male often end up using physical force to show their dominance.<sup>11</sup> Research suggests that asymmetry of power in intimate relationships is also related to violence and the predictors of using violence is majorly dependent on the perpetrator's gender.<sup>12</sup>

The hegemonic masculinity are the different sets of patterns that a male practice but are not limited to set of roles and identity thereby permitting male with continuous dominance and subordination over the female.<sup>13,14</sup> Hegemonic masculinity is embedded in the social and historical context of any given society and it helps to explain the approval of men in accepting practices for using aggression against the women.<sup>15</sup> The constructed differences give rise to unequal social structures and the status beliefs legitimizes and perpetuates the inequalities.<sup>16</sup> The functioning of these gendered social scripts is identified as the cause for the violence against women.<sup>17</sup> It has been estimated that globally 15-71% of women have experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime from their partner and 4-54% have experienced it in the past 12 months.<sup>18</sup> Women and girls in South Asia, face victimizations even before their birth through selective abortion; female infanticides; and throughout their life in different forms of incest and sexual harassment, rape, trafficking, dowry related violence, deprived from property, dignity and denial from other various life opportunities.<sup>19</sup> The estimation of violence victims in Nepal is difficult to establish due to the data gap and inconsistent reporting. The National Demographic Household Survey (NDHS) in Nepal predicts that girls and women of reproductive

age between 15-49 years have reported of experiencing physical violence (22 %) and sexual violence (12 %) at least once in their lifetime, since the age of 15 years.<sup>20</sup> Another study among young women in rural Nepal identifies the occurrence of physical violence (25.3 %) in the past 12 months.<sup>21</sup> The data on sexual violence in Nepal is difficult to assess as the subject is still considered as taboo.<sup>22</sup> It is reported that most of the sexual violence cases occurs within the family and are largely inflicted by the husbands than by the outsiders, but this sexual violence is seldom reported owing to stigma, family prestige, socio-economic dependence and weak legal procedures.<sup>23</sup>

The objective of this study was to determine prevalence of gender violence, perception on gender issues and awareness on sexual trafficking and rights among men and women in Morang district of Nepal.

## METHODS

This research is a part of intervention study using forum theatre interventions to increasing awareness on gender equality and reducing sexual trafficking in the Morang district of Eastern Nepal. The findings of the paper are based on the collected baseline data. A two stage sampling method was adopted for this study. In the first stage, a total of twenty villages (ten interventions and ten comparisons) were selected using probability proportional to the size for both the groups. In the later stage, the smaller administrative units called wards were identified from each selected villages. The required numbers of respondents in the selected wards of the villages were computed based on the percentage of the population shared by the village, and the final numbers of male and females were reached based on the population sex ratio at each selected wards. The calculation of sample size used conservative technique, considering 50% prevalence of exposure to the information, education and communication materials related to gender issues, 95% confidence interval (CI) and five percent allowable error; the required sample size was calculated to be 384 respondents. The further application of design effect of 2.5 and assumption of four percent non-response and loss to the follow up, the final sample size consisted of 1068 individuals (500 males and 568 female) in the comparison group and 932 individuals (310 males and 622 female) in the intervention group.

The instrument for this study was developed adapting to IMAGE Survey<sup>i</sup>, Gender-based violence tools manual - for assessment and program design, monitoring and evaluation in conflict-affected settings<sup>ii</sup>, and the NorVold abuse questionnaire (NorAQ)<sup>iii</sup>. The questions on emotional, physical and sexual abuse in NorAQ are classified further as mild, moderate and severe based on the level of severity.

The selected questions for the study were back translated to the local language from English by the native authors. The developed questionnaire for this study consisted of five

sections namely; socio demography, childhood and adult experiences, violence, attitude towards relation between male and female, and knowledge on sexual trafficking, rights and migration. The questionnaire along with exit questions on reflection, convenience, language and privacy was pre-tested earlier among 124 respondents in the Eastern (Morang) and the Central region (Sindhupalchok) of Nepal. The final version of questionnaire was developed after incorporating necessary changes and feedback received during the pre-test.

Color Coded Audio Assisted Computer Based Self-Interviews (C-ACASI) was used on an Open Data Kit (ODK) android application for the data collection. The respondents listened to the pre-recorded questions through the headphones, and responded to each questions by selecting color-coded answers in a tablet device (Samsung Galaxy Tab E 9.6 and Samsung Galaxy Tab 4 4G LTE). A separate male and female audio recording of the questions in Nepali language was used for respective sex to minimize any biases. The first author and the field staff at each site assisted the respondents for recording information on the socio demography section and this also served the purpose of transferring the skills in using tablet device for recording answers. The other four sections, involving private and sensitive questions were self-administered by the respondents. The color-coding of the answers, figures and prerecording of the questions also allowed illiterate population to be the part of this study. The respondents recorded their answers inside a previously arranged room with seating arrangements ensuring safety, privacy, and confidentiality and with no external disturbances. The use of C-ACASI has been growing in recent years with its potential to reduce social desirability bias encountered in face-to-face interviews and has shown increased reporting on various sensitive issues.<sup>24,25</sup> The use of C-ACASI also improves the quality of data collection by minimizing data entry errors and reducing time in cleaning and monitoring incoming data.<sup>26</sup> Twenty local field staffs, each from the respective study site and a field coordinator had received training on the ethics, community rapport building, safety issues and software use.

The data from the tablets were extracted daily and securely kept in a hard drive and backed up online with its access only to the first author. The extracted data was transferred to SPSS 24 for further analysis. Data clearing, handling missing data and primary coding was not necessary due to the use of software system, however thorough checking was done for each entry to identify any errors. A descriptive analysis using cross tabulation, frequency and percentage were computed from the obtained data.

The study had obtained ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Committee of the Kathmandu Medical College and Teaching Hospital, which is also an affiliate to the Ethical Review Board of the Nepal Health Research Council. A written consent was obtained from

each respondent after briefing the study objective to the batch of respondents coming for the interview. The study participants had to be eighteen years or above for their participation in this study. The participation was voluntary and the respondents had rights to drop out during the study without any further explanation.

## RESULTS

A total of 2000 respondents consisting of 810 males and 1190 female were included in the study. More than three fourth of the respondents (n=1510, 75.5%) were youths, falling to the age category of 18-35 years. The Janajati, an umbrella term denoting various ethnic groups of Nepal constituted more than 50% (n=1096) of the total study population and these Janajatis consisted of nineteen different ethnic sub groups. A close to 64% (n=1287) of the respondents had less than twelve years of schooling. The nuclear family (53.2%) was the most commonly reported family type. A close to 70% (n=1390) of the respondents reported both of their parents taking care of them during their childhood. Almost 42% (n=834) of the respondents were unaware of their mother's education compared to 28% (n=576) of respondents being unaware of their father's education.

The background characteristics of the respondents are listed in the Table 1 below:

The study has identified prevalence of mild, moderate and severe emotional, physical and sexual abuses at the study sites. Male compared to the female reported of more physical abuse during their lifetime at measured all three levels of severity (mild, moderate and severe). Females (n=259, 21.7%) reported of more severe lifetime emotional abuse compared to the male (n=148, 18.2%). Lifetime severe sexual abuse was reported by a close to five percent (n=95) of the male and female respondents respectively. The findings suggest that all forms of abuse were prevalent for both sexes both during both childhood and adulthood.

The prevalence of abuse, severity and age group are shown in the Table 2 below.

The incidence of partner perpetrated violence by both sexes for the past twelve months (Table 3 below) suggests that slapping, pushing, beating and kicking were reported as the most common partner violence. The severe forms of partner violence identified included choking, threat or use of weapon and setting on fire.

More than 50% (n=1095) of the respondents had known someone using physical violence against their partner in the community. Almost equal percent of males and females (20%) had felt neglect from their parents, under the influence of alcohol or drug, during their childhood. The witnessing of father beating mother was found more than double, compared to witnessing mother beating their father. The Table 4 below shows violence and abuse witnessing.

**Table 1. Background characteristics**

		Female	Male	Total
		n = 1190 n (%)	n = 810 n (%)	N = 2000 n (%)
<b>Age (Years)</b>	18-35	936 (78.7)	574 (70.9)	1510 (75.5)
	36-59	239 (20.1)	207 (25.5)	446 (22.3)
	≥ 60	15 (1.2)	29 (3.6)	44 (2.2)
<b>Education</b>	No Education	54 (4.5)	11 (1.3)	65 (3.2)
	< 12	777 (65.3)	510 (62.9)	1287 (64.3)
	12	277 (23.3)	210 (25.9)	487 (24.3)
	Undergraduate	44 (3.7)	55 (6.9)	99 (5)
	Master	7 (0.6)	21 (2.6)	28 (1.4)
	Non Formal	31 (2.6)	3 (0.4)	34 (1.8)
<b>Ethnicity*</b>	Upper Caste	477 (40.1)	278 (34.3)	755 (37.8)
	Janajati	629 (52.9)	467 (57.7)	1096 (54.8)
	Disadvantaged Non Dalit Terai	10 (0.8)	14 (1.7)	24 (1.2)
	Dalit	72 (6)	46 (5.7)	118 (5.9)
	Religious Minorities	2 (0.2)	5 (0.6)	7 (0.3)
<b>Family type</b>	Nuclear	641 (53.9)	422 (52.1)	1063 (53.2)
	Joint	541 (45.5)	382 (47.1)	923 (46.1)
	Extended	8 (0.6)	6 (0.8)	14 (0.7)
<b>Caretaker during childhood</b>	Mother or female relative	166 (14)	100 (12.3)	266 (13.3)
	Father or male relative	12 (1.1)	19 (2.3)	31 (1.6)
	Only mother	179 (15)	106 (13.1)	285 (14.3)
	Only Father	16 (1.3)	12 (1.5)	28 (1.4)
	Nearly equal	817 (68.6)	573 (70.8)	1390 (69.4)
<b>Mother's education</b>	Below grade 10	592 (49.8)	420 (51.9)	1012 (50.6)
	Grade 10 and above	80 (6.7)	74 (9.1)	154 (7.7)
	Don't Know	518 (43.5)	316 (39)	834 (41.7)
<b>Father's education</b>	Below grade 10	656 (55.1)	469 (58)	1125 (56.2)
	Grade 10 and above	174 (14.6)	125 (15.4)	299 (15)
	Don't Know	360 (30.3)	216 (26.6)	576 (28.8)

\* Classification based on Ministry of health and Population, Nepal 2012

The inquiry on the gender norms was largely guided to determining ascribed gender roles, decision- making and attitudes towards the opposite sex roles. Nearly 79% of the respondents (n=1572) confirmed of their fathers always treating mothers with respect compared to 85% (n=1692) of mothers always treating their fathers with respect.

Economic decision- making on household affairs and food/ clothing did not show greater involvement of the males. The involvement of only female in key economic decision-making for larger investments was reported by less than 12% of both sexes. The Table 5 below shows the gender norms on respective sex roles.

The respondents had witnessed more than 50% of male members in the household involved in cooking, cleaning and washing clothes. Most of the males (67%) were always found to be taking care of their children.

**Table 2. Prevalence of abuse n (%)**

Severity	Emotional abuse		Physical abuse		Sexual abuse	
	Female n=1190	Male n=810	Female n=1190	Male n=810	Female n=1190	Male n=810
<b>Mild</b>						
<18 years	116(9.7)	136(16.8)	43(3.6)	76(9.4)	26(2.1)	14(1.7)
≥18 years	105(8.8)	71(8.7)	46(3.8)	46(5.6)	28(2.3)	22(2.7)
Both	130(11)	66(8.1)	51(4.3)	35(4.3)	36(3)	19(2.3)
Lifetime	351(29.5)	273(33.7)	140 (11.7)	157 (19.4)	90(7.5)	55(6.7)
<b>Moderate</b>						
<18 years	105(8.8)	98(12.1)	64(5.3)	127 (15.6)	25(2.1)	22(2.7)
≥18 years	77(6.4)	53(6.5)	57(4.7)	55(6.7)	16(1.3)	18(2.2)
Both	102(8.5)	61(7.5)	49(4.1)	40(4.9)	17(1.4)	11(1.3)
Lifetime	277(23.2)	219(27)	170 (14.2)	222 (27.4)	58(4.8)	51(6.2)
<b>Severe</b>						
<18 years	79(6.6)	79(9.7)	23(1.9)	19(2.3)	9(0.7)	11(1.3)
≥18 years	78(6.5)	35(4.3)	41(3.4)	57(7)	19(1.5)	14(1.7)
Both	102(8.5)	34(4.2)	25(2.1)	20(2.4)	26(2.1)	16(1.9)
Lifetime	259(21.7)	148(18.2)	89(7.4)	96 (11.8)	54(4.5)	41(5)

**Table 3. Partner violence in past twelve months**

Incidences	Female n = 1190 n (%)	Male n = 810n (%)	Total N = 2000 n (%)
<b>Slapped</b>	102 (8.6)	71 (8.8)	173 (8.7)
<b>Thrown something</b>	76 (6.4)	37 (4.6)	113 (5.6)
<b>Pushed or shoved</b>	85 (7.1)	42 (5.2)	127 (6.3)
<b>Hit with fist</b>	66 (5.5)	23 (2.9)	89 (4.5)
<b>Kicked</b>	68 (5.7)	36 (4.4)	104 (5.2)
<b>Dragging</b>	59 (4.9)	25 (3)	84 (4.2)
<b>Beating</b>	74 (6.2)	40 (5)	114 (5.7)
<b>Strangled/Choked</b>	52 (4.3)	23 (2.8)	75 (3.8)
<b>Set on fire</b>	37 (3.1)	18 (2.2)	55 (2.7)
<b>Threat or use of weapon</b>	52 (4.3)	24 (2.9)	76 (3.8)

**Table 4. Witnessing violence and abuse**

Incidences	Female n = 1190 n (%)	Male n = 810n (%)	Total N = 2000 n (%)
<b>Witnessed father beating mother</b>	265 (22.2)	191 (23.6)	456 (22.8)
<b>Witnessed mother beating father</b>	112 (9.4)	64 (7.9)	176 (8.8)
<b>Neglect of parents under influence of alcohol or drug</b>	236 (19.9)	162 (20)	398 (19.9)
<b>Known someone in community who uses physical violence against partner</b>	670 (56.3)	425 (52.5)	1095 (54.7)

**Table 5. Gender norms**

Statement	Agreement	Female n = 1190 n (%)	Male n = 810 n (%)	Total N = 2000 n (%)
Father treating mother with respect	Never	78 (6.5)	51 (6.3)	129 (6.4)
	Sometimes	179 (15.1)	120 (14.8)	299 (15)
	Always	933 (78.4)	639 (78.9)	1572 (78.6)
Mother treating father with respect	Never	71 (6)	34 (4.2)	105 (5.2)
	Sometimes	127 (10.6)	76 (9.4)	203 (10.2)
	Always	992 (83.4)	700 (86.4)	1692 (84.6)
<b>Economic Decision making</b>				
Household Affairs	Father	138 (11.6)	128 (15.8)	266 (13.3)
	Mother	296 (24.9)	187(23.1)	483 (24.2)
	Both	756 (63.5)	495 (61.1)	1251 (62.5)
Food and Cloth	Father	190 (16)	181 (22.3)	371 (18.5)
	Mother	299 (25.1)	196 (24.2)	495 (24.8)
	Both	701 (58.9)	433 (53.5)	1134 (56.7)
Large Investment	Father	401 (33.7)	339 (41.9)	740 (37)
	Mother	142 (11.9)	89 (11)	231 (11.5)
	Both	647 (54.4)	382 (47.1)	1029 (51.5)
<b>Witnessing male members in home during childhood</b>				
Cooking	Never	252 (21.2)	145 (18)	397 (19.8)
	Sometimes	651 (54.7)	479 (59)	1130 (56.5)
	Always	287 (24.1)	186 (23)	473 (23.7)
Cleaning the house	Never	175 (14.7)	86 (10.6)	261 (13)
	Sometimes	597 (50.2)	431 (53.2)	1028 (51.4)
	Always	418 (35.1)	293 (36.2)	711 (35.6)
Washing clothes	Never	215 (18)	128 (15.8)	343 (17.2)
	Sometimes	650 (54.7)	458 (56.5)	1108 (55.4)
	Always	325 (27.3)	224 (27.7)	549 (27.4)
Taking care of children	Never	100 (8.4)	51 (6.3)	151 (7.5)
	Sometimes	298 (25)	212 (26.2)	510 (25.5)
	Always	792 (66.6)	547 (67.5)	1339 (67)

The attitude on relation between men and women helped to identify the established belief system on gender equality (Table 6). Nearly 13% (n= 158) of females strongly agreed on women deserve to be beaten at times, and almost 11% of female (n=127) strongly agreed on women should be tolerating violence for keeping their family together. Almost 70% of males (n=581) strongly disagreed that caring for children was mother’s sole responsibility. A close to 13% of women (n=153) felt a strong agreement on that rape occurs due to carelessness of female. Final decision making at home by male was strongly disagreed by 55.7% of female and 65.3% of males. More than half of respondent (n=1010) felt partial agreement on the statement that gender equality has come far enough already.

Around 72% (n=1441) of the populations were aware of occurrence of sexual trafficking from Nepal. However, only near to 46% (n=918) were aware on sexual trafficking occurring from their district. A more than 55% (n=1110) of

**Table 6. Gender equality**

Statement	Agreement*	Female n = 1190 n (%)	Male n = 810 n (%)	Total N = 2000 n (%)
Only Poor are at risk of sexual trafficking	A	612 (51.5)	498 (61.5)	1110 (55.5)
	D	337 (28.3)	211 (26.1)	548 (27.4)
	DK	241 (20.2)	101 (12.4)	342 (17.1)
Sexual trafficking happens only to India	A	423 (35.6)	290 (35.8)	713 (35.6)
	D	450 (37.8)	385 (47.5)	835 (41.8)
	DK	317 (26.6)	135 (16.7)	452 (22.6)
Sexual trafficking is a crime in Nepal	A	1033 (86.8)	752 (92.8)	1785 (89.2)
	D	56 (4.7)	23 (2.8)	79 (4)
	DK	101 (8.5)	35 (4.4)	136 (6.8)
Sexual trafficking is a denial of Human Rights	A	934 (78.5)	721 (89.1)	1655 (82.7)
	D	79 (6.6)	29 (3.5)	108 (5.4)
	DK	177 (14.9)	60 (7.4)	237 (11.9)
Sexual Trafficking can happen to any girl/ women	A	774 (65.1)	623 (77)	1397 (69.9)
	D	204 (17.1)	92 (11.3)	296 (14.8)
	DK	212 (17.8)	95 (11.7)	307 (15.3)
Sexual trafficking occurs due to women’s own fault	A	317 (26.6)	255 (31.5)	572 (28.6)
	D	628 (52.8)	447 (55.2)	1075 (53.8)
	DK	245 (20.6)	108 (13.3)	353 (17.6)
Pimps target vulnerable girl/women	A	829 (69.7)	645 ((79.6)	1447 (73.7)
	D	165 (13.9)	75 (9.3)	240 (12)
	DK	196 (16.4)	90 (11.1)	286 (14.3)
Traffickers escape legal prosecution	A	503 (42.3)	338 (41.7)	841 (42.1)
	D	462 (38.8)	353 (43.6)	815 (40.7)
	DK	225 (18.9)	119 (14.7)	344 (17.2)
Awareness and education can reduce sexual trafficking	A	969 (81.4)	711 (87.8)	1680 (84)
	D	86 (7.2)	38 (4.7)	124 (6.2)
	DK	135 (11.4)	61 (7.5)	196 (9.8)
Sexual trafficking will stop in next 20 years	A	383 (32.2)	272 (33.6)	655 (32.7)
	D	395 (33.2)	335 (41.3)	730 (36.5)
	DK	412 (34.6)	203 (25.1)	615 (30.8)

\*A-Agree, D- Disagree, DK-Don’t know

the respondent believed that only poor were at the risk of being sexually trafficked. A close to 90% (n=1785) and 83% (n=1655) of respondents were aware of sexual trafficking as crime, and as a denial of human rights respectively. A close 84% (n=1680) of the respondents agreed that awareness and education could help reduce sexual trafficking. A more than 36% (n=730) believed that sexual trafficking might not stop in next twenty years. Table 7 below shows the level of awareness on sexual trafficking.

## DISCUSSION

The study has identified that emotional, physical and sexual abuse are prevalent in both the sexes. The physical

Table 7. Sexual trafficking

Statement	Agreement*	Female n = 1190 n (%)	Male n = 810 n (%)	Total N = 2000 n (%)
Women working takes jobs away from men	SA	144 (12.1)	85 (10.5)	229 (11.4)
	PA	217 (18.2)	132 (16.3)	349 (17.5)
	SD	416 (35)	374 (46.2)	790 (39.5)
	PD	151 (12.7)	123 (15.2)	274 (13.7)
	DK	262 (22)	96 (11.8)	358 (17.9)
When a women is raped, she did something careless	SA	153 (12.9)	131 (16.2)	284 (14.2)
	PA	217 (18.2)	204 (25.2)	421 (21.1)
	SD	440 (37)	237 (29.2)	677 (33.8)
	PD	124 (10.4)	110 (13.6)	234 (11.7)
	DK	256 (21.5)	128 (15.8)	384 (19.2)
A women's most important role is to take care of her family and cook	SA	164 (13.8)	95 (11.7)	259 (13)
	PA	377 (31.6)	228 (28.1)	605 (30.2)
	SD	477 (40.1)	354 (43.7)	831 (41.6)
	PD	112 (9.4)	88 (10.9)	200 (10)
	DK	60 (5.1)	45 (5.6)	105 (5.2)
There are times when a women deserves to be beaten	SA	158 (13.2)	134 (16.5)	292 (14.6)
	PA	196 (16.5)	147 (18.2)	343 (17.2)
	SD	489 (41.1)	357 (44.1)	846 (42.3)
	PD	122 (10.2)	83 (10.2)	205 (10.2)
	DK	225 (19)	89 (11)	314 (15.7)
Changing diapers, giving kids a bath and feeding is mother's sole responsibility	SA	96 (8.1)	35 (4.3)	131 (6.5)
	PA	201 (17)	84 (10.4)	285 (14.2)
	SD	716 (60.1)	581 (71.8)	1297 (64.9)
	PD	140 (11.7)	90 (11.1)	230 (11.5)
	DK	37 (3.1)	20 (2.4)	57 (2.9)
A man should have the final word about decision in home	SA	91 (7.6)	56 (7)	147 (7.3)
	PA	168 (14.1)	92 (11.3)	260 (13)
	SD	663 (55.7)	529 (65.3)	1192 (59.6)
	PD	118 (10)	91 (11.2)	209 (10.5)
	DK	150 (12.6)	42 (5.2)	192 (9.6)
A women should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together	SA	127 (10.7)	85 (10.5)	212 (10.6)
	PA	250 (21)	152 (18.8)	402 (20.1)
	SD	611 (51.3)	443 (54.7)	1054 (52.7)
	PD	95 (8)	74 (9)	169 (8.5)
	DK	107 (9)	56 (7)	163 (8.1)
Gender equality has come far enough already	SA	221 (18.6)	155 (19.1)	376 (18.8)
	PA	564 (47.4)	446 (55.1)	1010 (50.5)
	SD	135 (11.3)	72 (8.9)	207 (10.4)
	PD	55 (4.6)	39 (4.8)	94 (4.7)
	DK	215 (18.1)	98 (12.1)	313 (15.6)

\*SA-Strongly agree, PA-Partially agree, SD-Strongly disagree, PD-Partially disagree, DK- Dont know

abuse and the severity faced were found to be more for males compared to the females, while comparable number of males and females reported of severe sexual abuse. The National Demographic Household Survey study of Nepal

(MoHP, 2011) has identified 22% of physical and 12% sexual abuse, while this study presents fewer incidences of both abuses. The National Demographic Household Survey was the national population survey and the difference found in this study could have occurred either due to smaller sample size or underreporting of the phenomenon.

The findings on the gender norms gives a fair and equal footing to the females except for economic decision making on larger investments, which still remains a major domain for males. Research has also constantly found a link between structural gender inequalities among societies supporting traditional gender roles and has suggested the gender roles can contribute to creating and maintaining these social hierarchies.<sup>27-29</sup> The idealization of masculinity and submissive femininity can also be attributed to differential power sharing and infliction of violence to the lesser power bearers.

Males were reported to have been actively involved in various household chores, contrary to the strict gender roles in a fairly patriarchal setup. This involvement of male in regular household chores can be justified with the religious belief held by some of the sects in the Hindu religion followers. Some Hindus prefer to do daily tasks at their own like, cooking and cleaning, this self-sustaining behavior attributed to their religious belief could be the reason for their involvement in the household activities. Also, among the Hindus, women are considered impure during their menstrual cycle. The menstruating women do not enter to the kitchen, touches the stoves, food and do not cooks and/or does any regular household jobs coming in closer contact to other family members. This also requires males in the family to be engaged in regular household chores while women are menstruating, suggesting male involvement in the household chores.

The partner violence suggests that both severe and mild forms of violence were exhibited by both sexes. The violence against women perpetrated by the partner is the result of unequal power relations between men and women and this unequal power relation has manifested to several unequal gender traditions including patriarchy.<sup>16</sup> Patriarchy is explained both as a structure and an ideology; a structure by which men possess more privilege and power, and as an ideology it influences in legitimizing this idea.<sup>30</sup> Patriarchal societies give rise to systematic domination over female and accepts use of violence in daily life through enforcing specific roles and also limiting women's capacity.<sup>27,31-35</sup> The identification of female perpetrators inflicting violence upon male in an intimate partnership is not an abrupt phenomenon, but female who have been facing constant abuse, been a victim of violence during childhood and witnessed violence inflicted upon their mother tend to retaliate and not be a victim.<sup>36</sup>

This study finds that only close to two and half percent of undergraduates (near to 10% of total respondents) reported of any form of violence compared to 66.8% of

below high school categories (64% of total respondents). A study among 1000 men in Nepal finds that among men reporting more gender-equitable beliefs, 55% are likely to perpetrate intimate partner violence significantly lesser than the 84% of men reporting lesser gender-equitable beliefs.<sup>37</sup> The gender equitable beliefs are on the other hand established by education and awareness, this study has found that parents' education and education of individuals are also linked to the incidences of violence.

The study populations are aware on the issues of rights and equality; however, the study also finds that the population is equally abiding to the traditional gender norms. This striking difference could be attributed to the fear of alienation and strong stigmas associated with several gender norms, making it difficult for the population to accept changes. The study confirms that despite of awareness on gender equality and sexual trafficking, prevalence of violence and adherence to stronger gender stereotypes, stigmas and roles indicates need of awareness measures.

The study has its strength in reducing data gap on gender inequality and violence that are less available on the Nepalese context. The sample populations for this study were ethnically different representing the ethnically heterogeneous population confirming to the ethnic diversity of the country. The inclusion of illiterate

population through use of recorded questions, pictures and color-coded response used in the study has also helped to surface experiences of the illiterate.

The major limitation of the study is the generalization of findings, despite the study includes relatively larger sample size still the generalization of the findings is not possible both at regional and national level.

## CONCLUSION

The study identifies that gender based perception and violence are affected by the of the belief systems and dismantling these belief systems for creating an equitable society requires awareness efforts. The information on sexual trafficking and rights are important in sensitizing masses against any episode of sexual trafficking and its prevention.

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<sup>i</sup>The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) is a comprehensive household questionnaire on men's attitudes and practices -along with women's opinions and reports of men's practices -on a wide variety of topics related to gender equality. From 2009 to 2010, household surveys were administered to more than 8,000 men and 3,500 women aged 18-59 in Brazil, Chile, Croatia, India, Mexico, and Rwanda.

<sup>ii</sup>This manual is one of the several outcomes of a three-year global Gender-based Violence initiative spearheaded by the Reproductive Health Response in Conflict (RHRC) Consortium.

<sup>iii</sup>NorAQ is a well-tested tool to measure emotional, physical and sexual violence and violence in health care settings by different perpetrators.

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