

DOMESTIC VOILENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN BHUTAN

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Background

- ▶ Bhutan is a male dominated patriarchal society with no female decision-making power
- ▶ Article 7 of the constitution of the kingdom of Bhutan, assures the right to life, liberty and security with the goal to realize happiness for the entire citizen irrespective of its gender (constitution of kingdom of Bhutan)
- ▶ Few organizations like NCWC, RENEW AND UN helps women and children related to domestic violence issues
- ▶ In Bhutan, 1/3 of the women experience some form of domestic violence (NCWC 2019)

Research aims and Methodology

- ▶ To analyze, investigate and determine the socio-demographic correlations of domestic violence particularly in urban communities based on the current scenario of domestic violence against women.
- ▶ It is also aimed to study the cause of domestic violence around the world with similar social structure to understand the central cause of domestic violence in Bhutan.
- ▶ Research was based on literature review with similar cases in other country.
- ▶ The finding from qualitative studies on domestic violence against women will be studied to know the various causes of domestic violence in Bhutan.

Literature review

- ▶ 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 private life” (WHO 2020).
- ▶ The Domestic Violence Prevention Act of Bhutan 2013 (DVPA) defines domestic violence as "violence against a person by another person with whom that person is or has been in a domestic relationship". 'Violence' is further defined as "any act, omission or behavior towards a person which results in physical, sexual, emotional or economic abuse".
- ▶ The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan guarantees equality for women and men in all spheres of life and the National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) is a competent government authority for protection and promotion of the rights of women and children in Bhutan.

Determinant of the cause of Domestic Violence from the studies carried out Outside Bhutan

- ▶ A research carried out by Saffari et al. (2017) in Iran found that the prevalence of domestic violence among participants was emotional (64%), physical (28%), and sexual (18%), and unemployment, substance abuse, and lower socioeconomic status increased the risk of domestic violence
- ▶ Guclu and Can (2018) to assess the prevalence and risk factor of domestic violence in a multicultural region of Turkey, it was found that alcohol use of the husband and ethnic origin were significant independent variables predicting any domestic violence.
- ▶ Rishal et al. (2018) to assess the prevalence of domestic violence and its associated factors among pregnant women in Nepal found that women with a low socio-economic position i.e. no education, no income, having income with no autonomy to use their income or a member of a disadvantaged ethnic group were more likely to report domestic violence (DV) compared to women with a higher socioeconomic position.

Cont...

- ▶ A similar study conducted on women referring to family court in Rasht, Iran found that many of the examined women (47.3%) mentioned economic problems as the main cause of domestic violence by their husbands while alcohol/drugs abuse and family interference were the minor factors for the cause of domestic violence (Mona et al. 2017)
- ▶ In Kaniyambadi, Tamil Nadu, It was found that the prevalence of physical violence was 65.8%, sexual abuse was 17.5%, and emotional abuse was 54.2% where alcohol consumption by husband, controlling behavior by a family member, and woman's employment were statistically significant determinants of domestic violence (Ram et al 2019).

Determinant of the cause of Domestic Violence from the studies carried out in Bhutan

- ▶ Although the trend in the number of cases being reported to relevant agencies is increasing, cases are still under-reported due to socio-cultural perceptions and lack of awareness (NCWC, 2019)
- ▶ As per the national survey on women's health and life experiences in 2017, it was found that emotional violence is the highest compared to other forms of violence in Bhutan (NCWC, 2017).
- ▶ In 2010, the National Statistics Bureau conducted the Multiple indicator Cluster Survey which reported that nationally, 68.4% of women aged 15-49, thought a man was justified in hitting or beating his wife under certain circumstances (NSC 2010).
- ▶ In 2012, the Ministry of Health conducted the National Health Survey and found that 74% of women thought that a man beating his wife could be justified under certain circumstances (MOH 2012).

Analysis

- ▶ The acceptance of violence is higher for India – 77 percent of the victims have not shared about violence to anyone as compared to 42 percent for Bhutan.
- ▶ The traditional norms, beliefs and agreement to already existing norms are higher in Bhutan.
- ▶ The Main cause of violence are reported as difficulty at work, financial difficulties, drinking habits, jealousy and disobedience in relationship.
- ▶ Acceptance of status, controlling behaviors, dependence for livelihood are reported as confounding factors or situations where likelihood for violence increases.
- ▶ Correlational Analysis in the studies shows that women and girls from higher wealth index are associated with lower prevalence of violence.
- ▶ In Bhutan, rural women are reported greater tolerance to violence.

Causes of violence against women

- ▶ The predominant cause of violence is reported to be arising out of workplace difficulties, financial challenges, drinking habits, jealousy, relationship problems, etc.
- ▶ Cultural and traditional norms of acceptance of status of men leading to controlling behaviors, dependence of women for livelihood are also found to be causing violence.
- ▶ The cultural predominance of men in India and Bhutan overshadows all these factors.
- ▶ women from higher wealth associated with lower incidence of violence, women scheduled castes and tribes are associated with higher incidence of violence.
- ▶ Tolerance to violence and acceptance are also associated with the development status of women. Women coming from rural areas reported greater tolerance to violence.
- ▶ Dependence on men for livelihood is understood as the cause for tolerance and acceptance and therefore prevalence of violence against women.

Conclusion

- ▶ World Health Organization estimates that one in five women and girls faces some form of violence during their lifetime.
- ▶ Violence against women are not only detrimental to the physical and emotional health of the victims, it also is detriment to the overall development based on equality of the society.
- ▶ The issues of violence against women are found to be more prevalent in the developing countries.
- ▶ The incidence is found to be more amongst the patriarchal societies; and in underdeveloped communities, specifically higher in rural compared to urban centres.
- ▶ The study reviewed the role of cultural and gender norms as the cause of violence
- ▶ The prevalence of the incidence of violence is lower in Bhutan compared to India
- ▶ India is predominantly Hindu dominated society with strong patriarchal and male dominance. Bhutan although is considered egalitarian, the social and political decision making at all levels are male dominated.

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