

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study “Domestic Violence against Women: A Study of Nalbari District in Assam” is an attempt to understand the problem of domestic violence against women with special reference to Nalbari district of Assam. The universe of the study is Nalbari district which is situated at the western part of Assam. This is an empirical study and hence sample has been drawn and the respondents in the sample were the victims of domestic violence of the district. In addition to this, respondents were also chosen from the cross-section of the society including members of women organisations, lawyers and doctors to understand their response to the victims. This study is a modest attempt to identify and describe the nature, causes and consequences pertaining to the phenomenon of domestic violence against women in Nalbari area. Besides, the study also looks into the role of government in dealing with the problem of domestic violence. Its response, initiative and effectiveness in dealing with the crisis. In an endeavour to summarize the facts and the findings of the study, chapter-wise summary has been presented keeping in view its objectives and hypotheses.

I

The introductory chapter (chapter I) provides a detailed outline of the research including the statement of the problems that signifies the importance and relevance of the present study. A conceptual framework has been evolved to understand the meaning of the key concepts like ‘domestic’, ‘violence’ and ‘domestic violence’ and the meaning that has been attached to them for the purpose of the present study. It contains a systematic and elaborate review of related literature, objectives of the study, hypotheses and the methodology of the study that explains the size of the sample, procedure of its selection and technique of data collection. Besides, a brief description of the chapters is also given in it.

As this study is concerned with domestic violence against women, the meaning, nature and consequence of domestic violence is precisely discussed in this chapter. Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another partner. Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, caste, religion or gender. It is a pattern of behaviour that characterises the misuse of power and promise by one

person against another who generally happens to be in an intimate or blood relationship. Domestic violence is not typically a singular event and it is not limited to only physical aggression. Rather, it is the methodical use of threats, ignominy and physical violence by someone who seeks power and control over his intimate partner. Domestic violence may be of different kinds like physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, economic deprivation and stalking. The victims demonstrate a wide range of effects from various kinds of domestic violence. The victims may suffer from severe and chronic mental and health problems. Besides the victims, the other members of the family may also suffer from physical, emotional and psychological stress as result of sustained domestic violence.

Violence against women within the family is a global phenomenon. It occurs irrespective of socio- economic status of women. No society can claim to be free of such violence. But the degree of violence differs according to the socio economic condition of the society. In India, crime against women in the domestic sphere is a very common incident. Poverty, illiteracy, traditional gender bias and social customs provide a very congenial situation for the commitment of such crimes against women. As per the Report of India's National Crime Records Bureau, more than 195856 crimes had been committed against women in the year 2008. Of these, 81344 cases were in the nature of domestic violence. As per the information of the Bureau in every nine minutes, a case of cruelty is committed against a woman in our country and most of these cruel acts occur within the four walls of home. Since the abolition of the practice of sati (1829), various significant steps have been taken in independent India also towards protecting women from torture and violence. In 1983, for the first time, an amendment was made in the criminal laws recognising domestic violence (matrimonial cruelty) as criminal offence under section 498-A of the Indian Penal Code. In 26th October 2005, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act was passed and it provides for more effective protection of the rights of women guaranteed under the Constitution.

Despite the steps taken by the government to prevent domestic violence, it continues to be an evil in our society. It is a regular feature of our everyday life. But the prevention of domestic violence is an essential condition not only for bringing gender equality but also to realise the objective of human rights in general. If the bulk of the

people who constitute half of our population live under torture and fear of violence, the task of nation building and an all-round development of the society will never be achieved. Thus, the study of domestic violence against women is an attempt to understand the position of women in our society.

This chapter also highlights the significance of the study. Nalbari is one of the backward districts in Assam. Some of the development blocks in the district are almost not having any communication, health or education facility. Nalbari being one of the backward districts of Assam has a situation where the conditions for the development of women are very poor. The incidences of domestic violence are also so high in the district that it has already attracted the attention of the government and various NGOs. As per the report of the Office of the DIG, CID, Assam, out of 41, 496 cases of domestic violence that have occurred in the last ten years, 4521 cases took place in Nalbari district alone. Thus, a study of the plight of women in the domestic sphere in the district of Nalbari is obvious to throw important light on various aspects and the gravity of domestic violence in our society.

As stated that the study was carried out in Nalbari District of Assam which is now having an area of 1009.57 sq.km consisting of 1(one) Civil Sub-Division, 7 (seven) Revenue Circle, 7 (seven) Development Blocks, 5 (five) Police Stations, 7(seven) Anchalik Panchayats and 65 (sixty five) Gaon Panchayats covering 471 villages. Out of these 7 blocks, 6 blocks (Pub-Nalbari, Pachim Nalbari, Barigog Banbhag, Tihu, Barama (part), Banekuchi) were selected for the present study by the technique of simple random sampling by using lottery method.

In order to collect primary data, cases for the period of 10 years (since 2001-2010) were studied. A total of 1825 cases of domestic violence had been registered under Nalbari Zilla Mahila Samiti since 2001. The total number of cases studied was 180. Most of the cases studied were of marital discord resulting from perpetual incidences of domestic physical violence. Besides, cases of ill-treatment and mental cruelty were also studied. The victims who had registered cases were also identified through Nalbari Zilla Mahila Samiti, the lone voluntary social organization of the district that renders counseling and legal aid to its clients. Thus, out of 1825 cases, 180 (approximately 10 percent) cases were studied and also the respondents were

interviewed. In addition to this 20 respondents were chosen from the cross-section of the society including members of Women organisation, lawyers and Doctors to understand their response to the victims. Thus, a total of 200 respondents were selected by the technique of purposive sampling.

For collecting primary data two sets of interview schedules were used which served as the principal instruments of data collection. In consonance with the objectives, close and open ended questions were formulated in the interview schedule. The interview schedules had different sections to elicit information from the respondents. In addition to socio-economic and demographic background of the respondents, information was also sought about the nature, incidence of domestic violence and the impact of domestic violence on the victims. In addition to the interview schedule for the victims, another schedule was used for the members of Women organizations. A number of social activists, protection officer (POs) and the police personnel were also contacted and interviewed as they are competent to throw light on the matter.

The study has been conducted with the objectives to understand the nature and causes of domestic violence, the role of women organisation for protection of rights and the state's response towards domestic problem and the hypotheses were framed in consonance with the objectives.

II

Chapter II gives a brief description of Nalbari district with an emphasis on its location, demography, development and communication. Besides, the socio-economic profile of the respondents is discussed. For the convenience of presentation, this chapter has been divided into two sections. Section I deals with the brief profile of the study area i.e. Nalbari district of Assam, its location, demography, historical background, development & communication, area and administrative division, literacy and economy and Section II deals with an elaborate presentation of the sample, their size personal profile and socio-economic background of the respondents.

Before presenting the socio-economic profile of the respondents, a brief profile of Nalbari district is drawn. The district is located in central western part of Assam surrounded on the north, the district shares its boundary with the newly created Baksa

district while the southern boundary of the district is flanked by the Brahmaputra River. The eastern boundary of the district is shared by Kamrup district while Barpeta district is located on the western boundary. According to 2011 census, the total population of the district is 7, 71,639 with male population is 396,006 and female population is 375,633. Out of the total population of the district of 7.7 Lakh (89.28percent) lives in rural area and only 10.72 percent lives in urban area. Percentage of SC and ST population according to 2001 census is 7.23 and 3.31 percentage respectively. The district has a heterogeneous ethnocentric population with Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Marawari, Nepali and so on. Majority of the population of the district speak Assamese, which is the official language of the district. Besides, the Bodo and Bengali are also two important languages in the district spoken by the Bodo and Bengali people respectively. The population of the district is divided into two major religions viz Hindu and Islam. Besides, people of other religious faith viz. Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhist, Jains etc inhabit the district in marginal number. According to 2001 census, 76.05 percent of total population is Hindu, 22.10 percent Muslim, 1.61percent Christian, 0.01percent Sikhs, 0.08percent Buddhist, 08percent Jains, 0.01percent are other religion and 0.06percent are not stated. The literacy rate of the district is 78.63percent as per 2011 census compared to 72.66percent of 2001. The male literacy rate is 84.36percent and female literacy rate is 72.57percent. Total literate in Nalbari district were 531,771 of which male and female were 293,184 and 238,587 respectively.

The total territorial area of the Nalbari District is 1009.57sq.km. Nalbari district comprises two important notified towns viz. Nalbari (district Headquarter) and Tihu. Nalbari is one of the 14 districts of Assam comprising only one sub-division. Below this level, there are 7 Revenue Circles (Tehsils), viz. Nalbari, Tihu, Barkhetri, Barbhag, Gograpaar, Paschim Nalbari, Banekuchi. Furthermore, the district is divided into 7 Community Development Blocks- Pub Nalbari, Tihu, Paschim Nalbari, Barbhag, Barkhetri, Gograpaar, Madhupur. Below the block level set-up, there are 7 Anchalik Panchayats, viz Pubnalbari ap, Barigog Banbhag ap, Paschim Nalbari, Madhupur ap, Tihu ap, Barbhag ap, Barketri ap covering 65 Gaon Panchayats. From the angle of Police administration, the district area is divided among 5 Police stations namely Nabari, Mukalmua, Gograpaar, Belsor and Tihu.

So far as the personnel profile of the respondents is concerned, analysis of data reveals that out of the 180 respondents, 61 (33.8percent) were found in the age group of '15 –30' years. A majority of 79 (43.8percent) belonged to '31-40' years followed by 35 (19.4percent) in the age group of '41–50' years. Besides, 3 (1.6 percent) and 2 (1.1 percentage) respondents were also found in the age group of '51 – 60' years and above 60 years respectively. Thus, age is not a barrier for domestic violence and it can happen at any age, although study reveals that women at the age group of 20-40 years are at higher risk than their older counterparts. So far as educational attainment of the respondents is concerned, out of 180 respondents, 55 (30.5percent) were found to have secondary school education, 35 (19.4 percent) higher secondary, 45 (25 percent) graduates, while 12 (6.6 percent) and 3 (1.6percent) were postgraduates and professionals respectively. Besides, 23 (12.7percent) respondents were also found to have primary education and 7 (3.8 percent) were found to be illiterates. Thus, it can be said that domestic violence occurred irrespective of educational attainment, although the prevalence of violence was higher among the less educated category. With regard to occupation, majority of 99 (55percent) respondents were found unemployed, while the rest 81 (45percent) were found to hail from different occupational background. Out of 81 respondents, 25(13.89 percent) were employed in private jobs, 20 (11.11 percent) were daily wage labourer and 12 (6.6 percent) were government servants, 7 (3.89percent) respondents who were found to be agricultural workers, 11 (6.11 percent) were found to be engaged in small business. This shows that domestic violence is prevalent irrespective of the occupational status of women.

Regarding family income of the respondents, it was found that out of 180, majority of the respondents 96 (53.33 percent) had income within Rs 1,000 -5,000 per month, while 31 (17.22 percent) of the respondents had income within Rs.5, 001 – 10,000 per month. Besides, 24 (13.33 percent), 18 (10 percent) and 11 (6.12 percent) were found to belong to the income group of Rs. 10,001 – 20,000, Rs. 20,001 – 30,000 and above Rs 30,000 respectively. It is found that occurrence of domestic violence is higher among the lower income group than the upper income ones. So far as the religious composition of the respondents is concerned, it was found that of 180 respondents, 152 (84.44 percent) were Hindus, followed by Muslims 26 (14.4percent) and others 2 (1.1percent) from Jainism. Thus, it may be said that domestic violence is a common phenomenon prevalent irrespective of religious affiliation. So far as caste composition is concerned, a majority of 116 (64.45 percent) respondents were found to belong to

General category, while remaining 64 (34.56 percent) belonged to SC, ST and OBC at the rate of 31 (17.22 percent), 16 (8.89 percent) and 17 (9.44 percent) respectively. This shows that domestic violence is a caste neutral phenomenon. On the whole, it is seen that women irrespective of their socio-economic status are victims of domestic violence, although the degree of violence fluctuates depending on the status of a woman.

III

In this chapter, an elaborate discussion is made to understand national and international responses to prevent violence against women. After independence, a number of important laws have been enacted to eliminate discrimination and ensure protection to women. From time to time, Indian legislature has formulated laws to enshrine the principle of impartiality. The Constitution provided equal rights both for men and women and also entrusted the duty upon the state to make special provisions to recognize the interests of women effectively. Following the constitutional approach to women's rights Indian legislature has passed various laws from time to time to protect and promote the cause of women. Many of these laws were government's social reform or labour welfare measures which was enacted in the earlier decades. However, in post independent era a number of important laws have been passed by the Indian legislature as well as by various states which has a bearing on the lives and status of women. Some of these women specific legislations have been highlighted here such as Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, Women's and Children's (Licensing) Act 1956, Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act (MTPA) 1971, Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1976, Karnataka Devadasi (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1982, Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Act, 1986, Commission of Sati Prevention Act, 1987, Andhra Pradesh Devadasi (Prohibiting Dedication) Act, 1989, National Commission for Women Act, 1990, Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994, Information Technology Act, 2000, Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act (PCPNDT Act) 2003, Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Rajasthan Compulsory

Registration of Marriages Act, 2009, Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Bill, 2010 and Domestic Violence Act 2005 etc. All these legislations are expected to provide legal safeguards to Indian women in different areas.

Besides this, the present chapter also focused on the relevant sections of IPC and Cr P.C that deals with offences committed against women. These are Section 304B, Section 305, Section 306, Section 313, Section 314, Section 315, Section 316, Section 319, Section 321, Section 322, Section 323, Section 324, Section 327, Section 339 & 341, Section 340 & 342, Section 349, Section 354, Section 359, Section 366A, Section 366B, Section 369, Section 372, Section 373, Section 375, Section 376 and Section 498A.

At the international level as well various legal laws and instruments have been prepared by different international institutions to deal with the problems of women. The period 1945 to 1975 is very important because during this period most important international instruments relating to women's rights were drafted and modified like United Nations charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenants on Human Rights, Mexico city conference etc. It is relevant to record the achievement of the UN in the field of women's rights since 1945. To know the existing status of women under international law, the provisions (laws) of United Nations Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Human Rights Covenants, Commission on the Status of Women, Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women 1967, Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Declaration of Mexico, 1975, World Plan of Action, World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women 1993, International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), Fourth World Conference on Women 1995, Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development 1995, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 1999, World Summit Outcome Document 2005, Resolution of the UN Commission on Human Rights 2005 were thoroughly discussed in this chapter. However, it can be said that several attempts have been made at the international level to prevent violence and exploitation of women, but, the condition remains unchanged. Without proper

national laws and their effective enforcement, the importance of international law will be muffled and of little significance.

IV

In Chapter-IV data are analyzed, interpreted and the results of the study on “Domestic Violence against Women: A Study of Nalbari District in Assam” are discussed in detail. This chapter also discussed the suggestive measures of the existing problem of domestic violence against women of Nalbari district in Assam. The study was carried out on the basis of the following objectives:

1. To find out the nature and causes of domestic violence.
2. To find out the role of Women’s organisation for protection of women’s rights and
3. To find out the state’s response towards domestic violence.

For the convenience of presentation, this chapter has been divided into three sections. Section I deals with the nature and extent of violence, Section II looks into the consequences of domestic violence, and Section III deals with the causes of domestic violence and the role the women organizations played in this regard.

With regard to the first objective that is outlined to understand the nature and causes of domestic violence against women, it was found that among the respondents who were victims, an overwhelming majority of 142 (78.89 percent) out of 180 were found to be physically abused in one form or other. In case of nature of physical violence it was found that out of 142 respondents, 72 (50.70percent) were found to be victims of beating, slapping and kicking, 37(26.05percent) were victims of pushing, shoving, grabbing in hair and holding with rope, 22 (15.49 percent) were threatened with knife, stick, rod and gun, while 11 (7.76percent) reported physical violence in the form of damaging personnel property or valuable things. This shows that physical torture inflicted by either the husbands or in- laws take different forms and majority of the respondents were found to be victims of beating, slapping, pushing and kicking. As regards the nature and extent of psychological violence, a majority of 70 percent (126 out of 180) had experienced mental strain in one form or the other due to domestic violence. In case of nature of psychological violence out of 126 respondents, 35 (27.78 percent) were found to be victims of derogatory language, negative body

language and indifference, while 33(26.19 percent) experienced psychological violence due to the withdrawal of talking terms and treating the victim as outcaste. 25 (19.84 percent) were victims of other types of psychological violence i.e. blaming for improper house-keeping, demeaning family background, criticizing for lack of or less intelligence, by giving threats of committing suicide by their husbands. In cases of 19 respondents (15.07 percent), they were ignored in every aspect of family matters and 14 (11.11 percent) were reported of repeated insult in presence of their children, relatives and outsiders. This shows that majority of women had to suffer mental strain from their intimate partners or from in-laws. It is also noted that severe psychological stress and living under terror and the mental torture of violence can lead to self-destructive behavior and to other fatal consequences such as family discord and suicide. The mental depression associated with domestic violence may go relatively unnoticed when compared to the physical violence. Nevertheless, it is as dangerous, if not more dangerous than that of physical violence. As regards the nature of economic abuse it was found that out of 180 respondents, 81 (45 per cent) were victims of economic abuse in one form or the other. In case of nature of economic abuse out of 81 respondents 32 (39.50percent) reported that their full amount of salary was forcefully recovered from them every month by their husbands, 27(33.33percent) were being forced to leave their existing job, 15 (18.53percent) were not allowed to take any outdoor job for earning, while 7 (8.64percent) were prohibited from making purchases of their choice from their salary. Thus it was found that a sizable number of women were being abused economically. In case of nature of sexual abuse it was found that out of 180 respondents, 86 (47.78percent) were found to be victims of sexual abuse in the form of forced sex, preventing from safe sex or using contraception or forced intercourse. While 66 respondents (76.75 percent) agreed that they were the victims of sexual abuse while their husbands were under influence of drug or alcohol. Thus, it may be deduced that sexual abuse was also a principal kind of torture that women experience in marital life. Regarding the opinion about the extent of violence it was found that out of 180 respondents, 35 (19.44 percent) had to suffer violence daily, while 45(25percent), 25(13.89percent) and 47 (26.11percent) were found to suffer violence once or twice in a week, fortnightly and monthly respectively. However 28 respondents (15.56percent) could not remember their frequency of violence. This shows that although evident in majority of the cases, the

frequency of violence is not uniform in all cases; there was variation from one case to the other.

Regarding the causes of domestic violence, it was found that out of 180 respondents 56(31.11percent) had faced violence due to extra marital affair of the husbands, 51(28.33 percent) reported to have suffered due to the alcoholic nature of the husband, 25(13.89 were found to be victims due to other causes like marital maladjustment, problems at work place of husband, difference in the social status of the partners, property dispute, mental disorders and children related issues. Again 22 (12.22percent), 17(9.45percent) and 9 (5percent) were found to be victims of violence because of dowry, absence of economic independence and patriarchal social outlook respectively. So, it may be said that although nature and causes of violence vary often, physical violence is a common form of torture that women face in most cases.

With regard to the impact of domestic violence, it was found to have grave impact on the lives of children and also on the personal lives of the victims. A majority of 115 (63.89percent) of the respondents were found to have suffered physical injury by the assault of their husbands. With regard to the seriousness of injury, out of 115 respondents who were physically injured, 52 (45.21percent) were seriously injured, 37 (32.18percent) and 26 (22.61percent) suffered moderate and minor injuries respectively. In case of psychological injury, out of 180 respondents, a majority of 146 (81.11 percent) were found suffered from health or mental problems due to violence, while the rest 34 (18.89per cent) respondents reported that though they were living under abusive situation they had not any disorder and had no health or mental problem. Regarding the impact of violence, it was found that out of 146 respondents who had developed mental and health problems, 16 (10.99 percent) reported to have suffered from various kinds of mental stress, 27 (18.49percent) were under depression, 20 (13.69percent) had anxiety, while 19 (13.01percent) and 52 (35.61percent) respondents were suffering from insomnia and other problems like chronic headache, high blood pressure, alcoholism, drug abuse and low self-esteem respectively.12 (8.21percent) respondents also reported to have developed suicidal tendency. What is still more tragic is that it not only affected the mental and physical health of the victim, it also had very serious impact on the children of the family which witnessed regular domestic violence. The repeated occurrence of domestic violence in a family had detrimental effects on the lives of the children. Data revealed

that out of 180 respondents, 78 (43.33percent) reported that violence had moderately affected the lives of their children, 23 (12.78percent) reported to have witnessed serious consequence of domestic violence on the lives of children. 79 (43.89percent) respondents did not register any serious concern about the affect of violence on the lives of children. About the type of effect that children had suffered, out of 101 respondents who had registered the evil affect of domestic violence on the lives of children, 63 (62.37percent) reported that their children had developed behavioural and psychological problems like anxiety, disobedience, aggression (particularly among males), oppositional behaviour, self-blame, isolation from peers, self-harming conduct, depression and other psychosomatic symptoms, while 23 (22.77percent) reported decline in the concentration of children and eventual low performance in school. 15 (14.86percent) respondents reported to have witnessed the evil effect of domestic violence on children but could not specify it. This shows that sustained domestic violence not only affects the personal life of the victims but the lives of their children as well.

With regard to the second objective that is outlined to understand the role of Women's organisations and N.G.Os for protection of women's rights, it was found that out of 180 respondents, 121 (67.22 percent) had got support from the women's organizations and could solve the problem mutually without dragging it to the court, 59 respondents (32.78percent) took help from the police, court and counseling centers. As regards the type of help sought it was found that out of 59 respondents, 27 (45.76percent) had approached the family counseling centers (FCCs), 21 (35.59 percent) had approached the court to get remedy, 6 (10.16 percent) had reported to the nearest Police station for help, while 5 (8.47percent) were given financial /job related suggestions by women's organisation working for the welfare of women at district level. As regards the reasons for mutual compromise, out of 121 respondents who resorted to it, 54 (44.62 percent) were found to have compromised only to protect their family reputation or prestige, 24 (19.83percent) compromised for the sake of children, 17 (14.07percent) compromised with the hope that things would change for better in future, 12 (9.91percent) compromised as they had no other place to go or seek shelter, while the rest 14 (11.57percent) cited different reasons for compromising with the situations i.e. lack of economic security, social stigma, destiny and so on. The response of the majority of the respondents who had compromised with their husbands for the sake of

family reputation or prestige was disappointing as it reaffirmed the stronghold of patriarchy in our society. Even the legal remedial measures could not be adopted as women were hesitant to do so under the pressure of patriarchy. Above revelation of data confirms the hypothesis that patriarchal social values are the cause of domestic violence. Whatever women have to suffer and whatever men hurl upon them basically originate from patriarchal social values in which both the categories are socialized. Regarding the effectiveness of the services provided by various organizations/NGOs, out of 180 respondents, 90(50percent) expressed satisfaction with the services. Their response was positive as they believed that this kind of help was fruitful to them. 70 (38.89percent) respondents had given somewhat a satisfactory response as they believed that organizations were not spending adequate time with the victims and their families to solve their problems. While the rest 20(11.11percent) were dissatisfied as according to them these organizations failed to bring in any change in the lives of women. Thus it may be said that although women organizations are playing an important role in solving the cases of domestic violence and providing support to the victims, they are required to play a still greater role so that the incidences of such violence may reduced drastically in the society.

With regard to the third objective that is outlined to understand the state's response towards domestic violence it was found that out of 20 respondents who hailed from the cross-section of the society, 11 (55 per cent) opined that the government was not doing enough to prevent or deal with the menace of domestic violence, 9 respondents (45 percent) were, however, found satisfied with the work done by the government. In case of legal awareness of the respondents, it was found that an over whelming majority of 157 (87.22percent) out of 180 were unaware of Domestic Violence Act, while only 23(12.78percent) respondents were found aware. Again in case of 489A of Indian Penal Code, a majority of 137 (76.11percent) out of 180 respondents were found to be unaware, while a considerable number i.e., 43 respondents (23.88 percent) were found to be aware also. As regards the availability of services in the district it was found that only two counseling centers were available to the victims of domestic violence which were named as Family Counseling Centers. As regards the service delivery system of the Family Counseling Centers it was found that only 27(15percent) out of 180 respondents had approached the Family Counseling Centers (FCCs) for help. In Nalbari district there is also no Rehabilitation Center or shelter

home, free legal aid services and medical services for the victims of domestic violence. As a result, women feel insecure to take action against the perpetrators of violence as it is these people who provide shelters to the victims. On the whole, the attitude of government towards solving the problem does not reflect a bright picture. In spite of various efforts people are still unaware of various legal provisions available for the protection of women. Above revelation of data confirms the hypothesis that poor implementation of the governmental laws to ensure women's rights is also responsible for domestic violence in our society. In respect of eliminating domestic violence in our society, the laws have failed to achieve its objective to the extent it was desired. The government's initiative is mostly confined to the making of laws, while the implementation of it is not being taken adequate care. Thus, a holistic approach involving the government and various other stakeholders of the civil society is required to be evolved to combat the evil of domestic violence in India.

Suggestions

In the course of conducting the study it is realized that some measures are required to be taken to reduce the incidence and impact of domestic violence against women. Some of them may be

1. Sensitization of women about legal remedial measures is required to be undertaken by concerned NGOs.
2. Women organizations need to expand their services to include women in rural areas.
3. Establishment of Family Court in each district is mandatory.
4. All-women police station is also required to be established in each district.
5. Education for girl children should be made mandatory beyond 14 years.
6. Counseling centers with professionally qualified counselors should be set up in every district.

7. Creating Public Awareness at all levels of society is necessary to counter the present trend of domestic violence against women. For this, women organizations may conduct awareness workshops both in urban and rural areas.
8. Shelter homes should be available to the victims of domestic violence.
9. Media should be made more sensitive and give right and adequate to the cases of domestic violence.
10. Special Care should be provided to women seeking medical help following an episode of violence.
11. Most of the victims of Domestic Violence are uneducated, backward and economically disadvantaged. The legal aid and advice should be made available to them free of cost. Such a scheme is required to be evolved by the government.

Limitations of the Study

Like any other study, the present study has its limitations. Given the limitation of time and resources at the disposal of the researcher, the aspect of domestic violence against women in specific caste, religion and linguistic group in Nalbari district could not be thoroughly investigated. But a comparative study of the phenomenon may still help to delve deep into the problem. This aspect may be considered in future research.