Chapter 2

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2.1. Introduction

A person’s life is like a book in which the events and phenomena make up the chapters. Flipping through the pages of these chapters unfold many moments and meanings which provide the essence of life. These experience and phenomena are very exclusive and personal. They belong only to the person who has lived through them. These experiences are attached with meanings and are better known as lived experience.

Lived experience refers to the German word Erlebnis, literally “living through something”, bringing the prereflective dimensions of human existence to the fore, as quoted by van Manen (Haland, 2006: 743). Lived experience refers to the way human beings give meaning to their situation. In other words, lived experience is fundamentally characterized by meaning (Haland, 2006: 743). We all experience the various types of experience including conception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire, volition and action. Thus, the domain of phenomena is the range of experience including these types (among others).
Feelings, thoughts and actions express lived experience according to the phenomenological tradition. It is based on the person's interpretation and valuation of life situation and is based on everyday life. In everyday life, the body is essential as we *are* our body in feeling and actions, but we also *have* a body and can observe and talk about it (Sanstrom, 2007: 432–433). This means that the body is both a subject and an object and this is expressed by the concept of ‘the lived body’, a concept developed by Merleau-Ponty. It is through our body that we exist, act and understand the world. The lived body is intentional and gives access to the world and there is no perceived separation between body and self.

Lived experiences are captured through personal narratives. Concepts related to narrative analysis of life histories have become increasingly visible in the social and health sciences over the last two decades (Braveman, et al. 2003: 144). The use of narrative analysis of life stories or accounts of disability experiences has been validated as an approach to understanding both the experiences of individuals and of groups of individuals who share a common illness or disability.

A narrative may describe events, define outcomes, or present the stages of a social process. Narrative theory stresses that humans create meaning about what they encounter in everyday life by plotting or framing experiences within narrative structures and constructing personal narratives by integrating past, present and future.
It may be argued that individuals not only use narratives to understand their everyday lives but also use narratives as a guide to create a particular future. Narratives are a way of creating meaning as life unfolds and as new circumstances present themselves. What we do continue our stories, sometimes by accepting what we perceive as inevitable, sometimes in response to external events, and sometimes by aiming to create a particular outcome. Thus, narratives are created and refined in response to experiences or as challenges are encountered to meet the goals they set. It must be noted that because a narrative is told, or retold at a particular point in time, a narrative always reflects the temporal, physical, social and emotional context of the narrator.

The present work is an attempt to study the lived experiences of women living with AIDS. The study has been carried out among women of five different cultural groups based on their first-person account of their life's experiences in general and that of living with AIDS in particular. As it is understood how individuals cognitively represent AIDS and their emotional responses can facilitate adherences to therapeutic regimens, reduce high-risk behaviours, and enhance quality of life. Phenomenology provides the richest and most descriptive data, and thus is the ideal research for eliciting cognitive representations.

2.2. Phenomenology

Phenomenology, according to von Eckartsberg is interpretive study of human experience. The aim is to examine and clarify human
situations, events, meanings and experiences "as they spontaneously occur in the course of daily life". The goal is "a rigorous descriptive of human life as it is lived and reflected upon in all of its first person concreteness, urgency and ambiguity", according to Polio et al (Seaman, 2001: 1). Phenomenology is often considered central to the interpretative paradigm. It is considered a philosophical discipline and a research method (Wojnar & Swanson, 2008: 172). As it has unfolded throughout the past 100 years, Phenomenology as a philosophical perspective has thrown light on previously ignored phenomena of the human experience, reformulated philosophical questions, and penetrate thought in almost all fields of scholarship.

The discipline of Phenomenology may be defined initially as the study of structure of experience, or consciousness. Literally, Phenomenology is the study of 'Phenomena', appearance of things, or things as they appear in our experience or the ways we experiences, thus, the meaning things have in our experience. Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view.

Basically, Phenomenology studies the structure of various type of experience ranging from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire and volition of bodily awareness, embodied action and social activity, including linguistic activity. Thus, the domain of
phenomena is the range of experience including these types (among others).

Phenomenology is defined by its domain of study - its methods and its main result. Phenomenology studies structures of conscious experience as experienced from the first person point of view, along with relevant conditions of experience. The central structure of an experience is the personality, its way it is directed through its content or meaning toward a certain object in the world.

Different definitions of Phenomenology have been given by different people from various disciplines as noted by Sarker (1994). Some of them are -

(i) William L. Reese (1980: 428) in his *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion*: “in general, Phenomenology is an approach to philosophy centering an analysis of the phenomena which flood man’s awareness”.

(ii) James Drever (1961: 206) in his *A Dictionary of Psychology*: Phenomenology is “the systematic investigation of conscious experience, as regarded as the true method of approach to psychology”.

(iii) Nicolas (1977: 2214) in *Understanding Human Behaviour* (24 vols): Phenomenology is “the study of mental processes and the way in which the brain interprets and understands sensations from the external world".
(iv) Cofer and Appley (1980: 662) in their Motivation - Theory and Research: Phenomenology refers usually to a way of looking at experience.

(v) Edwin G. Boring (1969: 18) in his A History of Experimental Psychology: "It (Phenomenology) means the description of immediate experience, with as little scientific bias as possible".

(vi) James M. Edie in the Introduction to Pierre Thinenaz's (1962: 19) What is Phenomenology: "Phenomenology is neither a science of objects nor a science; it is a science of experience".

Etymologically, Phenomenology means “Science of phenomena or appearances”. And for Hussel, ‘an appearance’ stands for ‘experiences’ through which a thing is presented to us, such as in perception. Hussel understands ‘Phenomenology’ as the study of phenomena or appearances in a systematic way to explain the possibility of our validity knowledge in different fields such as science, mathematics, philosophy, etc.

The basic purpose of Phenomenology, according to van Manen (1990) is to reduce the experiences of purposes with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence. To this end, the qualitative researches identify a phenomenon (an ‘object’ of human experience. The human experience may be phenomena such as insomnia, exclusion, anger, or undergoing coronary artery bypass surgery. The enquirer then collects data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon and
develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all the individuals – what they experience and how they experiences it (Creswell, et al. 2007: 236).

Phenomenology seeks to describe basic lived experiences. As a research method, it is the study of essences. The heart of the Phenomenology essence, studies the subjective experience, and never the validity of truth claims. The researcher’s goal is to move inside the experience of persons unlike her or him, to see with their eyes and feel their hearts, to understand their experience in his/her own being, without becoming lost in it. Phenomenology as a type of research is a poetizing activity in that “it tries an insensitive, evocative speaking, a primal telling, wherein we aim to involve in an original singing of the worlds” (van Manen, 1990: 13).

Conscious experiences have a unique feature. We experience them; we live through them or perform them. Other things in the world we may observe and engage. But we do not experience them, in the sense of living through or performing them, this experimental or first person feature – that of being experienced – is an essential. This feature is both a Phenomenology and an ontological feature of each experience. It is a part of what it is for the experience to be experienced (phenomenological) and part of what it is for the experience to be (ontological).
We study conscious experience by reflecting on various type of experience just as we experience them. That is to say, we proceed from the first person's point of view. However, we do not normally characterize and experience at the time we are performing it. In many cases, we do not have that capability: a state of intense anger or fear, for example, consumes all of one's psychic focus at the time. Rather, we acquire a background of having lived through a given type of experience and we look to the familiarity with that type of experience; hearing a song, seeing a sunset, thinking about love, intending to jump a hurdle. The practice of Phenomenology assumes such familiarity with the type of experience to be characterized, importantly, also, it is a type of experiences that Phenomenology pursues, rather than a particular fleeting experiences.

David Seamon (2001) therefore, defines Phenomenology, where a phenomenon refers to things or experiences as human beings experience them. Any object, event, situation, or experience that a person can see, hear, touch, smell, taste, feel, instruct, know, understood or live through is a legitimate torrid for phenomenological investigation. There can be Phenomenology of light, of places, of seeing, of jealousy, of relationship, of power, of economy, of sociability, of illness and so forth. All these are phenomena because human beings can experience, encounter or lived through them in some way.
The ultimate aim of phenomenological research, however, is not idiosyncratic description of the phenomena, through starting point for essential Phenomenology. Rather, the aim is to use these descriptions as a ground from which to discover underlying commonalities that mark the essential nature of the phenomena as it has presence and meaning in the concrete lives and experiences of human beings.

In order to proceed with a discussion of method in a clear and organized manner, it is helpful to consider van Manen’s work (1990: 30 – 31), in which he outlined six activities for researching lived experience as:

1. Turning to phenomenon that seriously interest us and commit us to the world;
2. Investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it;
3. Reflecting on the essential themes that characterize the phenomenon;
4. Describing the phenomenon through the act of writing and re-writing;
5. Maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon;
6. Balancing the research context by considering parts and whole.

2.2.1. Historical Development of Phenomenology

The history of Phenomenology is complex. Over time, as often happens with philosophical traditions, there developed different
phenomenological schools, styles and emphases. The word Phenomenology has come, in modern times, to be associated with the name of German philosopher, Edmund Husserl. Historically speaking, perhaps it was Hegel who had first used the word systematically in his monumental work "The Phenomenology of Spirit". In his work, Phenomenology was understood to be an ascent of consciousness from various forms of self-consciousness (Bhadra, 1990: 1). As 'Phenomenology' etymologically means 'science of phenomena or appearances his interest was mainly ontological, which differs from Husserl.

Husserl was mainly interested in the epistemological problems. Husserl differs from Hegel in that he understood 'Phenomenology' as the study of phenomena or appearances in systematic way to explain to possibility of our valid knowledge in different fields such as science, mathematics, philosophy, etc. He does not understand phenomena as a metaphysical study or ontology. Rather, to him it is a philosophical method which will help us go to the foundation of the sciences and other branches of knowledge so that it will be possible for us to have apodictive certainty in those areas (Bhadra, 1990: 1).

The central motive of Husserl's philosophical endeavour is the search for certainty. According to Husserl, subjectivity is the principles on which our knowledge of the world which we mean or intend depends. Subjectivity is the ground on which all meaning and valid principles are
formed. Husserl rejects the objectivism and naturalism of sciences (Bhadra, 1990: 7).

Husserl's idea of Phenomenology is interested in perceptions, judgments and feelings as such, in their a priori nature, in their very essence. Husserl felt that pure Phenomenology analysis could not be achieved until and unless there was a complete disconnection of the mind from the objects or 'bracketing' is known as the pure or transcendental Phenomenology.

Eventually, however, other Phenomenology thinkers such as the German philosopher Martin Heidegger and the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty reacted against Husserl's transcendental structure of consciousness. This existential Phenomenology as they came to be called argue that such transcendental structures are questionable because Husserl based their reality on speculative, cerebral reflection rather than an actual human experience taking place within the world of everyday life. (Seamon, 2001: 1).

In his Being and Time, Heidegger (1962) argued that consciousness was not separate from the world and human existence. He called for an existential correction to Husserl that would interpret essential structure as basic categories of human experience rather than as pure, cerebral consciousness. In his Phenomenology of Perception, Merleau-Ponty (1945) broadened Heidegger's correction to include the active role of the body in human experience. Merleau-Ponty sought to
re-interpret the division below the body and mind common to most conventional western philosophy and psychology. This existential twin of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty moved Husserl's realm of pure intellectual consciousness into the realm of the contingencies of history and embodiment (Polkinghorne, 1983: 205). Phenomenology has changed considerably since its founding by Husserl, moving from cerebral structure to live experience. The nature on how these two philosophers differ from Husserl's idea of Phenomenology is discussed as follows:

A. Maurice Merleau-Ponty

Merleau-Ponty interprets Phenomenology on the basis of the ideas of Edmund Husserl, especially the last phase on his thought (Bhadra, 1990: 474). But he insists on the ‘primacy’ of perception and so Phenomenology of perception occupies the central part of his philosophy. He means by the primacy of perception the fact that perception constitutes the ground level for all knowledge and its study has to precede all other levels such as those of the cultural world and also those of science (Bhadra, 1990: 479).

According to Spiegelberg, Merleau-Ponty's Phenomenology of perception is mainly an attempt to explore the basic structure of our experience of the world as it is available to us prior to all scientific interpretation. The primary task is to see and describe the world as it is presented in perception as concretely as possible, without omission of meanings and absence of meaning, the clarities and ambiguities. It is a
Phenomenology of the world as perceived, rather of the perceiving act
(Bhadra, 1990: 479).

Merleau-Ponty (1962) thinks that Phenomenology has combined extreme subjectivism with extreme objectivism in the idea of the world. This is something opposed to Husserl who had wanted to find the ultimate foundation for all knowledge in pure subjectivity. He denounces the appeal to subjectivity and wants to combine with the subjective with the objective through which might be called Phenomenology.

B. Martin Heidegger

Heidegger rejects Husserl’s project for a pre-suppositionless philosophy and simply demonstrate what followed from them (Sarker, 1794: 46-47). To Heidegger, Husserl’s Phenomenology was inadequate, and therefore, he turned the prevailing phenomenological current towards existentialism. Husserl’s Phenomenology is not concerned so much with the ontological or metaphysical status of man, while Heidegger’s Phenomenology takes more interest in the concrete problems of the living (thinking, feeling, willing) man. In this regard, the latter has walked further, at least one step than the former in the direction towards the solution of concrete of human problems.

Husserl roamed round the arid ground of epistemological problems and ignored the more pressing problems of the human condition. And it was for this reason that Heidegger deviated from the path charted by Husserl. As seen in the words of Sarker, “Heidegger
used the method (of Phenomenology) not to illuminate the more or less drily intellectual subject - matter to which Husserl applied it, but to clarify the more humanly engrossing issue of the nature of man and his place in the world." Heidegger’s approach is really more commendable than that of Husserl’s (Sarker, 1994: 82).

Husserl’s phenomenological method is mainly concerned with the analysis of the structures of consciousness that constitute the world. But he does not show how consciousness is connected with the main purpose of life. Heidegger shows how human life and purpose reveal the meanings of Being. Heidegger starts with the purposive nature of Dasein. Dasein can have a meaning, because it has consciousness or because it is consciousness (Bhadra, 1990: 343).

Heidegger accepted Husserl’s phenomenological method, but interpreted it in such a way that it could throw light on human existence. He thought that Husserl’s Phenomenology neglects individual Existenz. He argued that conceptual analysis is not sufficient to give us knowledge of what actually exists and what does not. Unlike Husserl’s, Heidegger refused to ‘neglect being’ by bracketing existence, and by concerning himself with essence (Bhadra, 1990: 343).

The Phenomenology of Dasein is a hermeneutic in the original sense of the word. In this sense it means the task of interpreting. But the interpretation holds to the extent of uncovering the meaning of Being and the basic structures of Dasein in general (Bhadra, 1990: 296).
In Heidegger's opinion, there is no ego, there is simply what he calls "Being-in-the-world'. The world is not what he calls 'Being-in-the-world'. The world is not 'bracketable, nor is the concept of ego necessary. Once the concept of ego is removed, we are free from the threat of philosophical sceptism. In this context, the phenomenological movement' is divided into branches - and he establishes what is called "existential Phenomenology" (Bhadra, 1990: 299).

2.2.2. Types

The Encyclopedia of Phenomenology (Embree, 1997) identifies seven unique perspectives:

(a) Descriptive (transcendental constitutive) Phenomenology that is concerned with how objects are constituted in pure (transcendental) consciousness, setting aside questions of any relationship of the phenomenon to the world in which one lives;

(b) Naturalistic constitutive Phenomenology that is concerned with how consciousness constitutes things in the world of nature, assuming that consciousness is part of nature;

(c) Existential Phenomenology that is concerned with concrete human existence, including issues of free choice or actions in life situations;

(d) Generative historicist Phenomenology that is concerned with how meaning, as found in human experience, is generated in historical context of collective human experience over a period of time;
(e) Genetic Phenomenology that is concerned with the genesis of meaning of things within individual experience;

(f) Hermeneutic (interpretive) Phenomenology that is concerned with interpretation of the structures of experience and with how things are understood by people who live through these experiences and by those who study them;

(g) Realistic Phenomenology that is concerned with the structure of consciousness and intentionality, assuming they occur in a world that is to a large degree external to consciousness rather than being brought into consciousness.

The two approaches that guide the majority of phenomenological investigations in nursing and caring are descriptive and hermeneutic (interpretive) Phenomenology. For the present study, the latter approach is used for the reason that the primary goal was to appreciate the holistic context of participants’ experiences and finding meanings in what participants said and received. The philosophical basis assumption of this approach is described in the subsequent paragraphs of the section.

Heidegger believed that humans are hermeneutic (interpretive) beings capable of finding significance and meaning in their own lives. Heideggerian’s Phenomenology is based on the perspective that the understanding of individuals cannot occur in isolation of their culture, social context, or historical period in which they live. Heidegger’s
Phenomenology attempts to address the situatedness of individual’s *Dasein* (the human way of being in the world) in relation to the broader social, political and cultural contexts (Wojnar & Swanson: 2007; 174). Therefore, when we consider what it is like to experience caring, healing and wholeness we cannot ignore the lives people live outside of being ill or well. In fact, their very experience of health is in the context of family traditions, community values, and the broader sociopolitical context (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007: 174).

The assumptions of *Dasein* and situatedness form the basis for pre understanding or, as Heidegger (1962) called it, a forestructure of understanding. The forestructure of understanding consists of:

(a) Fore-having (all individuals come to a situation with practical familiarity or background practices from their own world that make interpretation possible).

(b) Fore-sight (socio-cultural background provides a basis for anticipation of what might be found in an investigation).

Heidegger assumed that the fore-structure is closely linked with how one interprets reality. Wojnar and Swanson (2007) suggested that interpretive Phenomenology is most useful as a framework for examining contextual features of a lived experience as generated from a blend of meanings and understanding articulated by the researcher and participants.
Phenomenology emphasizes direct observation of phenomena. Phenomenologists seek to sense reality and to describe it in words, rather than numbers – words that reflect consciousness and perception. Phenomenology is a part of the humanistic tradition that emphasizes the common experience of all human beings and our ability to relate to the feelings of others (Bernard, 1995: 14–15). Schutz said, ‘when you study molecules, you don’t have to worry about the world “means” to the molecules. But when you try to understand the reality of human being, it’s a different matter entirely’. The only way to understand social reality, Schutz maintained, was through the meanings that people give to that reality. In a phenomenological study, the researcher tries to see reality through an informant’s eye (Schutz, 1962:59).

Phenomenologists try to produce convincing descriptions of what they experience rather than provide explanations and causes. Good ethnography – a narrative that describes a culture or a part of a culture – is usually good Phenomenology, and there is still no substitute for a good story, well told – especially if you are trying to make people understand how the people you have studied, think and feel about their lives (Schutz, 1962: 59).

2.3. Method

2.3.1. Sample

The most important consideration in selecting a sample is to see that it is closely representative of the universe. The size of a sample is
not a necessary insurance of its representativeness. Relatively small samples properly selected may be much more reliable than large samples poorly selected (Young, 1998: 326). The actual selection of the sample should be so arranged that every item in the universe under consideration must have the same chance for inclusion in the sample. A purposive sample of 25 women with a diagnosis of AIDS participated in this phenomenological study. Participants were recruited from five different communities – Meitei, Muslim, Kuki (only Thadou speaking), Rongmei and Tangkhul (the latter three are tribal communities). They were equal in numbers. Their age range was from 26 – 42 years. Their CD4 count was in the range of 96 – 192. Four women were married, there was one divorcée and the rest were widows. Two women were childless, while the rest were mothers. 60 percent of the women had less than high school education, 28 percent passed their board exams, 8 percent passed their council exam and only 4 percent of the women graduated.

Anonymity, voluntary participation was important ethical prerequisites. So, for those women who were not ready to reveal their identity, anonymity was maintained. For this study, participants were selected because they have lived the experience, were ready to talk about their experience and were diverse enough from one another to enhance possibilities of rich and unique stories of the particular experience.
2.3.2. Data collection and Analyses

The interviews were done within a period of one year. Women diagnosed with AIDS were taken their consent for interviews. The women were contacted through the staff of the NGOs they were associated with or through a common friend. The interviews were tape-recorded. The interviews lasted between 60-120 minutes. The interviews were later transcribed. Verbatim transcription was carried out. Interviews followed a semi-structured format investigating their experiences with AIDS and their strategies for coping with AIDS.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim. Further analysis was carried out on the basis of thorough reading and re-reading of the transcribed interview and thorough discussion with the supervisor. On the basis of the above, the analysis consisted of the following steps.

Step 1. The first step consisted of listening to the tape and reading through the interview text several times, followed by writing down the general impression of the interview as a whole.

Step 2. In the second step, themes are chalked out from the interview text. From the themes, main themes and sub themes are differentiated, with the lived experience of living with AIDS in mind.

Step 3. This step consisted of searching for a pattern of common main themes across the interviews.

Step 4. Interpretation of lived experience at four levels is done at this step. To preserve the rich descriptions of the women's lived
experience and to shed light on meanings at different levels of generality, interpretations were given on four broad levels –

i. Past experiences and meanings given (by the women under study).

ii. Living with AIDS and its meanings.

iii. Perception of death.

iv. Coping with AIDS.

The transcriptions were read and re-read several times. From each transcript, significant phrase or sentences that pertain directly to coping with AIDS were identified. Meanings are then formulated from the significant statements and phrases. The formulated meanings are clustered into themes allowing for the emergence of themes common to all of the participants’ transcripts. The results are then integrated into an in-depth, exhaustive description of the phenomenon.

2.3.3. Findings and Discussions

The four levels have been discussed in four different chapters as findings. Discussions of the findings are carried out in each chapter. Their story is both unique and common: unique because each experience of suffering is personal and common because many other women also suffer within the same backdrop.

2.4. Notes from the field diary

That people with HIV/AIDS are highly stigmatized was experienced while conducting fieldwork with the women living with
AIDS. Though people living with AIDS were supposed to be open about their status, they could not fully enjoy the liberty of going public. This was because of the peoples' attitude towards them and not simply towards their condition. And persuading them to agree for the interview was the hardest part of the field work.

Even if the researcher knew some women living with AIDS she felt apprehensive about approaching them directly. That was because she was not sure how they would react to her request. But fortunately, she had some friends who were involved in some NGOs related with HIV/AIDS. Through them she got the opportunity to meet the women who fitted her area of study. They were kind enough to oblige to her proposal. Though some of them were reluctant at the beginning, some readily agreed. Later it came to her knowledge that the reason behind their reluctance was the bad experience they had with some persons who met them, interviewed them and took advantage of their situation for their own personal gains. They felt used and abused. In her case, the mediators (those friends working in NGOS) knew her well and assured them of her intention.

Well, the first part being done, she took appointment and sat down to get prepared herself for the interview. Then, she realized that she was in a fix. She knew that the topic was a sensitive one and they were sensitive people and she needed to do her home work really well. At this stage she found help and guidance from her supervisor who fed
her with ideas and some basic tips. An interview guide was prepared for the interview. Phenomenological inquiry is not a simple interview where the interviewees are asked only those latent questions which anyone could answer on their behalf. It goes beyond that. The respondents were not simply poured with questions after questions. They were talked with, their body language were observed and were allowed to open up. Sometimes their body language would deceive their statements. They happened to nod their heads while they disagreed. The laughs were used to mask their tears. It was a difficult task which needed every bit of attention and did not give any room to divert her mind. It was not just a mere attempt to know about the incidents of their lives but it definitely was a journey to live and relive their lives with them. The interviews were about them reflecting their lives and to give meanings to the lives that they had lived, that they were living and also their perception on their future.

In the process of the interview there were instances of awkward moments. Theirs was not a happy story. And asking them to relive their past, ponder on their present and consider for their future was not a sweet experience for them. Their pasts were filled with mistakes and regrets. Their present condition was a big suffering. They did not dare to think of their future because all they could see was more miseries and death. So, there was not a single woman who did not cry or shed tears during the interviews. Sometimes they sobbed and wept bitterly and that often left her in an awkward situation. There was one instance in which
one elderly Kuki woman who was old enough to be the researcher's mother started weeping aloud while recalling the ill-treatments her husband gave her. She (researcher) could not ask her to stop crying because she (researcher) thought that crying was the only luxury she could afford, the luxury to pour out her inner turmoil. But at the same time, the researcher could not stare at her and simply waited for her to stop by herself. But she did not take long to regain her posture. All the researcher did was touched her and asked her to repeat one funny incident she narrated earlier in the beginning of the interview. Luckily that worked in her case. What the researcher realized was that sometimes all they needed was a gentle touch and the heart to understand their problems. The experiences gained from the present research work have helped the researcher not just academically but have also shaped her better as a human being. It really was a life-changing experience for her.