Chapter -III

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The social scientists were not very serious about the problem of domestic violence against women till the third quarter of the 20th century. It was only in 1970 that social scientist in the western countries started conducting studies to find out the nature and extent of violence against women within the family. They also conducted research to find out the factors responsible, for domestic violence against women. In India, very few research studies have been conducted in this area and majority of these studies are related to dowry. It was only from 1980’s that isolated attempts were made to identify the nature of domestic violence against women. The studies conducted in India and other countries are grouped together for proper understanding.

The available relevant studies have been presented under following headings:

1. Prevalence, nature and extent of domestic violence.

2. Reasons for which abused women prefer to stay in such relationship and reasons for not staying in such relationships.

3. Factors contributing to domestic violence.


5. Help-seeking behaviour.

6. Coping with an abusive relationship.
3.1 PREVALENCE, NATURE AND EXTENT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The prevalence of domestic violence against women cuts across all boundaries of caste, class, religion, and region because it has been viewed as a private matter. Violations against women’s human rights are time and again approved under the grab of cultural practices and norms, or through misinterpretation of religious tenets. No society can claim to be free of such violence; the only variation is in the patterns and trends that exist in different countries and regions. The rate of prevalence of domestic violence varies from one country to another country and it varies from region to region due to different factors.

According to Kimuna and Djamba, (2008) their study conducted in Kenya explores the factors associates with physical and sexual wife abuse on a sample of 4,876 women aged 15-49 years. This study reveals that more than one third of married women have been physically abused and one in ten has experienced sexual abuse from their husbands.

A cross-sectional study was conducted among 1296 young married women aged 15-24 years of rural Nepal by Lamichhane, et.al. in the year 2009. This study reveals that violence against women is quite common among young married rural women. More than half the women (51.9 percent) experienced some form of violence in their lifetime. Nearly half (46.2 percent) reported sexual violence. About one-fourth

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(24.8 percent) of women reported experience of forceful sexual intercourse when they were afraid to say ‘no’.

A cross-sectional study conducted among 300 women aged 16-49 in Edirne by Toku, et al, (2009)\textsuperscript{4} reveals that 93 percent of women having experienced different forms of verbal and psychological violence, 34 percent women reported that they experienced some form of physical violence in the past 12 months. Common forms of physical assault included being slapped (31.1 percent), being pushed, grabbed, or having something thrown at them (18.1 percent) and being kicked, bitten, or hit by fist (10 percent). Also with in the past year, 64.5 percent of the participants were knocked down by their husbands, and many of them were threatened to be beaten (25.4 percent), killed (6.4 percent) or kicked out of the house (8.4 percent). Nearly 9 percent of women said that their husbands never asked their opinion about familial decision, 93 percent and 96.4 percent of women who experienced physical violence also were exposed to sexual violence and psychological violence.

Goel and Sultana\textsuperscript{5} quoted The UNIFEM Report: The UNIFEM Report, “A life free of Violence: It’s Our Right” (1998) disclosed that 3-4 million women are battered each year worldwide; between 16 and 52 percent of women surveyed were assaulted by intimate partners. This report also discloses that in Kenya 42 percent of the women in the Kissi district were regularly beaten in their homes, in United states, one woman is physically abused by her intimate partner every nine seconds, in UK, one woman in ten is severely beaten by an intimate partner and in Canada studies show that women are more likely to be murdered by an intimate partner than by a stranger.


In the U.S., the Department of Justice reported that every year 3-4 million women are battered by their husbands or partners. Even in Sweden, which ranks high in the gender-related index, 66 percent of the 18,650 reported cases of violence on women in 1996 were of domestic assault.

In WHO Multi–country report on women’s Health and Domestic violence against women, (2005) data was analyzed from over 24000 women in ten countries representing diverse cultural, geographical and urban/rural settings: Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Japan, Peru, Namibia, Samoa, Serbia and Montenegro, Thailand, and the United Republic of Tanzania. It stated that the range of lifetime prevalence of physical violence by an intimate partner was between 13 percent and 61 percent, with most sites falling between 23 percent and 49 percent. Between 4 percent and 49 percent of ever-partnered women reported severe physical violence. The range of lifetime prevalence of sexual violence by an intimate partner was between 6 percent and 59 percent, with most sites falling between 10 percent and 50 percent in women’s health and domestic violence against women. The range of lifetime prevalence of physical or sexual violence, or both, by an intimate partner was between 15 percent and 71 percent. In most sites sexual violence was considerably less frequent than physical violence. Sexual violence was usually accompanied by physical violence, although in some settings a relatively large proportion of ever-abused women reported sexual violence only. In another study of the World Health Organization in 2000, reported that 12 to 25 percent of women were coerced into sexual intercourse.

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6 Ibid.
Fikree, et.al, (2005)\(^9\) conducted a study to know the attitude of Pakistani men toward domestic violence in Karachi in the year 1996. A total of 183 men volunteered out of which 176 men (\(\geq 18\) years), who had been married for at least one year and had lived with their wives were eligible and successfully interviewed. The study reveals that nearly all men (94.9 percent) perpetrated some type of verbal abuse, using abusive language being the most common (90 percent). The lifetime prevalence of physical abuse was 49.4 percent; slapping, hitting or punching was most often reported (47.7 percent). Among the respondents 45 reported physical injuries that their wives had sustained resulting to physical abuse; bruises (23.9 percent), and fractures (8 percent). Almost half of the men thought that they had a right to exercise violence against their wives. In another study conducted in Pakistan by Kapadia, et.al, (2009)\(^10\) reveals that one in five women reported spousal sexual abuse at some point in their married life.

Nagae & Dancy, (2009)\(^11\) conducted a qualitative study on a sample of 11 Japanese adult females. The results revealed that all the women experienced physical and emotional abuse and 82 percent experienced that sexual abuse. Out of 11 women 7 women reported that they were emotionally, verbally and continually criticized and abused by their parent-in-law.

A WHO multi-site study conducted by the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) (2000)\(^12\) at seven sites, namely Bhopal, Chennai, Delhi, Lucknow, Nagpur, Thiruvanthanapuram and Vellore in India reveals that about 50

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percent of women reported experience of one form of violence at least once in their married life. The prevalence of overall physical violence was 49 percent in urban slum sites, 27 percent in urban non-slum sites and 44 percent in rural sites of different regions. The prevalence of psychological violence is as follows. It was in urban slum sites of Delhi-48 percent, Bhopal-29 percent, Nagpur-61 percent, Chennai-40 percent and overall 45 percent compared to urban non slum sites of Delhi-25 percent Lucknow-39 percent, Chennai-16 percent, Thiruvanthanapuram-62 percent and in Vellore- 31 percent.

The NFHS-2\textsuperscript{13} reported that 21 percent of ever-married women experienced violence at some time since the age of 15 while NFHS-3\textsuperscript{14} reveals that 33.5 percent of all women aged 15 to 49 have experienced so.

Prakash (2011)\textsuperscript{15}, conducted a study among women in two villages namely, Jherli and Raila, which falls under the district Jhunjhunuw of Rajasthan. A total of 150 women were selected from these villages and were interviewed. The data revealed that 14 percent (21) of women experienced violence. Most of the cases were from Harijan and the rest were from Meena caste. Not a single case of violence was found among Brahmins, Jats, Rajputs and Jangid. Violence was more prevalent among the age group 15-30. Out of 21 respondents experiencing violence 13 were beaten and slapped frequently by the husband and in-laws, 4 were only beaten, 3 were slapped and one had to tolerate abusive words. And 9.3 percent (14) of them got injured during such violence and only 1.3 percent (2) had received medical treatment and rest did not get any due to the fear of husband and in-laws as well as financial problems.


Among the abusive husbands 18 were pressurizing for sex against their will and 3 were tortured for dowry. Awareness regarding the Domestic Violence Act is very low only 15.3 percent were aware of this Act.

A study conducted by Visaria, (2000)\textsuperscript{16} in rural Gujarat reveals that 80 percent of women were verbally abused in the form of calling names, using foul language, blaming parents of the women for their inability to manage the house efficiently or not attending to the needs of children or other members of the family. Nearly 10 percent of women reported sexual assault in the form of either being hit in the vagina or being forced into sexual intercourse, 17.6 percent of women reported of not giving money for meeting their needs by their husbands and 63 percent of women were physically abused which caused injury to women ranging from swelling, bleeding, pain or stiffness.

A study conducted by Mahajan, (1990)\textsuperscript{17} among women and men in Jullundhur district, Punjab in North India reported that about 75 percent of Scheduled Caste women were beaten frequently by their husbands, and likewise about 75 percent men reported beating their wives out of which 22 percent belonged to higher caste.

A study conducted by Jejeebhoy, (1998)\textsuperscript{18} in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu reveals that 42-48 percent of women in Uttar Pradesh and 36-38 percent women in Tamil Nadu were beaten up by their husbands.

According to the National Family Health Survey-III\textsuperscript{19}, covering the period 2005-2006 for the entire country interviewed 1.25 lakh women and has come out with some shocking findings. Around 40 percent married women undergo abuse at home;

\textsuperscript{18} Supra 1 (a).
\textsuperscript{19} Supra 14
slapping is the most common act of violence by husbands; 54 percent women and 51 percent men approve wife beating by husband.

The annual publication of the National Crime Records Bureau "Crime in India 2012"\textsuperscript{20} is an important report which provides extremely useful statistics on crime in the country. A total of 2,44,270 incidents of crime against women (both under IPC and SLL) were reported in the country during the year 2012 as compared to 2,28,650 in the year 2011 recording an increase of 6.4 percent during the year 2012. These crimes have continuously increased during 2008 - 2012 with 1,95,856 cases in the year 2008, 2,03,804 cases in 2009 and 2,13,585 cases in 2010 and 2,28,650 cases in 2011 and 2,44,270 cases in the year 2012. West Bengal with 7.5 percent share of country's female population has accounted for nearly 12.7 percent of total crimes against women by reporting 30,942 cases during the year 2012. Andhra Pradesh, having nearly 7.3 percent of the country’s female population, has reported for 11.5 percent of total crimes against women in the country with 28,171 cases in the year 2012.

\textsuperscript{20} Crime in India 2012, National Crime Record Bureau, New Delhi.
Figure: 3.1 Crime against Women (percentage distribution during 2012)

Source: NCRB 2012.
Table No- 3.1
Crime head-wise incidents of crime against women during 2008 - 2012 and Percentage variation in 2012 over 2011

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Rape (Sec. 376 IPC)</td>
<td>21,467</td>
<td>21,397</td>
<td>22,172</td>
<td>24,206</td>
<td>24,923</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Kidnapping &amp; abduction (Sec. 363 to 373 IPC)</td>
<td>22,939</td>
<td>25,741</td>
<td>29,795</td>
<td>35,565</td>
<td>38,262</td>
<td>7.6</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Dowry death (Sec. 302 / 304 IPC)</td>
<td>8,172</td>
<td>8,383</td>
<td>8,391</td>
<td>8,618</td>
<td>8,233</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Cruelty by husband and relatives (Sec. 498-A IPC)</td>
<td>81,344</td>
<td>89,546</td>
<td>94,041</td>
<td>99,135</td>
<td>106,527</td>
<td>7.5</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty (Sec. 354 IPC)</td>
<td>40,413</td>
<td>38,711</td>
<td>40,613</td>
<td>42,968</td>
<td>45,351</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Insult to the modesty of women (Sec. 309 IPC)</td>
<td>12,214</td>
<td>11,009</td>
<td>9,961</td>
<td>8,570</td>
<td>9,173</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Importation of girl from foreign country (Sec. 366-B IPC)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>-26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Total IPC crime against Women</td>
<td>186,616</td>
<td>194,835</td>
<td>205,009</td>
<td>219,142</td>
<td>232,528</td>
<td>6.1</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Commission of Sati Prevention Act,1987</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956</td>
<td>2,659</td>
<td>2,474</td>
<td>2,499</td>
<td>2,435</td>
<td>2,563</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986</td>
<td>1,025</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>895</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>-68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961</td>
<td>5,555</td>
<td>5,650</td>
<td>5,182</td>
<td>6,619</td>
<td>9,038</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Total SLL crime against Women</td>
<td>9,240</td>
<td>8,969</td>
<td>8,576</td>
<td>9,508</td>
<td>11,742</td>
<td>23.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total(A+B)</td>
<td></td>
<td>195,856</td>
<td>203,804</td>
<td>213,585</td>
<td>228,650</td>
<td>244,270</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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Source: NCRB 2012.

Annual Report on “Crime in India”\textsuperscript{21} shows an increasing trend in the cases registered on crime against women in India. The crime against women during the year 2012 has increased by 6.8 percent and by 24.7 percent over the years 2011 and 2008. The cases of dowry deaths have decreased by 4.5 percent during the year 2012 over the previous year (8,618 cases) whereas the cases of torture/cruelty by husband or his relatives have increased by 7.5 percent in the country. The cases under the Dowry Prohibition Act have increased by 36.5 percent during the year 2012 as compared to the previous year (6,619 cases). Cases of harassment related to dowry is often not

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
reported to the authorities due to fear that it may lead to further harassment for the women. However the facts given by NCRB are not very reliable. It still gives a glimpse of the terrible conditions of women in our Indian households and the level of domestic violence they face. The records suggest that the contribution of crimes that represent domestic violence in India is on the increase and show that dowry remains one of the major causes of violence against Indian women.

3.2 REASONS FOR CONTINUING AND QUITTING THE RELATIONSHIP

Despite frequent and severe violence, a considerable percentage of abused women choose to remain in such relationship due to different reasons. Society plays a key role in subjugating women to stay in such abusive relationships irrespective of the degree of abuse. Women are taught very early to maintain their marriage. A proverb in Maharashtra says, “Dear daughter, go to your husband’s house on foot, but come out only in a funeral procession (after death)”.

Walker presented the concept of Battered Woman Syndrome. She theorized that victims of spousal abuse gradually become immobilized by the fear and believe they have no other options. As a result, these women stay in the abusive relationships, coping in a best way they can. Women who fail to leave abusive partners take up self-blame for not maintaining such relationship and she considers herself wrong more often than they blame their partners. It is thought that this self-blame leads to low self-esteem, depression, and feelings of helplessness, which in turn traps women in such relationships. Lack of access to economic resources as, women who are full

time housewives and have no option of earning income has to depend on their partner and fail to leave them. Unemployed women likewise were found to be more unwilling to leave than employed women. Lack of support from the natal family and alternative place to stay is one of the major reasons for women to stay with the abusive partner. Many women tolerate abuse for the sake of their children because they believe an abusive father is better than none. They also feel that having a father in the house will provide security to them and their children. Gelles, (1976) in his study found that longer a woman had been in an abusive relationship (i.e. the more committed), the less likely she leave that relationship. Miller, (1992) reveals that most of the women accept and even rationalize domestic violence for the sake of preserving the family honour.

Nagae & Dancy, (2009) found that women identify cultural and legal factors that prevent them from leaving the relationship. Women have the belief that men are dominant, wives and everything they possess belong to the husband. Nine of the women reported that due to no support from the families for leaving that abusive relationship they have to stay and 73 percent women stayed because of their children’s need for their father. Whereas when her husband abuses the children, their safety became the primary reason for leaving the intimate partner violence relationship. The legal system also encourages wives to stay in intimate partner violence relationship and police also considered intimate partner violence to be a personal matter. In addition, women reported that lawyers were not helpful to find a viable alternative to remaining in intimate partner violence relationship.

26 Ibid.
28 Supra 11.
Emotional Reasons for Staying

- belief that the abusive partner will change because of his remorse and promises to stop battering
- fear of the abuser who threatens to kill the victim if abuse is reported to anyone
- lack of emotional support
- guilt over the failure of the relationship
- attachment to the partner
- fear of making major life changes
- feeling responsible for the abuse
- feeling helpless, hopeless and trapped
- belief that she is the only one who can help the abuser with his problems

Situational Reasons for Staying

- economic dependence on the abuser
- fear of physical harm to self or children
- fear of emotional damage to the children over the loss of a parent, even if that parent is abusive
- fear of losing custody of the children because the abuser threatens to take the children if victim tries to leave
- lack of job skills
- social isolation and lack of support because abuser is often the victim’s only support system
- lack of information regarding
- belief that law enforcement will not take her seriously
- lack of alternative housing
- cultural or religious constraints
3.3 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The highly patriarchal society dominated by males, low social status of women, traditional gender role, socialization of girls and boys, oppressive fundamental religious beliefs that devalue women, contributes to the existing prevalence rates of domestic violence. The feminist perspective considers male domination as a key element of violence against wives. The family is also viewed as an area where violent behaviour is learned and transmitted across generation.

The most often said cause of beating is disobedience on the part of women to husband’s order, drunkenness on the part of husbands, failure to bring dowry, and asking money. Martin et.al, (1999) found positive associations between wife abuse and stress-related factors, including the husband being young when he first lived with his wife, the couple living in poverty, the husband having a low educational level, and the couple having multiple children. Visaria, (2000) in his study found poverty was reported to be a major reason for violence among backward and scheduled castes but not among the high caste or Muslim households. Women from the scheduled and lower castes reported much higher incidence of physical abuse than other respondents.

Sriram and Bakshi, (1988) in their study found that the main causes of violence against married women were dowry demands, extramarital affairs and bigamy, alcohol and gambling. Subdra, (1999) in his study in Chennai found that

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31 Supra 1 (a) & 8.
33 Supra 16.
35 Ibid.
suspicions of unfaithfulness, alcoholism, dowry and instigation by the in-laws were
the main causes of violence in most of the cases.

Rao, (1998)\textsuperscript{36} in his study revealed that there was highest correlation between
wife beating and shortfall in dowry payments, higher expenditure on liquor. Most
severe cases occurred when husbands were in a drunken state, female sterilization,
and number of male children. In another study conducted in Kenya revealed that
alcohol, type of union, poverty, and a number of children were some of the factors
that influenced physical and sexual violence. Women with high school education and
employable were less likely to experience physical violence than less educated
women The most common reason was the failure to perform household duties up to
the expectations of their husband’s family\textsuperscript{37}.

Nagae & Dancy, (2009)\textsuperscript{38} found that alcohol and drug use tended to increase
the severity of physical violence, 36 percent women reported their husbands’
drinking and one reported her husband’s drug use as being associated with physical
battering. Communication between the spouses was characterized as unilateral, with
husbands initiating and dominating the conversation. Culture and patriarchal system
directly influence intimate partner violence in Japan. In Palestinian study Dhaher,
et.al, (2009)\textsuperscript{39} revealed that lower level of education, not being employed, having
more than one child, being married for less than 10 years, and making few household
decisions were related to women’s approval of wife beating.

\textsuperscript{37} Supra 2.
\textsuperscript{38} Supra 11.
\textsuperscript{39} Dhaher, E. A., Mikolajczyk, R. T., Maxwell, A. E., & Krämer, A. (2009), Attitudes Toward Wife
Beating among Palestinian Women of Reproductive Age from Three Cities in West Bank, \textit{Journal of Interpersonal Violence}.
Parkash, (2011)\textsuperscript{40} in his study found that the main causes of violence were joint family system as most of the cases, i.e. 13 out of 21 were reported to be staying in joint family system. Study further reveals that illiterate women are facing more violence from their husband in comparison to literate woman. Consumption of alcohol is the major cause of violence. There is a significant relationship between alcohol consumption of husbands and their violent behaviour. The study reveals that employment does not have a significant relationship with violence in the family. Women facing violence did not have knowledge about this Domestic Violence Act, fear of husband and in-laws, lack of economic independence, and fear of police and society did not allow them to raise their voice against injustice.

According to Fikree, et.al, (2005)\textsuperscript{41} the common cause for spousal argument includes issues related to children (71.6 percent), money (71 percent), wife attitude, i.e. not obeying/listening to husband’s wishes, being disrespectful to mother-in-law/father-in-law, going out to visit natal family or his friends without permission etc. Out of 176 respondent 55 percent were victim of physical violence during childhood, and 65 percent of the child observed their mother being beaten up. Socioeconomic and education status of husband and wife were found to be significantly associated with abusive behaviour. Men with low income were three times more likely to perpetrate physical abuse than those who were having a good income. Similarly, wives with no formal education were nearly five times more likely to get physical abuse than wives with some formal education.

\textsuperscript{40} Supra 15.
\textsuperscript{41} Supra 9.
Tokuc, et.al, (2009)\textsuperscript{42} findings conclude that patriarchal and traditional values, women’s lack of financial autonomy, and low socioeconomic status are the risk factors for physical domestic violence in Turkey.

The WHO Multi-centric study reveals that women identified lapses in fulfilling their responsibilities (cooking, attending to household, looking after children and in-laws) as key factors influencing the occurrence of violence. Seventeen percent reported their husbands had been sexually involved with other women and 14 percent reported that their husbands accused them of being “unfaithful.” Nearly, 12 percent of the women in the total sample; those living in urban non-slum and rural areas reported higher rates than women living in urban slums (14, 13, and 10 percent, respectively). Among the family members who most frequently harassed women because of dissatisfaction with dowry was the mother-in-law (cited by 81 percent of women reporting harassment), followed by husband (47 percent), sister-in-law (38 percent), father-in-law (27 percent) and brother-in-law (13 percent). According to the study Physical family violence against women is more prevalent among the lower socioeconomic classes and among women with lower levels of social support. Psychological family violence against women is not more prevalent among the middle and higher socioeconomic classes\textsuperscript{43}.

3.4 JUSTIFYING WIFE ABUSE

Indian society has high tolerance for domestic violence, and many people view violence as a women’s due. Feeling of inferiority is so internalized among Indian women that they feel they deserve to be beaten when they have done something wrong\textsuperscript{44}. Disputes over dowries, a wife’s sexual infidelities, her neglect of household duties, and her disobedience of her husband’s dictates are all considered legitimate.

\textsuperscript{42} Supra 4.
\textsuperscript{43} Supra 12.
\textsuperscript{44} Supra 16.
causes for wife-beating. It is only when the torture becomes unbearable, most women appeared willing to speak out otherwise they justify the violence. Women and girls of India have been socialized to be well-behaved and to be obedient to their husband - “pati to permashwar hai, bahu ghar ki lajja hai, maarta hai to kya huva, hai to mera aadmi koi dusra to nahi,” etc so they develop low self-esteem and consider that they deserve all these types of abuse.

Scholars and analysts have also said that economic vulnerability is a major reason for women’s acceptance of it in their daily lives. Jejeebhoy, (1998) in his study conducted in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh revealed that three in four women consider wife-beating a justifiable form of behaviour, so it is evident that violence against women is a widely accepted form of behaviour, viewed as a woman’s due and her husband’s right. NFHS-3 interestingly reveals that nearly the same proportion of women (54 percent) and men (51 percent) agreed that wife beating was justified in at least one of the situation.

A survey of 10,000 Indian women conducted by the Indian’s Health Ministry found that more than half of women interviewed considered violence to be a normal part of married life.

Fikree, et.al, (2005) in their study conducted in Karachi found that 46 percent of the men thought that they had a right to exercise violence against their wives. Men perceive marital abuse being purely domestic, a private problem, which should be resolved through help of close relative or friends rather than government mechanism.
In Edrine, Turkey 50 percent of women justified wife abuse if the women neglected her children, 40 percent justified if women spent money unnecessarily, and 25 percent justified if they yelled at their husband.  

A study conducted by Dhaher, et.al, (2009) on attitudes toward wife beating among Palestinian women of reproductive age, a total of 450 women were interviewed. Overall women perceived wife beating to be justified if a wife insulted her husband (59 percent), if she disobeyed her husband (49 percent), if she neglected her children (37 percent), if she goes out without telling her husband (25 percent), if she argues with her husband (11 percent), and if she burns the food (5 percent).

### 3.5 COPING WITH AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

Coping is considered as a multidimensional process and one which involves cognitive and behavioural efforts. Lazarus and Folkman, (1984) said there are variety of ways of coping, such as confrontive coping, seeking social support, avoidance, and problem-focused coping, researchers tend to dichotomize these coping strategies as active vs. passive, or emotion-focused vs. problem-focused, especially when they examine the impact of coping strategies on psychological health. He divided the coping strategies into two dimensions: emotion-focused coping, which “regulates stressful emotions,” and problem-focused coping, which “modifies the circumstances creating the harm, threat, or challenge”. Women cope with domestic violence in a variety of ways, such as redefining the problem/situation, seeking help from family, friends, and legal or social service organizations, and leaving the relationship temporarily or permanently. NFHS-3 reported that only one in four...

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50 Supra 4.  
51 Supra 38.  
54 Supra 14.
women (23.8 percent) sought help to end violence they experienced, whereas two out of three women neither sought help nor did they tell anyone about experiencing violence. The majority of women who experienced violence and sought help reported that they did so to get support from their natal family; 71 percent turned to their parents and other family members support. Miller, (1992)\textsuperscript{55} in his study revealed that support from natal home, age bearing sons, divorce or even suicide are some time suggested as viable options for women to escape from an abusive situation. Waldrop et.al, (2004)\textsuperscript{56} revealed that women appeared to use more avoidance strategies when they were still in abusive relationships and trying to cope with ongoing violence. However, the more severe and frequent the abuse becomes, the more likely battered women are to try to take active steps to leave the relationship. Some factors that might place constraints on these efforts are the amount of commitment to preserving the relationship and the resources available to help the woman cope with the abuse in an active and direct manner.

Nagae & Dancy, (2009)\textsuperscript{57} in their study reported that 82 percent of women avoided everything that would provoke them, such as quarreling, disobeying, making demands, performing chores imperfectly, going out and socializing with their family or friends, and socializing with male friends and colleagues. These women blamed themselves and felt guilty of all these.

3.6 HELP SEEKING BEHAVIOUR

Women’s opinion of their circumstances is a major reason influencing their help seeking. Battered women seek help from different sources to get and mobilize the necessary resources. Women have a large number of basic and security related

\textsuperscript{55} Supra 27
\textsuperscript{57} Supra 11.
needs. Identification of these needs is directly related to the form of help they seek. There are severe social sanctions on women for even acknowledging that violence takes place in the house; so women do not generally come forward to report the violence. Barriers to seeking help from statutory agencies identified by victims in a Sheffield community study, included lack of self-confidence, feeling sorry for the abuser, lack of trust in the ability of law enforcement and social care services to maintain confidentiality or recognize the abusers dangerousness, or prevent his violence, and the risk of arrest escalating the violence\textsuperscript{58}. A view of domestic violence as a personal problem, often reinforced by the community and perpetrator denial, as well as fear of retaliation and social ostracisation, deters many women from confiding in others and seeking help\textsuperscript{59}. Victim help-seeking is often an indicator of a serious situation\textsuperscript{60}.

Among the participants in Tokuc, et.al, (2009)\textsuperscript{61} study conducted in Edirne, 39.1 percent (113) who did not know where they could seek help when they faced domestic violence, this rate was 43.7 percent (45) who were assaulted physically at home. Of the physically assaulted women, 46.6 percent reported they did not go to the police when they were exposed to violence and only 11.7 percent of them applied to a health care centre after being exposed to physical violence.

\textsuperscript{58} Nicholson, P; O’Keeffe, C; Brenard, L; Powell, J; & Storey, M. (2003). An Investigation into Women’s Help-Seeking on Behalf of their Children and Themselves, and the Perceptions of Health and Social Care Professionals of the Impact of Domestic Abuse on Women and Children’s Mental and Physical Health and Behaviours. Sheffield School of Health and Related Resources. www.shef.ac.uk/research


\textsuperscript{61} Supra 4.
In Japan, according to Nagae & Dancy, (2009) seeking help was extremely difficult due to cultural beliefs that support male dominance, discouraged the wife from talking about intimate partner violence because of her duty and obligation not to embarrass her husband. In addition, seeking help from her own family may not be helpful because her family generally held the cultural belief that it is the wife’s behaviour that leads to intimate partner violence. Seeking help from in-laws may also be useless because often in-laws also abuse wives.

Fanslow, et.al, (2010) conducted a study on help seeking behaviours and reasons for help seeking reported by a representative sample of women victims of intimate partner violence in New Zealand. The author revealed that 75 percent of the respondents reported that they had told someone about the violence, indicating that it is not necessarily a “secret and private” problem. However, more than 40 percent of women indicated that no one had helped them. Informal sources of support (family and friends) were most frequently told about the violence, but not all provided helpful responses. Fewer women sought the help of formal sources such as police, health care providers, and not all provided helpful responses. Women’s reasons for seeking help and for leaving an abusive relationship were similar and included “could not endure more,” being badly injured, fear or threat of death, and concern for children.

3.7 SUMMARY

Review of literature is a vital part of any research. It helps the researcher to know the areas where earlier studies had focused on and certain aspects untouched by them. By reviewing current literature, it was found that there is a shortage of research or no research done on victims of domestic violence in Himachal Pradesh. By considering this factor researcher decided that this research would be a unique and necessary area to examine.

62 Supra 11.