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Where is "Intersectionality"?

A multiple case study on how development organization integrate intersectionality in their approach to reduce violence against women

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Abstract

Nepal has long been recognized as a multi-cultural country with a diverse geographical area. Despite its natural beauty, Nepal is plagued by a number of social issues. Violence against women has always been an issue, exacerbated by patriarchal cultures. Several development organisations are trying to alleviate the situation. The aim of this research is to decide how development organisations integrate intersectionality into their projects addressing violence against women. The study also looked at how development organisations view intersectionality and the challenges to incorporate it. In this context, intersectionality is used as a category of practice that has been further developed as a theoretical concept. Participation as the New Tyranny was also included as a theoretical concept to comprehend the challenges of an intersectional approach to integration. A case study of ActionAid International Nepal and Saathi Nepal was conducted as part of the research, using virtual interviews and text analysis as methods. The findings indicate that when planning programmes, intersectionality is noticed; however, it is lost during the implementation process in search of inclusion and participation.

Key Words: Development Organizations; Intersectionality; Intervention Projects; Participation; Violence Against Women.

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Acknowledgement

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Abbreviation

AAIN	ActionAid International Nepal
CBO	Community Based Organization
COM-B	Capacity, Opportunity, Motivation of Behaviour
COVID-19	Corona Virus – 19
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organizations
MAM	Mahila Adhikar Manch
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOHP	Ministry of Health and Population
NDHS	National Demographic and Health Survey
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

Introduction

Background

According to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Gender-based Violence (GBV) refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender which is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power and harmful norms. GBV is considered a human rights violation that can severely affect health and cause other various issues of protection. Nevertheless, before we move into the critical issue of "Gender-based Violence", we must understand what it is. Often gender-based violence has been used in place of domestic violence and similarly has been used for violence against women as well. These concepts are used to convey similar information. However, there is an important distinction between them and their implications for policymakers, care providers and survivors (Kirkegaard, Friends of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2020). The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defines violence against women as, "Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life" (Terry, 2007, pg.14). "Violence against Women and Girls" (VAWG) is one of the world's most common human rights abuses (UNFPA, n.d.). It has little respect for social, economic, or national boundaries. One in every three women in the world will be physically or sexually assaulted at some stage in her life (UNFPA, n.d.).

This thesis is focused more on women and since gender-based violence is a more inclusive term that includes violence against men and violence experienced by gender non-conforming people; we focus more on "Violence against Women and Girls". Kirkegaard (2020) adds that violence against women is more specific than gender-based violence in that it only applies to people who identify or present as

women. Women experience the vast majority of gender-based violence, to the extent where gender-based violence and violence against women overlaps each other.

Nepal, a beautiful country resembling a colourful tapestry, has 30 million inhabitants living on 147,181 square kilometres of land. The country has 126 ethnic groups and castes, 213 spoken languages, and follows Hinduism as their primary religion, with 81.3 per cent adhering to it (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nepal (MoFA), n.d.). Nepalese cultures are largely influenced by Hindu beliefs that keep women low-profile at home and submissive in society (Paudel, 2007). Nonetheless, the overall situation of women in Nepali communities has been gradually changing over the last several decades. The contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) among women rose from 3% in 1976 to 39% in 2001, while total fertility fell from 6.2% in 1976 to 4.1% in 2001 (Department of Health Services, 2001). Literacy rates rose from 12% in 1981 to 43% in 2001 (Nepal – National Population Census, 2001). Although there have been some significant changes regarding the empowerment of women in Nepal, it has been very minimal. According to Paudel (2007), men subordinate women in all aspects of their lives, including decision-making. GBV perpetrated against women in the home has a negative impact on their health and development. Wife beating is a common occurrence. Women are vulnerable to violence because of their low socio-economic and educational status. The practice of wife-beating, combined with the armed conflict between security personnel and Maoists since 1996, has exacerbated the country's situation for women and girls.

Violence against women is a widespread concern in Nepal. Legal subordination, economic dependence, cultural obligations, and the social status of women (Poudel, 2011) create and enhance male supremacy and female subservience to such a degree that neither aggression nor failure to complain about it is uncommon. Women do not have an independent identity by law; men inherit and manage much of the land, with the concomitant obligation to help parents, wives, and children. Women's dependency is strengthened by law, religion, and cultural norms. Also, women's

cultural duty to maintain family honour, poverty alleviation, lack of employment give rise to the opportunities for violence inherent in the dependency relationship.

Girls and women in Nepal are subject to several types of violence, many of which are faced internationally by women, and others that are more frequently seen in Nepal than elsewhere. This includes punishment for witchcraft (Boxi). Gender-based violence is occurring in ways that are interlinked with underlying social, economic, cultural, religious and gender norms, and may have recently been intensified by armed conflict (Villellas Arino, 2008). For example, in the Badi community in the Midwest Terai district, many women are forced into commercial sex work by social and economic factors, with 30-40 per cent reported being younger than 15 years of age. Dalit women face various discrimination, including the possibility of being accused of witchcraft (Boxi). Chhaupadi is a social custom for Hindu women in the western part of Nepal that forbids them from taking part in normal family activities during menstruation because they are considered impure. Women are kept out of the house and must live in a barn. This lasts ten to eleven days when a teenage girl has her first period, and four to seven days for each of the following days.

The caste system in Nepal also reinforces violence against women belonging to the lower caste groups. According to Sinha (1967, pg.94), "Caste is a hierarchy of endogamous groups which is organized in a characteristic hereditary division of labour". In the caste system hierarchy, Brahmans hold the highest rank, followed by Kshatriyas on the second rank, and Vaishya on the third rank and the lowest rank is held by the Sudras or also known as Dalits, who are considered as untouchables (Subedi, 2010). Women belonging to lower castes, and particularly Dalit women, are one of the most vulnerable groups because of the intersection of their caste and gender. They are extremely susceptible to sexual violence and exploitation in Nepal (Joshi and Kharel, 2008).

The 2011 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) found that more than one in five women aged 15-49 years (22 %) reported having witnessed physical abuse at some point after age 15.9 % have been physically abused in the last year, either daily (2%) or occasionally (7%). Older, married, rural and Terai women were more likely to experience physical abuse than other women's groups (NDHS, 2012). Besides, 12% of women have witnessed sexual harassment. The survey also asked men in the population and found that 21 per cent of male respondents thought that a husband could be justified in beating his wife.

The prevalence of violence against women in Nepal has led many development organizations, both International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), to work towards eradicating this social malpractice. UNWomen, ActionAid International Nepal and KIOS Foundation are some of the international organizations; whereas Saathi Nepal, Maiti Nepal and ABC Nepal are some national organizations to name a few. For this paper, I will be focusing on two organization, one NGO and one INGO. The primary reason for choosing one from each is to gain a different insight from a national and international organization working in the same field. Although these organizations have been changing scenarios of women in the societies of Nepal, the victims of violence against women and girls can only be seen from the lens of gender from the outside. Since Nepal is a country consisting of several castes/ethnic groups, cultural variations, regional differences, it is important to consider these aspects of societies when working towards reducing and eliminating violence against women and girls.

Aim

There is a much-needed investigation regarding the relationship of gender and intersectionality within gender-based violence, more exclusively violence against women as mentioned in the background section of the paper. Given the wide range of cultural contexts found around the world, violence against women is a complicated problem. To address this issue, no single strategy could be implemented in all

countries. Strategies must emerge from a thorough understanding of the broad interplay between the variables responsible for predictor or protective factors of violence against women (individual, family background, and community characteristics). Many national and international development organizations in Nepal have been working tremendously to eradicate this social issue. Hence, the paper aims to understand, given the complexity of the issue, whether these organizations are taking intersectional aspects such as caste, ethnicity, and class into account in their projects while approaching violence against women. Along with this, the paper also tries to understand the challenges these organizations face, either to integrate intersectionality or while integrating intersectionality, into their programs and projects regarding violence against women.

Research Question

The general research question and objective research questions will help achieve the aforementioned aim of the thesis.

General research question:

"How does development organizations in Nepal integrate intersectionality in their approach to reduce violence against women?

Intersectionality in the general question refers to, but not limited to, caste, ethnicity, and class. Since Nepal is a multi-cultural country with people belonging to the various background, it is important to look into caste, ethnicity, and class (including the area of residence, i.e., urban, or rural and literacy). Hence, the selection of these three aspects in various research has shown to be major factors of violence against women in Nepal. The general research question can be broken down into two objective research questions which will highlight how these organizations perceive intersectionality and the challenges that come with it.

Objective research questions:

"How do development organizations in Nepal conceive intersectionality as a category of practice while approaching and integrating them in projects regarding violence against women?"

"What are the challenges in integrating an intersectional approach in projects implemented by development organizations regarding violence against women?"

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis comprises six sections in which the first section aims to set the scene by providing an overview of the issue this thesis aims to study. An emphasis on Gender-based Violence, specifically, Violence Against Women and Girls in the context of Nepal is given in this section. The aim of the research is made clear within the segment along with the research questions. The first section is followed by the literature review discussing different research conducted regarding approaches to violence against women and lack of intersectionality, integration of intersectional approach, the context of violence against women in Nepal and feminist intersectional approach. The literature review is followed by the theoretical framework of the study which is going to be "Intersectionality as a Category of Practice" and "Participation as the new Tyranny". This section would introduce these theories, show how these theories had been used in the past and describe how they will be used in this paper. The methodology of the study will be reflected in the next section which will highlight how the data for the study will be collected. The ontological and epistemological stance of the research, sampling strategy, limitations and ethical considerations, and the positionality of the research will also be explained in the section. This section also focuses on different development organizations' approaches to combating violence against women Analysis of the collected data will be done under the Finding and Discussion section which will be followed by the last section of the research in which the thesis will be the conclusion.

Literature Review

This chapter aims to provide an overview of previous researches which will help the thesis to evaluate the relevant pieces of literature to identify themes, debates, and gaps regarding violence against women and inclusion of intersectionality by development organizations. The primary reason to review these existing pieces of literature is to further emphasize the purpose of this study, as well as to present more fully the possible gaps and issues found in previous researches. This section is divided into five subparts. Firstly, researches that highlight the limitations of interventions and approaches to violence against women that are not intersectional will be evaluated. This subpart will help us further understand the essentiality of intersectionality while dealing with complex issues such as violence against women. Secondly, kinds of literature that emphasize why it is difficult to integrate an intersectional approach will be analyzed. Instead of only stressing why an intersectional approach is needed, this section will help us identify limitation and difficulties in integrating the approach itself. The third sub-section focuses on violence against women in Nepal. This will help us understand the scenario of women facing violence by giving more context to the complex cultural setting of Nepal. The fourth sub-part reveals the factors that contribute to violence against women in Nepal making it more vivid to us that there are more layers and intersections to violence against women. Lastly, the section will be concluded by explaining intersectionality and gender-based violence.

Intervention for Violence Against Women and Lack of Intersectionality

The efforts of the women's movement and feminist activists to advocate for violence against women and girls has become an area of focus for many national, regional, and international platforms and public debates as well (Michau, et al., 2015). According to Ellsberg et al. (2015), many studies have been conducted over the last 20 years to examining the nature of violence against women and girls, as well as the root causes and risk factors associated with violence perpetration and victimization. Ellsberg et al. (2015), states that there has also been a significant increase in the number

and scope of programs in a variety of environments, including health care, legal systems, and social movements to combat violence against women and girls around the world.

The current efforts for violence against women do not focus only as a response to the outcomes of violence but on the area of prevention of such violence as well. Historically, much intervention focus was on dealing with the consequences of violence against women, however now; there has been a shift towards more prevention programmes (Michau, et al., 2015). After many years of committed efforts, there has been increasing knowledge about various forms of violence against women and effective prevention and response needed to address such forms of violence. Although efforts to address violence against women and girls have increased in various forms, and priority has been given to prevention efforts, there is limited evidence present on what kind of interventions are effective to combat violence against women on different levels (Temmerman, 2015).

The prevention programming has seen a large number of prevention efforts and initiatives. The prevention programmes have consisted of small to large-scale interventions such as workshops and public awareness campaigns address violence against women and girls (Michau, et al., 2015). The first generation of initiatives primarily focused on providing support services to victims of violence, intending to reduce perpetrator impunity and increase the effectiveness of the justice system. The second wave of programming, which has mostly been implemented in low- and middle-income countries, has placed a greater emphasis on violence prevention (Ellsberg et al., 2015). Few women's groups found that intervention is important to challenge individual attitudes and community norms that help in perpetuating violence against women and girls (Michau, et al., 2015). These programs grew organically, were often related to HIV prevention initiatives, and used a variety of approaches. These include large-scale campaigns, sophisticated education-entertainment or edutainment programs, skills development and economic empowerment programming, community

mobilization, and participatory group education efforts aimed at changing attitudes and norms that support violence against women and girls, empowering women, and girls economically and socially, and promoting non-violent, genocide-free societies (Ellsberg et al., 2015).

Regarding more response related programmes, Women-centred programs in high-income countries use a variety of methods, including psychosocial counselling, advocacy and counselling, and home visits, to provide women with services and support to minimize their potential risk of abuse and enhance their physical and psychological health and well-being. The majority of the interventions occur in health-care settings such as family planning or antenatal care, where women with a history of intimate partner abuse are detected by routine inquiry. Basic psychosocial care provided by health professionals typically consists of risk evaluation, safety planning, information about rights and appropriate resources, and referral to specialist services. There is evidence that some health-sector initiatives, such as depression reduction, may have some beneficial effects for women and their children (Ellsberg et al., 2015).

Many interventions are done for the perpetrators as well as school-based interventions. These interventions do give signs of an intersectional approach; however, the results produced have not been progressive. Examples of an intervention done in high-income countries that have implemented court-mandated programs to reduce recidivism in male perpetrators have been given which shows that 2 out of 18 studies reveals significant positive results. Similarly, the majority of preventive programs for intimate relationship abuse and non-partner sexual harassment are community educational activities delivered in schools. In the United States, only two of 17 rigorously evaluated school-based programs to minimize non-partner sexual attacks yielded statistically significant positive outcomes (Ellsberg et al., 2015). However, these types of common prevention approaches have been concerned with parallel issues. Many of the prevention programmes usually deal with awareness-raising campaigns and programs, however, although such campaigns are helpful to

bring attention to the issues, it is also essential to be designed in a way that complies with the changes in norms, attitudes and behaviours which contribute to tolerating violence against women (Michau, et al., 2015).

Often intervention programmes focus less on understanding violence against women and girls and on determining the necessary support and skills required to bring impactful and positive changes. They focus directly on the action phase of the work which could limit the outcome of the programme (Michau, et al., 2015). According to Temmerman (2015), there needs to be further enhanced programme evaluations for a proper assessment of promising and effective practices. This will help in identifying and developing new approaches for more implementations of effective interventions for violence against women and girls (Temmerman, 2015). Many programmes also often work with a single population group or sector which leaves out important connections with other groups and their issues. Community-level work needs to be promoted rather than individual-level changes since changes at an individual level has seen very fewer positive results. A community-level work helps to bring changes that are broader and impactful at a wider population level (Michau, et al., 2015).

Integration of Intersectional Approach

Gender-based violence is the most universal and multifaceted phenomenon which is shaped by various factors at multiple levels. An emerging body of scholarly work is giving voice to battered women from a wide range of formerly excluded and ignored communities (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). The feminist movement addressed gender-based violence, however, their traditional approach has mostly focused on highlighting the common experiences of women who have faced gender-based violence to eliminate abuse. (Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). However, this approach has increasingly been questioned by scholars and activists who recognize the need to give voice to women marginalized by the largely white, middle-class feminist movement (Richie, 2000; Ristock, 2002; Russo, 2002). Kanuha (1996) provides some criticisms on the generalizations about victims of gender-based violence. According to Kanuha

(1996), the perception of a common effect of domestic violence on everyone regardless of their race, class, nationality, religion, and various other factors is not an effective approach to ensure the inclusion of diverse perspectives. This suggestion of domestic violence being faced equally by everyone undermines the particular experiences of various abuse victims and also affects the way the prevalence and impact of violence against particular victims are analysed.

Increasingly, domestic violence scholars are questioning traditional methods of defining and measuring domestic violence (Kanuha, 1996). Since different cultures define violence in many different ways, it is difficult to measure the pervasiveness of gender-based violence in an adequate manner (Yoshihama, 1999). Yoshihama (1999) suggests that there should be alternative means of measuring domestic violence. She argues that the traditional or mainstream measures to address violence against women have many limitations because there is a lack of socio-cultural context present within it. What is considered domestic violence depends on the specific meaning to every different woman and what they consider as their partner's actions and is shaped by their perspective and socio-cultural background. This community-based analysis of women of Japanese descent elucidates multiple, interconnected ways in which socio-cultural factors affect their responses to their partners' abuse while highlighting tensions between cultural constraints and benefits. As women are forced to suffer abuse, the restrictions affect their physical and emotional well-being. Disobeying cultural prohibitions has a cost, as it deprives a woman of her cultural identity as well as her support system. Data in Yoshihama's (2000) study indicates that their Japanese background had influenced how they had dealt with their partners' violence (pg. 221). This shows how cultural background should be understood to tackle issues such as violence against women.

Similarly, Hoogte and Kingma (2004) in their article, "*Promoting cultural diversity and the rights of women*", states that work with women from indigenous groups, giving the example of different organizations work in Latin America, must

consider both their identity as women and their identity as indigenous people, as well as the interplay between these identities. As per their study, indigenous women do not condemn their faith, but rather wish to alter those customs in order to achieve justice. The paper gives examples of works done by two Dutch development organisations, Novib and Hivos, who organised a workshop with local experts to explore how to help indigenous women. Two major quandaries were identified: the conflict between collective and individual rights, and the need to link and resolve social and economic exclusion with cultural discrimination. Hoogte and Kingma (2004) suggest that there is a need for holistic solutions like changing power dynamics is a long-term process that must also address gender-based violence and NGOs must adapt their approach to their target audiences and consider and work in the long term. Given the current focus on short-term, observable outcomes, this is a challenge.

Understanding and sensitivity to intersecting identities, as well as the ability to analyse them, are essential for designing and executing development projects in collaboration with communities and individuals (Grünenfelder and Schurr, 2015). "*Intersectionality – A challenge for research and practice?*" (ibid, pg. 783) emphasises the value of challenging identity-based development arguments from an intersectional viewpoint, which exposes inter and intra-categorical gaps within target groups. The article focuses on not only intersectionality among the beneficiaries but between researchers and development practitioners and beneficiaries as well. The article argues that if the concept of intersectionality is wrongly employed in development practices, categorical differences such as gender, caste and disability may be depoliticized (pg. 783).

Violence against Women in Nepal

According to UNICEF, violence against women in South Asia exists in six kinds, most often in sexual abuse, incest, and rape within the household by family members and others, forced prostitution by the family members, neglect by family

members, feticide and infanticide, a tradition of dowry and abuse by spouse and the laws.

Historically, in Nepali society, Violence against women and girls has been in existence yet still seen as an inevitable social phenomenon. However, since the early 2000s, there has been an increment in a public discussion to address violence against women in Nepal (Joshi and Kharel, 2008). According to a study conducted by Deuba (1997), 93% of women and girls were victims of violence which caused them mental and emotional torture, 82% were victims of being beaten, 30% were victims of rape and 28% were forced into prostitution.

According to the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey of 2011, at least one-third of women face different forms of violence every year (Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP), 2011). Various factors such as social, cultural, religious, and economic, in Nepal reinforce male dominance which leads to the persistence of systematic discrimination and violence against women which severely hinders the lives of women. The patriarchal norms in Nepali society enforce male superiority causing women to struggle for equal space in the society (Joshi and Kharel, 2008). Family factors including an alcoholic or an illiterate husband also contribute to violence against women. The study makes a clear distinction among different classes that exist in the society as although violence among women is not limited to economic status, it was observed that women belonging to lower class and middle-class society were a victim of violence than their upper counterpart due to poverty-related stress. Finally, social issues such as child marriages are highlighted as a factor. Since early marriages hinder opportunities for education and employment, it aggravates violence against women. Although child marriages are unlikely in all culture, we can narrow it down to specific ethnic groups that still practice it (Atteraya et al., 2015). In a study done in the Banke district of Nepal, it was found that the majority of women had been verbally abused causing them mental torture; many women also faced harassments by their spouse and in-laws for giving birth to daughters. However, these cases were never

reported because of the prestige of the family, fear of spouse and in-laws, fear of socio-cultural norms, traditions and values, fear of further violence by the husband and in-laws, the uncertainty of justice and lack of support (Joshi and Kharel, 2008). Like Atteraya et al. (2015), we can also explore "*Women's Status and Violence against Young Married Women in Rural Nepal*", an article by Lamichhane et al. (2011), which shows that deprivation of education for women and their lack of power in terms of decision making in household results in violence against women. Less serious forms of physical or sexual violence from husbands are commonly tolerated in Nepal. Even more, Illiterate women were also more likely to accept violence against women victimisation.

Nepal is a male-dominated patriarchal society that has become a cultural norm over the years. Early marriages, dowry-related common cultural practices, and cultural norms that require women's submissive role in the family are some features of the patriarchal society in Nepal (Atteraya et al., 2015). Understanding these features, many researchers have tried to find out what factors contribute to violence against women and girls.

Violence towards women is a disturbingly prevalent phenomenon that is profoundly entrenched in the country's mindset and patriarchal attitudes. Patriarchal social norms, as well as the prevalence of harmful patriarchal practises, the normalisation of abuse, and the social stigma associated with disclosing violence, continue to pervade society at all levels, excessively impacting women, and girls, as well as those from marginalised communities, who face intersecting and multiple types of discrimination (OHCHR, 2019). Due to socio-cultural norms and practices in the Nepali society, very little interference is there in violence against women within a household. Often the perpetrator receives impunity of legal, judicial, and cultural forms. And the violence continues to go on. The most common reasons for the enforcement of violence of women are inadequate education gender inequality, lack of power and involvement in decision making, different cultural practices, being a woman

and belonging to a disadvantaged group, inefficient and discriminatory laws and policies and economic marginalization (Sharma, 2007).

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Nepal has undergone dramatic constitutional reform over the last 20 years, including the abolition of its monarchy in 2008, the election of the country's first female President in 2015, and, more recently, the country's transformation to a federal democratic State following 2017. The successful transformation brought many women legislators to be elected for political positions which included women from marginalized groups such as Dalit and also women from indigenous communities. Despite these encouraging developments, the country faces significant challenges in reducing violence against women and achieving gender equality in accordance with its current constitutional and international commitments (OHCHR, 2019).

Women are socioeconomically less strong and less independent in household decision making because of educational deprivation and a cultural context that requires women to play a submissive role. Because of their lower socioeconomic status, women are more likely to accept being victims of crime. Violence against women has a severe impact throughout the lifespan of women and affects their ability to exercise autonomy in terms of using services of reproductive health and they have little to no ability to protect themselves from reproductive tract infections and sexually transmitted diseases (Joshi and Kharel,2008).

In the context of Nepal, women living in the Terai region of Nepal and belonging to underprivileged castes and ethnic groups were more likely to be victims of violence against women (Atteraya et al., 2015). Women and girls who face intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, such as Dalit women, indigenous women, including Madhesi, Tharu, and Badi women, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender and intersex women, women from religious minorities, women with disabilities, women living in remote areas, widows, and women affected by leprosy, are disproportionately affected by violence towards women (OHCHR, 2019).

There are several strategic measures and policy briefs produced by the Government of Nepal concerning the issue of GBV and women's empowerment, as well as the gaps in these measures (UNDP, 2014). These government strategies include:

- Nepal's Five-Year National Strategy and Executive Plan to End Gender Violence (BS 2069/70- 2073/74).

- Nepal's National Plan of Action for "Year Against Gender-Based Violence, 2010."

- "A Study on Gender-Based Violence Conducted in Selected Rural Districts of Nepal."

NGO activities and initiatives include:

- Production of films to deconstruct patriarchy in South Asia.

- Country programs focused on the increasing violence against girls.

- Focused groups and discussions to promote gender-equitable behaviour amongst adolescents in high risks districts.

- Pilot programs to bring awareness to the social construction of masculinities and male gender norms.

According to the Prasai (2016), training is the most common and successful form of raising awareness used by development organisations regarding violence against women. Human rights education, child rights promotion, engagement projects, stakeholder meetings, sensitization, and celebrations were among the training activities carried out by NGOs. Some of the non-governmental organisations have offered shelters, short-term transit housing, psychosocial counselling, legal counselling, drop-in care, medical assistance, schooling, skill training, and seed capital for victims of violence against women. However, it appears that not all NGOs that operate shelters

provide services such as counselling, legal assistance, ability training, and reintegration as part of their shelter.

Finally, we probe "*Intimate Partner Violence Among General and Urban Poor Population in Kathmandu, Nepal*" by Oshiro et al. (2011). The study reveals that the prevalence of physical violence by the husband was 33.8% among the urban poor population compared with 19.9% in the general population. Lower economic status was predicted to be associated with violence in both populations, according to the multivariate analysis using structural equation modelling. Poverty is widely recognised as a risk factor for violence against women everywhere. In both populations, however, there was a greater association between violence and the husband's drinking or polygyny than between violence and poverty. According to a Nepalese study, the prevalence of alcohol dependency in rural villages was as high as 25.8% (Jhingan, Shyangwa, Sharma, Prasad, & Khandelwal, 2003). The study highlighted the urgent need for Nepal to develop an alcohol abuse policy. There was a substantial link found between violence and early marriage or a lower educational level of the husband. However, the association was only found in the general population. We may not have detected any significant association between early marriage and violence due to the small sample size of the urban poor population. However, the association between education and violence, education may have little, if any, association with violence among the urban poor population.

In research conducted by Lamichhane et al. (2011), it was seen that at an individual level, older women were more exposed to violence against women. Similarly, under individual-level factors, the research showed that compared to secondary and higher educated women, uneducated or primary educated women had an almost double prevalence of any form of violence against women. Also, a husband with higher education was less violent to their wives. At an empowerment level, seasonally employed women were notably victimized along with occasionally employed women. Women whose husbands chose to use contraception or visit friends

or relatives had lower proportions of any form of violence than women who decided on their own. Women who chose to spend their own or their husband's earnings were less likely to be victims of violence against women. Women who made joint decisions with their husbands about their healthcare or large household purchases were less likely to be exposed to violence against women. Women in Nepal who could refuse sex with their partner or ask their husband to use a condom experienced nearly half the victimisation of violence against women their peers who could not. Moreover, the final factors were based on family and social factors which showed that poorer women had almost two times more prevalence of encountering violence against women than rich women in Nepal. Women who had controlling husbands also were exposed to violence than their peers who had non-controlling husbands (Lamichhane et al., 2011). This shows how different factors come into play in perpetuating different forms of violence. To understand different factors and address the forms of violence accordingly, an intersectional approach is very important as intersectionality helps in understanding the conditions of society and how events or conditions are shaped by multiple overlapping factors. Intersectionality helps in understanding that a society is not shaped by a single axis of social division but rather a combination of multiple axes which influence each other (Collins & Bilge, 2016)

Violence against women impacts women in various forms limiting their capabilities to sustain a quality life. Promotion and creation of a gender-equal society is much need in Nepal and for that, preventive measures are of great importance. If violence in families and communities is reduced, the quality of life increases for all (Joshi and Kharel, 2008).

Many scholars have pointed out that some different variables and factors contribute to violence against women showing how complex the issue is which does not have a one module solution. This gives more emphasis on understanding the intersectionality to overcome it. These studies have helped but unravel that factors do not limit to gender only but in a multi-dimensional country like Nepal, we must take

into caste, ethnicity and class into account while comprehending the issue of violence against women.

Intersectionality and Gender-Based Violence

According to Bograd (1999), domestic violence is not a rigid phenomenon. Intersectionality helps in defining domestic violence by incorporating the experiences of everyone, the responses of different actors and the diverse representation of personal and social consequences and the solutions to address such violence. The social context we live in is shaped by the intersections of systems of power and oppression. The systems of power could be race, gender, caste, class, and the system of oppression could be caste stratification, class stratification, gender inequality, socio-cultural norms, and prejudice and many more. Focusing on only one dimension such as gender inequality cannot explain domestic violence, because it interacts with other various systems of power and oppression to create the situation of domestic violence.

An intersectional approach helps in providing ways to authenticate the experiences of marginalized women whose experiences are often forgotten in the mainstream dominant cultural discourse about violence against women. Many intersectional works of literature are increasing providing diverse experiences of women from different sexual orientations and racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds who have been victims of violence. According to Kanuha (1996), these voices and experiences "must be heard across different perspectives, from different theoretical disciplines, and in different forms" (Kanuha, 1996, pg. 46). Such efforts are extremely essential to address the lack of intersectional perspectives in mainstream literature. This will not only improve our perspective of analysis but also develop the response to the victims and survivors of belonging to different backgrounds.

Both cross-cultural and multicultural domestic violence studies make it clear that there is no one-size-fits-all explanation for domestic violence and that, consequently, solutions must reflect these differences (Campbell, 1999; Dasgupta,

1998; Gondolf, 1998; Richie, 2000). When strategies are based on experiences of women belonging to a different class and race backgrounds, it will be less effective for those who face different types of obstacles in life regarding gender-based violence (Crenshaw, 1994, pg. 96). Women who are victims of various forms of gender-based violence belong to different sexual orientations, religious backgrounds, nationalities, hence, they require different forms of interventions as well. For example, a woman who is a victim of assault or violence who has a poor living condition would primarily require safe and secure housing (Bassuk, 1995; Websdale & Johnson, 1997). In such conditions, applying for welfare could also be one of the primary concerns (Josephson, 2002). However, if an immigrant woman is a victim, the primary requirement would be bicultural and bilingual services for her (Rivera, 1997).

An all-inclusive perspective while approaching domestic violence helps in the enforcement of culturally competent services for both the victims and perpetrators. Cultural competence necessitates an awareness of client cultural nuances as well as the specific cultural and systemic needs of various populations (Almeida & Lockard, 2005; Gondolf, 1998; Rivera, 1997). According to Gondolf (1998), a culture-blind approach to gaining cultural competence is counterproductive. He suggests that service providers, particularly counsellors, must educate themselves about how cultural and ethnic differences can affect the therapeutic process. He advises clinicians to further their understanding of diverse racial and ethnic groups so that they can be alert to how racial and ethnic differences may affect the assessment of woman battering.

Therefore, Violence against women is a major issue around the world and especially in a developing country like Nepal. There has been a surge in community level and individual level prevention and response programmes to bring attention to various forms of violence against women. However, many studies suggest that it is important to understand and identify different backgrounds, cultures, caste, ethnicity, and many other factors before planning and implementing programmes. Hence, an intersectional strategy to address violence against women is extremely essential.

Theoretical Framework

This chapter will address the theoretical context, which will aid the paper in clarifying implicit theories in a more developed manner. Within the theoretical context, weaknesses associated with the theories will also be considered. For the paper, I will use "Intersectional theory" as a category of practice and "Participation as the new tyranny" as theoretical concepts. These theoretical concepts will assist me in determining how I conceptualize the essence of the research issue, its foundation, and the analysis to be used to investigate acquired data. These theoretical constructs will further help to structure and direct the analysis, laying the groundwork for the study.

Intersectionality as a Category of Practice

Intersectionality is a way of interpreting and examining the complexity of human interactions, people, and the environment. In the context of social injustice, the organization of power and the livelihood of people are understood better as not being determined by a single axis of social division, whether race, gender, or class, but by multiple axes that work together and influence each other (Collins, 2019). It is a popular concept since it offers a concise shorthand for explaining the concepts that have come to be recognized in feminist thinking and women's studies scholarship as a result of political struggle (Phoenix, 2006). The definition of intersectionality had been used in feminist work on how women are positioned as women while also being black, working-class, lesbian, or colonial subjects before Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the word in the late 1980s (ibid). Crenshaw (1991) expanded on the framework in "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color" two years later as she used intersectionality to illustrate how social movement organizing and activism around violence against women obfuscated the weaknesses of women of colour, especially those from immigrant and economically marginalized communities (Carbado et al., 2013). As a result, intersectionality emphasizes a richer and more complex ontology than approaches that seek to categorize individuals one at a time, showing that fruitful information development must consider social roles as

relational. (Phoenix, 2006). Therefore, the theory serves as a catch-all expression for highlighting the multiple positionings that compose everyday life and the power structure that underpins it.

There are various ways in which intersectionality is currently being applied, according to Phoenix (2006). Nevertheless, it is mostly used as an analytical technique that helps people to have a better understanding of the world and its dynamics (Collin, 2015). The intersectional approach can yield insights that non-intersectional approaches may fail to reveal or even mask. One of the examples of it would be of Hopkins (2012) when he used intersectionality to examine lived experiences of body type and size demonstrating the experience of (self-identified) fat young people are relational, locational, and intersectional- that who else they are, and who they are with, and where they are will affect how they experience their size (2012). For example, one research participant, who fit the category of a young, gay, and fat man, felt that there was a linkage between size and sexuality. He was not satisfied with his size because he did not conform to the stereotypical gay man of having a thin body. (Hopkins, 2012: pg. 1237). Another 9 participants, a tall, fat, Indian woman felt that she did not conform to the expectations of women in her ethnic group – thus ethnicity and gender shaped her experiences of being tall and fat (Hopkins, 2012: pg. 1238). As these findings demonstrate, intersectionality was vital to Hopkins' analysis and allowed findings to emerge that may not have if the analysis had been focused on a single axis, such as body size alone. Similarly, researchers in disability studies have emphasised the importance of intersectional analysis to understand the lived experiences of people with disability, particularly given the relationship between people of colour and people from a poor background and higher rates of disability (Barager, 2009: pg. 3) and emphasises on the fact that people with disability receive ability through intersectionality to access services (Haniff-Cleofas & Khedr, 2005: pg. 1).

For the thesis, we take Brubaker's (2013) concept of "category of practice". Brubaker (2013: pg. 2) has used "Muslims" to differentiate between the category of

analysis and the category of practice. As a category of practice, "Muslim" is used to identify oneself and to identify others (ibid, pg. 2). Throughout his paper, he has sketched the use of "Muslims" as a category of practice – a category of self and other identification by the Muslims themselves rather than other's perception of the Muslims (category of analysis).

Similar to Brubaker (2013), the thesis disconnects intersectionality from an analytical concept which is usually mobilised by feminists to understand patterns of domination beyond gender binaries. Since the paper intends to investigate development organization and inclusion of intersectionality within interventions and projects regarding violence against women, intersectionality as a theory is an empirical category rather than an analytical category here. Intersectionality, in the paper, will not be a framework to help me understand whether intersectional factors contribute to violence against women (which I have made evident in my literature review), but would rather help me investigate projects conducted by development organizations regarding violence against women in Nepal. While analysing the collected data, intersectionality will help me see if intersectional variables are taken into consideration; especially caste, ethnicity, class, and others, while planning and implementing their projects. The study plans to apply an intersectional approach to critically analyse the projects that are being conducted and show how a lack of intersectionality approach can leave many aspects of violence among women unnoticed and even in some cases hide the issue as a whole.

Participation as a Tyranny

In "*Participation: The New Tyranny?*", Cooke and Kothari (2001) highlight important perspectives of the participatory discussion, suggesting that traditionally, there has not been much criticism of participation itself, but rather of how methods in participatory projects function. Cooke and Kothari (2001) classify tyranny into three forms. First, international agencies and funders wield power just underneath the rhetoric and practice of participation. These tyranny tackles agencies' and funders'

long-held decision-making power. Second, the focus on participatory practises obscures many constraints and manipulations that reduce local power differentials; in reality, participatory practises may sometimes lead to the persistence and exacerbation of local power differentials. This tyranny is at the group level and discusses well-known social psychological aspects of group functioning that are widely overlooked in the participation literature. The third type of tyranny addresses the supremacy of the participatory process, noting that widespread acceptance of participation, especially the goals and values expressed, has restricted discussion and even consideration of alternative methods for cultivating growth.

For this paper, I will be looking into three particular chapters from the book to add to my theoretical concept. First, Mosse's chapter, "*People's Knowledge*"; second, Kothari's chapter, "*People's knowledge and Social Control in Participatory Development*" and finally "Cooke's (2001) chapter, "*The Social Psychological Limits of Participation?*". These chapters will help me understand whether the organizations look into an intersectional aspect or use participation to include women from different background to achieve inclusion.

Mosse (2001) explains the concept of local knowledge in the context of participatory programme preparation, arguing that ideas regarding considering different aspects of local knowledge predominate in the participatory debate (pg. 16). He then attempts to illuminate a point by stating that local information can and often is, built from outside powers in bureaucratic participatory planning strategies. Problems with defining the concept of local knowledge itself may arise, and this may be the cause of ineffective methodological outcomes (pg. 17). Mosse (2001) also contends that what is viewed as local needs, what the local people want and prioritise, is in reality constructed by outside powers during project planning. Regarding the concept of people's awareness in the sense of participatory work planning processes, Mosse's claims suggest that "local knowledge" is often focused on and formed by the desires of the dominant actor. Furthermore, Mosse (2001) emphasises that the

underlying interests are often focused on ideas of short-term gains and contends that "people's awareness' is undeniably a powerful normative construct that serves to conceal the complex nature of information production in 'participatory' planning, especially the position of outsiders" (Mosse, 2001: pg. 23). In this thesis, this can be connected to analyse whether the understanding of including everyone in the development organization's program is what the beneficiaries wanted or the knowledge that is transferred to them via the organizations themselves.

Secondly, according to Kothari (2001), participatory approaches to development work often outline the methodological dimensions of participatory projects while failing to recognise the significance of recognising power imbalances in society. Furthermore, Kothari describes the concept of social control in this chapter. She emphasises that if the act of insertion is imposed with authority over the persons, it can be interpreted as an exercise of power. There is a connection between what is perceived as the 'truth' and power relations, and as the 'truth' become accepted in society, the acceptance of power inequalities may follow. In the long run, power disparities and 'truths' remain normatively unquestioned, according to Kothari. As a result, participatory approaches that proclaim local awareness may maintain power structures that are evident alongside social norms within societies.

We now focus on Cooke's (2001) chapter where he shed light on four concepts of social psychology: risky shift, the Abilene paradox, groupthink, and coercive persuasion. However, we focus on risky shift and groupthink for the thesis. The first idea suggests that group discussions appear to lead group members to make decisions that pose a greater risk than decisions they might have made individually. Stoner (1968) developed it as a result of an experiment in which individuals made riskier decisions after interacting with other members of the community. According to Stoner (1968), significant factors in the experiment were individuals' assumptions that their risk-taking was linked to "others like themselves" and common values (pg. 442). Cooke argues that these 'risky change' factors can also be found in participatory growth. For

example, he contends that the language used in the orthodoxy of participatory creation is often persuasive and lively, and that project facilitators often appear convincing. While this may be a positive if it results in a better way of life for the locals, it is dependent on the means and highlighted interests of bringing about this transition. It may be argued, for example, that if the intentions are not entirely geared toward improving the conditions of the disadvantaged, but rather toward other goals, persuasion may be negative.

Similarly, the second principle mentioned by Cooke (2001) that we are focused on is groupthink. Groupthink is described as dynamics within the group that leads to a situation where wrong and bad decisions are taken (pg. 112). In circumstances where groupthink is present, the most important thing is to achieve group cohesion, regardless of other facts. Cooke emphasises that "dissent is discouraged, suppressed, or eliminated; procedure shortcuts are taken; conclusions by the leader or key advisors go unquestioned; and prejudices contribute to policy" (Schafer and Crichlow, 2010: pg. 6). Cooke contends that evidence of groupthink is likely to be found in discourses regarding participatory growth, emphasising, for example, that the morality of participatory development in and of itself is likely to be unquestioned. Cooke challenges the absence of groupthink in the participatory literature in general, believing that it has not been adequately presented or addressed.

These theoretical lenses can help me analyse the challenges that organizations face while integrating intersectionality. Since we should assume that the data can show whether these organisations implement intersectionality or not, and how they do so, it will be critical to use Cooke and Kothari's Participation as the new tyranny to understand the disbalance of the two stakeholders, both the organisations and their beneficiaries, while doing it. These theories, beginning with intersectionality as a category of practice, will aid researchers in their search for answers to the research question of how intersectionality is understood and applied in the development field. Similarly, when dealing with the challenges of incorporating intersectionality, the idea

of inclusion can help to clarify how inclusiveness and participation of all can become an issue to achieve intersectionality.

Methodology

This section will present the data collection method, method of data analysis and the research design of the paper. This section is divided into eight sub-sections: research study and design, ontological and epistemological stance, sampling strategy, data collection and analysis, limitations, validity and reliability, ethical consideration, and positionality and reflexivity. The first sub-section is research study and design, which will explain the research strategy. The second sub-section will then define the researcher's ontological and epistemological stance for the analysis. The sampling techniques used to select participants for the study will be discussed in the following section. This is accompanied by a description of how the data was obtained and how it will be analysed in the following section. Since conducting research can be difficult, limitations when conducting research are listed as a sub-section. The following section discusses the ethical issues that arose during the study and how they were addressed. Finally, the methodology segment concludes with a discussion of the researcher's positionality and reflexivity.

Research Study and Design

To fulfil the aim of the study in understanding the approaches of international development organizations regarding violence against women, the research has a qualitative research strategy. The motive is to comprehend the organization's thoughts about the issue and further offer a more detailed understanding of the topic; hence, a qualitative strategy is adopted rather than quantitative. Data from first-hand observation, interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, participant observation, recordings made in natural environments, records, and objects are used in qualitative research. The information is mostly non-numerical. Ethnography, grounded theory, discourse research, and interpretative phenomenological analysis are examples of

qualitative approaches (Creswell, 2002). Sociology, anthropology, political science, psychology, social work, and educational studies have also used qualitative research techniques (Alasuutari, 2010). Qualitative researchers investigate people's perceptions of their social reality. Qualitative research is concerned with individuals' views, perceptions, and emotions to generate subjective results (Creswell, 2007). As a result, a qualitative study design would be useful in understanding the approaches taken by various development organizations on intersectionality in violence against women, as it helps to consider a situation from a holistic perspective. By incorporating the voices of the participants and an appreciation of their experience, qualitative research ensures that a summary and explanations of the issues and problems at hand are provided (ibid).

The thesis aims to conduct a multiple case study. A multiple case study is going to be implemented for the research because studying multiple cases, in this case, organizations with a national and international background are going to help us understand the similarities and differences between the cases (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Similarly, Multiple case study can also be used to either indicate contrasting results for expected reasons or indicate similar results in the studies (Yin, 2003). Therefore, case studies of two organizations, one national and one international, are done in this research. The thesis decided to include one international organization and one national organization to also see if there are differences in their work against violence against women. It has to be made clear that this research was not a comparative study between these organization rather an attempt to understand the difference in the module of the organization, one being national and the other being international, which would probably give a distinct insight on how they perceive the issue and approach to tackling it. Given the resources that these organizations have individually, it would also be interesting to analyse the challenges they face while conducting their project regarding the issue at hand.

While choosing these organizations for the case study, a criterion was set that the organizations should be working in Nepal for the past 20 years in the field of

violence against women. Finally, ActionAid International Nepal and SAATHI Nepal was chosen for the study as organizations representing the international and national background, respectively. The chosen organisations (i.e., ActionAid International Nepal and SAATHI Nepal) were contacted via e-mail at the start of the thesis with a detailed description of the thesis and its purpose, as well as a request for their time for the interview. While one organisation responded quickly, it was difficult to reach the other. As a result, various tactics were used in order to communicate with them. Later, the organisation was contacted via their various social media sites. A detailed description of both the organization is as followed:

ActionAid is a global justice federation committed to promoting social justice, gender equality, and the abolition of poverty. ActionAid Nepal is a member of the federation and works for human rights, poverty alleviation, and gender equality. It is a non-governmental national social justice organization established in 1982 that works on a local level in Nepal's various provinces. It is also a member of the national and international social justice movements, as well as other civil society networks, partnerships, and coalitions. The main motivation to choose ActionAid Nepal for the research is because ActionAid Nepal is one of the very few international organizations that work specifically against "Violence Against Women". In addition to this, the rapport between the organization, ActionAid Nepal, and me has been strong as I interned during my third semester in ActionAid Nepal, which will be beneficial during the interview phase.

SAATHI Nepal is a non-governmental organization established in 1992 to counter the various types of violence and discrimination experienced by Nepali women and girls. It was the first organization to draw substantial national attention to domestic violence in Nepal as an issue needing immediate attention and action to break the silence that affects the lives of many oppressed women and girls. It has steadfastly pursued its crusade for a safe and violence-free world in which women and children can live with equality and dignity. SAATHI Nepal's history and dedication towards

gender-based violence is the primary reason why the organization is chosen for the study as the organization can provide more insight on the issue.

Ontological and Epistemological Stance

This paper's ontological and epistemological stances are constructionist and interpretivist, respectively. Other than direct observation, constructionism and interpretivism argue, there are other ways to know about the world, including our experiences and interpretations of the world around us (Al-Saadi, 2014, pg. 3). The ontological stance corresponds well with the theoretical frameworks provided in the study, especially "Participation as Tyranny," which focuses on the relationship between organisations and their beneficiaries. Similarly, the epistemological position is interpretivism, which means that knowledge of the social world can be gained by an analysis of the participant's understanding of the world in which they live (Bryan, 2012), in this case through how the organisation perceives and understands intersectionality of violence against women.

Sampling Strategy

The study focuses on various organisations working to end violence against women, how these organisations incorporate intersectionality into their efforts, and what obstacles they face in doing so. Certain requirements were set when selecting the participants to ensure the focus of the research and to provide appropriate perspectives for the study. Those requirements are as follows:

1. The respondent must have been involved with and have had adequate experience in researches or studies on violence against women,

2. The respondent must be older than 18 years to not jeopardise any underage participants in the study and to give them a better understanding and experience with the specific topic of study.

One of the most common sampling techniques is purposeful sampling, which groups participants based on preselected criteria related to a specific research question

(Mack, 2005). The available resources and time, as well as the study's goals, define sample sizes, which may or may not be set before data collection (Acharya et al. 2013). Purposive sampling was thus determined to be the most appropriate method for this study as the research focuses on organizations and their representatives that are well informed and competent with the issue of violence against women. Purposive sampling was then combined with quota sampling because quota sampling enabled us to select samples that met the researcher's requirements (Mack, 2005). The criteria allow the researcher to concentrate on a sample that is most likely to have experience, knowledge of, or insight into the research subject (ibid). Quota sampling allowed the research to choose to have one national organization and one international organization.

Two interviews were conducted for the research, each from ActionAid International Nepal and Saathi Nepal, both of which were Nepali. The table below shows the details about all the participants that took part in the interview:

S.N.	Gender	Workplace	Location of Work	Position
1.	Female	ActionAid International Nepal	Kathmandu	Associate Project Officer
2.	Female	Saathi Nepal	Kathmandu	Central Coordinator

Table 1: Description of Participants

Data Collection and Analysis

Interview

For data collection, a semi-structured open-ended interview was performed. Since the purpose of the paper was to learn how organisations interpret and incorporate intersectionality into their projects, a semi-structured open-ended interview was required. This type of interview has many advantages; it helps to overcome low questionnaire response rates, it is well suited to the exploration of attitudes, values, beliefs, and motives, it allows you to evaluate the validity of the respondent's answers by observing nonverbal indicators while discussing sensitive issues, and it can facilitate

comparability by ensuring that all questions are asked (Barriball and While, 1994). This type of interview also provides a forum for the researcher to have an open mind about the data to be obtained and the possibility of new theories and ideas emerging from the data (Bryman, 2012). The interview process in semi-structured interviews is typically very versatile, which in this case allows interviewees to express their knowledge, thoughts, personal experiences, and reflections on violence against women and the work their organizations are conducting to eradicate it (ibid). This type of interview is selected as it gives the interviewer space to prepare a list of preset questions, but semi-structured interviews unfold conversationally, enabling participants to discuss topics that are essential to them (Longhurst, 2003). In order to conduct these interviews, online meeting platforms like Zoom was agreed upon. A total of two participants were part of the research, each belonging to a different organization.

The conducted interviews ranged from 40 minutes to 1 hour approximately. All the respondents were given a consent form before the interviews were conducted to make sure that they are participating and providing information of their own will. To help steer the interview better and provide a sense of structure to the interview, an interview guide was also prepared. Interviewees were asked to choose their choice of language, either English or Nepali, to help them articulate and express themselves better. While one interviewee chose to give the interview in English, the other settled for Nepali as their choice of language. The interviewees were asked prior to the interview if they could be recorded during it. Recording the conversations provides the researcher with "raw data" that can ultimately be used to substantiate the study as evidence, experiences, and examples (Blommaert and Jie, 2010). All of the interviews were taped to ensure that all data is properly preserved so that no vital information is missed. The respondents were surveyed to determine the best time and date for them. All of the interviews began with questions designed to make the interviewees feel at ease, such as questions about their job history, the responsibilities, and goals of the organisation with which they work, and their motivation to work with the organisation.

These were accompanied by more detailed questions about violence against women, project preparation and implementation, intersectional dimensions of violence against women, and the difficulties they face as an organisation when carrying out these projects.

Text Analysis

Similarly, the research also utilized text analysis to understand the projects and programs conducted in the organizations' working areas to give more insight into the intersectional approach they applied. The text analysis was conducted to strengthen the understanding of the approaches taken by the organizations. Reports of both organizations will be scrutinized to analyze projects that are carried out to reduce violence against women. These lists of reports were first searched on their official websites and further inquired for more at the end of the interview. This step is also very necessary to compare these projects with the data collected through interviews. Below listed are some reports published by these organizations that will be analyzed:

S.N.	Organization	Date Published	Report's name
1.	AAIN	2018	Reflection and Learning 2017
2.	AAIN	2019	Reflection and Learning 2018
3.	AAIN	2020	Reflection and Learning 2019
4.	SAATHI	2020	Rapid Assessment of Women Shelters on Impact of COVID-19
5.	SAATHI	2021	Saathi Organization Profile 2021

Table 2: List of reports and publications by the organizations

As for the analysis, to properly evaluate the obtained data, all of the data were audio-recorded, and the interview transcript was manually transcribed and translated into English. Using the NVivo app, the data were stored according to their themes based on the importance of the study's goal. Storing the collected data made it easier to separate the data into various concepts and regions, allowing for more effective data analysis.

Limitations

There were several limitations, both internal and external, during different phases of conducting the study. Talking about external limitation first, let us begin with the global pandemic, Corona Virus – 19 (COVID-19), being a huge hindrance throughout the thesis period. The research was previously planned to be in Nepal with face-to-face interviews and more secondary resources. However, due to COVID-19, this was not possible to limit the research to an online platform. A face-to-face interview would have helped gather more information as the conversations would have been more free-flowing compared to online interviews with interrupting technical issues throughout the interviews. The pandemic also hindered in getting access to some of the personnel from the organizations. Due to the pandemic, Nepal was going through a lockdown. The head offices of the organizations were closed, also many of the personnel from the organization were victims of COVID-19. It would have been easier to go to organizations in person to make them understand the thesis more and build a better rapport with them. The responses from the organizations were not prompt and sometimes they would even reply after a week or not at all. In addition to that, conducting interviews being in different time zones made it difficult to manage time for it. To avoid the lack of data for the research, reports of the organizations were first gathered through their website. Nevertheless, there was a limitation in accessing the reports as well. Secondary data were unavailable at first as one of the organizations did not publish reports regularly. It was only possible to gather secondary data from one of the organizations only after the interview was conducted. It was difficult to gather data during text analysis as the organization could not provide proper data on paper.

Furthermore, since the sample size is small (n=2), the quality and quantity of knowledge obtained can be reduced at times. More participants at various levels would have been needed to obtain more detailed quality information. However, this study attempted to include as many potentially relevant participants as possible who could

communicate facts, experiences, and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner.

Although violence against women is such an important issue, it was difficult to also search for academic and scholarly literature on the issue which was based in Nepal. This made it difficult to search for previous research to understand the scenario of violence against women in Nepal.

Validity and Reliability

According to Brink (1993), validity and reliability are critical components of all research as meticulous attention to these two things can mean the difference between good and bad research and can help to ensure that results are accepted as reliable and trustworthy by colleagues. This is especially important in qualitative research, where the researcher's subjectivity can easily cloud data interpretation, and where research results are often challenged or interpreted with scepticism by the scientific community. Similarly, Patton (2002) states that validity and reliability are two aspects that all researchers must consider when planning a report, evaluating the findings, and assessing the research's quality.

First, the choices of organizations having more than 20 years of experience in the field of violence against women were selected for interviews ensuring the validity of the research. Along with the interview, published sources from the organizations were also considered to make sure that the data were reliable. Data obtained from various sources reinforced each other and also aided in data comparison to ensure the collected data is valid and reliable.

According to Yin (2013), many case study evaluations, particularly those focused on broad or complex interventions, may require the use of two or more methods. When these approaches are purposefully designed to collect any overlapping data, the likelihood of triangulation exists, and if the results are convergent, greater trust can be put in the overall findings of the assessment (ibid). Therefore, for the

research, interview and text analysis are chosen as methods. With the help of these two methods, we can see if their analysis shows a connection that could help in validating the data and giving reliability to the thesis.

Ethical Consideration

It is important for researchers to recognise that their decisions when conducting research impact not only the research but also the individuals and organisations who were a part of it. It is our primary responsibility as researchers to be ethically sensitive before carrying out any of our research activities. Several ethical problems were considered for this review to end with an acceptable progression.

Some of the ethical principles that this research abided by are as follows:

• Transparency: Everyone involved in this research, particularly interview respondents, was given clear details about what the research is and how their feedback would be analysed. Both informants were orally explained the research and its purpose in-depth to ensure that participants understood the aim of the research and could make an informed decision about whether or not to continue their involvement in the study.

• Objectivity: Bias was avoided at all stages of the study, including research design, data collection, and data review and interpretation. Given that I was affiliated with one of the organisations that participated in the interview, the study was conducted with little regard for my affiliation.

• Integrity: Before participating in the interview, all respondents signed a consent form. Throughout the report, the analysis has kept all promises and agreements.

• Confidentiality: All respondents were held anonymous because the consent form also stated that private communications would be protected.

• Respect for intellectual property: Due acknowledgement and credit has been given to all previous researches listed in the thesis.

Positionality and Reflexivity

In research, the researcher's views, principles, beliefs, and social context affect them throughout the research process, influencing any methodological and analytical decision he or she takes. Positionality necessitates the researcher recognising and situating their perspectives, values, and convictions concerning the study process (Manohar et al., 2017). Self-reflection is an ongoing process that is required in any research project because it allows the researcher to recognise, create, and criticise their role within the research process. Positionality is informed by reflexivity, the idea that researchers should recognise and reveal themselves in the study to understand their role in it or impact on it (ibid). It is a self-reflection on how their perspectives and positions could have affected research design, research method, and analysis of research findings.

In this thesis, I am using Savin-Baden and Major's (2013) method to demonstrate my positionality and reflexivity. Researchers, according to Savin-Baden and Major (2013), must first situate themselves about the subject. Second, the researcher establishes their role concerning the participants.

It is important to note my previous association with ActionAid International Nepal, where I served as an intern from September 2020 to January 2020. Given that I worked there, I must be careful not to make conclusions about their work during the data analysis process of the study. Given that I am from Nepal, my nationality should be recognised as well, as I am unable to deviate from my theoretical framework in the study and relate the information given with experiences in Nepal. As a student, it is also important to recognise that while I lack experience in how an organisation operates, I cannot fully challenge an organization's approach to sensitive issues such as violence against women. As a result, it must be noted that this study is not a critical

evaluation of how these organisations should work, but rather a review to comprehend them.

From an organizational perspective, I can be seen as someone who is questioning their methods and approach to lessening social issues such as violence against women. Along with that, this could also make them think that I would criticize these organizations on their works. Hence, this can lead to organizations not fully opening up about their projects and how they conduct them. Since I am a student doing my master's thesis, my age also influences the research process, particularly in establishing a relationship and trust with the organizations.

Findings and Analysis

This section of the paper contains a thorough analysis of the research's key findings. In addition, the section analyses the collected data through the lenses of Intersectionality as a practice category and Cooke and Kothari's participation theories. In analysing the results, the section answers the following research questions from the thesis: "*How do development organizations in Nepal conceive intersectionality as a category of practice while approaching and integrating them in projects regarding violence against women*?" and "*What are the challenges in integrating an intersectional approach in projects implemented by development organization regarding violence against women?*" First, this segment will provide a detailed description of the primary data collected through the seme-structure interviews as well as secondary data collected through the organisations' papers and publications. Then these data will be analysed with the theoretical concepts that were mentioned in the theoretical framework section.

Before we dwell on how ActionAid International Nepal and Saathi conceive intersectionality while integrating them in their projects regarding violence against women, we need to understand what violence against women is for them. Also, it is important to understand how they choose their target groups and working areas because

this can help us see how and if women belonging to a certain category are chosen. This step is essential as this can also act as a challenge in integrating the intersectional approach in their project.

According to the interview, the ActionAid International Nepal respondent stated that the organisation has a very clear stance on violence against women. They noted that all four thematic fields in which they operate, namely women's rights, education, livelihood, and disaster risk reduction, are specifically centred on women because the organisation believes that violence against women occurs in all of these sectors. They also stated that women, especially women from marginalised backgrounds, are at the heart of the programmes. When discussing oppressed groups, the respondent emphasised the Dalit ethnic community the most. According to the interview and AAIN journals, it is clear that the organisation not only focuses on domestic violence against women and girls, but also on social issues such as child marriage, dowry, Chhaupadi, and boxi allegations (witchcraft). The respondent emphasised the various intervention and awareness projects that they run in their working areas, as well as the fact that AAIN is actively working on policy reformation. Along with the various types of violence listed above, such as rape, domestic violence, and social gender-based violence, the interviewee added that AAIN also worked to change the scenarios of Nepalese housewives. AAIN has been working tirelessly in the field of unpaid care work because they feel it is a form of violence against women.

The interview with a representative of Saathi Nepal, on the other hand, revealed that the work they do is very different from that of ActionAid International Nepal. According to the respondent, the organization's programmes include, though in a somewhat limited way, running shelter homes for women who have been victims of violence against women. They also mentioned that, in addition to their primary initiatives, the organisation implements numerous awareness campaigns and interventions with various stakeholders on violence against women.

When asked how they select their working area and target group, an ActionAid International Nepal respondent stated, "*It is a lengthy process to choose where to work and execute our projects and programs. This includes a variety of pre-appraisal and appraisal processes to identify places where violence against women is prevalent in order to launch our projects. These systems also assist us in selecting districts and areas with a large proportion of disadvantaged and vulnerable citizens.*" According to the respondent, in addition to the assessment process, AAIN consults with local governmental bodies to understand the issues that persist in the region. Consultation with local government bodies also assists AAIN in avoiding overlap, as other organisations will be operating in the same district. Another important piece of information given by the respondent was that they often work with local communities, which is introduced by local non-governmental organisations. These local non-governmental organisations are usually their partner organisations, assisting them in facilitating and coordinating their programmes in their respective working areas.

This was also evident with Saathi Nepal; when asked about their planning process, the respondent said that they have consulting partners, who are either from their donor organisation or their partner international organisation, WinRock International. These organisations assisted them technically and equipped them with the services they needed, including technological and human resources. According to the interviewee, the four areas in which Saathi Nepal operates are also the areas in which WinRock International wishes to operate. The working process of Saathi Nepal differed from that of ActionAid International Nepal. According to the interviewee, Saathi Nepal mentioned, "*Rather than intervening on our own initiative in all of our four working districts, we wait for locals to request assistance before beginning an intervention.*" According to the interview and their findings, all of these interventions and awareness programmes are not only aimed at women, but also at members of the municipality, local police, and community members.

Projects and Programs with an Intersectional Approach?

Both the organizations were asked who their target groups were and why they choose them as their target. For which, the organizations listed out different categories like caste, ethnicity, age, geographical areas, and others. Works that were based on these categories were also evident in their reports. I have divided the subsection below to help us understand these programs based on these categories.

Based on Caste and Ethnicity

With the help of the interviews and the reports that were provided to us, we can see that both organizations heavily focused their projects on caste and ethnicity. This was not surprising with the prevalence of the caste and ethnicity hierarchy that exists in Nepal. The respondent from ActionAid Nepal stated, "*ActionAid have a specific target audience for which we work for, especially those who are vulnerable and oppressed groups. We feel that these groups are most deprived of their rights and services.*" When asked who these groups were, they replied, "*Dalits and other indigenous ethnic group fits the profile of the most disadvantage, this is also where violence against women is most prevalent.*" According to the respondent, the main reason why AAIN focuses more on Dalit and indigenous group is because of these cultural discriminations as they lack access to education and employment, making them more backwards than any other groups in Nepal.

Nonetheless, the issue of what happens to people who do not fit into the category but reside in the same cultural or ethnic background arose. The respondent stated, "*We do work with people from higher castes and ethnicities, such as Brahmins and Chettri, but they are not prioritised as the main target community, but they are included as well. Even in Bajura, we had Thakuri who were the majority of the population, but we implemented projects for Dalits.*" The interviewee gave an example of their work in Nepal's Bajura district, where the majority of the locals were of Thakuri descent. Nonetheless, the AAIN concentrated their efforts on Dalits because that was where they were most needed.

Similarly, Saathi's respondent was able to point out that projects explicitly tailored to a particular ethnic group had been carried out. She stated, "*We have specifically conducted a project for women of Baadi caste. People do not usually hear about them, but they are known for their tradition of commercializing sex and promoting prostitution. Because of this many of the women from their caste fall victim to violence against women such as sex without consent, sexual harassment and unwanted pregnancy.*" The respondent then followed up with, "*We knew it would be difficult for us to intervene in their culture and tradition, but we could educate them and make them aware of the violence they were facing. We planned programs that would help them understand safe sex, mental health, reproductive system, and consent. It would have been wrong for us to just go and intervene, but it is often best to uplift the circumstances of women suffering violence against them and make them aware of what is wrong.*" The respondent also stated that there have been many other initiatives and projects that have taken similar ethnic groups into account. Since Saathi normally waits for others to seek support, the respondent expressed that violence against people belonging to oppressed and Dalit ethnic groups is most common in areas where there is a lack of education and economic stability.

Based on Geographical areas

ActionAid Nepal and Saathi, both in their interviews stated that geographical areas are extremely important to consider as an intersectional aspect when dealing with violence against women. ActionAid's respondent stated, "*Other than caste and ethnic group, we focus on women from all rural, semi-urban, and urban areas.*" This was evident as per their Reflect and Learning Reports of 2017, 2018 and 2019. The report highlights work in different districts such as Doti, Bajura, Kaski, Banke, Nawalparasi and others.

Similarly, the respondent from Saathi said, "*Our organization consider geographical locations to be very important. People and their problem vary from where they live. That is why we have our working areas in 4 different districts. We*

conduct our researches in all these districts and helping us to identify where violence against women persists and who needs additional assistance." There were four shelter homes for victims of violence in Kathmandu, as stated in the interviews and their report (Saathi Organization Profile, 2020): Banke, Kanchanpur, and Kapilvastu. These shelters supported women and girl survivors and victims of physical, sexual, and mental violence, as well as victims of trafficking and armed conflicts, with much-needed shelter and comprehensive care. Projects like "Addressing Social Obstacles to Women's Advancement" were carried out in eight rural districts: Siraha, Mahottari, Dolakha, Sindhupalchowk, Kapilbastu, Dang, Kanchanpur, and Bajura.

Another explanation Saathi mentioned why age and geography are relevant is that their research shows that violence against women occurs more frequently among women from the Terai area, according to the respondent. They also stated that a lack of education and technological advancements have exacerbated the issue, as young girls and women fall prey to predators who entice them by portraying a better world and tricking them into trafficking or raping them. An example was shared in the same context by the respondent, "*When we do to Terai, there are so many young girls in that location who are waiting for their 'Sapano ke Raajkumar' (Prince Charming) to save them from their current situations and make it better.*"

Based on the age and other categories

We can continue the previous examples in this section. Usually, these victims from Terai are young and belongs to the adolescent age group. The respondent from Saathi added, "*When we go to Terai, young people who are uneducated, this compels us to create awareness programs and interventions for the age group.*" Many cases highlighted that age is also an important intersectional aspect to consider while developing projects regarding violence against women. In all of ActionAid's reports (Reflections and Learning 2017, 2018, 2019), an issue that is mentioned is child marriage. For this issue, the report of 2019 shows that AAIN was successful in stopping 89 cases of child marriage in Doti, Palpa, Siraha, and Parsa districts, while 1,423

people, including priests and social leaders, were sensitised on policies and legal provisions against child marriage. Parents in the Samunnati project were oriented to change the age-old practice of dowry and do not embrace it in their children's marriages using the Capacity, Opportunity, Motivation of Behaviour (COM-B) diagnosis model.

Similarly, Saathi's report highlighted that the organization had also established shelters for child survivors of physical and sexual violence, as well as survivors of war, destitute or orphaned children, and children from low-income families.

While it was important to develop programs and projects for victims of violence, the organizations also stated that it was important to take other intersectional aspects into account. These aspects were perpetrators, men and boys, governmental bodies, and community members.

ActionAid's respondent stated, "*We always look at women and work on them, it is important to take men and boys into account as well. We have various programs to aware them of the issue of violence against women.*" Likewise, Saathi's respondent shared, "*We work with perpetrators as well. It is important to not leave out people who commit the crime and only focus on women.*" These statements are supported by their reports as well. AAIN's Reflections and Learning 2017 focused on alcoholism among men. The report suggested that alcoholism in men was described as one of the critical issues that almost always resulted in physical and psychological violence against women in many districts such as Parsa, Nawalparasi, Doti, and Terhathum, to name a few. To make sure that alcoholism does not contribute to violence against women, the women addressed the issue, collaborated with local stakeholders, collectively identified, and analysed the problem, and devised an action plan to contain it by establishing a monitoring committee.

We can also see the reports (Reflections and Learning, 2019 and 2018) mentioning the inclusion of men and boys. "*Engagement of men and boys is necessary to transform the social and gender norms that reinforce patriarchy and inequality. So, it is prioritized in each of the VAWG programs and campaigns* (Reflections and

Learning, 2019)." According to the report, this helped change the social and gender stereotypes that perpetuate sexism and injustice, making it a priority to include boys and men in all VAWG initiatives and campaigns. "*Several discussions and interactions with men and boys were conducted in different districts on the importance of their participation in the group to stop VAWG. The discussion focused on men to make them realize that their engagement is as important as women in the issue of women's rights and in defeating violence. Young boys were also mobilized in Safe City Campaign. The results have been reported from Chitwan that boys' group from there not only stopped harassing girls but also influenced their peers to stop doing so. In Sankhuwasabha, it was observed that many men are coming out in favour of women's rights and are advocating for their respect and proper representation in public programmes* (Reflections and Learning, 2018)." These pieces of the report show the emphasis given to men from ActionAid International Nepal.

Similarly, the interview with Saathi also gave insight into programs that are conducted for perpetrators and local men from communities where violence against women is high. The respondent shared, "*We did a lot of programs for perpetrators, awareness and interventions. It was interesting to know that all those people who commit crime are aware of what they are doing is wrong. It is sad to see that women are still seen as an outlet to pour frustration. Other than that, we provide awareness for boys in schools and community members as a whole on different issues of violence against women.*"

The inclusion of other aspects such as governmental bodies and communal bodies are also mentioned in the reports of both organizations. Reflections and Learning 2019 shows that AAIN and its partner organizations organised community organisations of women and girls such as "Mahila Adhikar Manch" (MAM, a community-based organisation (CBO) operated by women in their working areas), adolescent groups, community watch groups, child, and youth clubs to combat violence against women and girls. According to these reports, these campaigns not only

increased the agencies' interest in speaking out but also persuaded local governments to take proactive action and put a stop to VAWG. In Reflect and Learning 2018, we can see that training on existing VAWG policies and legal provisions for women survivors of violence was also provided to MAM members to capacitate them and encourage them to go for legal justice. This program helped in reporting a total of 162 cases in our working areas and among them, 86 got resolved through the legal process. MAM is still seen as an important aspect that identifies cases, take them forward and coordinate with concerned authorities. Similarly, Reflection and Learning 2017 has similar involvement of various stakeholders to tackle problems of violence against women. CBOs like MAM is shown as a key actor to mitigate violence against women cases by working as a community mediator for survivors of violence.

Programs such as the "cross-border anti-trafficking programme" centred on the protection and empowerment of women migrant workers by developing rehabilitation centres in Banke and transit-centre in Kanchanpur. The report also emphasises the importance of women and girls in the entertainment industry, as the report suggests that these women are at high risk of sexual harassment and violence. Similarly, the report shows that home-based employees, especially those from slum areas, were targeted to increase their visibility and voice among policymakers and other organisations by engaging them in dialogues with city officials, providing skill and empowerment training, information, and other benefits. However, the respondent from AAIN stated that it is important to consider aspects like caste, ethnicity and class when dealing with violence against women. They mentioned that discrimination within the cultural background and geographical locations is also very important to consider.

Intersectionality or Inclusion?

Let us now look at the data produced and reflect it on the first sub-research questions that were posed at the beginning of the thesis. How do these development organizations conceive intersectionality as a category of practice? Intersectionality is a crucial construct that provides us with the mentality and vocabulary to investigate the

relations and interdependencies between social categories and structures (Atewologun, 2018). Intersectionality is important for researchers and practitioners because it improves analytical sophistication and provides theoretical explanations for how heterogeneous members of specific groups can experience the workplace differently based on their race, sexual preference, class, and other social locations (ibid). It is important to be sensitive to such gaps to improve understanding of problems of social justice and inequality, thus increasing the likelihood of social change. Moreover, according to The Opportunity Agenda (2017), an intersectional approach acknowledges systemic discrimination due to sexual orientation and identity, gender and gender identity, race, economic status, national origin, and ability, among other aspects of one's identity, and that this systemic discrimination impacts access to opportunity. After scrutinising all of the projects and programmes, both through interviews and reports, we can see that ActionAid International Nepal and Saathi Nepal can be seen taking different intersectional dimensions into account. According to previous research in the literature review, we discovered that violence is more prevalent among Dalits and other indigenous groups. Similarly, we can see that both organisations recognise that some groups, in our case Dalit and other indigenous groups, need more attention than others, prompting them to organise initiatives and services that are more focused on them. We can also see that geographical locations and age are considered by both organisations. AAIN focuses on child marriages and malpractice such as Chhaupadi, which is important not just because they consider girls, but also because they consider cultural issues that contribute to violence against women. Awareness campaigns for children in schools to improve the socialisation process in helping children realise the violence against women often reveals how age is taken into account in preparing and carrying out their programmes. Similarly, both the organizations also can be seen taking external bodies like governmental bodies and policies into account when dealing with violence against women.

However, it should be noted that, while an intersectional approach is used in designing and executing these projects and programmes, some main concerns must be addressed. To begin, it is critical to recognise that intersectionality does not simply concentrate on one specific group, but rather identifies various aspects within the problem itself. The organisation does not prioritise other ethnic groups when concentrating on these vulnerable indigenous and ethnic groups like Dalit. However, bringing back the quote from ActionAid's representative, "*We do work with people from higher castes and ethnicities, such as Brahmins and Chettri, but they are not prioritised as the main target group. Everyone wants to become beneficiaries of our program, therefore, we try to incorporate women from other backgrounds as well. We try to make it inclusive to everyone, but we make sure who the target group is.*" By this, we can realize that even though these programmes are developed for Dalits and other marginalized group, people of various castes and ethnicities are typically included. Also, these programmes offer the impression of neglecting women from a higher caste and ethnic group. This is stressed further by an ActionAid respondent who states, "*It is not feasible to hold women in the same category due to their needs varying based on their cultural, religious, and geographical context. But if we go to a community, we do place all women under the same umbrella*." A representative from Saathi also shared a related anecdote. Since Saathi takes geography into account, women from various backgrounds are represented. The interviewee said, "*Saathi has faced obstacles when conducting programmes focused on a certain group because the women (not belonging to the target group) participating in the project believe the programme is irrelevant to them*." We can see how the principle of inclusion, rather than intersectionality, is being used. While involving men and boys, governmental bodies, and communal bodies are significant, initiatives that are not specific to victims will not aid in eradicating violence against women.

The lack of an intersectional approach is not only limited to caste and ethnicity, as the findings show that all initiatives and programmes in Nepal are typically carried

out in rural areas. While both organisations claim to run programmes in both rural and urban areas, we can only see projects considered to be running in the urban area to be in the capital city of Kathmandu based on their interviews and studies. Except for Kathmandu, all the areas mentioned in the interviews and the reports are rural (Kanchanpur, Doti, Siraha, Bajura, Manohara etc.). When considering areas, these organisations must operate in specific areas due to various challenges as mentioned in the interview. ActionAid's respondent stated that "*While finalizing our working area, we have to make sure that other organizations are also not working in the area.*" And Saathi's respondent mentioned, "*We have consulting partners who make sure where we work and who we work with.*"   Saathi must choose areas considered significant by their donor organisations and foreign partner organisations and AAIN must avoid duplication of work because other organisations are working in them. This shows that these organizations do not have the freedom to work in areas where violence against women would be more but in areas that they can work.

These findings suggest that although development organization do take into consideration different form of intersectional aspect into account while developing projects regarding violence against women, the essence of intersectionality gets lost in the process of implementing it. First, community members want to either be part of programs as mentioned by the organizations in their interview. Second, while including everyone from the community, the attention from the targeted group is diverted. This leads us to the next stage of the study, which focuses on how an organization's need for inclusion and participation has hampered intersectionality.

Participation as a challenge to Intersectionality

We can see how, despite having services that are normally only relevant to a few members of the group, both Action Aid International Nepal and Saathi Nepal ensure that all women in the community participate in them. In this case, we can use Mosse's (2001) definition of local knowledge to examine how knowledge is often based and formed by the dominant actor's desires, in our case the development organizations.

Since these organisations assist locals with their social problems, it is simple for them to build awareness that a neighbourhood requires such projects and programmes and how these projects and programmes can address them. Let us go back to one of the quotes from AAIN's interview, "*We do work with people from higher castes and ethnicities, such as Brahmins and Chettri, but they are not prioritised as the main target community, but they are included as well. Even in Bajura, we had Thakuri who were the majority of the population, but we implemented projects for Dalits.*" Even though they recognise that their projects and programmes do not solve everyone's problems, as discussed above relevancy among women of all backgrounds, they continue to run them. Mosse also emphasises the underlying interest of these dominant actors to gain short term goals. This is particularly evident in ActionAid Nepal texts, where we can see stories of progress with the participation of various stakeholders. However, these gains are not sustainable and do not include knowledge for everybody in society.

Both the organization also fails to acknowledge the social hierarchy that persists in Nepal and the power disbalance of the organization and the beneficiaries. Kothari (2001) emphasizes that participatory approaches to development work often outline the methodological dimensions of participatory projects while failing to recognise the significance of recognising power imbalances in society. She emphasises that the act of insertion can be viewed as an exercise of power if it is placed with authority over the citizens. There is a connection between what is viewed as the "truth" and power relations, and as the "truth" is accepted in society, power inequalities may follow. According to Kothari (2001), power differences and 'truths' remain normatively unquestioned in the long run. When conducting the interview, the respondent from Saathi stated, "*Before we organize any projects or intervention for the community, we take help from the social mobilizers. They are usually the well-known face of the community or someone who took help from us. They then influence women to join our programs and make them understand why it is necessary for them and how it will*

benefit them. This is how we try to bring in all women from the community to participate in our programs." We can see how the power of the organizations make them assume that the project is going to benefit them making it the truth among themselves and the community. While bringing in women from different background does bring inclusiveness and participation, we can see it brings a barrier in integrating an intersectional approach to their programs.

Similarly, we can also see AAIN and Saathi Nepal including women from different background in the same project disregarding the cultural hierarchy that lies within the community. The respondent from Saathi Nepal stated, "*When we bring women from different background together, they form groups of their own. Sometimes, this creates a disbalance as people from lower caste or ethnic group does not speak up in front of the higher caste people. So, we mix them so that they realize that their problems are similar and ask them to work together.*" This also shows that these social hierarchies based on caste and ethnicity create groupism, also, people from the lower strata are usually reserved due to the power relations between them and others. However, Saathi Nepal shared that they usually mix these groups while conducting their projects. The organizations make them believe that their problems are similar and can solve them together. While it is important to identify that organizations are again taking advantage of their power to create a 'truth' that they see to fit. This can also be related to Cooke's (2001) concept of risky shift. The concept suggests that group discussions appear to lead group members to make decisions that pose a greater risk than decisions they might have made individually. However, involving women from different background can create solutions to problems which might not be relevant to the group that is more vulnerable to violence against women. First, it is vivid that some programs are not relevant to all women, yet they are made to participate. Second, their input on an issue that is focused on someone else can rather not be relatable to whom the program was originally designed.

Finally, we can further associate the discussion above with Cooke's concept of groupthink. Groupthink is present when people from different background participate in similar projects and programs mentioned above. As Schafer and Crichlow (2010) mentioned, this would lead to the group leading to cohesion rather than what is needed for the group. Although the problems of people of different background might be different, conclusions might hamper the solution these groups need. As mentioned by both the organizations, their groups consist of women with different background with the difference in issue due to it. Participation of all the women can contribute to groupthink. This does not only apply to awareness programs and training but would also apply to a community-based organization such as MAM for AAIN. While trying to solve an issue, if a group rather focuses on coming to a consensus, it can sometimes lead to the problem not being solved at a deeper level.

With the help of Cooke and Kothari's concept of participation, we can see how organizations sometimes in search of inclusion and participation of all community members, the essence of intersectionality gets lost.

Nepal has always been a culturally rich country with 125 ethnic groups, 123 separate mother tongues, and a variety of indigenous and folk religions in addition to Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. Considering this and coming back to intersectionality and integrating them in development organizations regarding violence against women, we can see how organizations rather than focusing on the need of the victims try to incorporate them into a category leading to the inclusion of all. Although different intersectional aspect is taken into consideration, there are indications of blanket approach and a need of inclusion and participation that causes organizations to not fully achieve intersectionality in their project.

Conclusion

The thesis's final section will include a rundown of the empirical results as well as a theoretical conclusion. In addition, suggestions for future policy changes and appropriate interventions will be presented briefly.

The findings showed that development organizations in Nepal have been doing immense work to deal with sensitive issues such as violence against women. These organizations, unlike those shown in other researches, have been taking different stakeholders into account in their projects to combat violence against women. The research aimed to address whether these organizations applied an intersectional approach to their project regarding violence against women and the challenges that come with it.

Both the interviews and texts helped in trying to understand the approaches these development organizations take before and during the projects and programs. As it cannot be concluded whether these organizations fully integrate intersectionality in their project, it can be said that hints of intersectionality can be seen. However, the findings do show the need for inclusion and participation of women and other stakeholders in implemented projects. Many challenges were identified with the findings. Development organizations, to cover as many people as possible, sometimes forget the essence of the intersectional approach creating a barrier to themselves regarding the integration of intersectionality. Along with this, women want these projects to include them; however, while involving them, these projects lose its principle on what it was trying to achieve.

Intersectionality as a category of practice assisted in highlighting different intersectional aspect that contributes to violence against women. Also, it helped in identifying what development organizations take into consideration while dealing with the issue. Along with that, Cooke and Kothari's concepts on participation helped in understanding where the concept of intersectionality gets lost as development

organization looks for inclusion and participation of all. However, a positive aspect noted was that although these projects and programs as not focused on specific groups, development organizations have worked from various angles to deal with the issue. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that a bigger study should be conducted to understand the connection of intersectionality with projects regarding violence against women conducted by development organizations.

According to the respondents, it was clear that the patriarchal mindset among the people, all the way up to the government has been contributing to the issue of violence against women. Hence, through the findings of this paper and recommendations by the respondents, policies regarding the issue should be revised and be made victim-friendly. They also suggested that empowerment and awareness of women should be the topmost priority if we were to overcome the issue of violence against women. In terms of integrating intersectionality, it would be ideal to understand the need of the women and plan project not just focusing on the most vulnerable but also focusing on a broader range of beneficiaries to address issues that are not seen yet.

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Annex

Informed Consent Form

Graduate School, Faculty of Social Sciences, Lund University SIMV02 Global Studies: Master's Thesis (Two Years) – Spring 2021

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. Please accept this form as an official invitation to participate in an interview as discussed in our previous e-mail communication. The purpose of this form is to provide you with the information about your involvement and your rights as a participant of this research.

Your participation in this study will consist of an online, one-on-one semi-structured interview lasting no longer than 1 hour. The chosen platform for the interview is Zoom. You can choose whether or not to use a webcam.

During this interview, you will be asked a series of questions about your experience as an employee at _____ working with women empowerment. Your participation remains entirely voluntary at any stage of the interview. You have the right to pass on any question. At any time, you may notify the researcher that you would like to stop the interview and your participation in the study.

The interview will be audio recorded through Zoom's recording function. The digital copy of both this recording and the subsequent transcription (carried out by the researcher) will be securely stored on the researcher's computer. The transcription can be provided to you per your request.

All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential. All real names and identifying information acquired in this interview will not be associated with any part of the written report of the research and will be permanently deleted after the completion of the research.

For any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the researcher at: aa5838ch-s@student.lu.se. You may also contact my thesis supervisor at the Graduate School, Lund University using the following contact information**:** Muriel Côte – muriel.cote@keg.lu.se

Please save a copy of this letter for your future reference. If wished, you may also request a digital copy of the finished manuscript from the researcher. At the beginning of our interview, you will also be requested to read out loud the section below as a form of vocal consent.

_____
SIGNATURE
By signing this consent form, I certify that I, _____,
understand and agree to the terms of this agreement.
Date:
Aayush Chitrakar aa5838ch-s@student.lu.se

Interview Guide

Where is Intersectionality?

The purpose of my thesis is to explore how, if they do, does development organizations incorporate the concept of intersectionality into their projects regarding violence against women. In the context of the thesis, we specifically take caste, ethnicity, and class into consideration as factors that overlaps with violence against women. If there are hurdles for these organizations to get into intersectional aspect of violence against women, then these obstacles are also aimed to be explored.

Organization Name: _____

1. How long have you been associated with the organization?

2. What is your role in the organization?

3. What are the main tasks/focus of the organization? Why?

4. How did the organization get into Gender based Violence, more specifically, violence against women?

5. What going into the planning process of projects regarding violence against women?

6. How important is it to consider caste into these projects?

7. How important is it to consider ethnicity into these projects?

8. How important is it to consider class (social class (high, middle, low) and area of residence (urban and rural)) into these projects?

9. Are there other intersecting factors that you think are important while dealing with violence against women? How are they incorporated in the projects implemented by the organization?

10. Does differences in caste, ethnicity and class matter when working against violence against women?

11. What are the challenges the organization is facing to not keep all women under the same category?

12. What can be done to improve the condition of women in regard to violence against women?

13. What kind of policies exists in terms of violence against women? In your view, are those policies enough? What changes do you think are needed in the policies?