

A Case Study of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality Ward no. 8, Achham



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis **Impact of Chhaupadi Pratha in Rural Area : A Case Study of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality Ward no. 8, Achham district** which I have submitted to the Central Department of Rural Development, Development Economic and Mathematics, Mid-West University, Surkhet, is entirely my original work prepared under the supervision of my supervisor Mrs. Bipana Devkota I have made due acknowledgements to all ideas and information borrowed from different sources in the course of this thesis. The results of this thesis have not been presented or submitted anywhere else for the award of my degree or any other purposes. No part of the content of this dissertation has been published in any form before. I shall be solely responsible for any evidence is found against my declaration.

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This is to certify that Mr. Kamal Kumar Shahi has completed this thesis entitled **Impact of Chhaupadi Pratha in Rural Area : A Case Study of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality Ward no. 8, Achham district** under my guidance. This is his independent work for the fulfillment of the Master's Degree in Rural Development. I recommend this thesis for final evaluation.

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APPROVAL LETTER

This thesis entitled **Impact of Chhaupadi Pratha in Rural Area : A Study of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality Ward no. 8, Achham district** Submitted by Kamal Kumar Shahi for the partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Rural Development has been approved by the evaluation committee.

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This thesis entitled **Impact of Chhaupadi Pratha in Rural Area : A Case Study of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality Ward no. 8, Achham district** has been undertaken in to the study of partial fulfillment and the requirement for the Master's Degree in Rural Development of the Graduate school of Humanities and Social Sciences. It focuses mainly on Socio- Economic Impact.

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Kamal Kumar Shahi

ABSTRACT

This thesis entitled **Impact of Chhaupadi Pratha in Rural Area : A Case Study of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality Ward no. 8, Achham district**. The main objectives of this study to determine the factor that are associated with Chhaupadi Pratha and to determine the women's perception towards chhaupadi system. The study is going to be conducted among the people of society, Panchadewal Binayak Municipality ward no. 8, Achham. there's not a study about the Chhaupadi system and its impacts on health of women and their experience within the sector of the women of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality ward no. 8, Achham. Only quantities data was included in the study. All the women's of reproductive age (15-49) years in Panchadewal Binayak Municipality ward No. 8, Achham. The was selected sample size 40 women by using purposive sampling method. First take a consent from respondent by making effective rapport building. Then, collect the data through one to one interview by using the semi-structural questionnaire. And recorded carefully. This study emphasis on mentally, physically, psychologically, socially and religiously effects on women health from chhaupadi pratha.

In the strictest observance of chhaupadi, women are prevented from looking at the sun, interacting with males and cattle, drinking dairy products and conducting their daily chores. Furthermore, if they “touch the fruit trees, the fruits will fall before they are ripe or the fruits was dry; if they fetch water, the well will dry up; if the cattle are fed or milked by Chhaupadi, blood will come out of their teats instead of milk”. The cause of Chaupadi tradition there is many cases of women raped, killed by wild animals, bitten by snakes or dead due to cold during their stay in the chhaupadi goth. Chhaupadi women face both physical and mental hardship. These women believe that any breach in such practice will bring bad omens upon their family, community or society.

Key Words : Chhaupadi, Chhau, Women, psychologically, mentally, socially

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ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

AHR	:	Advocates for Human Right
ICRW	:	International Center for Research on Women.
INGO	:	International Non-government Organization
MoHP	:	Ministry of Health and Population
NDHS	:	Nepal Demographic and Health Survey
NGO	:	Non-government Organization
OPD	:	Out Patient Department
PRB	:	Population Reference Bureau
UCSF	:	University of California San Francisco
UK	:	United Kingdom
UNFPA	:	United Nations Population Fund
UN	:	United Nation
US	:	United State
WHO	:	World Health Organization

CHAPTER : ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In most parts of the developed world, women assume that their menstrual periods will remain part of their private lives and will not affect their ability to work, go to school or otherwise contribute to society. This is not the case in Nepal, where women are considered "unclean" and "impure" during the menstrual period prevented from taking part in many normal aspects of their lives. Even in this modern day females would be sent to spend the duration of their monthly menstruation isolated in an unsanitary hut, this is a common and accepted ritualistic practice for women in Nepal (Mazzulo, 2011). Practices and taboos surrounding menstruation vary according to the region, the community, the village, and are not confined to Nepal (Rebaud, 2011). Chhaupadi system is traditional practice in which women and girls are forbidden to touch anything and have to live in cow shed during menstruation. It is a widespread practice prevalent in Far West and some parts of Mid-West region of Nepal. In Far West it is prevalent mainly in Achham, Bajura, Bajang, Doti, Baitadi, Dadheldhura, Darchula, Kanchanpur, and Kailali and in Mid-West it is prevalent in Kalikot, Jumla, Humla, Mugu, Dailekh, Jajarkot, and Surkhet Districts. In these areas, family and society do not treat menstruation as natural phenomena (Amgain, 2011).

The practice of isolating women during menstruation is called chhaupadi pratha. Nachhunu, the Nepali word for menstruation, also translates as "untouchable". Even in modern Nepal it is common for women who are considered 'impure' and untouchable during the days of their menstruation. Everything they touch during the time of their menstruation can be considered impure (Mazzulo, 2011). Chhaupadi literally means "Menstruating woman". They are isolated from family, relatives, and society; they are kept in a small cold and dark shed where most often cattle were kept in other time. They are considered "impure" or "unclean" or

"untouchable" during menstruation period. The word chhaupadi is Achham's local Rawte language word. Chhau is menstruation and Padi means woman. Chhaupadi

pratha is a century's old ritual of banishing Nepali women and girls during their monthly menstruation. Throughout history, many cultures have practiced the same type of rituals. Today the banishment ritual is still accepted by (Mazzulo, 2011). History of menstruation is said to be from religious practices where it was believed that Gods and Goddesses angry with women who stay in the family house during menstruating. According to religious folklore, Indra, the King of Heaven was accused of killing a Brahmin and because of the illicit acts with women that Indra committed during his quest to redeem his sin, for these acts all women were said to be punished through menstruation (Hussain, 2012).

There are clear cultural reasons for these taboos and practices. When, a Hindu woman reaches maturity, she is kept in a dark room for thirteen days during their first and second menstrual cycle and four days of every other menstrual cycle (Kandel, Bhandari and Lamichanne, n.d.). When a girl has her first menstruation, she is sequestered from her family members for 11-15 days. In the case of mature woman, she stays in shed for 5 days and married woman has to stay for only 4 days (Maharjan, 2010).

This ritual regards as women "impure" during their menstrual cycle; it is known to have initially originated centuries ago from a belief that gods and goddesses become angry if any woman stays in her home during that time. Following the ritual, women are made to live in sheds outside their homes called "chhaupadi Goths" (Sharma, 2010).

This practice stems from the belief that when woman has her periods, she is "impure" and could "pollute" and "contaminate" the house by remaining there during her menstruation periods. So, once a month, during the entire length of their menstruation, women are banished to the chhaupadi goth, which they can only leave once their periods are over (Rebaud, 2011).

In the strictest observance of chhaupadi, women are prevented from looking at the sun, interacting with males and cattle, drinking dairy products and conducting their daily chores. Furthermore, if they "touch the fruit trees, the fruits will fall before they are ripe or the fruits was dry; if they fetch water, the well will dry up; if the cattle are fed or milked by Chhaupadi, blood will come out of their teats instead of milk" (Rebaud, 2011)

A menstruating woman cannot touch anyone; if anyone touches her, the person needs to be purified by taking a bath and drinking cow's urine. Specifically, she is not permitted to touch pregnant women or trees, because of the idea that the "fruit" each are bearing will die or was malformed. Menstruating women are not permitted to participate in religious ceremonies, nutritious food is forbidden, and warm clothing is not allowed. Yet, they are still expected to participate in hard labor, carrying out the daily chores that they would normally do, such as working in the fields, fetching firewood, washing clothes, and so on (Sharma, 2010).

It is believed that if the woman does not adhere to these practices, there could be any number of negative impacts: she could become sick or die; her bones could break; she could become infertile; others could fall ill or even die. She was come sexually dangerous and harm come to partner's genitals person could not have sex if the seclusion is broken. If these women were unable to maintain these traditions, their community would be shattered and would no longer survive (Kandel, Bhandari and Lamichanne, n.d.). The women in Achham are following this ritual by thinking this as the culture which all follows. In this area, family and society do not treat menstruation as natural phenomena. In Chhaupadi system girls and women are isolated from family and home during several days in their menstrual cycle. Menstrual women are not allowed to touch men, children, cattle, living plants, and fruit bearing trees. If they touch all aforesaid things it is believed that the things become polluted and it makes god angry (Bennet, 1983).

In most parts of the developed world, women assume that their menstrual periods will remain a part of their private lives and cannot affect their ability to figure, attend school or otherwise contribute to society. this is often not the case in Nepal, where women are considered "unclean" and "impure" during the menstrual period prevented from collaborating in many normal aspects of their lives. Even during this modern-day female would be sent to spend the duration of their monthly menstruation isolated in an unsanitary hut, this is often a typical and accepted ritualistic practice for girls in Nepal (Bennet, 1983).

Chhaupadi and other sorts of discrimination during the menstruation may be a serious right violation affecting females in rural areas in Far West Nepal districts. While the govt. has outlawed the practice, it's struggled to show policies and action plans into practice. per the practice, women are considered 'impure' during their menstruation period and are banished from their family home and compelled to measure in a very cow shed or a Chhaupadi shed for the duration of their period each month, usually 5-7 days. During this era, they're denied access to nutritious food products like dairy products including milk also as green vegetables, forbidden from making physical contact with other members of the household, community or assets like cattle and trees, bereft of access to basic sanitation and not allowed to the touch taps or public water supplies. Occasion.ally, women have access to a chosen pump outdoors or a stream within the village which they will use to wash and wash their clothes. The Chhaupadi sheds are very basic, small outbuildings with no doors. This leaves women liable to various illnesses also as animal attacks from snakes, poisonous insects and sexual violence. Chhaupadi may be a cultural and non secular practice which has roots within the manifestation of the core concept of 'purity' (suddha, Chokho), versus 'pollution' (asuddha, Jutho) which is extremely prominent in Hindu religion and culture (Davis, 2005).

Chhaupadi system is traditional practice during which women and girls are forbidden to the touch anything and must board cowshed during menstruation. it's a widespread practice prevalent in Far West and a few parts of Mid-West region of Nepal. In Far West it's prevalent mainly in Achham, Bajura, Bajang, Doti, Baitadi, Dadheldhura, Darchula, Kanchanpur, and Kailali and in Mid-West it's prevalent in Kalikot, Jumla, Humla, Mugu, Dailekh Jajarkot, and Surkhet Districts. In these areas, family and society don't treat menstruation as natural phenomena (Mathur, 2008).

In many areas of Nepal, particularly undeveloped mountainous regions, women are considered impure when menstruating. For per week each month these women become untouchable. they have to eat their meals separately, make no physical contact with others or with water sources (I was forbidden to the touch the tap), and must have intercourse little or no bedding. In some areas, women are expected to sleep outside in a

very tiny hut called a Goth until they're clean again. this practice is named chhaupadi, derived from two Hindu words: chhau (4).

Chhaupadi is that the way of life for therefore many ladies in Nepal. Young girls are expected to fulfil their natural role as a mother, yet the very organic process that permits this miracle of motherhood is condemned as shameful and dirty. When daughters get older to be ashamed of their own nature. Girls practicing Chhaupadi will stop attending school each month during this point of non-public isolation, therefore sustaining the inequality in education and therefore the stigma surrounding periods. this is often due partially to poor access to and knowledge about products like sanitary pads. there's a general lack of education on menstrual hygiene in Nepal, which may be a direct result of persistent traditional beliefs and practices (Mishra, 2007).

Menstruating women are prohibited from participating in normal family and community life, including entering the kitchen, using common toilets and eating common food. Women are required to remain aloof from temples and other holy places and are restricted from collaborating in community activities. Menstruating women and girls are compelled to remain in chhau goths, which are generally unhygienic places without proper light and ventilation or protection from the weather. Most chhau goths don't have sanitation facilities, like toilets or running water. Hence, the practice of chhaupadi may invalidate the 'open defecation free' (ODF) status per some communities, because it requires women to return to open defecation during their manse. (Ritzer, 1983).

Women face various discriminatory practices within the context of chhaupadi. The tradition is that ladies cannot enter inside houses, kitchens and temples. They also can't touch other persons, cattle, green vegetables and plants, or fruits. Similarly, women practicing chhaupadi cannot milk buffalos or cows, and don't seem to be allowed to drink milk or eat milk products. Generally, Generally, women stay in very separate hut or cattle shed for five days during menstruation (Sen, 1981).

Woman's need social support, nutritious food, and warm home especially during the period of delivery, after child birth, menstruation, women of far western have to live

in either cowshed or buffalo shed or in Chhaupadi shed and eat less dietary food. At a period of transition, pain they have to follow varieties of restrictions. They are denied to eat ghee, milk, curd, etc and are forbidden to touch public tap, temple, home, and food either (Amgain, 2011). This research had been carried out in Panchadwal Binayak Municipality 8, Barala Achham of the Achham district which has presented the Practice of Chhaupadi system women suffers and its changes in the society.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the Mid and Far Western Regions chhaupadi system is considered as a major problem about women's health issues. During the period of menstruation, Women face various discriminatory practices in the context of chaupadi. The tradition is that women cannot enter inside houses, kitchens and temples, women are forbidden to touch men or even to enter the courtyard of their own house. Within Chhaupadi system (called as Chhau pratha in far west), women and girls are kept in Chhaupadisheds, which is a little bit far from residual home. Isolated Chhaupadisheds, cowsheds where women are resided during their menstruation are open and door less. Women and girls have to stay in such huts and cowsheds five to seven days in each month amidst their menstruation (Amgain, 2011). Chhaupadi practice violates women's rights because it limits their ability to live safe and healthy lives, and in some cases it deprives girls' opportunities to attend school. Further, it identifies traditional culture and power structures like patriarchy as important determinants for the continuation of the practice (Sandbakken, 2011).

According to custom, women should not be given milk or ghee while they are menstruating, but should only eat flatbread with salt. This deprives them of nutritious food during their periods. The women must survive on a diet of dry foods, salt, and rice. They cannot use warm blankets, and are allowed only a small rug. They are barred from consuming milk, yogurt, butter, meat, and other nutritious foods. They are also restricted from going to school or performing their daily functions like taking a bath, forced to stay in the barbaric conditions of the shed. Access to water taps and wells is also limited. Chhaupadi women can only bathe or wash clothes in a 'chaupadi dhara'- a separate well, stream or small rivulet nears the village. With such a strong societal stigma attached, the impact of chhaupadi on the health of Nepali women is traumatic to say the least five days

a month, the women are confined to a dark, dirty room without nutritious food in sufficient quantity. As women are not allowed in the house during menstruation, they often engage in harder, manual labor outdoors as a result, including digging, collecting firewood and grasses and farm labor. These conditions take their toll on women's health and make them more vulnerable to various health problems, including diarrhea, pneumonia and respiratory diseases.

The cause of Chaupadi tradition there is many cases of women raped, killed by wild animals, bitten by snakes or dead of cold during their stay in the chhaupadi goth. Chhaupadi women face both physical and mental hardship. As mentioned, women are often relegated to 'chaupadi goth' or cattle sheds where they stay in very basic, unhygienic and exposed conditions. In the strictest observance of chhaupadi, women are prevented from looking at the sun, interacting with males and cattle, drinking dairy products and dealing with their daily chores. It is supposed that the scourges threatening the community and the family of women who do not abide by the tradition: "she could become sick or die; her bones could break; she could become infertile; others could fall ill or even die. She was come sexually dangerous and harm would come to any partners' genitals and person could not have sex and could be harmful to family members, village etc. if the seclusion is broken." Furthermore, if they "touch the fruit trees, the fruits will fall before they are ripe or the fruits was dry; if they fetch water, the well will dry up; if the cattle are fed or milked by Chhaupadi, blood will come out of their teats instead of milk" (Rebaud, 2011).

According to custom, women shouldn't lean milk or ghee while they're menstruating, but should only eat flatbread with salt. This deprives them of nutritious food during their periods. the ladies must survive on a diet of dry foods, salt, and rice. they can't use warm blankets, and are allowed only a tiny low rug. they're barred from consuming milk, yogurt, butter, meat, and other nutritious foods. they're also restricted from visiting school or performing their daily functions like taking a shower, forced to remain within the barbaric conditions of the shed. Access to water taps and wells is additionally limited. Chhaupadi women can only.

Bathe or wash clothes during a “chhaupadi dhara”- a separate well, stream or small rivulet nears the village. With such a robust societal stigma attached, the impact of chhaupadi on the health of Nepali women is traumatic to mention the smallest amount five days a month, the ladies are confined to a dark, dirty room without nutritious food in sufficient quantity. As women don't seem to be allowed within the house during menstruation, they often engage in harder, manual labour outdoors as a result, including digging, collecting firewood and grasses and farm labor. These conditions take their toll on women's health and make them more liable to various health problems, including diarrhea, pneumonia and respiratory diseases. The reason behind Chhaupadi tradition there's many cases of girls raped, killed by wild animals, bitten by snakes or dead of cold during their stay within the chhaupadi Goth Chhaupadi women face both physical and mental hardship. As mentioned, women are often relegated to chhaupadi Goth or cattle sheds where they stay in very basic, unhygienic and exposed conditions.

A study about suffering this thesis includes all practices which are cause of the sufferings of women through chhaupadi. On the basis of these literature and discussion, I want to examine the Process and experiences of the women about chhaupadi system.

1.3 Research Questions

Therefore researcher focus this study to answering the following questions.

1. How do women perceive Chhaupadi System?
2. What is the process of Chhaupadi system?
3. How are women conditioned in chhaupadi Pratha?
4. What do women narrate their experience of Chhaupadi system?

1.4 Objectives of this Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study to assess impact of Chhaupadi Pratha in Rural Area of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality Ward no. 8, Barala, Achham.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are hear under:

- To determine the factor that are associated with Chhaupadi Pratha.
- To determine the women's perception towards chhaupadi system.

1.5 Significance of the Study

- Lots of studies are conducted among the sector of chhaupadi Pratha basically concerning with diseases and psychological state, sociopolitical issues. But there's not found any study about chhaupadi Pratha with associated consider Community which is a remarkable issue.
- The study is going to be conducted among the people of society, Panchadewal Binayak Municipality ward no. 8, Achham. there's not a study about the Chhaupadi system and its impacts on health of women and their experience within the sector of the women of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality ward no. 8, Achham.
- Chhaupadi is that the very interesting and hidden issues still existent within the study. its own process and practices.
- It should be shown this issue within the world, because there's no more literature found about chhaupadi Pratha from academic field but few empirical literatures are found.
- As these purpose study aims to access the local perspective of chhaupadi and their perception. It'll be very helpful to researchers, development organizations and organization involved in health research.

The research has been conducted among the people of society. There are fewer studies about the social system and suffering in the sector of health of the people of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality 8, Barala Achham of the Achham. The study was conducted among the people of study area. Its impacts on behavior and their experience in the sector of health of the women of Study area. In this condition this research will contribute for

the people of this place. It helps to identify the cultural practices, norms, values, process, and experiences of the women and helps to understand local people's cultural system which is closely related with the suffering in which they practice local cultural context to maintain order in their society. So it helps to establish a tradition of chhaupadi and suffering as a medical anthropological study among the women of these places and facilitates further study on the same group.

1.6 Organization of the Study

Organization of the study was made the subject matters in different chapter. Therefore, this divided into different chapter and topics to make the study easy and to draw the attention of others towards this.

Which is starting from Introduction, which is being followed by chapter Two thus it consists of Review of the literature, review on access urbanization of status and theoretical frameworks of the study.

Chapter Three deals with research methodology and consists of research design, rational of selection of the study area to generate necessary data analysis to illustrate for the study.

Chapter Four presents analysis and interpretation of the data.

Finally, chapter five deals about the conclusions are given the some suggestions in brief.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, a brief analysis is presented on the theoretical approach about the study of Chhaupadi Pratha and suffering. The review of literature on ‘Chhaupadi pratha: women condition in the society and suffering’ provides the theoretical framework about the study of the women’s problem and suffering. The review of literature is divided into different section: and each section distinctly describes based on the mentioned sub-title below i.e. about the chhaupadi system and the relationship of women, their culture, and society that deals women’s condition, experience, the process of chhupadi and their suffering. Similarly it deals with the women experience to the local context in specific given society and describes the researches that have been carried out in the Nepalese context.

A literature review is simply a summary of what existing scholarship knows about a particular topic. It is always based on secondary sources, that is, what other people have already written on the subject; it is not concerned about discovering new knowledge or information. As such, it is a prelude to further research, a digest of scholarly opinion. A literature review should focus only on the relevant academic literature: popular or non-academic sources may be brought in occasionally to illustrate a point, but the central interest is always on the data collected or the theories put together by recognized experts in the field. A literature review will try to look at as much of this existing research as possible. It will review major scholarly books in the relevant area, but will also take a keen interest in journal articles, which in many subjects give more up-to date material (Mishra, 2010).

2.1 Theoretical Literature

Keeping this in mind I have employed various theoretical approaches in the study, for example, as Suffering Theory as well as Feminism Primarily the study concentrated its focus on the suffering model approach of health and behavior. Suffering can be defined as a state of severe distress associated with events that threaten the intactness of

the person. It can occur in relation to any aspect of the person in the realm of his social role, his group identification, his relation with self or body, or in relation to family or relation with a personal or transcendental source of meaning. Suffering never affects only one part of a person but it affects the whole being; i.e. physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and social aspects (Oreopoulos, 2005).

The concept of suffering in the field of health and behaviors is widely used for the emic understanding of people about their notion and concept about health, how they are suffered from social norms, values, rituals and systems. Social problem related to women health and their existence and practices made by them in the local context. Therefore, it is important to know how people as a cultural being relate to, talk about and frame their perception and notion about existing health problem created by the different aspects in the society. People's experience is the important source for understanding adaptive strategies and their collective ideas about prevailing health problem created by social system. While sex refers to the physical differences of the body, Gender concerns the psychological, social & cultural differences between male & females. The distinction between sex & gender is fundamental (Giddens, 1993).

Therefore Chhaupadi Pratha as a social system is followed only by women but not men. Only women suffer from the chhaupadi pratha. In the same society the women follow the system and the man do not. That difference is the subject of the feminism which is trying to show in this study. Moreover, the study has used both suffering and feminism to examine the linkage between healths and people's religious belief. Particularly, this approach has focused on the woman's practices and their experiences about social system. Living in chhaupadi goth, staying far from everything, Keeping busy to hard work, keeping low voice to other, having without nutritious foods like this work are responsible for woman suffer. This suffering and feminist framework is used for accessing the various religious system for affecting health of woman in the local context.

The united nation field bulletin on "chhaupadi in far west" shows that most women follow all the norms of the system. However, some women residing near the district headquarters have started to drink milk and eat milk products. The number of

girls attending school during menstruation has significantly increased recently. At the same time, even educated women still hesitate to visit temples or prepare food in case they may anger the Gods or Goddesses and bring misfortune. A female NGO worker in Dadeldhura reported that it's very difficult to convince the older generation to abandon Chhaupadi. Neighbors are said to put pressure on the woman or her family when they do not follow the system (Kafle, 2011).

Chhaupadi practice, which is characterized by banishment of women during menstruation from their usual residence due to supposed impurity, is in existence in the mid- and far-western regions of Nepal. It has been criticized for violation of basic human rights of women and also for its associated physical and mental health impacts. Despite having been outlawed, it continues to exist due to illiteracy, superstitious beliefs, gender disparity and community endorsement of the practice. It is necessary to increase the ongoing social awareness among affected Nepali communities about the natural character of menstruating and the harmful practice of Chhaupadi in order to eliminate this violence against women while also addressing the community's concerns (Cameron, 1998).

Chhaupadi is a practice where girls/women are not allowed to enter inside the house, touch water and milk for 4 to 7 days during their menstruation period. They must stay in a hut outside, identified as a chhaupadi house. a mixed method study (Quan+Qual), was conducted to find out the practice of school going female adolescents regarding chhaupadi practice in Doti district of Far-western region of Nepal. The findings also revealed that chhaupadi ritual has been practiced by the people despite of the fact that it has serious effect in the health of the female. Also, it has threatened the security of the women, sometimes resulting brutal consequences like rape and death of the women. The study concluded that beside all other factors responsible for continuation of chhaupadi ritual, there is a strong superstitious belief that various miss happenings will occur due to violation of chhaupadi ritual. Therefore, it is necessary to increase awareness by lunching awareness programs and should be emphasized in school curriculum as well (Mathur 2008).

Thomas Long (2006) explores the experience of suffering in order to see to what extent it can be understood within the context of the human condition without diverting the reality of suffering or denying the meaning of human existence and divine reality. Particular attention is given to describing and interpreting what he calls the transcendent dimensions of suffering with the intent of showing that in the experience of suffering persons come up against the limits of what can be accounted for in ordinary terms and point towards transcendent reality. In religious faith the transcendent dimensions of suffering may be understood to come together with other transcendent dimensions of experience in a more distinctive or focused encounter with transcendent reality. The conception of God that is suggested by the transcendent dimensions of suffering, however, differs from the model of God in western theism as an absolutely transcendent, all powerful, immutable and impassible being. Suffering is frequent in life, often ensuing when a wished-for state cannot be realized. One common response to suffering is mourning. Mourning may take problematic forms, and this can lead to chronic denial or embitterment or despair or stagnation. On the other hand, mourning may occur in such manner as to facilitate meaning in life, empathy, caring, and perspective. One's "myths" and beliefs often affect the mourning process and may themselves be influenced by that process. Different myths accompany or influence different identity patterns and life-styles. The core concepts of religion are often associated with certain myths and beliefs that may inspire meaning and courage, caring and wisdom (Schmitt, 1988).

These literatures deal with the Meaning and definition of suffering and qualitative analysis of various phenomena within the society. These articles explain how different phenomena suffer human. In these articles suffering theory is used. According to these articles I have analyzed the Chhaupadi system through suffering perspectives. After the review of these literatures I have analyzed the issue chhaupadi Pratha through suffering Theory from micro level. Like this I have done my research complete using the methods of qualitative research methods to collect information from inner side of respondent.

Lynn Bennett (Bennett, 1983) had conducted anthropological study on the status of High caste Brahmin-Chhetri women in a village named as Narikot which is proximate to Kathmandu. Using field work method such as life history, participant observation, and

genealogical analysis, Bennet has tried to explore zstatus of high caste women in different social setting such as in husband and their natal homes connecting it with Hindu Patrilineal ideology. For Bennet, position between men and women cannot be understood in isolation from Hindu culture. Her study shows that women have different social status in affinal and consanguinal relationship. Due to patrilineal Hindu values, high caste Brahamin-Chhetri women have low social status, they are underneath of their husband, and treated as impure or polluted in their husband's home while in their natal home they are treated as pure or sacred or the mythic form of Goddess.

In their affinal relationship women have to be obedient, and dutiful to their in laws and family elders. They are bounded by so many responsibilities and observance of practices. They have to be observance of strict fast of Tij, menstrual taboos, and strict kitchen purity. Different behaviours and practices in different homes have root on the myth that celibacy as pure and procreation as impure. In addition to it they do have concern to control women's sexuality. For Bennet, observance of strict ritual practices such as Tij fast and menstrual taboos as substitute of control and oppression. For Bennett, behind the low status of women, it has root on patriline Hindu culture. The swoshthani vrata katha, other traditional Hindu texts, and deep seated patriline Hindu values result hierarchy, status, and power differentials of women. Bennet has looked status of women from the stand point of patriline Hindu ideology. She has followed the line of Domount. She has not connected the lower status of women with economy and power. She did not analyze the issue associating it with property inheritance system. Women do not have right to property even up to now. And they do not have access to power. These may be the other causes that led that lower status of women. So Bennet has very less concerns with the dynamics of economy and political power (Bennett, 1983).

Sunil Kumar Joshi and Jagannath Kharel (2008) explain in Violence against Women in Nepal – An Overview: historically, violence against women and girls has been in existence and Widespread in Nepali society but still unreported problem in Nepal. Violence against women has started being openly discussed and addressed only in the last decade. The lens of looking at women has changed significantly that shifted from being child bearers and providers of health care in the 60"s and 70"s to a slow realization of

their critical productive role in rural economy in the 80"s, and to the recognition of women as citizens in need of equal legal and political rights in the 90"s. Without comprehensive, carefully documented research on violence against women, it is impossible to know whether women are experiencing more violence in some countries than in others, or whether they are reporting it more often. In the absence of proper research, it is difficult to compare and assess the scope of violence as well as the effectiveness of programmes to end it. With research, advocates can better understand obstacles and develop appropriate methods for combating them. Research can motivate government and civil society to take action once the extent of a problem is proven. These literatures deal with the women and menstruation as social problems.

Chhaupadi Pratha is a also social problem about women's health. Similarly chhaupadi pratha described social problem like these article. After the review of these literatures I have analyzed the issue chhaupadi Pratha as a social problem from micro level. Like this I have done my research complete using the methods of qualitative research methods to collect information from inner side of respondent.

2.3 Chhaupadi Pratha: An Overview

The word chhaupadi is Achham's local Rawte language word. Chhau is menstruation and Padi means woman. Chaupadi Pratha generally prevails in Far Western region of Nepal. There is only few literatures can be found related to the chhaupadi pratha among them few of the literatures I found. Nirmal Kandel, Amar Raj Bhanddari, Jaya Lamichhane analyze in their article "Chhue, Chhaupadi and Chueekula Pratha" (n.d.) – Menstrual Sheds: Examples of Discriminatory Practices against Women in the Mid- and Far-Western Regions of Nepal: analyze Women as "Impure" or "Unclean" During Menstruation and Post- Partum Periods" "Chhue, Chhaupadi and Chueekula Pratha" are discriminatory practices against women during their menstrual periods and the post-partum period.

The articles about women health are related with menstruation hygiene which is also known as chhaupadi period some part of Nepal. There is only mentioned about health and hygiene from health perspectives. But this study analyzed social and cultural

process of menstruation system also related with health. How these menstruation system become women suffer and how they perceive it is the main theme of this study.

Women are the suppressed group in Nepali society their status is low rather than men in the society. About women status in society are written many literatures but some of them according Hinduism among them are mentioned here. In general, in each society there are socio-cultural norms and prescriptions regarding the knowledge, attitude, preference, behavior of people, etc. In Hindu culture, menstruation (a reproductive health element) is considered religiously impure and ceremonially unclean. There are many socio-cultural taboos being practiced by females during menstruation. Apart from validity, these taboos help women maintain menstrual hygiene as a prerequisite to avoid reproductive health problems. Therefore, this paper attempts to examine such practices in the study area and the factors influencing the practice of social taboos. The Socio-cultural taboo Index developed is to classify women into three categories as low, moderate and high practice of social taboos. The results show that a very strong practiced attitude among the women is clearly evident in keeping them away from religious and ceremonial participation. Surprisingly, this practice is comparatively high among urban respondents. Except religious and ceremonial related taboos, women do not seem favorable to practice of other social-taboos. Conclusion: At least a strong belief in “menstruation is religiously impure and ceremonially unclean” makes them practice menstrual hygiene (Selvi & Ramchandran, 2012).

Although menstruation is a biological process that occurs for women of a sexually mature age, many cultures associate it with symbols that shape and affect women's lives within these societies. This thesis examines orthodox Hindu beliefs about the origin and meaning of menstruation, which is fundamentally viewed negatively (i.e., adharmically). Drawing upon sources from the earliest to more recent Dharmasastra literature, the thesis demonstrates that orthodox Hindu menstrual taboos derive from menstruation's adharmic associations, which in turn affect attitudes towards women. The Dharmasastras also attempt to realign women with dharma by prescribing appropriate roles for them and act in tandem with the Hindu goddess tradition. Orthodox

interpretations of Hindu goddesses configure these deities to serve as dharmic models "for" "and" of women, thereby transmitting dharma to women in ways that are perhaps more meaningful, accessible, and effective than the sastric literature alone (Hembroff, 2010).

In the case of the Melmaruvatur temple, there is the traditional category of "revelation;" this time, by the Goddess herself to a male devotee. In other cases, it is male or female leaders who wanted to see reform'. The reform itself is not understood as anything new or innovative; there are ample narratives in the more than three millennia of texts which provide precedents. These stories are retrieved, valorized and used as precedents for current changes. One can also see the very diversity, plurality, and lack of centralized authority in Hindu traditions as a way in which changes happen. The many traditions - Sanskrit, vernacular, Brahmanical etc, interact constantly. While the Sanskritization elements are well known, the vernacularizing of the many traditions have allowed for a lot of innovative practices. These spaces have allowed women to take on various leadership roles including that of sacerdotal functions. And, finally, one may point to the Sanskrit sources -- the sources of dharma given in the various dharma sastras. These four different sources allow for innovation. Many texts point to the Vedas and the smriti literature as sources for dharma. A third source is the exemplary behavior (sadachara) of the righteous people. The last source is considered atma tushti. While this is frequently translated as "conscience," it is also seen as that which gives peace or contentment to one's soul. Seen from this perspective, there is plenty of room for change, room to negotiate gender and sacerdotal functions, room for the contentment that comes in making right what many perceive as centuries of gender or caste inequality (Narayanan, 2005).

In Hindu culture menstruation system is considered as dominating practice. That is why Hindu followers keep it according to culture and it became cause of suffering for women. This thesis focused on how society takes menstruation which are cause of women suffering.

2.2 Empirical Literature

The qualitative research on "chhaupadi Pratha: women condition and suffering" was conducted in Duni VDC Acham. The main aim of this research is to determine the social problems in women health. The data was collected by using focus group discussion and in-depth interview. These research shows that in Duni "Chhaupadi" in Duni VDC Achham is practiced in which women are kept in a small shed during menstruation period. Chhaupadi system limits women's capability to live a safe, healthy, and educated life forbidding women from anything to touch during their menstruation period. Women are considered as impure during the period of menstruation. It is a violation of women's human rights. It restricts women's human development such as capabilities to be survived, to be well nourished, capability to be safe, educated capabilities to get health facilities, and longer life, capability to be free from social servitude and superstitions (Kafle, 2011).

The qualitative study on "Chhaupadi in Nepal: Towards a Harm Reduction Strategy" conducted in three district Acham, Kailali and Bajura. The data was collected by using focus group discussion, in-depth interview, organizational interview and observation. This research shows that the goal of eliminating chhaupadi needs to be preceded by the de-stigmatization of menstruation as a physiological process. This will only happen once we start informing people what menstruation actually is. Any strategy for harm reduction must take into account both the fears of the local people and their right to practice their own religion. It is also important to keep in mind that more restrictions seem to be imposed by the community than by the families. This presents a window of opportunity for chhaupadi harm reduction efforts as individual families are evidently moving towards change by loosening restrictions within the households. It is useful to keep in mind that in championing the rights of some, we do not want to infringe on the rights of others who believe in the system and want to continue it. We must respect religion, but advocate for its transformation to forms that respect all persons (Luitel, 2001).

The article on "Chhaupadi: The affliction of menses in Nepal" shows that The element offer involved with the practice, along with pressure from the community, are big parts of why the women continue to put themselves through Chhaupadi. Crop failure, death and disease, and water shortages have been blamed on women not strictly following the rules of the practice. Families believe that misfortune was brought on them by the gods if a menstruating woman is allowed in the home or any religious places. In the eyes of many in remote villages of western Nepal, ignoring Chhaupadi would bring ruin to everyone. Old beliefs die hard, even when rape and underage pregnancy are the tragic consequences (Luitel, 2001).

Menstrual exile, also known as Chhaupadi, is a tradition of “untouchability” in far-western Nepal. Based on the observational cross-sectional study was conducted with 107 sample size in two school of Aacham district far western Nepal. Study shows that the majority of the girls (n = 77, 72percent) practiced exile, or *Chhaupadi*, during their menstruation, including 3 (4percent) exiled to traditional *Chhau* sheds, 63 (82percent) to livestock sheds, and 11 (14percent) to courtyards outside their home. The remaining girls (n = 30, 28percent) stayed inside the house, yet practiced some form of menstrual taboos. Of the 77 observed living spaces where the girls stayed during exile, only 30percent (n = 23) had a toilet facility. Most exiled girls (97.4percent) were restricted from eating dairy products. Participants reported having various psychological problems, including loneliness and difficulty sleeping while practicing *Chhaupadi*. Three of the girls were physically abused; nine were bitten by a snake. Notably high proportions of the living spaces lacked ventilation/windows (n = 20, 26percent), electricity (n = 29, 38percent), toilets (n = 54, 70percent) and a warm blanket and mattress for sleeping (n = 29, 38percent) (Mishra, 2010).

The observational cross-sectional study on "chhaupadi Pratha and education among girls" was conducted in three district (Mugu, kalikot and Jumla) by Action work Nepal. The total sample size from three district is 661. these study shows that there were altogether 233 participants (37.8percent) who do not attend school during menstruation (including school left, never attended and absent during menstruation). Nearly 20percent do not attend school because of health problem during menstruation and 19percent

responded that they felt uneasy to go, where 16percent remained absent cause of shyness on those days. And still 15percent have to stay in separate place strictly in those days so they remain at home, and in the same way other 5percent were not allowed by parents to attend school (Mathur, 2008).

According to Radha Paudel, head of the grassroots organization Action Works Nepal (AWON), as many as 95percent of girls and women in Nepal's mid- and far-reaching western regions practice *Chhaupadi*, with the great majority of them banished to cowsheds. Yet Nepalese women all over the country – even Nepalese women abroad still practice the tradition to varying degrees. *Chhaupadi* has been linked to a host of psychological and physical illnesses. that 77percent of girls and women felt humiliated during their periods, and two-thirds reported feeling lonely and scared when staying in cowsheds (Kafle,2011).

Chhaupadi culture in Nepal is that threat wherein menstruating women have to live outside of the home in a shed-like dwelling. The study aims to determine the factors of reproductive health problems related to Chhaupadi. A cross-sectional study was performed with women of menstrual age (N = 672) in Kailali and Bardia districts of Nepal. Data were collected with stratified sampling. Results reveal that one fifth (21percent) of households used Chhaupadi. Condition of livelihood, water facility, and access during menstruation and precisely the Chhaupadi stay was associated ($P < .001$) with the reproductive health problems of women. The study concludes that Chhaupadi is a major threat for women's health. (Upreti, 2010).

Awareness about reproductive health, inclusive of menstruation hygiene, is generally lacking in adolescent girls because of sociocultural barricades in which they grow up. A cross-sectional study was undertaken among 1,160 college-going adolescent girls aged 15–19 years. Data were collected using a pretested questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS, version 19. The study showed a response rate of 91.63percent. Around 24.7percent participants were aware about menstruation before menarche, 48percent showed dysmenorrhea, and mothers were the main source of information. More than half of the students showed certain beliefs regarding menstruation and were also following

restrictions. Overall, 78.9percent of adolescent girls preferred sanitary pad as menstrual absorbent, while 25.6percent of the girls were using both cloth and sanitary pad (Kafle, 2011)

The quantitative and quantitative observational cross-sectional study on "Abolition of Chhaupadi in the Far and Mid-Western Region of Nepal Baseline Report" was conducted in Aacham district. The total sample size of the study is 367. The data should be collected thorough FGD, observation, in-depth interview and key informant interview. This study shows that. The most prevalent discrimination is related to the access to water since 48.9percent stated to be only allowed to bath or wash clothes in the Chhaupadi Dhara and therefore are not allowed to touch water taps. The second most prevalent discrimination is the access to same quantity and variety of food since 37.9percent of the girls and women were not allow eating the same variety of food, mainly milk and milky products. The participation in community/family level cultural and religious activities is another relevant discrimination since 32.6percent of the respondents reported not being allowed to participate. Last but not least, 19percent of them have slept in a hut or Chhaupadi, 14.1percent have not being allowed to talk to males, only 11.4 percent stated not being allowed to read/write or touch books while. School attendance is one of the less prevalent discriminations .

The term “suffering” is borrowed from medical sector. More than illness, disease, feelings of pain, stress, insecurity, etc are called suffering. Feeling of uncomfortability, feeling of insecurity, these feelings come out by many causes i.e. accident of a person, death of a person and insecurity by the society. It is very vague term/concept because it includes different condition of suffering. Suffering is surely a given in consciousness, a certain "psychological content," like the lived experience of color, of sound, of contact, or like any sensation. But in this "content" itself, it is in-spite-of-consciousness, unassembled. It is unassembled and "unassemblability (Oreopoulos, 2005).

There are many explaining suffering literature deal with illness, disease, physical pain and mental health. Some of the suffering theories are women and health relationship and its impact on women lives.

Oreopoulos (2005) has defined suffering as a state of severe distress associated with events that threaten the intactness of the person. It can occur in relation to any aspect of the person in the realm of his social role, his group identification, his relation with self or body, or in relation to family or relation with a personal or transcendental source of meaning. Suffering never affects only one part of a person but it affects the whole being; i.e. physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and social aspects. Suffering can occur when one does not expect it, or the patient does not report it when it is expected. Also, a person can suffer enormously at the distress of another, especially a loved one finally, as I mentioned in my introduction, suffering is a unique personal experience and can only be defined by the person who suffers. He talks about pain and suffering.

It is believed that the greater the pain the greater the suffering but this is not always the case. Thus childbirth can be extremely painful yet it is considered to be rewarding. Also patients can write from pain and not suffer if they know what is causing the pain; on the other hand, an individual may report considerable suffering from a minor discomfort if they do not know its source. The dimensions of suffering from terminal cancer are physical, i.e. pain, loneliness and isolation, psychosocial-fear, anxiety, depression, despair, and spiritual, i.e. search for the meaning of life and suffering. Suffering in a hopeless situation; when confronted with a hopeless situation, facing a fate that cannot be changed. In these circumstances, what then matters is the human potential at its best, which is to transform a personal tragedy into a triumph. When we are no longer able to change a situation – we are challenged to change ourselves. The meaning of love; Love is the only way to grasp another human being in the innermost core of his personality. Love enables one to see the essential traits and features in the beloved person, but even more the potential in him that has not yet been realized. By his love the loving person enables the beloved to achieve his potential.

Clara Han (2013) in *Suffering and pictures of anthropological inquiry* a response to comments on *Life in debt*; wants to elaborate a few concerns with this appraisal and the placement of his book in relation to it. First, in what way might we speak of an “ethnography of suffering”? Here, the “of” acts to create a sense that there are given agreements as to what might or might not fall under “suffering.” Yet, it is precisely this

givenness of agreements that so much anthropological work has sought to problematize. This imaginary, suffering is a (human) capacity to feel pain which is equated with or interchangeable with misery; in which boundaries between cruelty and indifference and care and generosity are secure; and in which the “suffering subject” could be read along stable axes of good and evil. Yet, far more than “simply providing descriptions of harsh lives,” anthropological attention to suffering has provided some of the most thoughtful work on the difficulty of a universally recognizable human. He might ask if indeed this anthropological work is simply describing a capacity of humans to feel pain. For, if we consider the bodily aspects of being human that are shared with other animals, He can agree at least on that basis that humans have a capacity to feel pain. This discussion is clearly missing the point: anthropological thought attentive to suffering is neither simply concerned with a capacity to feel pain, nor even ignorance to pain or incapacity to imagine another’s pain. Rather, anthropologists have sought to elaborate problems such as how pain gains expression in language and the stakes in the acknowledgement of pain: what is at stake when that acknowledgment is withheld? This question can be at once political and moral. Perhaps he might more fully appreciate the idea that suffering contains a notion of life. For, the caricature of humans being horrible to other humans eclipses the ways in which the very fabric of life may be frayed by violence and the work of time in reweaving life again: the very modes of relatedness that emerge from and through suffering. In attending to the ways in which life is precariously woven and showing how those conditions of precariousness may counter the official version of Chile, *Life in debt* expresses his aspiration to be attentive, watchful, and responsive to the suffering in this world.

Kapil Dahal (2010) in “widowhood, Life Situation and Suffering: A Medical Anthropological Perspective” has shown how Maoists lead war put the people specially widow women in the situation of suffering from their society itself and ultimately impacts occurred in the life hardship of the widow women as well as physical health and created socio-psycho stress on them. Dahal has discussed the coping strategies followed by displaced widows of the war. He has mentioned that these widows have altered the ways of their lives to cope with their newly emerged social, economic and cultural situations. He has described that many men were killed during this battle and their killing

had several effects on the lives of their relatives, family members, and wives. And the culture- untimely demise of husband cause a woman to be a guilty of her husband's death and often is called Bokshy or Allachchhini in hindu social context- is tied to our society which claiming a woman as misfortune to her husband make them compelled to leave their family, relatives and society.

The factors include the patient's psychological and emotional state, especially his or her past experiences, extant mood and anxiety about anticipated consequences. Physicians should not rely on a simple 'disease model' when treating low back pain but should try to identify the bio-psychosocial factors involved and should understand that pain and suffering are not always synonymous. This paper focuses on the problems presented by non-specific low back pain to health care providers and to disability management. Non-specific low back pain refers to complaints of low back pain with no evidence of associated fractures, sciatica, a surgically correctable condition, or systemic disease. It is imperative to distinguish between pain and suffering, and thus to separate 'pain as a signal' from the reactions and emotions displayed by individuals who 'have pain'. Pain and suffering are distinct, and that there can be pain (or other dire symptoms) without suffering and suffering without such symptoms'. He characterizes suffering as an emotional state triggered by anticipation of threat to one's self or identity. Budd has added to our understanding of the concept of suffering. He noted that present mood, as well as the anticipated future, influences responses to body states. He characterized suffering as occurring '... when we assess ourselves in a situation and don't like where we are, where we have been, or where we are going and we can take no actions to close this gap'. Suffering may be the ambient mood state of the person at the time the alleged or reported pain problem began or was first perceived and labeled. Alternatively, when there is nociceptive stimulation, the prevailing mood may become suffering when the future is anticipated (Fordyce, 1994).

Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman (1996) describe in *The Appeal of Experience; The Dismay of Images: Cultural Appropriations of Suffering in our Times*; Suffering is one of the existential grounds of human experience; it is a defining quality, a limiting experience in human conditions. Images of suffering are appropriated to appeal

emotionally and morally both to global audiences and to local populations. Indeed, those images have become an important part of the media. As "infotainment" on the nightly news, images of victims are commercialized; they are taken up into processes of global marketing and business competition. The existential appeal of human experiences, their potential to mobilize popular sentiment and collective action, and even their capability to witness or offer testimony are now available for gaining market share. This globalization of suffering is one of the more troubling signs of the cultural transformations of the current era: troubling because experience is being used as a commodity and through this cultural representation of suffering, experience is being remade, thinned out, and distorted. It is important to avoid essentializing, naturalizing, or sentimentalizing suffering. There is no single way to suffer; there is no timeless or spaceless universal shape to suffering. There are communities in which suffering is devalued and others in which it is endowed with the utmost significance.

The meanings and modes of the experience of suffering have been shown by historians and anthropologists alike to be greatly diverse. Individuals do not suffer in the same way, any more than they live, talk about what is at stake or respond to serious problems in the same ways. Pain is perceived and expressed differently, even in the same community. Extreme forms of suffering? survival from the Nazi death camps or the Cambodian catastrophe? are not the same as the "ordinary" experiences of poverty and illness. We can speak of suffering as a social experience in at least two ways that are relevant to this essay: 1) Collective modes of experience shape individual perceptions and expressions. Those collective modes are visible patterns of how to undergo troubles, and they are taught and learned, sometimes openly, often indirectly. 2) Social interactions enter into an illness experience (for example, a family dealing with the dementia of a member with Alzheimer's disease or a close network grieving for a member with terminal cancer). As these examples suggest, relationships and interactions take part, sometimes a central part, in the experience of suffering.

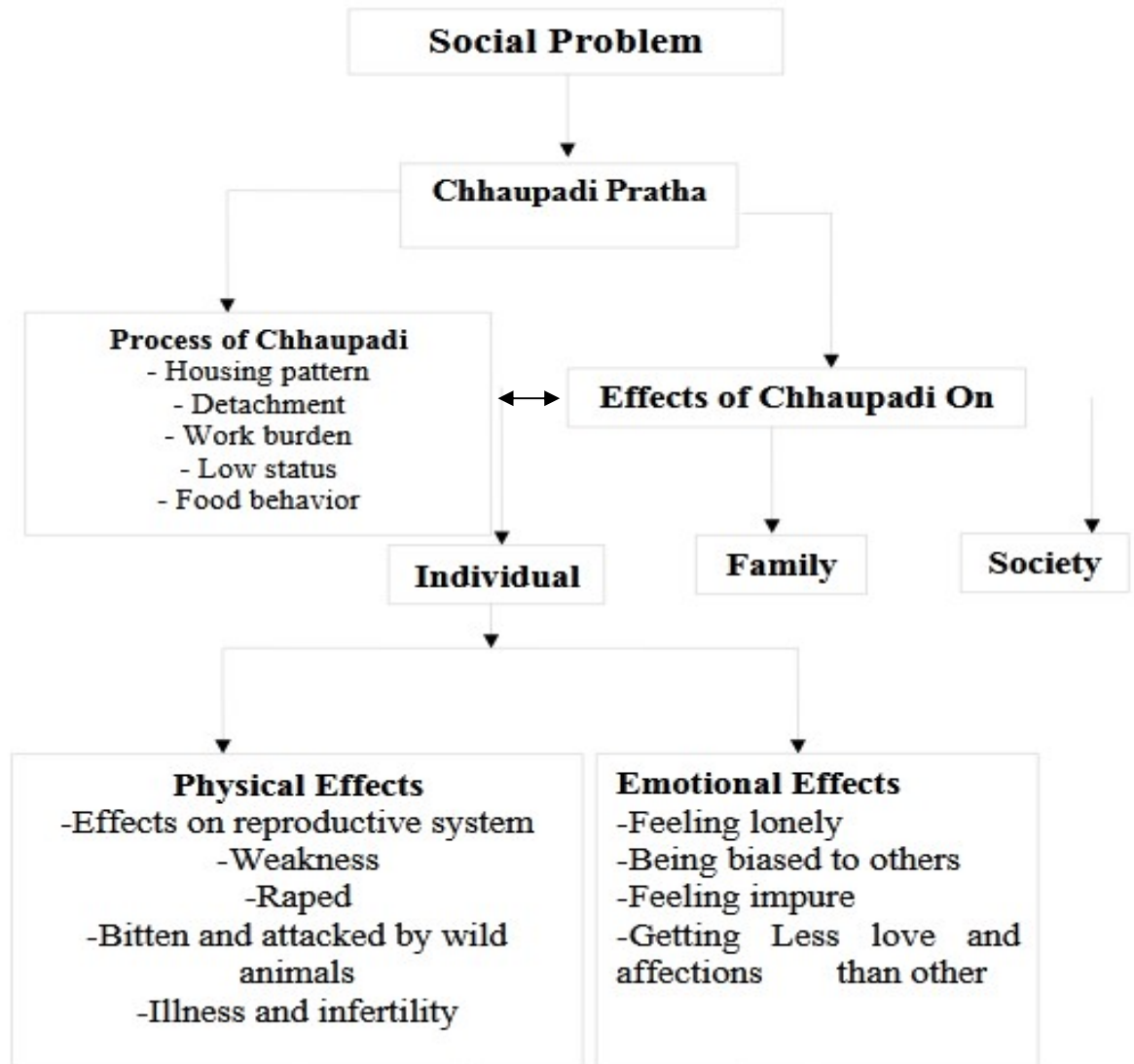
Arthur Kleinman and Joan Kleinman (1997) in "Suffering and its professional transformation: toward an ethnography interpersonal experience" define experience as an intersubjective medium of micro cultural and infra political processes in which

something is at stake for participants in local worlds. Experience so defined mediates (and transforms) the relationship between context and person, meaning and psychobiology in health and illness and in healing. Building on this theoretical background, an approach to ethnography is illustrated through an analysis of suffering in Chinese society. The embodied memory of a survivor of serious trauma during the Cultural Revolution provides an example. From there, Kleinman & Kleinman go on to describe a framework of indigenous Chinese categories for the analysis of experience - mianzi (face), quanxi (connections), renqing (situated emotion), bao (reciprocity). The paper concludes with a discussion of the existential limits of this and other anthropological approaches to the study of experience as moral process. Suffering engendered by the socially constituted nature of illness through the delegitimation of illness experience in chronic fatigue syndrome. Cultural meanings of physical and mental illness are shown to be reflected in interactions with others to construct an illness reality in which chronic fatigue syndrome is defined as either nonexistent or psychosomatic. Disconfirmation of the subjective experience of illness leads to suffering arising from the threatened stigma of psychological disorder, the alienation resulting from a decision to keep the illness secret, and the shame of being wrong in one's definition of reality. Patients also develop strategies for contesting the definition of chronic fatigue syndrome as "not real." Delegitimation merits further exploration as a category for experience-near analysis of suffering in medical anthropology (Ware, 1992).

Chhaupadi is the very interesting and hidden issues still existent in the study. It has own process and practices. It should be shown this issue in the world, because there is no more literature found about chhaupadi pratha from academic field but few empirical literatures can be found. Among these literature about chhaupadi only few literature are available therefore, in this relation, the need of more researches and studies from social science perspective in general and anthropology in particular to trace out the local perspective from micro level on chhaupadi and suffering and recognize their experiences. As these purpose study aims to access the local perspective of chhaupadi and suffering and their experiences. It was very helpful to researchers, development organizations and organization involved in health research.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The following conceptual model represents the key elements that shape process of the chhaupadi and experience of women and to the local context, which will make the study easier in the interpretation of the findings for the case of Panhadewel Binayak Municipality 8, Barala Achham. The conceptual framework of this study is given below, see figure 1.1



(Soure: Researcher)

Figure : 1 Conceptual Framework

The figure 1.1 shows existing social problem in Achham which is known as Chhaupadi Pratha. Within the Chhaupadi Pratha women should follow such process of norms and values: should live in chhaupadi goth, should stay far from everything, should keep busy to hard work, should keep low voice to other, should have without nutritious food. Chhaupadi pratha affects Individual as well as family and society. Chhaupadi Pratha directly affects in individual Health. Individual affects can be divided in two types' Physical affects and Emotional affects. In individual such physical effects are shown. Weakness can be seen in women health, she can be raped, can be bitten and attacked by wild animals, can be ill or infertile and can be affects reproductive system of the women. Emotional effects are like this woman fills lonely herself, she is being biased, fills impure and gets less love and affections. The woman is suffering cause of these physical and psychological effects. So this figure shows how woman suffer from Chhaupadi Pratha clearly.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design

Descriptive cross-sectional Study was conducted to assess the factor associated with impact of chaupadi pratha in rural area of Panchadewal Binayak Municipality ward No. 8, Achham. Only quantities data was included in the study.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Panchadewal Binayak Municipality ward No. 8, Achham. Panchadewal Binayak is a Municipality, which is located in Achham district, Sudurpashchim Province of Nepal. Panchadewal Binayak has total 9 wards, which are scattered across 148 square kilometers of geographical area. According to 2022 Census conducted by Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), Panchadewal Binayak Municipality had total population of 27,485.

3.3 Population and Sample Size

All the women's of reproductive age (15-49) years in Panchadewal Binayak Municipality ward No. 8, Achham where 408. Ammongthe age between 15to 49 years only 40 women had taken as sample.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

All the 408 women's of age between 15 to 49 years 40 women were taken in sample by use purpose sampling methods.

3.5 Data collection technique

First take a consent from respondent by making effective rapport building. Then, collect the data through one to one interview by using the semi-structures questionnaire. And recorded carefully.

3.6. Ethical consideration

- Verbal informed consent was taken from the participant before collecting the information.
- Participants were assured that confidentiality and privacy was maintained.
- Participants was assured that the collected information was only for study purpose.
- The bio-ethical research principles was adopted during the research and its publication.
- Ethical approval letter was taken from NHRC before conduction of research.
- Approval letter was taken from college before conduction of research.

3.7 Limitations of the study

Every study has its own limitation and more than one particular person bonding in certain time, perspective and sources cannot possible to study whole aspect. So, there is some limitation in any research and this research is no exception either. The limitations of the research area are as follow:

- The research limited to Panchadewal Binayak Municipality ward no. 8, Achham.
- The study was also limited in terms of time and resources.
- This study is about a village and women age group of 15 to 49.
- The finding from the study may be not generalized other place than Far western provine of Nepal.
- This study emphasis on mentally, physically, psychologically, socially and religiously effects on women health from chhaupadi pratha.
- There are many cases of resistance which hold vary significant to document and I could not concentrate on it because my primary focus was on how and what women suffer from the Chhaupadi system.

3.8 Data Analysis and Interpretation Methods

Data analysis and interpretation methods in research encompass a range of techniques and processes aimed at extracting meaningful insights from collected data. This involves organizing, cleaning, and processing the data to uncover patterns, relationships, and trends. Common methods include statistical analysis, qualitative coding

and thematic analysis, content analysis, and data visualization. The goal is to transform raw data into actionable knowledge, enabling researchers to address research questions, checklist and draw informed conclusions that contribute to the broader understanding of the subject under investigation. The choice of methods depends on the research design, data type, and research objectives, with the ultimate aim of producing credible and reliable research outcomes.

After collecting the data from interview schedule, it was carefully checked to remove the possible errors. The collected information was tabulated in the master tables and paichart, graph chart. Then the data were classified and tabulated in different tables and mean tables under different headings and sub-headings by using mathematical and numerical procedure. Finally, the data were interpreted comparing it with national data.

CHAPTER : FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Socio-Economic of Respondents

The analysis attempts to analyze the information received from the questionnaire observation and informal discussion. Data from survey is tabulated. Analysis has been carried out according to the sections included in the questioner sheet. Out of 40 respondents selected this information female participation in cooperatives is praise worthy.

4.1.1 Age-wise Structure of the Respondents

Researcher have presented the age structure of respondents of sample in the study area. The maximum number of respondent belonged to age group 25-34 years. The table has presented the age group on present of the respondents.

Table 1

Age structure of the Respondents

Age Group	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
16-24	10	25.0
25-34	15	37.5
35-44	6	15.0
45-49	9	22.5
Total	40	100.0

Source : Field Survey, 2024

Result from table shows that majority i.e. 37.5 percent of members age group is 25-34. It means that age group of members are to be a productive of age group, they are more energetic and entrepreneur to do self business and they involved in the income generation. There is only 15 percent of members are belongs from 35.44 age group. It means, that age group of members are to be unproductive age group and they are

dependent on other.

4.1.2 Family Size of the Respondents

Table 2 gives the family size of respondent interviewed in quantative society.

Table 2

Family Size of the Respondents

Family	No. of the Respondents	Percentage	Family Size
Less than 5	10	25.0	49.9
5 to 8	25	62.5	42.9
More than 9	5	12.5	7.2
Total	40	100.0	100.0

Source : Field Survey, 2024

Family size of less than 5 is 49.9 percent, 5-8 group is 42.96 person, more than 9 group is 7.2 percent respectively. This shows that large population are living under a family which have less than five members. But here, is survey most of respondents belongs from 5 to 8 number of family size. By comparing with national census more percentage of people live in 5 to 8 family size in study area. However this is only 42.9 percent according to national census. In the study are, due to economic and social factors like high level of poverty, lack of education, traditional social norms and values the large number of people are live in large family size (CBS, 2022).

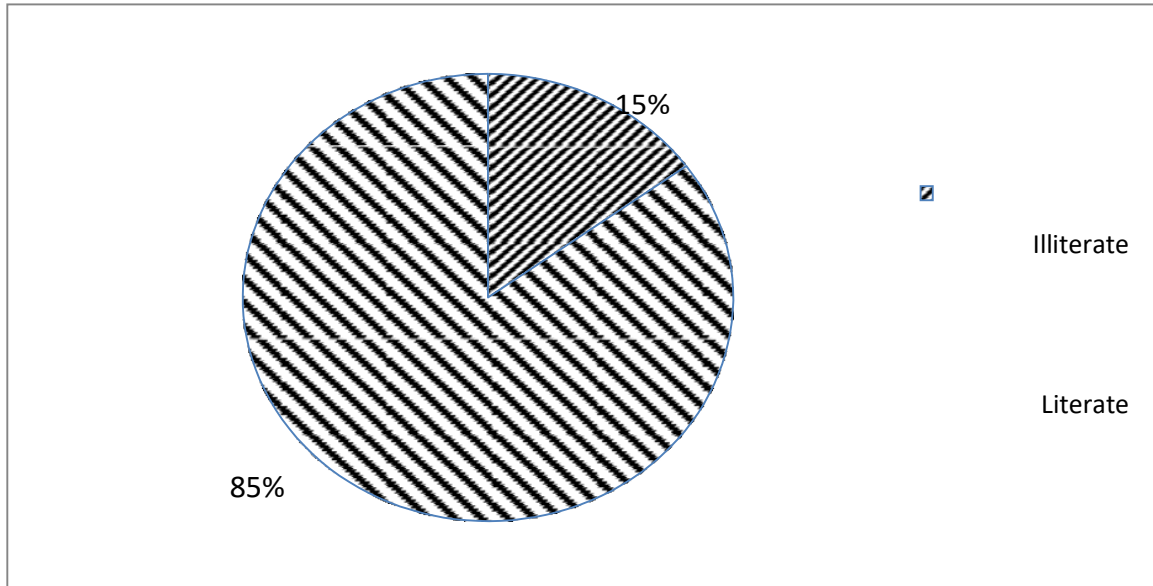
4.1.3 Educational Status of the Respondents

Education plays a most important role in the economic development of the nation. without education, development is not possible. Educational status of a people plays a key role in the effort of any endeavor to uplift the society from repression and scarcity

needs less to say it has a positive in the success of rural people.

Figure 1

Educational Status of Sample



Source : Field Survey, 2024

The study shows that 85 percent of the respondents are literate whereas 15 percent are illiterate. Out of the 40 respondents selected 25 male and 9 female are literate, 3 male and 3 female are illiterate. That means the majority of literate members are involved in cooperatives. The cooperatives have major purpose is literacy in society by campaigning, giving loan in education.

4.1.4 Ethnic Composition of the Respondents

The study area are Brahmin, Cheetri, Janajati and Dalit. There is not any discrimination towards Brahman, Chhetri, Janajati and Dalit. In the study area the majority is Brahmin/Chhetri. Ethnic composition of respondent is given below.

Table 4*Ethnic composition of the Respondents*

Caste/Ethnic	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
Brahmin/Chhetri	24	60
Janjati	12	30
Dalit	4	10
Total	40	100

Source : Field Survey, 2024

The table indicates that out of 40, the majority of respondents 60 percents respondents were are Brahmin/Chhetri. There are also other cast, among them Janajati 30 percent, 10 percent of respondents were Dalit. respectively. Brahmin/Chhetri was found largest that means the committee was also formed by upper caste.

4.1.5 Land Holding Size of the Respondents

Nepal is an agricultural country and more than 74 percent of the people is depend on farming. The possession of land considered to have economic and social status.

Table 5*Size of Land Holding of the respondents*

Land Size	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
Below 5 Ropani	25	62.5
5-10 Ropani	10	25.0
Above 10 Ropani	5	12.5
Total	40	100.0

Source : Field Survey, 2024

The land possession shows that most of the families fall under small farmer 25 (62.5%) respondents have land holding below 5 Ropani, 10 (25%) respondents have 5-10 ropani and 5 (12.5%) respondents have above 10 Ropani land size.

4.1.7 Land Tensure Status of the Respondents

The table 7 gives analysis data on land tenure status of the respondents interviewed in the main survey.

Table 7

Land Tenure Status of the respondents

Tenure Status	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
Land Owner	30	75
Tenant	10	25
Total	40	100

Source : Field Survey, 2024.

Out of total respondents 75 percent respondents have their own land and 25 percent respondents cultivate their land as a tenant. Most of the respondents have their own land. It means most of the respondents do not pay rent for the land and all the income from agriculture is not divided for.

4.1.8 Food Sufficiency Status

The below table gives sufficiency status of respondents interviewed during the survey.

Table 8*Food Sufficiency Status*

Status of Food Sufficiency	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
Sufficiency	10	25
Insufficiency	30	75
Total	40	100

Source : Field Survey, 2024

Out of total respondents 25 percent of respondents produce sufficient food their family from their own land and 75 percent respondents do not have sufficient food from their agricultural farm. They engage in agricultural sector but not have sufficient food production for their family members.

4.1.9 Condition of House of the Respondents

The study consist of two types of house structure like concrete and Tatched. The structure of house are presenting at following table at the time of study period.

Table 9*Condition of Houses of the Respondents*

Types of House	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
Concrete	25	62.5
Tatched	15	37.5
Total	40	100

Source : Field Survey, 2024

Out of 40 respondents selected, 62.5 percent respondent live in concrete house

and 37.5 percent respondents live in tached house. That means the maximum respondents are able to increasing their income sources.

4.1.10 Drinking Water of the Respondents

The respondents are asked about the source of drinking water. They invest in small farming and income is generate, after they have to spend in their business/farm.

Use of different sources of drinking water of the respondents is given below.

Table 10

Drinking Water Composition of the Respondents

Sources	Total Number of the Respondent	
	Number	Percentage
Local Source	25	62.5
Pipe water own	10	25.0
Piped Water Public	5	12.5
Total	40	100.0

Source : Field Survey, 2024

The above table present that 62.5 percent used to local source of water, 25 percent of respondents were used to own piped water. Similarly, 12.5 percent of respondents used public piped water. Own water piped has been increased in such type of survey that means the respondents water sources are local.

4.1.11 Toilet Structure of the Respondents

The respondents asked to the questions about the their toilet structure. They are not empowered by economically and socially as well health, so most of the respondents has built hygienic toilet. They are aware to improve in toilet. The structure of toilet

composition of the respondents is given.

Table 11

Toilet Structure of the Respondents

Structure	Total Number of the Respondents	
	No	percent
No Toilet	5	12.5
Local Toilet	35	87.5
Hygienic	0	0
Total	40	100

Source : Field Survey, 2024

The above table shows that 12.5 percent of respondents have no toilet, 87.5 percent of respondents had local toilet. Majority of the respondents had local toilet kachhi type toilet used.

4.2 Physical, Social and Cultural Status of Study Area

There are the mixed settlements in which Khas Chhetris such as Khadka, Saud, Thapa and Dalits live in the Panhadwel Binayal Municipality 8, Barala, Achham. Thakuri families who were the local Rajas despite being very population have ruled over many places in eastern Achham due to their connection with the king and Rana rulers during Rana and Panchayat regime have now been migrated. They were the rulers in many this region. They used to claim them as the successors of princely local king. Though the ordinary Khas Chhetris such as Khadka, Saud and Thapa were great in numbers, they were considered as the subjects of one or two Thakuri family in this village. The scenario was not unlike in the case of other villages. Though the majority population is of Chhetris and Brahmanas, they used to be governed by one or two Thakuris or Shah Families. Shahas or Thakuris were the bearers of most of the tradition that was created considering their economic and political interests. Now Shah ruling families have not been in the village but some of the Thakuris or Shahs have been living at Bazar area of Chhaukhutte from neighbouring. But Thakuris or Shahs have some large populations in other

surrounding study area. In terms of caste they rank the top level in local hierarchy. They have been and still being treated as rajas. They don't marry with ordinary Khas Chhetris and Brahmanas. Brahmanas are considered as priest of Thakuris and ordinary Chhetris. There is a different kind of hierarchy between various castes and Dalit lies in the bottom of that echelon. In Far West Region there is also hierarchy between Chhetris and between Dalits. So the Far West Region is a segregated type of society and the Panhadewel Binayak is also not different from that. The village follows the Hindu tradition and worship so many god and goddesses (Shiva, Shree Krishna, Ganesh, Indra, Nawa Durga, Laxmi and Saraswati etc.) in local level. In each places they have their own deities which are also named as shamans (Dhami/Deota in local vernacular). In addition to believe on local deity or shamans (Dhami), the village also believes on traditional healers (Jaisis). Many superstitions, myth are associated with this local deity or faith healers and traditional healing system which are linked also with the Chhaupadi system. So the local social cultural system is constructed with these multiple institutions, actors and agencies such as caste system, local myth, superstition, values-norms, local deity, and traditional healing system. In house hold level family holds and bears this system and tradition. The village social and cultural system constructed by multiple institutions does not treat Chhaupadi as natural phenomenon. It associates some unlucky happenings with the violations of Chhau rules during the period of menstruation.

4.2.1 Chhau Scenario

In the case of Chaukutte Bazaar the some women did not stay at the chhaupadi goth during my field work period. But in the case of villages, if anyone goes ten minute far from Bazaar towards the village, then the practice is prevalent in each village, and settlement. On entire nine wards except small Bazaar, I found only four houses that were not abiding by the norms of Chhau system through the observation. In terms of caste, the practice is more rigid among lower caste Dalits, and upper caste Thakuris. Though, Thakuris who were very few numbers and currently have migrated at Terai were the strict followers of the tradition. Thakuris were the rulers, who used to claim themselves as local king; live in other many neighboring places strongly followed the tradition. Thakuris live in large numbers in its neighboring villages such as in many places. It is reported that the

Thakuris from more rigid in bearing old customs and tradition. Most of the women from Thakuris families go home only after seven days menstrual cycle. This also applies in the case of local deity or shaman, traditional healers (Jaisi), and Brahmins, and the worshipers of local deity from other various castes. The living status of Chhaupadi women is more worsening and quite complex among Dalit community. However relatively educated and well off families from abovementioned castes are resisting the practice. They treat Chhaupadi system as the tradition of shame which is lowering their status.

4.2.2 Housing Pattern for Chhaupadi

A chhaupadi goth is sometimes built within the household premises, but in other cases, they are isolated from the homes, up to a 100 meter away from the houses. Most sheds can barely fit two people: they tend to be around six feet wide and four feet high and made of mud, stone and wood with no windows. A chhaupadi shed or hut is a simple stone, grass, or stick shelter. The sheds are very unhygienic, unventilated and poorly built. During their seclusion, women have to remain within the shed, often without sufficient clothes or blankets. In some places, there are small sheds built specially for the purpose of seclusion. These tend to be very small and unventilated. Women and girls are :

Case Study 1

Rambha Auji from Duni shared her bitter experiences. Each month during menstruation, she has to stay in her family's cattle shed, which serves as the menstrual hut. She has asked herself why god has given this torture to women. Staying in the shed is horrible; smelling because of its function as a cattle shed. She is even obligated to take her meals in this unclean environment. During menstruation, she is considered to be "impure" or "unclean" during these periods and is regarded as an untouchable by her family members. She has had bitter experiences, rooted in these practices. She once went to clean herself and her clothes in a nearby stream, but villagers and family members accused her of making the stream impure. After several weeks, the problem was rectified, but not until she had assured her fellow villagers that she would not repeating her actions in the future. Elderly people and others in the community hesitated to use the

stream water for a long period. She doesn't have hope that her situation will change after marriage, saying, "My own family doesn't consider or support us during that period, even though we are their own daughters and sisters. Why would the in-laws give us support, when the daughters-in-law are considered secondary?" She believes that this practice is a result of traditional beliefs, taboos and practices. Mrs. Dhankala Kami also has to stay in her family's cattle shed and menstrual hut during her monthly periods. Members of her family and the people of the community consider the time of a woman's period as very "impure". The women have to remain secluded in a separate area and cattle sheds are used for this purpose. Because the village is stricken with poverty, the community cannot construct another shelter for use as a menstrual shed. The community believes that if anything is touched by a menstruating woman, it was come impure and may cause harm to others. If they touch something accidentally, then the item should be cleaned immediately to make it reusable. If the women touch their husband or other family members, then those touched must bathe in order to cleanse themselves of impurities. During these periods, she feels as if she was an animal and, for this reason, wants to share her experience. Even during the winter season, her family's beliefs wouldn't change.

The was forced to stay in the shed without a proper warming mechanism. She had to sleep on the floor with only a layer of straw and a thin blanket for a bed. Her meals were also supplied in the shed and she had to walk a long distance for cleaning early in the morning. On one occasion during the winter season, she fell sick with a high fever, later diagnosed as pneumonia. For her treatment, the family had to bear the high costs, though it was difficult for the poor family. Though the family members were aware of the reasons for her illness, they remain unwilling to change their traditions because of conservative beliefs and social pressures.

4.2.3 Work Load of Chhaupadi Women

Most of the Chhaupadi Women I have talked with were living at the small shed far from the home. Like other Nepalese women, they don't have to cook food for the

family. Menstruating women are not permitted to participate in religious ceremonies. They have to bath everyday and wash clothes using cold water. Answering my question what types of works should you do in your chhaupadi periods Raju Luhar (name changed) says,

“Aba Chhau bhayaka bela hamle ghar bhitra ko sajilo kaam harna millaina, ghar bairako ghas katnya, daura lyaunya, khannya, syaula lyaunya jasa kaam harnu paddo chha”.

They have participated in hard labor out of the house, such as working in the fields, fetching firewood, washing clothes, and so on.

4.2.4 Food Behaviour

All chhaupadi women I have talked with were not allowed to eat dairy product food. They were not allowed to eat meat of sacrificed goats, buffalos, hens and ducks in temple during any festival. They did not touch fruit trees. The chhaupadi women only ate rice, daal, vegetable and chapatti during her monthly period. In the monthly period the women need more Dietary food but in case of Duni the chhaupadi women have prohibited to eat such dietary food (Milk, Curd, Ghee, Butter and meat). About food behavior of chhaupadi in her periods Surja Saud says,

Case Study 2

“Chhau bhyaka bela dud, dai, chhai, ghiu kei khana millaina sukhkha bhat daal tarkari matrai khana paido chha, kasai deota lai chdayaka kukuda bakhra ko masu pana khana millaina”. Answering my question why do not you get drink milk? The Narpata Saud (name changed) has said if they drink milk, the cow or buffalo leave to give milk. And answering my question why do not you get eats meat of sacrificed animal? The Champha Sunar (name changed) has said if they eat sacrificed animal, the god was angry so bad acts happen in their life. Picture No. 2. A woman eating food within Chhaupadi Goth

4.2.5 Concept and Process of Chhaupadi

a. The ideology of pollution and purity

In the society purity and danger both are existing. Purity makes social order and danger brings danger in social order. Sometimes danger needs to keep social order. After disorder the order comes or after pollution the purity comes (Douglas, 1966).

The prevalent ideology of purity and pollution treat certain states of people, objects, and actions as impure and particular things as pure. Particular events such as birth, death, and miscarriage are treated as impure and contacts between people during these periods are prohibited from impure to pure. Bodily substances such as saliva, phlegm, semen, and blood are considered as impure. Women are treated as bodily polluted during the period of menstruation. Lower caste people are also considered as bodily impure and which is directly associated with their occupational impurity. They are treated as impure because they handle the leather work, eat beef, and remove the dead animals. So the bodily impurity of lower caste Dalits is coterminous with occupational impurity.

Most of the social transactions between people in everyday practice in the region are dictated by this ideology of purity and pollution. Agricultural work such as digging, ploughing, and fertilizer bringing and the household work such as washing, cleaning, and child caring activities are considered as impure. In most cases, women are involved in household, child caring, and agricultural related impure work.

About impurity Dipa Saud (name changed) says,

“Chhau bhayaka bela baikini ka hada bati ragat aaudo chha tei ragat le nachhunya banaunya ho, chha din ka dini ragat aauna raya pachhi baikini chokkhini chhan”.

Most of the daily interactions and behaviors are directed by the rules of impurity avoidance. The supposed pure such as shaman (Dhami), the regular worshiper (Pujari, and Fulpate), the priest (Brahman), and Jaisi have to be strictly abided by the norms of impurity avoidance. The persons who have ascetic life have to follow the rules of impurity avoidance. Guiding and governing by the ideology of purity-impurity and

auspicious-inauspicious in everyday life society discourage contact with bodily impure people permanently to Dalits and temporally to women during their period of menstruation. Considering as polluted women tend to be secluded or excluded from normal life from five to seven days during menstruation period and ten to twelve days during child birth. Menstruation is considered as absolutely impure while child birth as both impure and pure.

2.2.6 Dharma and Paap

Researcher once asked with a woman of a Chhetri family, what would happen if menstrual women entered into their home. She told that it is sinful (paap lagchha), cows and buffalo will get sick (Gai, Bhaisi birami parchha), and shaman started to shaking (Dhami Chaldachha). So, impurity avoidance during menstruation and childbirth is also associated with the concept of Dharma and sin. Most of the girls and women bear the Chhaupadi tradition in the name of Dharma. If they do not abided by the existing Chhaupadi rules, then it is considered as sinful act (paap). Answering my question why you follow chhaupadi rule Deva Luhar (name changed) says,

“Chhaupadi gotha nabasi khera gharai basya pachhi padani deota ko than hudo chha taludi chhaupadi basya pachhi deota risauda chhan, paap lagdo chha, chhal hudo chha, gotha ka goru madda chhan bana bakhra lai bag khado chha, ghara ka maisa birami padda chhan”.

It is believed that, violation of Chhaupadi laws might harm to their bodies, families, and the community as a whole. If any girl or women entered into a temple of local deity, then it is believed that personally she might lose her eye, or goes mad or may die and in community level it might brings sandstones, and cholera in the region. Something that is abiding with the Chhaupadi norms is considered as Dharma and not following the tradition as sinful act (paap). If milk, curd, and ghee are given to a girl and women in the menstruation period, if they come in contact with home, fruit bearing trees, then it is considered as sin (paap). Violating the Chhaupadi rules most of the women and girls do not want to be sinful and other family members do not want to take the risk. The

concept of Dharma and Paap embedded in local social structure also is a driving force to operate:

Case-4

Tulsa Luhar (name changed) told we should face various difficulties and happen bad acts in our life not following the chhaupadi system. It is sinful (Paap Lagchha) not following the tradition. She shared me a story which had she seen. A woman was not following the system in the village. In the menstruation period she lived inside the home, drunk dairy products, went anywhere through the way of temple. Then after one day her son had gone to jungle to gather fire wood. Then the tiger attacked her son and he died. It was considered cause of sin (Paap Lagyo) of not following the chhaupadi pratha.

4.2.7 Shamanism (Dhami/Deota and Fulpate)

I asked with younger girls, and other senior women what would happen if you do not follow the tradition, then they told that god was angry, Buffalo will not give the milk, and other unlucky things might happen at their home. They follow the tradition because of the fear of local deity (Dhami/Deota). Many lives are depending up on the power of local deity if cholera and other social and natural disaster broke out in the region. Most of the people believe that they was saved from many unlucky happenings because of the power of their local deity. The practice is that if anybody becomes ill, if any unlucky things happen in some body's family then they go with Dhami/Deota. If cow or buffalo did not give the milk, if somebody died suddenly in any family, if somebody's health is not good and frequently fall sick, then they go first with their Dhami to ask what happened to them and for the treatment.

In Panchadewel Binayak Municipality Barala Achham and in far west there are many forms of local God and Goddesses. Dhamis are the form of their God. They are known as Masto and Bandali in the Duni region. The people in the region overly believe on Masto and Bandali deity. Masto and Bandali is the hope of the hopeless and power of the powerless. The person whom some supernatural power made shacking becomes the Dhami through the means of some public function and gatherings. The person, who exercise the power of deity and shack if some unlucky things happen are called as Dhami,

the bearer of Masto and Bandali. They are considered as pure people and have to remain far from the contact of bodily impure people such as Dalits and Chhaupadi women. The supposed pure people Dhamis and Phulpates are not allowed to eat the meal made by others. In the case of Chhau, they even do not walk the way from where the women during the period of menstruation have walked. I once asked with a woman about Dhami of Masto, what would happen if any girl or woman touches him during the period of menstruation, she told,

“chhaupadi baikini chhau bhyaka bela dhami ka hada lagya pachhi deota risauda chhan tabai dhami birami padma chhan, tei baikini lai pana baulyaudo chha”.

The god becomes angry (Deota risauchha), Dhami might fall sick, and Dhami's neck bent in the opposite side and sometimes he might be faint. It promotes the belief that menstrual women should not come in contact with the supposed holy things once set by in processes of evolution of different socio-political system. If somebody is suffering by any illness, if somebody's buffalo did not give the milk and then he or she go with Dhami to ask that what happened to them, then Dhami shack and associate it with the transmission of Chhaupadi and delivery women. In other cases some time Dhami suggest that it is because of witchcraft. So Dhamis, the symbol of local deity who exercises the power of deity, associate some miss-happening with the not abiding with Chhaupadi norms, and the cause of witchcraft. So many people in the village have believed with local deity, which also work as a centre of myth and superstition. So, the Chhaupadi system is being continued along with this Dhami/Deota system.

Case -5

The local women Dipa Saud (name changed) shared me an incident. There was a big stone in front of her house in which the god (Deota) lived. It was bared to touch and go near for chhaupadi women. It was the thing only before two days when I talked her. I was bringing the grass for cattle then in the way. There was raining and the grass had been wet. After that her sister taking the grass put side of the big stone. The grass touched the stone in which the god (Deota) lived. Then the god (Deota) had been angry. The big snake was standing in front of the house cause of god's anger. Then after her mother in

law came there and told to the snake “Please god forgives us! It was our big fault! We will never do such acts!” Then the snake went slowly far from the house and disappeared.

4.3 Local Belief System of Chhaupadi Pratha

The taboo is more followed by Dalit families. Dalits are also barred from the temple except menstruated girls and women.

4.3.1 Women’s Perceptions

These practices are driven by culture, its taboos and superstitions, in particular. A Hindu girl or women are secluded, believing that it will not bring any harm to community and the family. If the custom is breached by any means then it will create problem both on women and other member of the community like becoming sick, infertile and even the death. During this period they defer from the sex believing that the period is dangerous and may harm the genitals of the partner and making him sterile or impotent. It is believes that if women don’t maintain this tradition, the community would no longer be able to survive. Partly as a result of these beliefs, menstrual huts were built in the patriarchal societies. Tribal men of the west are frightened of menstrual blood and believe that a single drop could kill them. Even the gaze of a menstruating woman could mean death. If touched by her hands, they could come to great harm in the hunt. Menstrual seclusion rites, as recorded over the last few centuries, typically include the following practices.

Menstruating women must not see light. She must not touch neither water nor earth. When a girl gets her period for the first time, she is separated from her community and is not allowed to see light. At the end of her bleeding, she reemerges and is taken around and shown the earth, water, flowers and friends as if seeing them for the first time. Girls are secluded in a darkened section of the house and forbidden to look upon men and allowed to go outdoors only on a dark night. At the end of the cloistering, the family and villagers celebrate with a feast. The sheds are very dirty and unhygienic, having cattle excreta on the floor. They are also very cold during the winter. The women

sleep on the floor, with only straw and a thin blanket for bedding. They have to take a bath every day for seven days, but they are not allowed to clean themselves at the common tap. They have to go to a separate tap built for Chhaupadi or to a nearby river for bathing and the washing of clothes. Frequently, "Chhaupadi" are not allowed to enter the household compound and are not allowed to touch other people.

There are also strong traditional beliefs that their family would become sick and bad things would happen in the house if the "Chhaupadi" stayed at home. The women are unable to touch fruit trees, fetch water, water plants or milk the cattle. It is believed that if they touch the fruit trees, the fruits will fall before they are ripe or the fruits was dry; if they fetch water, the well will dry up; if the cattle are fed or milked by Chhaupadi, blood will come out of their teats instead of milk. There have been many cases of deaths and serious illnesses due to these practices. They are regularly suffering from infections like pneumonia, diarrhea and other chronic diseases, including mental disorders. It is a culturally driven gender discrimination against women. These beliefs and taboos continue to be practiced in this country, in even in the Twenty-first Century. Women are considered "impure" or "unclean" and are prevented from taking part in many normal aspects of their lives during these periods. They believe that any breach in such practices will bring bad omens to their family, community and society.

4.3.2 Continuation of the System

I interacted with a Deusari, a local woman, who is working as maternity and child care worker in the village health post. Knowing her as the change activist, who was also involved in the anti Chhau campaign, I had chosen her as my respondent to know the scenario of change and the struggle of change activists. Mrs Deusari is working in the local health post since 15 years. She was the opponent of Chhau since the very beginning. Being a health workers she know the natural causes of Chhau (menstruation).

As I asked the scenario of Chhau at the village how many people are abiding by Chhau norms and what about the educated girls and women? My concern was to know

the fact that whether or not educated girls and women follow Chhaupadi system? She told what to say and how to say:

There are so many complexities. She told one example. Once she asked one of the Bachelor's degree holder high school teacher Mrs Shital, where you live Shital, you are the educated girl. Whether you live in Chhaupadisheds, or inside the home during your menstrual cycle, she asked with Shital. Mrs Shital says what to do, and how to do? She ignored her three menstrual periods and lived inside the home after she returned village from Dhangadhi after finishing her Bachelor's degree. But in each cycle her own and one of her elder mother gathered at corridor in her home and started to say, what happened to this Shital. Is she going to be ill? She is going to be ill. Please bring her to the Dhangadhi for the treatment, the nearby hospital from Achham district. In each her menstrual period as her mother and her elder mother started say like this; she obliged to return back in the buffalo shed to follow the chhaupadi norms. The most of the educated girls and the women have the same situation like that of the Shital. During Maoist movement and emergency Maoist launched the campaign to stop the ill practice. Maoist cadres destroyed the Chhaupadisheds, and gave the speech that not to follow the tradition. They said people from Europe and America who do not follow the Chhaupadi restrictions reached the moon and other planet. We the followers of Chhaupadi system have not food to eat, no clothes to wear, no medicine to be cure while we become ill. Even we don't have the sandal to wear on our foot.

We are reaching nowhere following the tradition. So the tradition should be break. They have threatened that those who do not live inside the home, leaving cowsheds and buffalo sheds will face the punishment. During their campaign many people say yeas, but did not follow except very few cases. But as peace process began in 2006, the tradition and the practice shift in the same state as it was in the previous period. The tradition and the practice become restored after the beginning of the peace process.

In the case of Deusari, she was not following the practice since 13 years. As her neighbor sister knew that she is not holding the Chhau tradition, they asked with her, is

she not abiding by the system. She lied in front of them, telling first that she is using a tablet. She bought that tablet from Paliya, India which cost 10000Rs. She used that tablet which caused stop her menstrual cycle. Later as they doubt her that she is lying, again she started to tell that she has thrown out her womb, as a result her menstrual cycle have been stopped. But her neighborhood did not stop to tell her that During this question Deusari revealed another side of her story. She said she also become terrified, as an unlucky thing happened to her life. The mother of already four daughters Deusari, was 10 months pregnant at that time when incident occurred in her life. It was the baby boy that was growing in her womb, which they have already known checking it in Luckhnow hospital, India. She was in near of her delivery date. In the meantime she met an accident in which she fell down from the upstairs of health post to the downstairs. She and her baby got badly hurt. Her baby got died after some minutes on the way to her home. At night she was brought to Dhangadhi reserving a jeep up to Chaukhutte bazar. After reaching Dhangadhi hospital she was taken in to surgery ward, she had operation, her dead baby been removed, and finally she had been saved. During that incident she became terrified whether it happened because she violated the Chhau rules or something like that. Her neighborhood associated that incident with the phenomenon of not abiding with the Chhaupadi system, though, Deusari associate with it or not. Deusari shared her experience how deep seated Chhaupadi stereotypes affect the behaviors of many women. Even up to some four or five years ago, the menstrual women did not come inside the compound of health post, even if they were being will. I will women, in their menstrual cycle, used to ask for the medicine, very far from the compound of the health post.

They used to say that they cannot come inside of the health post compound because; it is nearby with the temple of local deity. But Mrs. Deusari used to deny giving them the medicine until and unless they come to the hospital. After many persuasions, and counseling, women started to come the inside of the compound of the health post during their menstruation period. So the sudden accidents are associated with the local deity and with the following and not following the Chhaupadi tradition. Social surrounding and the laymen interpreted any miss-happenings and the unlucky things with the abiding and not abiding of the existing Chhaupadi tradition and myth.

Case-6

When Mrs. Tulasa Saud, a Community Mobilizer, came to understand the negative effects of "Chhaupadi Pratha", she gave up such practices and stayed in her home during menstruation. However, during this time, her goats were killed by wild animals. All of her family members believed that, because she refused to adhere to tradition, she had brought a bad woman upon their family makes anger the god. This reinforced her belief in such practices and she felt that the "god and goddess were not happy with her".

She continued the practice again, despite some reluctance. After she became a Community Mobilizer for a local NGO, working on empowering members of the community, she learned more about women's and children's issues. Now, she, along with her family members, does not believe in such practices and does not follow the tradition. This is the story of a mother from Duni who had been practicing "Chhaupadi" since her first menstruation, even continuing the practice during the post-partum period, following the birth of her child.

She had many difficult experiences since she began the practice, but also she agrees with the traditional cultures and practices. She believes that if she doesn't follow them, her family will blame her for all harm that may come to the family. Because of this practice, she had lost her baby. To her surprise, however, no one in her family developed a negative attitude towards such practices and so they continue the tradition.

CHAPTER-FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

This study has considered the social problem related to women health of Far West Region in the Panchadewel Binayak Municipality 8, Barala in Achham district which is conducted through suffering perspective. Local people and culture of creating the social problem related to women health in the local cultural context were the primary concern of this study. How are women feeling suffering from chhaupadi system is the major issue of the study? Through chhaupadi system this study explores the psychological and health sector of women.

In the strictest observance of chhaupadi, women are prevented from looking at the sun, interacting with males and cattle, drinking dairy products and conducting their daily chores. Furthermore, if they “touch the fruit trees, the fruits will fall before they are ripe or the fruits was dry; if they fetch water, the well will dry up; if the cattle are fed or milked by Chhaupadi, blood will come out of their teats instead of milk”. The cause of Chaupadi tradition there is many cases of women raped, killed by wild animals, bitten by snakes or dead due to cold during their stay in the chhaupadi goth. Chhaupadi women face both physical and mental hardship. These women believe that any breach in such practice will bring bad omens upon their family, community or society.

5.2. Conclusion

"Chhaupadi" in Panchadewel Binayak Municipality 8, Barala in Achham district is practiced in which women are kept in a small shed during menstruation period. Chhaupadi system limits women's capability to live a safe, healthy, and educated life forbidding women from anything to touch during their menstruation period. Women are considered as impure during the period of menstruation. It is a violation of women's human rights. It restricts women's human development such as capabilities to be survived, to be well nourished, capability to be safe, educated capabilities to get health facilities, and longer life, capability to be free from social servitude and superstitions. In

the name of tradition, the practice is being continued since generation to generation. So these practices contribute significantly on the health status of the people of the region and poor socio-economic development of the society and the country. These culturally driven gender discrimination has made people to believe that any breach on practices will bring harm to their family, community and society even in the twenty first century.

Chhaupadi system limits women's capability to live a safe, healthy, and educated life forbidding women from anything to touch during their menstruation period. Women are considered as polluted during the period of menstruation face various restrictions. In terms of capability to be educated, well nourished, healthy and longer life, access to health facilities, and capability to be free the region lies in the bottom rank in comparison with eastern and western part of Nepal. So, the Superstitious practice Chhaupadi is also connected with abovementioned dark situation. The food denial during their menstrual cycle is a part of the overall food deficiency situation in the region.

Above mentioned Chhaupadi practices are cause of suffer for women of Far Western Region. In the name of religion, tradition, rules, norms and values the women of Far Western Nepal suffer from social problem as a Chhaupadi Pratha.

5.3 Recommendations

- Local government should be Initiate widespread awareness campaigns to educate both men and women about the harmful effects of Chhaupadi and how it violates human rights.
- Include menstrual health education in schools to challenge taboos around menstruation and promote gender equality.
- Establish a system to monitor the progress of interventions aimed at eradicating Chhaupadi and to evaluate their impact on women's health, education, and economic status.
- Conduct further research on the social, cultural, and psychological impact of Chhaupadi on women and girls to inform future interventions.

- Strengthen enforcement of the laws banning the Chhaupadi system and ensure that there are severe penalties for those who practice or encourage this harmful tradition.
- Government institutions and local authorities must take strong action against those who force women to follow Chhaupadi.
- Health professionals should be trained to provide non-judgmental, sensitive care to menstruating women in these communities.
- Involve community leaders, both male and female, in discussions about the harmful effects of Chhaupadi and work to change cultural perceptions.
- Support local women's groups or create new community-based organizations that can work to empower women and help them overcome these traditional gender norms.
- Focus on improving the overall socio-economic status of the Far Western region by investing in education, economic development, and infrastructure.
- Encourage skill-building programs for women so they can gain independence and challenge patriarchal norms.
- Empower women in these communities by encouraging their involvement in local decision-making processes.
- Support women leaders who are willing to challenge the traditional practices and advocate for women's rights.
- Work with traditional and religious leaders to reshape the cultural beliefs around menstruation and Chhaupadi, emphasizing gender equality and women's dignity.
- Use social media platforms to spread awareness about the negative impacts of Chhaupadi and foster discussions about gender equality.
- Leverage mobile technology to deliver health education programs directly to women in remote areas.
- Partner with national and international organizations working on women's rights and gender equality to ensure a multi-dimensional approach to ending Chhaupadi.
- Support the development of resource materials and training programs to address both the immediate and long-term needs of affected women.

These steps aim to not only eliminate the Chhaupadi system but also improve the overall well-being and human rights of women in the region.

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Annex I

Checklist for In-Depth Interview

Name of Respondents:

Date:

Age:

Caste:

Education Level:

Religious:

Family type:

Income Source:

1. What is Chhaupadi system?
2. What you have to do when you have chhau?
3. From which age do you start to perform Chhaupadi process?
4. Why do you perform chhaupadi process? (Probe religious and social signification)
5. Where should you stay during the chhau?
6. Do you Perform rituals during chhaupadi period like worshiping god/goddess, marriage ceremony, death ritual, birth initiation and festival etc?
7. Experience and Perception about Chhaupadi
8. How do you perceive Chhaupadi system? And what do you think about it?
9. What type of problem do you face in Chhaupadi periods?
10. What type of problem do you face in chhaupadi goth?
11. What type of food do you eat during chhaupadi period or not? And Why?
12. Do you think you are impure during chhau? Why?
13. Why you restricted from are touch the things like cow, fruits plant, temples, performing rituals and eating foods etc?
14. What kinds of effects of chhaupadi system occur in you, your family and your society?
15. What kinds of work should you do while you are in chhaupadi? And is it different than other times?
16. How do you feel living detached from family members, collective works and specially your child?
17. What do you want for existence of chhaupadi system in your society? Why?
18. Do you have any movement have you ever faced during chhaupadi which you want to share with me?

19. Do you think any changes in chhaupadi system? What types of changes have you seen in chhaupadi system till now?
20. What is the cause of changes?
21. How many days do you stay in chhaupadi Goth?
22. Do you perform rituals during chhaupadi period like worshipping god/ Goddess, marriage ceremony, death rituals, birth initiation, festivals etc?
23. Do you have any idea about from when did the chhaupadi system and how?
24. Health Consequences of Chhaupadi
25. Does any kind of problem during chhaupadi periods affect your health?
26. How much burden of work do you have during chhaupadi?
27. What kinds of health problem have you faced by burden of work in your health?
28. How much burden of work do you have during chhaupadi?
29. Do you take treatment for health problem during chhaupadi period? Any restriction to visit health facility and meet health personnel?
30. What type of treatment do you take?
31. What are the consequences of the problem of chhaupadi system in health have you ever seen to other?

Annex II

Photos



Annex

Map of Study area

