

**The Accusation of Witchcraft as a Violence against Women: Perception of Nepalese Immigrants in Oslo**

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## **Abstract**

This research has explored the issue related to witchcraft and its accusation as violence against women in Nepal. The witchcraft related violence is a long-rooted problem and has been a challenging issue for both the government and people in Nepal. Many women have been the victims of this problem. Having considered this problem, the present study has made its attempt to examine how Nepalese adults in the diaspora context of Norway, who grew up in Nepal as children and experienced the problem of witchcraft, perceive witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal after residing in the equity promoting Norwegian context.

It employs a qualitative case study research design. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews and some other secondary sources such as documents and newspapers. The findings were analyzed using the concepts from theories about diaspora, violence and gender inequality.

The findings indicated that the issue of witchcraft and its accusation as violence against women plays a different role among Nepalese people in Nepal and Nepalese immigrants in the diaspora context of Norway. To put it in another way, the accusation of witchcraft is very common in Nepal and many Nepalese women have been the victims of it whereas the issue has null prevalence among Nepalese living in the diaspora context of Norway. The study has found several reasons behind why witchcraft prevails in Nepal. Some of the reasons include lack of education, poor job opportunities, gender discrimination, weak law enforcement, continuation of caste system and deep-rooted misogyny in religion (widowed Hindu women are often targeted). Meanwhile the Nepalese diaspora in Norway successfully removed the problem as they are living amongst the highly educated and scientific temperament of the Norwegian society. Nepal is lagging far behind Norway in HDI (Human Development Index) and other sectors too.

***Key Words:*** *Witchcraft, Diaspora, Violence, Gender Equality, Immigration*

## **Dedication**

This thesis is specially dedicated to my son Cyril and daughter Celina.

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## Acronyms

CEDAW	The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
e.g.	Example
etc	Etcetera
DDC	District Development Committee
E.U.	European Union
F	Female
HDI	Human Development Index
Ibid.	Same reference as earlier
i.e.	In Example
INSEC	Informal Sector Service Centre
LC	Lower Caste
LE	Long Education
LS	Long Stay
M	Male
Ma	Male
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NRNA	Non-Resident Nepali Association
NSD	Norwegian Center for Research Data
p	Page
S	Single
SE	Short Education
SS	Short Stay
TF	Faculty of Theology
UC	Upper Caste
UiO	University of Oslo
UN	United Nations
VDC	Village Development committee
WAP	Witchcraft Accusation and Persecution

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## **Chapter I: Introduction**

### ***1.1 Introduction***

The accusation of witchcraft has been seen as a major problem in Nepalese society. This problem is deeply rooted and still is very common especially in rural areas of Nepal. There are many incidents of witch-hunt related violence every year where women are mainly the victims. Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC) for human rights and social justice reported 52 incidents of witch-hunt related violence against women in 2012, 69 in 2013 and 89 in 2014 (INSEC, April 2015). This shows that such incidents are still prevalent in Nepalese society. As a consequence, many women face social boycotts while others are badly beaten and threatened which often leads them being lynched and murdered.

The study assumes that Nepalese (who were born in Nepal, spent their childhood and completed school education there and moved to other parts of the globe when their adulthood began) are familiar with the problem of witchcraft as this problem goes long back in Nepalese society. With this assumption, the present study aims to find out how Nepalese immigrants, who migrated to Norway in their adulthood and have been living in Norway for more than at least two years, perceive of witchcraft as violence against women. The study is confined to the Nepalese immigrants living in Oslo. Based on the features of diaspora, it is assumed that they are familiar with both Nepalese and Norwegian contexts.

The concept of diaspora is a strong basis to frame the research problem of this study. The concept of 'diaspora' traditionally refers to the dispersal of Jews referring their suffering, loss and return. Later it was used to describe other dispersal groups and became familiar in the field of cultural studies and social sciences after 1990. Now, it is

equally important in the realm of policy making. According to Cohen (2008), normally, diasporas are characterized by most, if not all, of the following features:

- Migration, which may be forced or voluntary, from a country of origin in search of work, trade, or to escape conflict or persecution;
- an idealized, collective memory and/or myth about the ancestral home;
- A continuing connection to a country of origin;
- A strong group consciousness sustained over time; and
- A sense of kinship with diaspora members in other countries

Some of the above features of diaspora are also applicable to Nepalese immigrants living in Norway. Besides children, almost all the Nepalese immigrants to Norway were born and grew up in Nepal and moved to Norway either as a student or in search of work from Nepal directly and sometimes from other European countries. On the one hand, they are very much familiar with such problem as they grew up in Nepal. On the other hand, it is also assumed that they have some sorts of opinions on the issue based on Norwegian experiences. They have lived here in Norway and are assumed to collect new experience from Norwegian societies. Considering this, the present research aims to find out their perceptions on witchcraft as violence against women in Nepalese society. Here, the question may arise how the Nepalese diaspora living in Norway can have perceptions on the issue of witchcraft in Nepalese society. The features of diaspora support that there is connection between host place and the place of origin are good enough to answer this question. Connecting diaspora to Nepalese community in Oslo, almost all the adults living in Norway are of the first generation. They grew up as children in Nepal and moved to Norway when they were adult. Most of their relatives live in Nepal. They frequently visit the place of their origin. They often read news and keep them updated about the place of their origin. As per my experience while living here in Norway, Nepalese people have their own group. They often celebrate their festivals and organize different cultural programmes on different occasions such as Nepali New Year Programme. They sometimes invite famous artists from Nepal to show their performance. This shows that they have very close relations between the host place and the place of origin.

Although the history of Nepali people living in Norway goes back to more than 40 years, most of them have come to Norway in the last 10 years (Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) National Co-ordination Council, Norway, 2016). It seems that the number of Nepalese immigrants to Norway is in increasing order. Although there are no fixed data, it is estimated that around 2500 to 3500 Nepalese immigrants live in different parts of Norway. The majority of them, approximately 2000 to 2500 live in Oslo.

### ***1.2 Problem statement***

Among many crimes, the accusation of witchcraft and the violence it invites has been a big issue in Nepalese society since long. There are many reports and research which show that the people in different parts of Nepal have been suffering from this superstitious belief in different forms and degree. Many news reports and data from the reports of different organizations like INSEC show that women are the major victims of this problem. They have been suffering very seriously. This has been seen as a violence against women. Nepal is still lacking behind due to gender discrimination and violence against women. Women still depend on men. They are mostly engaged with the household work where men work outside in order to make an income. This means to say that women's life has formed around the private sphere while men's life has revolved around the public sphere (Bryld, 2001, as cited in Haug, Aasland, & Aasen, 2020). This is still existing even if the situation has improved to some extent in the recent years. The country is still a developing country. As a result, many people have migrated to foreign countries showing different reasons like study, employment and business. Norway is one of such destinations where the number of Nepalese immigrants is increasing day by day. These people have been able to make a Nepalese diaspora in Norway. It is assumed that they have learnt and collected different experiences while living together with Norwegian society.

The present study takes both the childhood experience from the homeland and diaspora experience from the host land as the basis for the data. It assumes that the people living in diaspora context may have found new ideas and experience based on the observation

of socio-cultural activities of the host land. These new ideas and experiences may help them suggest some measures to solve the social problems (the accusation of witchcraft in this study) they are familiar with in their homeland. They might suggest the measures by comparing different factors related to socio-economic, cultural, religious and educational circumstances from their childhood and diaspora context. As a researcher., I will try to find how Nepalese immigrants in the diaspora context of Norway, who grew up in Nepal as children experiencing the problem of witchcraft, perceive witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal after residing in the equity promoting Norwegian context. It is my ambition that the study will help to wipe out the problem of the accusation of witchcraft as a violence against women in Nepal.

### ***1.3 Aim and research questions***

The current study aims to shed light on the perception of Nepalese immigrants on the accusation of witchcraft as a violence against women. These immigrants live in Norway now and spent their childhood in their homeland in Nepal. The central focus of the study is at the accusation of witchcraft as a violence against women as the major problem in Nepalese context. It discusses the issue from different theoretical perspectives such as diaspora, gender and violence. It also aims to suggest some measures as the solution of the problem by discussing the findings of the respondents in the light of different theories.

To achieve these aims, the study is guided by a general research question:

***How do Nepalese ADULTS in the diaspora context of Norway, who grew up in Nepal AS CHILDREN experiencing the problem of witchcraft, perceive witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal after residing in the equity promoting Norwegian context?***

To make it possible to further explore in detail with certain boundaries, the general research question has been divided as follows:

- a. *How do they recall the tradition of witchcraft from their childhood?*

- b. *What are their current perceptions on witchcraft?*
- c. *How do they remember the accusation of witchcraft as violence against women from their childhood?*
- d. *Why do they think violence against women is still existing because of witchcraft accusation?*
- e. *What (do they think) can be the measures to solve this problem in the Nepalese society?*
- f. *Has the experience of living in Norway shaped their opinions? How?*

#### ***1.4 Motivation for the Study***

There are many incidents related to witchcraft in Nepal. On March 8, 2018, a serious violence against a girl named Radha Chaudhary took place (INSEC, April 2015; The Himalayan Times, 11 March 2018). Based on these two sources which I read and the news I watched from television and other online media during that time, I realized that she was treated so badly. She was beaten almost to death. Although there were hundreds of people present, no one dared to protect her. Moreover, the most shocking thing is that even the people's representatives elected from the local municipality did not make any attempt to protect the victim. Instead, the crowd just observed with sheer indifference. It was a mob lynching in broad daylight. All of them together were watching, clapping and enjoying. There were also many women present (ibid.). After reading and watching the news about this event, various issues from different aspects of the event arose in my mind. This encouraged me to investigate the various aspects emerging from this event. For example, why does such structural violence occur? How do Nepalese diaspora perceive such issues as they are also directly or indirectly connected?

Next, my motive is to seek whether the issues of witchcraft are similar here in Oslo, as is the situation in Nepal. If these are not experienced here, what may be the reasons? Through this study, I intend to come up with some important findings that may support to find out significant facts that are essential for the policymakers and the other concerned authorities in minimizing such problems. I hope, some of the findings of this study, if not all, may be applicable in the context of Nepal.

### ***1.5 Outline of the study***

The thesis contains seven chapters. The first chapter contains introduction. Similarly, the second chapter has been developed to prepare the background of the study. The third chapter reviews the related literature and also includes theoretical background along with analytical framework. The fourth chapter deals with the research methodology. The fifth chapter presents the data obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The sixth chapter discusses the findings based on the data collected in the light of discussed theories. Finally, the seventh chapter presents the summary of the findings and recommendations.

### ***1.6 Chapter summary***

Nepalese people living in Nepal have been exposed to the problem of the accusation of witchcraft in different ways. This is a kind of deep-rooted social evil in the context of Nepal. The problem is rather severe among Nepalese women. All those Nepalese who passed their childhood in Nepal and now live as Nepalese diaspora in different parts of the world have certain knowledge about it. They have it either from hearing / reading of news or from direct witness. Keeping this view in mind, the present study makes its way through the perception of Nepalese immigrants living in Norway with the focus in similar issues. This chapter has attempted to prepare a short background of the study covering certain aspects. The chapter has, for example, covered the following sections: introduction, problem statement, aim and research questions, motivation for the study and outline of the study. The brief presentation of these sections has created a good starting point for the study.



## Chapter II: Background of the study

As the preparation for the background of the study, the chapter presents some cases of the incidents related to the witchcraft and its accusation where women are the victims. Furthermore, the chapter also includes brief presentation on the legal provision regarding such issues. Finally, it also briefly presents an overview about Nepalese immigrants in Norway as it is a major part of the study.

### *2.1 Highlights of the witchcraft related violence against women in Nepal*

There are several indications of witchcraft related incidents in Nepal. Being myself as a person who grew up in Nepal, I saw, watched, read and experienced such incidents. Violence against women observed in such incidents accounts for a large number of human rights violations in Nepal. One type of violence perpetrated against women is accusing them of witchcraft, especially in the Terai and hilly rural regions, which makes them vulnerable to abuse (Gurung 2016). Some of the selected representative cases that have occurred in different parts of Nepal from 2013 to 2019 are presented below:

*Table 1: Incidents of witchcraft related violence against women*

S.N.	Incidents
1.	<p>Forty-five-year-old Domani Chaudhary of Dhodana VDC-2, Siraha, was severely beaten by her neighbours over the death of a newborn in her village. Ramakanta Chaudhary, the father of the infant, allegedly roused her neighbours into beating her on 6 February 2013.</p> <p>She suffered severe injuries to the chest and head and had to be admitted to the hospital. Her son and daughter were also injured when they tried to shield their mother. The perpetrators had fled the village before police action could be taken. All of the five accused were arrested on 9 February but were released on bail 15 days later. A year later, Siraha district court sentenced all five to three months in prison and fines of 5,000 each.</p>

	Source: Köhler (17 April 2013)
2.	<p>On 15 August 2013, forty-five-year-old woman called Parvati Devi Chaudhari of Supadi Village Development Committee was accused by a group of influential people in her village. She and her husband were ordered to leave the village. They had agreed and were preparing to leave the next day. However, they were attacked the same night, and she was beaten to death. She was accused of witchcraft for the illness of a local girl. A group of people that included women, and one of the alleged masterminds Kari Kaha had been arrested, while many others were still at large, as of 26 August. It was alleged that the police had refused to register the case the next day because it was a Saturday (public holiday) which had given opportunity to the accused to flee.</p> <p>Source: Panta (27 August 2013)</p>
3.	<p>A thirty-two-year-old dalit women Laxmi Pariyar of Kavre was found dead in her home on 13 December 2016, following a public torture and repeated assaults on 9 December 2016, by a group of people led by schoolteacher Hira Lama, in and near the premises of Suryodaya Secondary School in Sano Bangthali. On 9 December 2016, she was interrupted on her way back from a fair, by Hira Lama and his mother Kali Tamang, and tied to a basketball pole with a rope. According to Pariyar's second son who was nine years old at the time and witnessed the whole event, Nirmaya Tamang the shopkeeper who sold Lama the rope was also involved in the assault. In front of the villagers Lama had gathered to witness, he repeatedly beat Pariyar with a stick. He also kicked her on her chest. She was physically assaulted and force-fed human feces over witchcraft allegation.</p> <p>She and her family were continuously harassed, and she was found dead later on 13 December 2013.</p> <p>Source: The Himalayan Times (21 December 2016)</p>
4.	Sixty-five-year-old Kusama Devi Yadav of Siraha was attacked inside her

	<p>home and beaten by Shiva Nath Yadav and two others from her village on 13 April 2017. Her husband also sustained injuries trying to shield her. She was taken to a medical center for treatment after being rescued with the help of other villagers. Shiva Nath Yadav’s daughter had been ill, for which he blamed the victim of witchcraft.</p> <p>Source: The Kathmandu Post (18 April 2017)</p>
5.	<p>A serious violence against a girl occurred. Radha Chaudhary, 20 years old, of Deukali of Ghodaghodi Municipality-5, Kailali (a part of Western Terai Region) was beaten black and blue on the charge of practising witchcraft by Ram Bahadur Chaudhary so called Bhole Baba (a disciple of Hindus’ Lord Shiva). He had been pretending as the disciple of lord Shiva and mistreating many women and girls in the name of curing them from illness. A piece of recent news on the same incident has been cited from a famous daily newspaper of Nepal, ‘The Himalayan Times’-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">While Radha was cleaning cowshed at around 7:00am, neighbour Kishmati Chaudhary had dragged her out of the cowshed. Radha said a group of seven persons were involved in beating her mercilessly. “They caught me by my hairs and dragged me to the ground and thrashed. People sat around as if a fair was under way. When I begged for help, no one came to my rescue,” Radha bemoaned.</p> <p>Source: The Himalayan Times (11 March 2018)</p>
6.	<p>A 73-year-old single woman from a remote village, Seti Maya Layo Magar, was thrashed and force-fed human excrement by a group of men led by a Nepal Army officer, on 14 November 2018, after three local shamans accused her of being the village witch. She had to be admitted to a hospital in Kathmandu. The main perpetrator, Dhan Bahadur Magar,</p>

	<p>a Nepali army soldier on leave, had brought in three shamans to investigate his ailment, after he had started feeling chest pain. The shamans identified Seti Maya as the culprit and accused her of trying to eat his heart. While she needed hospitalization after the incident, she was threatened by the perpetrators, as well as the local leaders of political parties, against making a police report. A police complaint as only launched by the victim three days later. All four accused were arrested.</p> <p>Source: The Kathmandu Post (19 November 2018)</p>
7.	<p>A thirty-five-year old woman was force-fed human feces by a group of five or six women in Birta village of Bangaha municipality-4, Mahottari district, on 18 August 2019 linked to accusations of witchcraft. The victim was taken to hospital for treatment and two of the alleged perpetrators were arrested at the same day.</p> <p>Source: Hindustan Times (19 August 2019)</p>

In all the cases presented above, females are the victims. This does not mean that there are no male victims in Nepal. However, many studies have shown that the number of female victims is quite higher than that of male victims (Atreya, Aryal, Nepal & Nepal, 2021; Gurung, 2016). Considering the nature, content and aim of the present study where the major focus is on the accusation of witchcraft as violence against women, the above cases were selected. Moreover, the cases are from different parts of Nepal.

## ***2.2 Brief presentation on legal provisions on the accusation of witchcraft in Nepal***

Nepal has been suffering from several incidents connected to the accusation of witchcraft. This assessment is based on a comparative legal analysis of international treaties, national and district policies and legislation relating to accusation of witchcraft in Nepal.

## **A. International treaties and obligations**

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) obliges the Government of Nepal to take effective and appropriate measures on abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health and welfare of women since Nepal is a party through signature and ratification to the treaties (Shrestha, 2018). Harmful practices are prohibited in various other international documents which Nepal has been a part of like Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action-1993, UN Specialized Conferences, Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action-1995 (ibid.) and so on that call for eradication of any conflicts, which may arise between the rights of women and the harmful effects of traditional or customary practices, cultural prejudices and religious extremism (like accusation of witchcraft in Nepalese context).

## **B. National Legislations regarding accusation of witchcraft and it's legal remedies**

To understand it better, let's look at the constitutional provisions, legal provisions, and district level and local government provisions.

- **Constitutional Provisions:**

- a. The Constitution of Nepal-2015 provides that no person shall be exploited on the basis of religion, custom, tradition, culture practices or any other bases as a fundamental right in article 29 (Constitution of Nepal, 2015).
- b. Similar provision is also enshrined in the Directive Principles and the State Policy in articles 50 and 51 of the Constitution of Nepal. This right is extended whereby any physical, mental, sexual or psychological or any other kind of violence against women, or any kind of oppression based on religious, social and cultural tradition, and other practices is forbidden by the Constitution in article 38. The punishment for the perpetrator and the compensation to the victim is also ensured by the same article.

- **Legal Provisions:**

- a. To combat the crime of witchcraft in the country, the parliament enacted an Act called Witchcraft Act (Offense and Punishment) 2072 (2015).
- b. The Act enumerates a list of acts falling under witchcraft and provides for the treatment of the victim in section 3.
- c. Police officials are obliged to ensure that doctors prepare a treatment report of the victims according to section 5(2) of the Act.
- d. The officials also have a duty to make an arrangement for the psychological counseling from an expert, but this support is only supposed to be provided immediately in the case of necessity as mentioned by section 5(3). An assessment of which of the situation to be considered as ‘an immediate necessary’ situation is still nowhere mentioned.
- e. A relief package to the victim is provided in the forms of an interim protective order, compensation and money for treatment in sections 10 and 12 of the Act. The victim is provided with food and stay in the shelter he/she has been living in along with the protection from beating and to have gentle behavior. The assessment of the compensation is carried out in the nature of the crime, quantity, the pain inflicted on the victim and the economic status of the perpetrator. In case of inability of the perpetrator to pay the victim, the court will bear the cost of the compensation.
- f. Furthermore, the perpetrator should pay all the cost of the treatment of the victim and the person accompanying the victim in the hospital. The money for such cause can be drawn from the ‘Gender Violence Prevention Fund’ in case the court finds it necessary on the basis of economic status of the perpetrator. The victim in case requires security and separately treated, such should be arranged by the police station as ordained by section 14 of the Witchcraft Act (Offense and Punishment) 2072 (2015).
- g. The Criminal Code Bill passed in 2017 stipulates penalties for inhuman treatment of an individual by accusing them of practicing witchcraft. According to section 168 of the bill, the perpetrator of such an act could

face up to five years in jail and up to Rs 50,000 in fines to be granted as compensation to the victim.

- h. According to section 168 of the Criminal (Code) Act 2074 (2017) of Nepal, a fine of up to 50,000 Rs and five years in prison will be applied for the inhuman practice of accusing a person of being a 'Bokshy/Witch'. In addition, perpetrators will be prosecuted for other charges related to the incident, such as torture, assault or murder.

- **District level and local government provisions:**

- a. Wiping out of the social ill practices for the protection of girls and women long had been provided for in the Local Self Governance Act 2055 (1999). According to the Act, the District Development Committee (DDC) was provided with the duty to carry acts to wipe out the social ill practices and protect women and girls. These provisions were later realized in various Acts and the constitution.

We can see from the above legal provisions that Nepal has made its commitment to provide and secure the women's rights by signing in different international treaties and forming laws at both at central and local levels. The core gist of these provisions shows that no person shall be exploited on the basis of religion, custom, tradition, culture or any kind of violence against women. However, government authorities are often blamed for not being able to implement those laws properly. It seems that there are some loopholes in the implementation of laws. As a result, the outcome is not as effective as it should be.

Since the law itself is new and there is no regulation to implement these provisions, the result is yet to be seen. According to data from the police in Nepal, 180 complaints were received regarding accusations of witchcraft during the last five years (2015-2016 to 2019-2020) (Nepal Police, 2020). Weak law enforcement has been the biggest obstacle in addressing the problems in existing legislations and eradicating their shortcomings.

Although these laws exist, they are not strictly implemented. There are cases in which local police have declined to file complaints, claiming that they are personal matters and should

be resolved within the community. This demonstrates the complexity and severity of this phenomenon. A large proportion do not seek legal aid, and many victims are not even aware of their legal rights, while some who are do not report the violence because they fear reprisals (Atreya, Aryal, Nepal & Nepal, 2021).

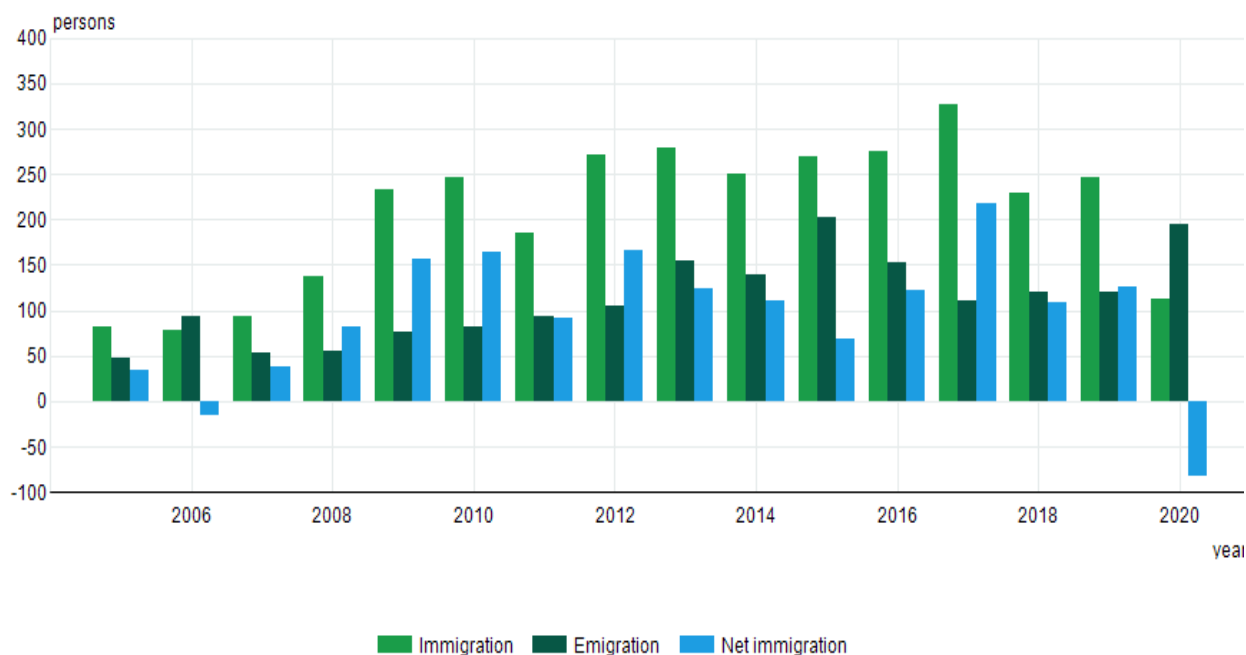
### ***2.3 Nepalese immigrants in Norway***

There is no long history of Nepalese immigrants in Norway. Following Statistics Norway, Nepalese people started to come as immigrants only after 1970s and onwards. However, most of them have come to Norway in the last 10-15 years. They have chosen Norway for various purposes such as study, job and family immigration. Very few Nepalese came as asylum seekers. In the recent days, several people having Nepalese origin but having citizenship from European countries have come to Norway. Most of them have come from Portugal and some others have come from the countries such as Poland, Austria and Germany.

There is no exact data on how many Nepalese exactly live here. It was estimated that there lived about 1500 to 2000 in different parts of Norway (Non-resident Nepali Association (NRNA) National Co-ordination Council, Norway, 2016). However, it is itself the Nepalese people who live in Norway estimate that approximately 3500 Nepalese live in different parts of Norway now. Most of them live in Oslo whereas a few of them live outside Oslo in order to find professional job opportunities or study in different universities. This is to say that they want to live in Oslo as far as possible.



Figure 1: Immigration, emigration and net immigration of Nepalese to Norway (2005 - 2020)



Source: Statistics Norway (2021)

The above table presents the status of the number of the Nepalese immigration, emigration and net immigration after the year 2005 to 2020. There is fluctuation in the number of Nepalese immigrants to Norway. However, there is no fewer than 150 immigrants after the year 2009 except 2020. There were a few more than 100 immigrants in 2020. This might be because of COVID-19 pandemic. The data shows that the year 2019 was recorded as the year having highest number of immigrants to Norway from Nepal. This is the only registered data of those Nepalese who directly migrated from Nepal to Norway. However, there are many other Nepalese who migrated to other European countries, got their citizenships there and moved to Norway afterwards. Besides, there are some Bhutanese Nepalese who have similar culture and can speak Nepalese language. These are the people who registered in refugee camps in eastern Nepal during the 1990s as Bhutanese citizens deported from Bhutan during the protest against Bhutanese state and monarch by some of the Lhotshampas demanding

democracy and different state (United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 2008). Later, they resettled in different countries in the world and some of them came to Norway.

#### ***2.4 Chapter summary***

The chapter has prepared the background for the study with the presentation of relevant cases which provide base for the exploration. For example, the major themes of these cases along with responses of the respondents have been discussed in the light of selected theories under the discussion section to explore the findings. As the study belongs to witchcraft accusation in connection with violence, gender and Nepalese immigrants to Norway, this chapter has introduced them in brief with the expectation that this will help to come up with concrete findings at the end.

### **Chapter III: Literature review and theoretical background**

This chapter reviews the literature related to the accusation of witchcraft in Nepal and also includes theoretical background along with analytical framework.

#### ***3.1 Literature review***

Levack (1992) uses two approaches to analyze the literature in pursuit of an answer to the question: Why are women popular targets during witch-hunts? First, he assumes that women have typically participated in roles (as traditional healers, midwives, heretics, and cult leaders) in which they have been portrayed as powerful actors rather than as helpless scapegoats. These roles are in stark contrast to the evil role of the witch. Levack contends that by performing these powerful roles, women are rebelling against the traditional view that they are passive and powerless. According to Levack's second approach, women are considered to be morally weaker than men. They are more susceptible to the advances of the devil and, therefore, practice witchcraft more frequently than men do.

Grigaitė (2018) carried out a research on witchcraft accusation and persecution (WAP). The aim of this study was to demonstrate the scope and complexity of WAP and draw the attention of all key stakeholders, including academia, to the significant scale, severity and complexity of human rights violations faced by women in Nepal due to WAP.

The results of this study deepen the knowledgebase and understanding, of the complex background to the story surrounding WAP in Nepal. The analysis of study results has also revealed cultural, social and legal challenges that are often intertwined, inter-related and deeply-rooted in Nepali society, and thus affect the context, in which WAP happens. The main recommendations for future development in this field in Nepal would be to first of all start prioritizing the issue of WAP on both national and international level. It is important to scale up the existing most effective grassroots practices, which work to eliminate WAP, and respect and foster human rights in the country. As for the potential

reactive measures, it is crucial to first of all ensure the safety of WAP survivors, following their first-hand experience of it. This would include ensuring that complex support is available and accessible to WAP survivors in all parts of Nepal, by which they could be assisted to reach safety, then provided with all the necessary education and advice, as well as legal aid, psychosocial support, and be empowered to seek and access justice. Not only financial and political support is needed from both the local government and international community to tackle this problem, but also more research is required into separate parts of the complex picture of the context, causes and consequences of WAP: the superstitious beliefs in witchcraft and related traditions and how these are changing in the 21st century; the role of the caste system in the context of WAP; changes in the role that traditional healers – Jharkri play and the potential for allying with them in the fight against WAP; the ways and practices of related law bypassing, developed by local communities; as well as the complex intersection between the field of mental health and WAP.

Similarly, Gurung (2016) has developed a research paper which provides an overview of the problems regarding accusations of witchcraft against innocent and poor women, who are then treated badly by a range of people in their communities. With the help of this paper, he has also looked at how such superstitions and religious belief have impacted the lives of women and the efforts for change that are being made by women's rights networks and other stakeholders. It also examines existing legal provisions and the current status of policy enforcement on the ground. Further, it seeks to find out how women's rights/human rights organizations, activists and NGOs are working to abolish this barbaric practice through the use of case studies. The paper concludes with recommendations and a list of steps that still need to be taken to protect such women and allow them to live with dignity.

Sharma (2009) wrote a research paper on the accusation of witchcraft and its effects on Nepalese women in Nepal. The objectives of the paper were to find out how the accusation of witchcraft has impacted in the Nepalese society, especially the lives of

Nepalese women and why such bad tradition exists. The paper has also compared the witchcraft in Nepalese society to the other societies in the world, for example Africa.

The findings of the paper suggest that it is very bad for a woman to be charged for being a witch baselessly. Once charged, all the society people start to give mental and physical torture to the accused women. Then it would be very difficult to stay in the society. Not only the society people, but also the family members start to torture the accused women. Sometimes this situation may lead to the murder or suicide. Jhankris (or the witch-doctors) also act as the complementary aspect of the witchcraft and help to add the evidences in favour of the witchcraft. The paper also highlights that witchcraft cases are frequent in the remote areas of the country. These remote areas mostly have low literacy rates. Illiteracy is the main cause behind the retaining of this evil in the mind of the local people. The traditional belief itself passes on from one generation to the other generation. According to Sharma, the imprint of the childhood is very difficult to erase from the mind. Therefore, children should not be taught imaginary bad lessons by their parents.

He has found that Witchcraft is mainly related with the problems of women in Nepalese society because they are often charged of being witch. However, in other parts of the world like Tanzania in Africa, both men and women are charged of being witches.

The major findings from the above discussed literatures reviews are significant for the study. For example, Levack (1992) discusses why women are popular targets during witch-hunts. In the same way, Grigaite's (2018) research is relevant in the discussion with the view that cultural, social and legal challenges that are inter-related are deeply rooted in Nepalese society and it affects the context in which witchcraft accusation and persecution happen. The study of Gurung (2016) helps to further investigate how superstitious and religious beliefs have impacted the lives of women. Similarly, the study of Sharma (2009) provides the idea on why witchcraft accusation occurs mostly among women and how they face the possible challenges after they are accused of witchcraft. These central concepts from Levack (1992), Grigaite (2018), Gurung (2016)

and Sharma (2009) are taken into consideration while discussing the collected data from the informants and selected cases (presented under chapter two) to arrive at sound findings presented in the subsequent chapter.

### ***3.2 Theoretical framework***

In order to analyse the perceptions among Nepalese immigrants living in Norway on witchcraft, this study combines three concepts to build a theoretical framework to unpack and answer the research questions:

- 1) The concept of diaspora, focusing on cultural and migration related aspects of diaspora
- 2) The typology of violence, basically personal violence and structural violence
- 3) Theory of gender inequality

Below I give a review of how these concepts have been theorized, how I choose to apply them, and why.

#### ***3.2.1 Diaspora***

‘Diaspora’ is the first concept that my research will utilize to explore the perceptions among Nepalese immigrants living as Nepalese diaspora in Norway. In general, diaspora refers to the act of dispersing people from their homeland to the different places across the globe. The movement of people has become very common with the advancement of science and technology. The theoretical conceptualization and understandings of diaspora have changed over time. According to Flaskerud & Leirvik (2018), some of the oldest and largest Muslim migrant communities in Europe, who have originally migrated from Pakistan, Morocco and Turkey, have been described in the research literature as ‘diasporic’. Similarly, it can be understood from Moghissi (2006, 3-8, as cited in Flaskerud & Leirvik, 2018) that the term diaspora has different coverage during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The following extract from Flaskerud & Leirvik (2018, p. 417) adds more understanding on it:

During the 1970s and 1980s, the term came to mean minorities of immigrant ancestry who develop strong ties with their country of origin (Moghissi 2006, 3–5). During the 1980s, diaspora became associated instead with transnationalism and globalization. A diaspora was understood to create ties linking local communities originating from a dispersed population rather than underlining links with a country of origin (8). In the 1990s, another definition gained acceptance, which emphasized the recreation of hybrid plural identities and cultures. Rather than organizing a dispersed population and linking scattered groups and individuals to form a cultural community, diaspora was considered a discourse, a political struggle concerning minorities' status and the responsibility of the cultural majority and of the state towards them (p. 6).

It can be analyzed from the above extract that in an early stage, the diaspora group is more connected with the country of origin. Later groups make ties with similarly dispersed populations across local communities. And then there comes the recreation of hybrid plural identities and cultures. Finally, diaspora becomes a discourse, a political struggle concerning minorities' status and the responsibility of the cultural majority and of the state towards them. I will examine a group of Nepalese migrants who can be described as having strong ties with the country of origin. They have hybrid identities or are more concerned with the majority of the country in which they live. It is also an interesting aspect to discuss and investigate how different identities of belonging influence in their perceptions of witchcraft.

Different scholars have defined the concept 'diaspora' from different angles, for example, migration, culture, skills and technology transfers and so on between host land and homeland. Wahlbeck (2002) asserts that diaspora' as a concept tends to build on three common criteria: dispersal; settlement in multiple locations; and the idea of a 'homeland'. Similarly, Vertovec (1997) defines 'diaspora' as referring to.

any population that is considered "deterritorialized" or "trans-national"—that is, which has originated in a land other than that in which it currently resides, and whose social, economic, and political networks cross the borders of nation-states or, indeed, span the globe (p. 277).

Vertovec (1997) has talked about three different meanings of the concept 'diaspora'. They are 'diaspora' as social form, as type of consciousness and as mode of cultural production. Diaspora as a social form can be understood as forming a typical social group with certain characteristics. Through consciousness, a negotiation is made between country of origin

and the place they live now. Diaspora as a mode of cultural production refers to the mode of preserving the culture from the country of origin showing strong ties to the country. These different meanings have a certain utility for conceptualizing, interpreting, and theorizing processes and developments that affect South Asian religions outside of South Asia.

Although Vertovec (1997) broadens the concept of diaspora in the form of definition and meanings as presented above, it is noticeable that they are related to each other. They are related in the sense that all of their concern is on the people in diaspora context who have their strong ties to the country of their origin. The diaspora as a mode of cultural production is more developed form of diaspora, for example, it includes social form and cultural production of the diasporic society.

As we have seen, in a trans-national diasporic setting, members of diasporas may engage in development in their home countries directly or indirectly. They may engage in development in their home countries directly or indirectly. Tinajero (2013) identifies five different levels of trans-national diasporas development, ranked here from lowest participation to highest:

- Receiving information: Members of diasporas passively receive information on development-related initiatives in their home countries.
- Passive information gathering: Members of diasporas provide information to interested parties, often governments in their home countries.
- Consultation: Development actors, including governments, consult members of diasporas to inform policy or practice.
- Collaboration- Members of diasporas share responsibilities, either by delegating tasks to other actors, or by jointly designing and/or implementing development interventions.
- Self-mobilization: Members of diasporas retain full ownership and responsibility for development initiatives.

I assume that the nature of my interlocutors' relations with Nepal is similar to the way Vertovec (1997) and Tinajero (2013) describe diasporic meaning and behaviour as



having ties to the homeland. Building on the idea of Vertovec, I explore how Nepalese diaspora has developed as a social form, what kind of consciousness they have and how they have developed or transformed their culture. Likewise, I also utilize Tinajero's idea of different levels of trans-national diaspora development to see which different levels of diaspora development Nepalese in Norway engage in.

Different studies and research have made the area of diaspora quite broad. Therefore, it is important to focus on particular aspects of diaspora which are more significant for the particular studies. As this study addresses people living in a recent migrant context, the study will utilize diaspora theory. The study will mainly utilize the cultural and migration related aspects of diaspora. For example, the research questions "Has the experience of living in Norway shaped their opinions? How?" will be discussed in the light of cultural and migration related aspects of diaspora. The discussion will be made aligned to the ideas of Moghissi (2006, 3-8, as cited in Flaskerud & Leirvik, 2018), Tinajero (2013) and Vertovec (1997) as presented above. Moreover, the concept of diaspora theory will help to seek more information on how Nepalese people living in Norway keep their concern to the country of their origin, what kinds of cultural programmes they organize, how their mindsets are affected by Norwegian tradition and culture.

### ***3.2.2 Different dimensions of violence***

The second concept I utilize in my theoretical framework is 'violence'. For this purpose, I have tried to pick out the major concept of the different forms of violence as presented by Johan Galtung, a Norwegian sociologist, in his (1969 and 2018) articles, 'Violence, Peace, and Peace Research'. The study mainly explores different types, or the nature of violence emerged as a result of the accusation of witchcraft as proposed by Galtung. To be specific, for example whether the violence emerged from the accusation of witchcraft is personal or structural. According to Galtung (2018, p. 36), "violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations". However, this should be rather seen as a broad

concept with a logical extension. There are different dimensions of violence. Galtung (2018, pp. 37-40) presents six important dimensions of violence.

**a. Physical and psychological violence**

The differences can be made on the type of violence that works on the body and violence that works on the soul. Under physically violence, human beings are hurt somatically, to the point of killing. Under psychological violence, there exist different activities like- lies, brainwashing, indoctrination of various kinds, threats, etc.

**b. Negative and positive approach to influence**

A person can be influenced not only by punishing him when he does what the influencer considers wrong, but also by rewarding him when he does what the influencer considers right. Instead of increasing the constraints on his movements the constraints may be decreased instead of increased, and somatic capabilities extended instead of reduced. This may be readily agreed to, but does it have anything to do with violence? Yes, because the net result may still be that human beings are effectively prevented from realizing their potentialities.

**c. On the object side**

This refers to whether or not there is an object that is hurt. When a person, a group, a nation is displaying the means of physical violence, whether throwing stones around or testing nuclear arms, there may not be violence in the sense that anyone is hurt, but there is nevertheless the threat of physical violence and indirect threat of mental violence that may even be characterized as some type of psychological violence since it constrains human actions.

**d. On the subject side**

This refers to whether or not there is a subject (person) who acts. It is referred to the type of violence where there is an actor that commits the violence as personal or direct, and to violence where there is no such actor as structural or indirect. In both

cases individual may be killed or mutilated, hit or hurt in both senses of these words, and manipulated by means of stick or carrot strategies.

**e. Violence that is intended or unintended**

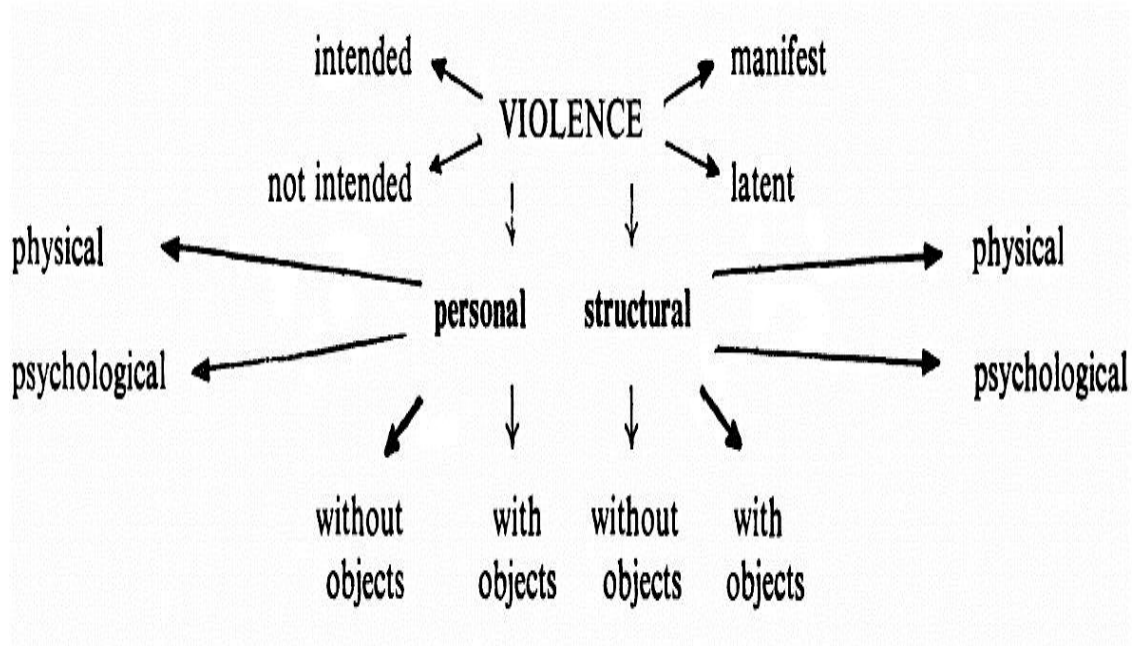
This distinction is to be made between violence that is intended or unintended. This distinction is important when guilt is to be decided, since the concept of guilt has been tied more to intention.

**f. Two levels of violence, the manifest and the latent**

The manifest and the latent are the traditional distinction between two levels of violence. Manifest violence, whether personal or structural, is observable, although not directly since the theoretical entity of ‘potential realization’ also enters the picture. Latent violence is something which is not there yet might easily come about.

However, Galtung (2018) summarizes the typology of violence with the following diagramme giving less importance on negative-positive distinction.

Figure 2: A typology of violence manifest



Adapted from Galtung (2018, p. 41)

Reviewing Galtung's list, my starting point of this study is at the level on physical violence. This is most obvious in the incidents collected from different sources which have already been presented in chapter two. However, there are indications of other forms of violence such as with objects, without objects, intended, not intended, psychological and so on. The broad classification of violence under personal and structural violence by Galtung (2018) provides an outline to investigate how women are violated due to witchcraft accusation and what may be the possible measures to solve such problems investigating the root causes. Therefore, an attempt has been made to discuss personal and structural violence in the following sections.

### Personal violence

Personal violence is also called direct or behavioral violence. Physical and psychological violence emerged under personal violence is direct if there is an actor involved, but it

can also result from structural violence. In either case, individuals can be harmed or killed.

According to Galtung (2018), for personal violence this would mean a situation where a little challenge would trigger considerable killing and atrocity, as is often the case in connection with racial fights. In such cases we need a way of expressing that the personal violence is also there the day, hour, minute, second before the first bomb, shot, fist-fight, cry – and this is what the concept of latent, personal violence does for us. In contrast to structural violence (which is silent and does not show), personal violence shows. The object of personal violence perceives the violence, usually, and may complain- the object of structural violence may be persuaded not to perceive this at all.

Galtung (2018) has presented different features of personal and structural violence based on the nature of society as follows:

In a static society, personal violence will be registered, whereas structural violence may be seen as about as natural as the air around us. Conversely: in a highly dynamic society, personal violence may be seen as wrong and harmful but still somehow congruent with the order of things, whereas structural violence becomes apparent because it stands out like an enormous rock in a creek, impeding the free flow, creating all kinds of eddies and turbulences. ... structural violence as something that shows a certain stability, whereas personal violence (...) shows tremendous fluctuations over time. (Galtungpp 41-42)

However, there is co-relation between personal and structural violence. For example, there is often a political debate on whether one type of violence is necessary to obtain or sustain the other type and whether one type of violence is necessary or sufficient to abolish the other type.

### **Structural violence**

Following Galtung (2018), structural violence is any scenario in which a social structure perpetuates inequity, thus causing preventable suffering. The study of violence under

which enslaved individuals lived and died can be framed under the umbrella of structural violence: the notion that harm can be inflicted to individuals by the social, economic, and political repressive structure they live in and that sanctions slavery (Galtung, 2018). The study of structural violence helps to examine the ways that social structures (economic, political, medical and legal systems) can have disproportionately negative impact on particular groups and communities. This type of violence gives us a way to consider how and in what forms these negative impacts occur and also provides the possible ways to curtail such harm (ibid.).

Structural violence manifests as unequal access to social systems of support like housing, health care, education and employment, primarily due to a long history of cuts to social welfare funding and programs that disproportionately affect women. This in turn increases the risk for interpersonal violence as women are ‘forced’ into vulnerable social positions and dependency (Montesanti & Thurston, 2015). Structural violence and interpersonal violence are interdependent and interwoven. Racial violence, gendered violence and family violence, for instance, do not exist in isolation of social structures that have been built on ideologies of inequality and dominance of one group, ethnic, gender or otherwise, over another (Milaney, Lockerbie, Fang, & Ramage, 2019). Structural violence is indirect because it is institutionalized and results from the unequal distribution of power and resources by repressive structures (Galtung, 2018).

The above discussion (under the section ‘Different dimensions of violence’) has presented different forms of violence based on Galtung (2018). As violence caused by the accusation the witchcraft is a part of the study, the idea of Galtung regarding different forms of violence is quite useful for the discussion of the findings. For example, the discussion can be made on the questions such as: Is accusation of witchcraft connected to structural violence both in terms of gender and as cultural tradition? If so, how does this influence diasporic understanding of witchcraft? The study has concluded the outcomes of the study on such issues by discussing the responses of Nepalese diaspora in the light of Galtung (2018).

### ***3.2.3 Theories of Gender Inequality***

Theory of gender inequality is the third concept used in this study. Gender theory helps to open the questions like: What is the gender roles situation in Nepal? Why are more women suffering from witchcraft accusation than men? How can this problem be reduced? The theories related to gender inequality can be discussed in terms of various aspects. Those aspects may be related to the biological, psychological, anthropological, sociological and economic conditions. Another general classification is found as socialist, liberal, and radical feminist. However, Agassi (1989) has used the classification of gender inequality theories based on the following themes to carry out her studies.

#### **a. Production and property relations**

The existing material inequality as well as status hierarchy in society is one of the problems creating inequalities between male and female. Sociologists normally expect that “the smaller the differentials in standards of living or property in a society, the smaller also the status differentials between men and women” (Agassi, 1989, p. 162). According to Engels ([1884] 1972, as cited in Agassi 1989), “the cause of women’s inferior status is class society and the forms of family organization it produces; once class society is abolished, and the state withers away, the patriarchal family will also disappear” (p. 162).

#### **b. Family structure and household**

Engels ([1884] 1972, as cited in Agassi 1989, p. 163) has two assumptions on the gender inequality. First, the responsibility of women confined to the areas of household work and childcare create inequality. The second deals with women’s unequal status and financial dependence within marriage. Only propertyless proletarian marriage which is based on “individual sex-love,” can provide equality to the women. The economic independence of women may be helpful in the accusation of equal power (Lesser Blumberg, 1984, as cited in Agassi 1989, p. 164). Several theories assume that gender-egalitarianism may be possible as a result of one or more of the following factors: the

decline of women's economic dependence on men, the increase in women's control over reproduction, the improvement and greater availability non-domestic child-care services, the reduction and greater flexibility of occupational working time, and men's gradual realization that a gender-egalitarian dual role of occupational and family work is in their own long-term interest (Agassi, 1989, p. 164).

### **c. Social roles, especially occupational work roles**

Agassi (1989, p. 164) argues that modern liberal feminist theories of gender equality are based on the assumption that in order for women to achieve equal status, all stereotyped social roles for men and women have to be abolished. This is because society has assigned women work roles which are unpaid such as childcare work and domestic responsibilities. On the other hand, society has given men roles that are prestigious and which are market related, and which give them economic accumulation. Similarly, Eagly & Carli (2007) also mentions that men still have the benefit of higher wages and faster promotions. It is necessary for the equal distribution of household chores and taking care of children between partners and parents in order for women to achieve equal status as men do (Agassi, 1989).

According to Agassi (1989), here are two gender-role theories which assume that gender equality is unfeasible. The first of these argues that gender roles are biologically given and thus unchangeable. The second argues that the inevitability of gender inequality is that of precultural motivational disposition, that is to say that there is a gender difference in the degree of the need for initial parenting.

### **d. Sexuality**

There are some radical feminist theories of gender inequality as discussed in Agassi (1989, p. 167). The first feminist theory of gender inequality condemns marriage and any other form of long-term heterosexual liaison as detrimental to women's equality, not because of economic dependence or double work burden, but because of the inevitability of the resulting emotional dependence of women on men (Atkinson, 1970b; Firestone 1971, as cited in Agassi, 1989, p. 167). The second radical feminist theory of gender inequality is



that of obligatory heterosexuality (Rich, 1980; Rubin, 1975, as cited in Agassi, 1989, p. 167), which derives from Levi-Strauss and from Freud as interpreted by Lacan. According to Levi-Strauss, the basic form of male dominance is men's use of women as objects of exchange. According to Lacan's reading of Freud, women are raised to internalize their inferior status by being pushed from birth to sex heterosexuality as obligatory. Similarly, MacKinnon (1987, as cited in Agassi, 1989, p. 167) has also presented the radical feminist view that the basis of all gender inequality is the sexual violation of women, namely, violence against women in the forms of rape, wife battering, sexual abuse of children, sexual harassment, non-voluntary prostitution, and pornography. However, a socialist variant of this theory views that the root cause of men's violence against women lies in the frustrations and injuries generated in men by class society (Schwendinger & Schwendinger, 1983 as cited in Agassi, 1989, p. 168)

Agassi (1989) claims that this classification overlaps the other classification. For example, the theories belonging to the first group are mainly economic; the theories in the second and third groups are economic, sociological, anthropological, psychological, and even biological. The fourth group 'sexuality' belongs to the psychoanalytic.

The Kibbutz as a theoretical test case, Agassi (1989) proposes the criteria to examine whether men and women are equal in the Kibbutz social order. These criteria are- i. access to resources; ii. autonomy, that is the freedom to make life choices and the freedom of movement; iii. power, that is, active participation in decision making in social group through membership, in institutions, in holding positions of economic, political and ideological power.

To summarize Agassi (1989), the following factors such as- profits in basic living conditions, production and property rights, family structure and household, social roles and positional empowerment, political representation, participation in civic actions and sexuality play an important role in maintaining gender equality. Sociological feminist theory severely criticizes the society for burdening women with most of the domestic and child-care work and of conventional marriage for causing women's economic dependence and limiting their autonomy (Agassi, 1989). Likewise, liberal feminists believe changes in

equal opportunities and educational policies, e.g., the National Curriculum, will end patriarchy (Agassi 1989).

The idea forwarded by Sen (2001) on gender inequality is also relevant for the study. However, some of the ideas presented by Sen overlap to the idea of Agassi (1989). According to Sen, gender inequality exists in most part of the world, but it exists in different ratios and forms. It is not a homogeneous phenomenon, but a collection of disparate and inter-linked problems. Some of the varieties of the disparity between the genders as discussed by Sen are as follows:

**a. Mortality inequality**

Inequality between women and men directly involves matters of life and death and takes the brutal form of usually high mortality rates for women and a consequent preponderance of men in the total population, as opposed to the preponderance of women found in societies with little or no gender bias in health care and nutrition. Mortality inequality has been found more prevalent in North Africa and in Asia, including China and south Asian nations (p. 466).

**b. Natality inequality**

In many societies around the world, many parents desire to have a baby to be a boy rather than a girl. However, it used to be their just wish but could not stop having from a baby girl. But with the availability of advanced technology to determine the gender of a fetus, sex-selective abortion has become common in many countries. This has made statistically unequal even in number.

**c. Basic-facility inequality**

Even when demographic characteristics do not show much anti-female bias or any at all, there are other ways in which women can get less than a square deal. There are many countries in Asia and Africa, and also in Latin America, where girls have far less opportunity for schooling than boys. There are even other deficiencies in basic facilities available to women, for example, varying from engagement to cultivate one's natural talents to fair participation in social functions of the community.

**d. Special-opportunity inequality**

Even if there is relatively little difference in basic facilities including schooling, the opportunities for higher education may be far fewer for young women than for young men. Gender bias in higher education, training and professional training can be observed even in the richest countries in the world, in Europe and North America (p. 465).

**e. Professional inequality**

There is also bias in employment as well promotion in work and occupation. Women often face greater handicaps than men. Even the like Japan may be quite egalitarian in matters of demography or basic facilities, and even to a great extent in higher education, and yet progress to elevated levels of employment and occupation seems to be much more problematic for women than for men. Even one English television series *Yes, Minister*, hints out that there are even no women in the British civil service.

**f. Ownership inequality**

There is unequal distribution of ownership of property in many societies around the world. However, its severity can vary with local rules. Even basic assets such as home and land may be very asymmetrically shared. This not only reduces the voice of the women but also makes it harder for women to enter and to flourish in commercial, economic, and even some social activities.

**g. Household inequality**

Family arrangements can be quite unequal in terms of sharing the burden of housework and childcare even if there are no overt signs of anti-female bias in, for example-mortality rates, or male preference in births, or in education, or even in promotion to higher executive positions. It is quite common in many societies to take for granted that men will naturally work outside the home, whereas women could do so if and only if they could combine such work with various inescapable and unequally shared household duties. This means that there is division of labour. This leads women back

because they lack knowledge and understanding of different types of work in professional fields.

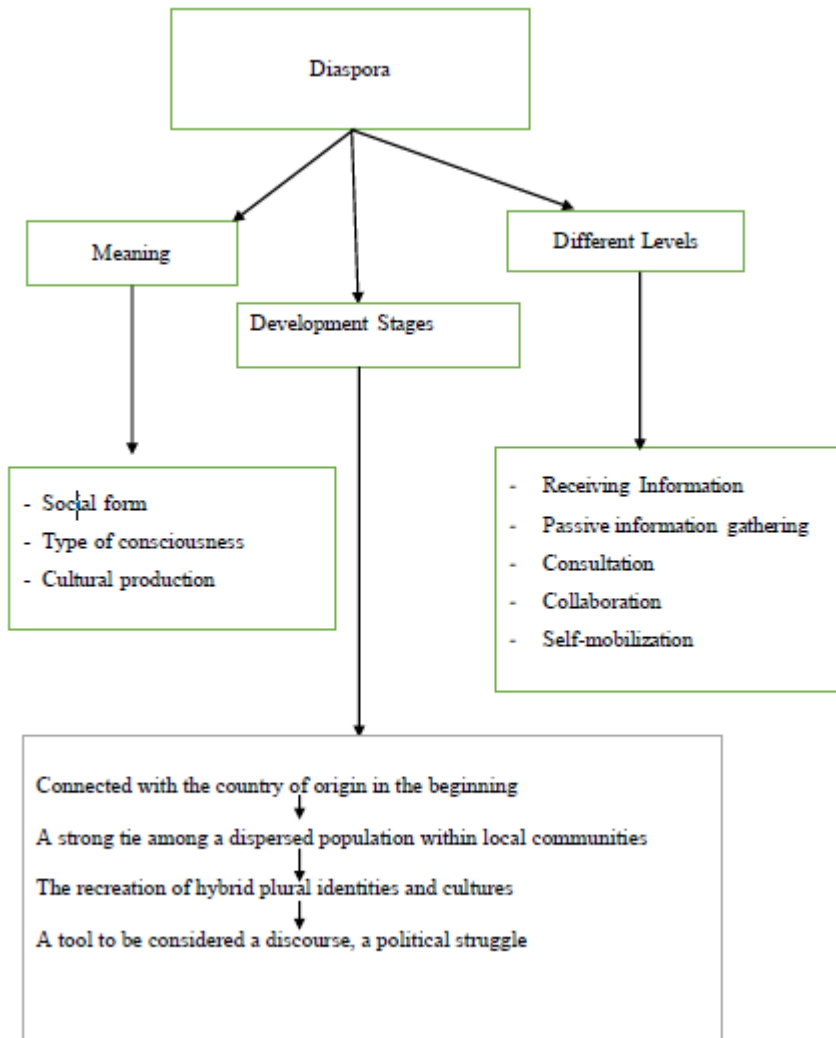
### ***3.3 Analytical framework***

Based on the ideas from different theories presented above, namely diaspora theory, theory of violence and gender inequality theory, an analytical framework has been developed to examine the data. The analytical framework will function as a guideline. Witchcraft, the main issue of the present research is analyzed from the perspectives of these three different theories. Below I outline what particular aspects of these theories are essential to my study and how they are interrelated to each other.

#### ***3.3.1 Confining the concept of diaspora for this study***

As the present research has been carried out in the diaspora context, it utilizes some concepts from diaspora theory which are developed from Flakerud & Leirvik (2018), Vertovec (1997) and Tinajero (2013). It helps to deal with the questions like: How do the Nepalese living in Norway remember witchcraft from their childhood? What are their current perceptions? How has the experience of living in Norway shaped their opinions? What are the possible suggestions for the measures to solve the problem in Nepalese society? Based on the reading and analysis from Vertovec (1997), Flakerud & Leirvik (2018), and Tinajero (2013), the meaning, development stages and different levels of diaspora respectively can be presented in the following diagramme I have developed and presented below. The figure summarizes different elements of three different aspects of diaspora (the meaning, development stages and different levels). I utilizes these elements in the discussion section to check how comparable they are to the data I collected from the informants.

Figure 3: Meaning and different levels of diaspora



Based on Vertovec (1997), Tinajero (2013) and Flakerud & Leirvik (2018)

The present study does not utilize all the understandings of diaspora. It only utilizes certain elements of three aspects, which are meaning, development stages and levels of the diaspora, which I have presented in the diagram above. My selection of these aspects depends on the data provided from the respondents and the type of Nepalese diaspora the study deals with. For example, this framework helps to briefly analyze what type of cultural

production Nepalese diaspora in Norway has, where the diaspora is in terms of development stages and which levels of diaspora Nepalese diaspora in Norway is practicing. The study considers them as a whole.

### ***3.3.2 Confining the concept of violence for this study***

Theory on violence will open and analyze the questions like what type of violence women are suffering from, and in what ways they can be broadly classified into personal violence and structural violence.

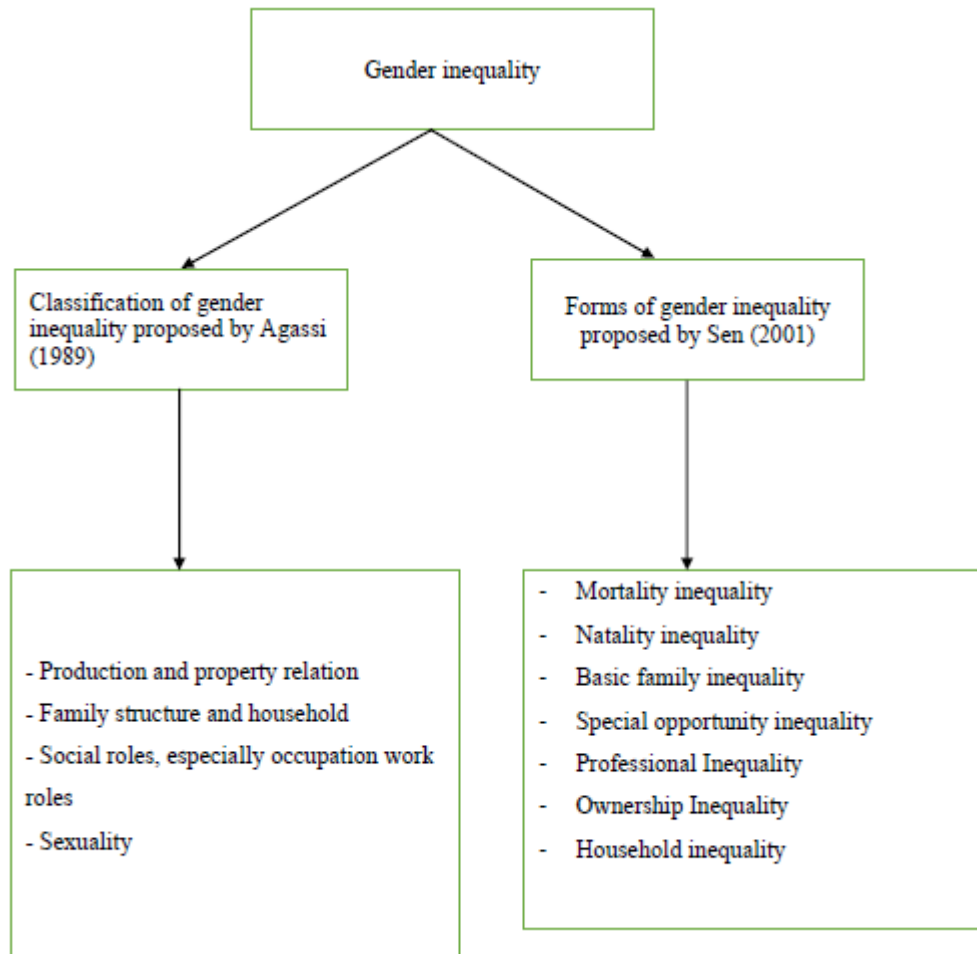
For this particular study, personal violence and structural violence as presented by Galtung (2018) have been mainly taken into consideration for the analysis. However, some further divisions of these two categories like- psychological violence, physical violence, intended violence, unintended violence, with objects, without objects are also taken as the basis for the study. They help to analyse the data from the point of view whether witchcraft victims in Nepal face these different kinds of violence.

Taking the basis of the classification of violence, the study asks why and what types of violence women suffer from witchcraft. The study will only utilize those forms of violence from Galtung's model which correspond to the responses of the respondents and are applicable particularly in the context of Nepal. These findings further lead to the analysis and way forward to the possible measures to solve the problem of witchcraft as a violence against women.

### ***3.3.3 Confining gender inequality theory for this study***

As mentioned earlier, another important theory for this study is gender inequality theory. This deals with why different discrimination and inequalities appear among male and female and how such discriminations lead more female to be accused of witchcraft accusation. Based on the idea of Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001), there are different classifications and forms of gender inequality. They are organized in the following diagram:

Figure 4: Classifications and different forms of gender inequality



*Based on Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001)*

This study utilizes the classification of gender inequality forwarded by Agassi (1989), focusing on production and property relation, family structure and household, social / occupational roles and sexuality. The data are analyzed and discussed looking at the given classification to establish how women are subject to unequal status in relation to men. Furthermore, I rely on different forms and disparities between the genders put forward by Sen (2001), focusing on inequality between men and women when it comes to mortality, natality, basic family, special opportunity, professional, ownership and household. These different forms of disparities help to discuss, analyze and compare the data collected for this study. The classification of gender inequalities by Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001) are

relevant in case of Nepalese society. For example, the gender classification of Agassi (1989) helps to analyze and discuss the gender-wise roles in terms of the property relation, family structure, social roles and sexuality in Nepalese society. Similarly, the gender inequality prevalent in Nepalese society can also be analyzed in terms of the six divisions (mortality inequality, natality inequality, basic family inequality, special opportunity inequality, professional inequality, ownership inequality and household inequality) presented by Sen (2001). Although Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001) have classified gender inequality differently, the most part of the concepts overlap to each other.

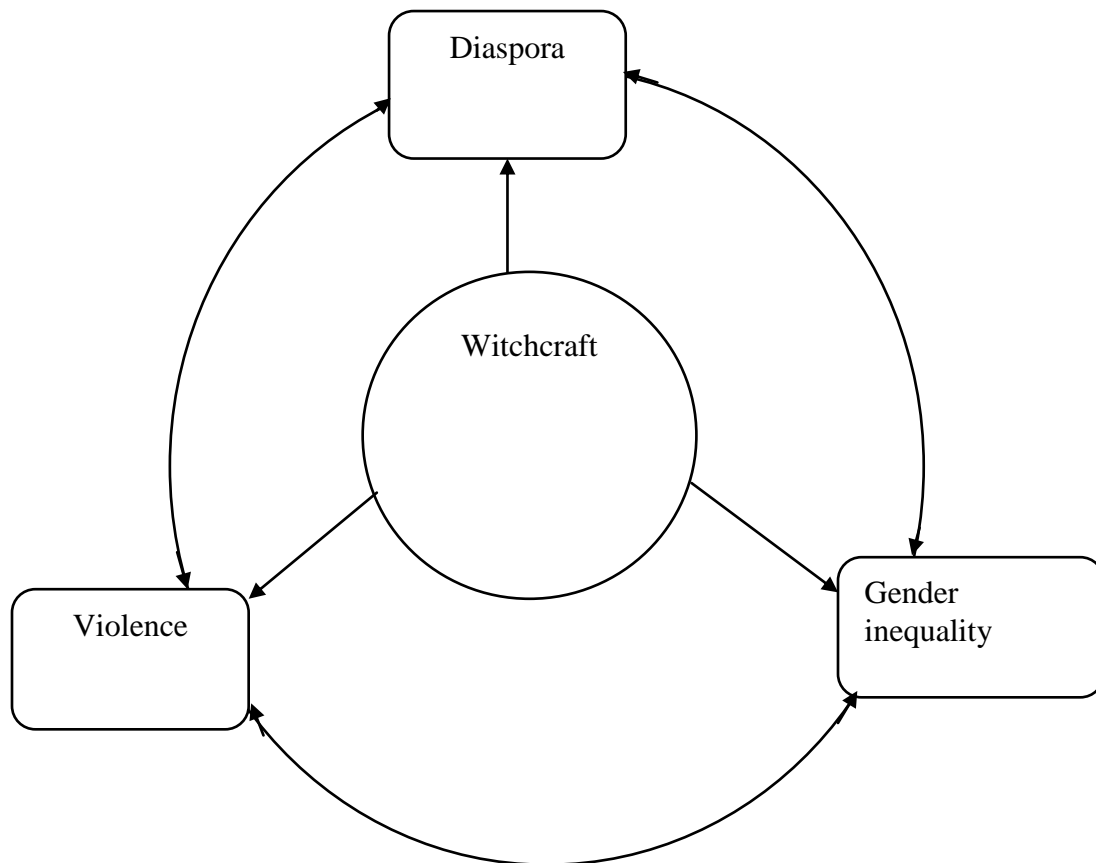
### ***3.3.4 Possible integration of diaspora, gender inequality and violence with reference to witchcraft for this study***

The present study related to witchcraft takes its basis on diaspora, violence and gender. As the present study is concerned with how Nepalese diaspora in Norway perceive witchcraft in Nepal, it explores connections between witchcraft and diaspora. We have seen from the discussion of diaspora theory in the earlier section that the people in diasporic context have some connection with the tradition and culture of the origin of the country and the host country. Along with diaspora and gender, violence is another important part of the present study. The nature of the violence selected for this particular study is only the violence against women emerging from the accusation of witchcraft. As different studies have shown that the number of females accused of witchcraft are more than that of male in Nepal, the present study takes its basis on the idea that there is a connection between gender inequality and witchcraft. Therefore, the present study will analyze how the accusation of witchcraft is considered as violence against women in Nepal by connecting witchcraft and gender inequality to each other.

To sum up, the present study relates to the perception of witchcraft in diaspora. Witchcraft as a violence is examined with particular attention to gender.



*Figure 5: Interrelation among diaspora, gender inequality and violence with reference to witchcraft*



*Source: Author's own concept (Based on the reading from different literature presented under theoretical framework)*

The above figure shows that the issue of witchcraft has some sorts of connections with diaspora, violence and gender. It seems that they are interrelated to each other. When I look at the relation of witchcraft to the diaspora, I, for example, analyze and discuss whether the tradition of witchcraft accusation has transferred to the host country from the country of origin. Further, I also discuss the data related to witchcraft accusation from the perspectives of different forms of violence and gender inequality. This is to say that the study seeks why majority of women suffer from different forms of violence in the name of the accusation of

witchcraft. Has gender inequality something to do with this phenomenon? The study makes its findings discussing the data as a whole.

The main research question of the study is- How do Nepalese ADULTS in the diaspora context of Norway, who grew up in Nepal AS CHILDREN observed the problem of witchcraft in Nepal, perceive witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal after residing in the equity promoting Norwegian context? Three selected theories namely- diaspora theory, theory of violence and gender inequality theory together help to analyze the collected data and lead towards the reliable findings. To come to the actual findings of the main research question, I have developed supporting research questions. The general overview of how the discussed theories help to open up and find the answers to which particular sub-research questions are presented below:

*Table 2: Selected theories to open up and analyze the sub-research questions*

Sub-research questions	Selected theories to open up and analyze
a. How do they remember witchcraft as violence against women from their childhood?	Diaspora theory Violence
b. What are their current perceptions on witchcraft?	Diaspora theory Violence Gender
c. Why do they think violence against women appear now?	Gender inequality theory Theory of violence Diaspora
d. What (do they think) can be the measures to solve this problem in the Nepalese	Diaspora theory Gender inequality theory Theory of violence

society?	
e. Has the experience of living in Norway shaped their opinions? How?	Diaspora theory  Violence  Gender

### ***3.4 Chapter summary***

Literature review, theoretical background and analytical framework are the basis of the study. This chapter has developed a framework where related literatures have been reviewed and different theories related to the study for example- diaspora, violence and gender equality have been discussed thoroughly. The discussion of these theories has led to an analytical framework. The chapter has reviewed the literature Levack (1992), Grigaitė (2018), Sharma (2009) and Gurung (2016). This literature has helped to review the issues related to witchcraft and how women have been suffering from its accusation. In the same way, the presentation and discussion of Vertovec (1997), Flaskerud & Leirvik (2018) and Tinajero (2013) has provided frame to structure diaspora theory. Likewise, Galtung (2018) has been discussed to frame out different dimensions of violence. The discussion on the ideas of Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001) has confined the areas of gender discrimination for the study. Finally, an analytical framework suitable for the study has been developed by integrating main ideas of the discussed literatures and theory.

## **Chapter IV: Methodology**

The chapter presents the methodological processes of the study. It includes the data collection method, sampling procedures, establishing quality of the study i.e., validity and reliability, ethical issues and limitations of the study.

### ***4.1 Qualitative case study***

This study utilizes qualitative case study research methods. According to Stausberg & Engler (2013) qualitative research is more descriptive and does not employ numerical measurement. It also utilizes more open-ended questions, investigates human or social phenomena. Therefore, I think qualitative research strategy helps a lot in this study.

Similarly, a case study is an intensive analysis of a single case i.e., person, institution, group or event with the developmental factors in relation to the context. For example, Bryman investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the “case”) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident.

### ***4.2 Data collection tool***

Since this is a qualitative case study research, interview has been used as the primary tools of the data collection. In addition, some related news articles and documents have been used as secondary tools of data collection which are used to fill up the gaps.

The study has employed semi-structured interview. The informants were selected using purposive sampling. This is because it allows participants relevant to the research questions that are being posed (Bryman 2016). For the semi-structured interview of this particular research, 10 informants were selected.

### ***4.3 Sampling procedure***

There are diverse people from Nepal having different residential status in Norway. They are estimated to be 2500 to 3500 Nepalese around different parts of Norway. Majority of

them include permanent residents, temporary residents (many of them include students), and permanent residents of Portugal as well as other EU countries and residing in Norway. To include the informants from diverse group, the population was divided on the basis of different categories such as- academic background, marital status, age, gender, duration of stay, types of marriage, caste (so called lower caste and upper caste) and so on. However, as per recruiting informants, the researcher considered those dimensions, which were really important for the topic. The important dimensions which were taken into consideration are- gender, partnership status, education, length of stay in Norway and the so-called caste. Regarding education, those who have graduation and above degree were considered as having long education. In the same way, those who have stayed in Norway for more than three years were categorized as having long stay in regard to the length of stay in Norway. In the most optimal case, the researcher tried to find at least one informant from each of the categories. There were two binary features for each dimension. For example, the selected dimensions and their features with their suitable codes were as presented in the table below:

*Table 3: Selected dimensions and their features with suitable codes for recruiting respondents*

Status	Binary Features	Code
Gender	Male	M
	Female	F
Partership Status	Married	Ma
	Single	S
Education	Long Education	LE
	Short Education	SE
Length of Stay in Norway	Long Stay	LS
	Short Stay	SS
So Called Caste	Upper Caste	UC
	Lower Caste	LC

The researcher will take 10 informants from the above dimensions. Priority will be given to select the informants having fewer overlapping features. The list of the informants will be as presented in the table below:

*Table 4: List of informants and their features*

Informants	Possessing Features
Informant 1	Male, married, long education, long stay, upper caste (M, Ma, LE, LS, UC)
Informant 2	Male, single, short education, short stay, upper caste (M, S, SE, SS, UC)
Informant 3	Female, married, long education, long stay, upper caste (F, Ma, LE, LS, UC)
Informant 4	Female, single, short education, short stay, upper caste (F, S, SE, SS, UC)
Informant 5	Male, single, long education, long stay, upper caste (M, S, LE, SS, UC)
Informant 6	Male, married, long education, short stay, upper caste (M, Ma, LE, SS, UC)
Informant 7	Female, married, short education, short stay, upper caste (F, Ma, SE, SS, LC)
Informant 8	Male, married, long education, short stay, lower caste (M, Ma, LE, SS, LC)
Informant 9	Male, Married, short education, long stay, upper caste (M, Ma, SE, LS, UC)
Informant 10	Male, married, long education, long stay, lower caste (M, Ma, LE, LS, LC)

This was just a simple criterion to determine who would be the proper interviewees so far as possible. However, there was a challenge to recruit all the participants based on this criterion. Therefore, two informants sharing some overlapping features also were

recruited. The snowball sampling was used to recruit the informants. This means that the persons already participating in the project helped to recruit other new members.

#### ***4.4 Validity and reliability***

Validity and reliability are the important qualities of any research. A research is of good quality if it is valid and reliable. These two components are important in designing, analyzing and judging the quality of qualitative research. Validity in research refers to whether the research is exactly measuring what it claims to be measuring (Bryman, 2016). Establishing validity requires proper methods of data collection. For example, while collecting data from interviews, we have to minimize bias as much as possible (Cohen et al., 2007). Reliability refers to the consistency in measurement. It deals with whether the results of a study are consistent and repeatable with the same set of instruments (Bryman, 2016). To establish reliability, we have to minimize errors and biases as much as possible. Continuous supervisions by the supervisor also help to minimize errors and establish reliability (Yin, 2014). In this research, I also used multiple methods of data collection. I minimized bias while selecting sample. I also considered the suggestions of my supervisor to make the findings more valid and reliable.

#### ***4.5 Potential ethical issues***

The researcher followed certain ethical norms of carrying out any research. According to Bryman (2016), it is very important for the researcher to be familiar with how he should treat the people on whom he conducts research and whether there are some activities in which he should or should not engage in his relations with them.

Considering the above ideas, the researcher was aware about the rights and independency of the participants. He clearly mentioned about the purpose of the study and clarified that the information collected were confidential. The information collected were utilized for no other than the research purpose. He also explained how the participants (organizations and people) were benefitted from the findings of his research. He respected the respondents and their busy schedule. Hence, he managed the time with

them in advance. He provided the result to the institution and the authority from where the data were collected to make the study more ethical. This helped them for the further improvements of their planning.

#### ***4.6 Challenges related to data collection***

There were some challenges I faced during data collection. Firstly, the challenge was to recruit the informants based on variation in features. I planned to avoid repeating the participants having similar features. For example, I planned to select the informant number 5 and 7 having the features as *male, single, long education, short stay, upper caste* (M, S, LE, **SS**, UC) and *female, married, short education, short stay, lower caste* (F, Ma, SE, SS, **LC**) respectively. However, these were selected based on the following features: *male, single, long education, long stay, upper caste* (M, S, LE, **LS**, UC) and *female, married, short education, short stay, upper caste* (F, Ma, SE, SS, **UC**).

Secondly, it was difficult to take all the interviews physically as the whole world was suffering from COVID- 19 pandemic. As a result, I collected some data from meeting in person, others virtually and in the form of written responses. This was done so to avoid COVID- 19 infection.

All of these challenges were resolved by applying the suitable procedures in conjunction with the consultation of my supervisor in advance.

#### ***4.7 Limitations of the study***

The study was confined to a certain area and people. For example, the informants were the Nepalese immigrants living in Oslo only. They should have lived in Norway at least for two years. The criterion to determine who were the proper interviewees were implemented as far as possible. However, some of the informants sharing some overlapping features were also recruited because there was a challenge to find all the respondents based on the set criterion. The findings are based on the analysis of the information collected from the selected informants and documents. It has been carried



out within a short period of time. The findings might not be applicable in the context of other country than Nepal.

#### ***4.8 Chapter summary***

The chapter has presented the methodical procedures that have been applied for the study. The study has utilized semi-structured interview and qualitative research study. They are utilized as the nature of the study. The detail on sampling procedure (i.e., snowball sampling) has been presented well. The respondents were recruited based on their different features like- education, gender, duration of stay in Norway, so called caste and marital status. These features / divisions have been set to avoid the overlapping possibility of the respondents. The chapter has well-presented the recruiting procedure adopted in this study. Finally, the chapter has also dealt with the ethical issues and limitations with reference to the study.

## **Chapter V: Data Presentation and Analysis**

The current chapter presents and analyzes the data obtained from both different sources. This section mainly presents the experiences of Nepalese people who spent their childhood in Nepal and have been living in Norway as adults. It has been collected from their responses that they have their own experiences on the issue of witchcraft and its accusation as a violence against women.

### ***5.1 Childhood experience upon witchcraft***

This section presents the childhood experiences of the respondents on witchcraft. Different respondents have shared their varied and different experiences. As they come from different parts of Nepal, it is normal to have diverse experiences. Another important reason is that the respondents have diverse backgrounds such as age, education, caste and so on. Moreover, they spent their childhood in Nepal in different time periods and have experience from those time periods.

While asking about the experience, one of the respondents who grew up in a city told that he had not experienced such incident. However, he had heard several incidents where women being subjected to inhumane treatment. He said-

*Being honest, and a resident of capital city, I have never experienced such incident. But have heard several incidents that cursed me being a part of Nepalese society because such incidents have proved that we are no more human. (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)*

However, there was a respondent who said that he had experience about the witchcraft from his childhood. According to him, the man who was blamed had to leave the village because of the accusation. This shows that the men are also the victims in some places. He expressed his experience like this-

*One of our neighbor's uncle (Amar) was innocent, and he was poor. He used to do the household jobs in the rich ones. One day the buffalo of the rich family gave birth to little calf. After some hours, the calf died. The aunt from that house blamed Amar uncle of using black magic to the calf. Amar uncle felt ashamed and moved from the village to another. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, SS, UC)*

Similarly, there is another incident as told by one of the respondents. According to her, a woman was blamed to have killed her husband when he died of natural causes. She was murdered at the end. It was her own family-in-laws who blamed her to be the witch. The respondent told in her own words as-

*22 years old woman who is suffered from the loss of her husband after 3 months of her marriage got tortured by her in-laws, molested by her father-in-law, and even got killed at the end. She was accused of killing her own husband using witchcraft. (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

According to another respondent, people blamed a woman to have been a witch and their children and animals were sick because of her magical power. They used to scold her badly. She shared her experience like this:

*When I was a child, there was one poor widow in my village. She was blamed to be the witch. People around (her neighbors) used to scold her when they or their animals became sick believing that she used her magic power and made them sick. Even if their babies did not eat their food as normal or their cow or buffalo did not give the milk as normal, they used to scold her saying that it was because of her evil power. (Interviewee: F, Ma, LE, LS, UC)*

Another respondent has shared a very interesting experience. According to him, whenever domestic cattle got sick, people used to think that it was because of witchcraft. They used to invite a witch doctor to cure them. His expressions are as follows-

*During my childhood we used to have domestic cattle like buffalo, goats, cow etc. And if they were sick with some reasons it was very popular to invite a man who was known for his magical powers by which he could cure the animals. (Interviewee: M, S, LE, LS, UC)*

Likewise, one of the respondents said that he had another horrifying experience as well. People in the village used to pretend false acts in the name of witchcraft and carry out their sinister personal revenge and settle their scores. For example, they used to milk the buffalo and hide the milk. After hiding milk, they used to blame that the buffalo did not give milk because of witchcraft. Here are his words-

*I have experienced some incidents. In the name of witchcraft, some people even pretended. For example, a man milked the buffalo. He hid the milk. And he acted as if his buffalo did not give milk because of witchcraft. (Interviewee: M, Ma, SE, LS, UC)*

In some places, it has also been found from the respondent that there were many incidents related to the witchcraft. People indirectly talked about the person who was blamed to be the witch. They scolded the person without disclosing the name. The respondent said like this-

*Yes, I have some experience. For example, people and even my parents used to blame certain person as a witch when their children became sick, animals became sick, did not eat properly or buffalos or cows did not give milk as normal. In my experience, there used to be many incidents. However, people in my village used to talk about the person (supposed to be a witch) and blame internally but could not announce it openly. They used to scold badly and give very bad blessings indirectly without announcing names and identity. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, LS, UC)*

In some cases, it has been seen that the criminals do not get punishment even if Nepal has made certain laws on it. This is because the criminals have good connection with the leaders and the authorities who are in power. The people in the village cannot blame those who are rich and have high social status. This has been expressed by one of the respondents as-

*I have experience from my childhood. It is a criminal offence in Nepal. If a person is found guilty of it, they will go to jail. However, sometimes the criminals are saved by the leaders or who are in the authority. On the other hand, I never heard or read that the persons from high economic status or having power in the society got blamed as witches. (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)*

The punishment given to the women in the name of the accusation of witchcraft used to be very cruel and serious. They made them eat human feces, mercilessly beat them and stripped them naked. beaten and made necked. This has been expressed in following expression of the respondent-

*It is still occurring in our society in Nepal and women in the society persists. Many years ago, one woman was accused of killing her brother-in-law by using witchcraft in our society. After, she was dragged from her home, beaten up in public, paraded naked by people, made to eat human feces and drink urine. (Interviewee: M, S, SE, SS, UC)*

There is an experience of one respondent that the caste system also contributed to the problem of witchcraft. People from upper caste often blamed the people from lower caste to be the witch. Here is what he gave an example-

*For example, if the child is crying or afraid or does not have good health in an upper-caste family, then they blamed the worker from the lower caste who served them to be their witchcraft. (Interviewee: M, S, SE, SS, UC)*

However, about 30% respondents said that they do not have direct experience but have read and heard a lot about the gravity of witchcraft in Nepal. For example, one of them said- *“I haven't experienced but have heard a lot about it”*. (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)

Analyzing the responses of the respondents, it is obvious that there have been different witchcraft related incidents in Nepal since long. They existed in different forms. People in the societies believed that both human and domestic animals became sick because of witchcraft. It was also experienced that some of the people in the villages cheated their neighbors and said that their buffaloes or cows did not give milk. They did so with the thought that they did not have to share milk to those villagers who did not have. Normally, villagers in the village share and help each other when they have cows or buffalo which give milk. On the one hand, many of the respondents had directly experienced them while on the other hand, some other respondents had heard and read a lot about such incidents.

## ***5.2 Current perceptions on witchcraft***

This section presents the current perceptions of respondents on witchcraft. They grew up in Nepal. The earlier section presents respondents' diverse experiences about witchcraft tradition as experienced by them during their childhood when they were in Nepal. Now the respondents live in different context. As they live as adults in one of the developed European countries, they have their own perceptions on witchcraft now.

As the question ‘Have you realized any changes in your own concept regarding the witchcraft after migrating to Oslo from Nepal?’ was asked, many of the respondents responded that they have different perceptions now. Based on the experiences from both the countries, most of them have their own perceptions now regarding why the accusation of witchcraft is still a major problem in Nepal and not in Norway.

Some of the responses regarding this issue highlighted the implication of higher education and awareness programme:

*Now I have come to know that it is lack of awareness and education in Nepal which has helped the superstitious belief like witchcraft survive. (Interviewee: M, S, LE, LS, UC)*

Social, economic and cultural elements were also added to the element of higher education and awareness. Comparing this experience with the experience from Norway, one of the respondents argued that the economic condition of the country and its citizen plays an important to avoid social problems like witchcraft. One of the respondents stated:

*Coming from the social-activist family background, neither my family nor I faced any challenges of the accusation of the witchcraft. Now, I have seen in Norway that the people here are socially and economically far more active than the people in Nepal. My current perception is that the poverty of the people and the country itself are the major cause of the survival of witchcraft (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

In addition to the country's economic status, social and cultural activities of the people, the formation and implementation of the improved judicial system was also considered as an important factor in reducing the violence against women emerging from witchcraft accusations. Comparing the situation of Nepal and Norway, one of the respondents has expressed these ideas as:

*I can see and compare the situation of Nepal and Norway now. The social, cultural and economic activities are completely different. I often read the news from different media and watches the news from the television about different incidents of witchcraft in Nepal. My current perception is that the economic status of the country, well developed legal system in the country and the living standard of the people of the country play important roles in removing such superstitions like witchcraft. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, LS, LC)*

Even if the situation has improved in Nepal, it is still worse when it is seen from the developed country like Norway. Based on this observation, one of the respondents who is male, married, and has lived in Norway for many years, said:

*I think the situation has improved when we compare it to the past. However, it is really a serious problem in Nepal when I look it from here Norway and Norwegian society. (Interviewee: M, Ma, SE, LS, UC)*

As the respondents went on answering, they shared their perceptions correspondingly. Some of them talked about the social and cultural contexts while some other talked about changing laws related to the problem of witchcraft. Based on the experience of living in Norway, one of the respondents said that the problem of witchcraft can be removed if all the citizens are well civilized and they are economically prosperous. The respondent said in her own words as-

*... realizing that the educated civilization and focusing on own prosperity are the most effective measures to turn the concept of witchcraft. (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)*

Another respondent talked about the civilization process and changing laws. As he has realized that the country like Norway makes effective policies and laws in any field and implements them properly. He also thinks that Nepal also needs good policy and effective implementation. According to him, the situation in Nepal in this matter is improving law and order. For example, the Government of Nepal is working better in the field recently and introduced Muluki Ain (Criminal Code Bill). He said-

*Yes, the civilization process and recently promulgated Muluki Ain (Criminal Code 2018) has brought some changes in these social evils. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, SS, UC)*

Living in Norway and reading different news about witchcraft in Nepal, one of the respondent's current perception is that it is still a problem in Nepal although it does not look so. Even if those who are specially from the upper caste do not experience much, no one can claim that they do not have experiences about it in one form or the other, directly or indirectly. They believe at least to some extent.

*For outsider witchcraft prevalence looked very low (almost 0), especially in upper caste and within educated people. However, everyone believed it to some extent. (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

Based on his experience from living in Norway, another respondent realized it now that illiteracy and misinterpretation of religious principles and religious scriptures might have been one of the major reasons for the survival of superstitious belief like witchcraft. His intention was to show something about the misinterpretation of the religious principles of Hinduism and its sculpture. As Nepal is a Hindu dominated

country whereas Norway is a Christian dominated country in terms of the number of followers, there are different religious cultures. The respondent said-

*The illiteracy might be the most obvious and major factor to promote witchcraft. The misinterpretation of different religious text and scripture to maintain the power of religion in society might be another vital reason behind this. (Interviewee: M, S, LE, LS, UC)*

Many people believe that there is long rooted problem of caste system in Nepal. Many of them say that this is more common within Hinduism. Taking experience from both Nepal and Norway, one of the respondents says that the tradition of caste system in Nepal has some connections with the issue of witchcraft. Those, especially women and widow, who are from the lower caste are often accused as witch. This may be one of the reasons why the problem is continuing in Nepal. According to her, she has not seen any caste system and its effects in Norway. Here are the words expressed by the respondent:

*Caste system creates inequality in the society. Upper caste has the power to rule the lower caste, especially in the remote areas where illiteracy is prevalent and awareness about the human rights is very low. For example, widow woman from the lower caste is accused of every bad thing that happens in the society and gets punished by so called reputed societal members. Punishment could be badly beaten, making her naked and head-shaven, feeding the human feces and burning her alive. (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

Most of responses of the respondents, who live in Norway now, have shown that they never believed in witchcraft. This may be because they all are literate. However, they have different perceptions regarding the issue of witchcraft after they have lived in Norway. Studying the situation of Nepal and Norway, they are now able to analyze and give reasons why Nepal is still facing the problem of witchcraft. Many of them believe that illiteracy, unemployment, caste system, misinterpretation of religion, low economic situation, gender inequality and so on are the leading factors which are promoting the problem of witchcraft in Nepal.

### ***5.3 Childhood experience upon witchcraft as violence against women***

This section particularly presents the data on the accusation of witchcraft as violence against women specially based on the respondents' childhood experience. It has



previously been presented in section 5.1 that the accusation of witchcraft is common in Nepal and most of the women are the victims of it. Respondents have different experiences.

In the experience of one respondent, the accusation of witchcraft is not only violence against women. She experienced from her childhood experience that many men also suffered from this problem. However, the situation was worse and still it is with female. She said-

*Witchcraft is not only violence against women. It has been prevailed against ignorant and innocent men as well. But women are vulnerable in this evil practice. Victims are treated badly as the unfortunate object who do black magic to misfortune the good luck and deeds. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, SS, UC)*

There is a similar view of another respondent. According to him, mostly the women used to be blamed as witches. But the witchdoctors often would be the male. He would commit different crimes in the name of treatment. The respondent who had this experience said-

*Talking about my village, both male and female used to be blamed as a witch. However, the majority would be the case with female. If someone would be sick, we used to call a witch doctor. So far as to my experience, the witch doctor used to be a male. He used to come and use his magical spell to treat the person or domestic animals. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, LS, UC)*

The respondent also expressed about the sexual violence presented by the witchdoctors in the name of treating sick girls / women. He went on saying:

*In some cases, I heard and read that the witch doctor pretended that he would treat the sick woman or girl by putting her in a single room. He used to treat her by massaging her body. Sometimes, some witchdoctors used to be blamed to have sexual intercourse. This is also a kind of violence against women. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, LS, UC)*

As the respondents are from different parts of Nepal, the types of incidents which took place are different in nature. One of the respondents experienced the following incidents related to witchcraft. According to him-

*Various incidents which took place to women due to witch crafts are such as-mistreating women, beating and boycotting from society. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, LS, LC)*

In some cases, it has also been found that people blame other women as witches just to take a personal revenge. The respondent who had heard and read about this told in the interview as-

*Although I haven't seen or experienced it by myself, I have read few incidents related to violence against women from rural regions of Nepal in news. Not every incident makes it up to news. In some cases, personal revenge might be as well the striking factor for accusing of witchcraft. (Interviewee: M, S, LE, LS, UC)*

From the responses, it has been found that the problem related to the accusation of witchcraft is more common not only against but also among women. They themselves are the perpetrators in majority incidents. Let's look at this response:

*Main part of witchcraft is more common among women. In many cases that I have heard, read and experienced, the women themselves are creator of this problem. Even within the family, daughter-in-law and mother-in-law blame each other when they do not have good relation. However, mother and daughter never blame to each other. In case male is blamed; he is not dominated as much as the woman is. (Interviewee: M, Ma, SE, LS, UC)*

We can also see from the response that the accusation of witchcraft is more common among women and may even take place within the family. Another informant instead identified widows and old women as particularly vulnerable to accusations.

*People usually blame women, especially the widow and poor women as the witch which is not true. (Interviewee: F, Ma, LE, LS, UC)*

Nepalese society is patriarchal in nature. The status of women in Nepal is not same as that of men. They have vulnerable position in the society. The woman who is accused of witch has difficulties to survive in that society. As a result, this brings many consequences in her life. Either she leaves the society, or she can never live as before. This can be interpreted from the following expression-

*Yes, I do agree that it is a violence against women. Nepal being patriarchal society always practices the tradition of showing women in second number of humankind. Still the religious faith gives much more priority to the normal women but denies any girl / woman who has been accused of being witch. If anything degrades the status of any person, s/he will not be accepted as s/he was used to be as before. In this case, once women get accused of witch, she can never live the life as she did before. So, this is a violence against any women. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, SS, LC)*

All the above responses show that the respondents living in Norway who grew up in Nepal have some sorts of experiences from Nepal that the women were vulnerable. People in the society considered them as the second-class members whereas men were considered to be the first class. Women always depended on men. As a result, they became victims of different social crimes like witchcraft.

#### ***5.4 Current perceptions on accusation of witchcraft as violence against women***

The present section shows the current perceptions of the respondents on witchcraft as violence against women. This includes the presentation of the respondents' recent perceptions after living in Norway and based on their new experiences.

Unlike in Nepal, the respondents said that they have not experienced any incidents in Norway where women have suffered from the accusation of witchcraft. This is said like this:

*I have not experienced any witchcraft related incidents which have violated the women's right in Norway, but I have heard many in Nepal. (Interviewee: M, Ma, SE, LS, UC)*

Another respondent said that he has not even heard and read about the news that addresses witchcraft related violence against women. He said:

*All these years I have lived in Norway, I haven't heard about any violence against women which were related to witchcraft. (Interviewee: M, S, LE, LS, UC)*

There was another similar response. The respondent has not heard or read this type of news. She expressed her view as:

*Sorry to say that I have not heard about such violence in Norway and I had not read such incidents. There might be such incidents in Norway (possible, but I have not heard or seen), I won't be reading or listening of such cases. Somehow, to avoid is to protect. (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)*

With the same question asked to another respondent, she replied as if she was surprised by this question. Her response showed that nothing related to the issue of the accusation of witchcraft and its violence against women was comparable from the situation of Norway to Nepal. She said-

*Can we compare? I don't think its comparable. At least I couldn't find it comparable. (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)*

But in the same connection, another respondent has made a clear distinction between the situations of women in Nepal and Norway. This is what his current perception is. He said-

*I don't have any special changes in my perceptions. But I can now realize that women in Nepal are vulnerable. They depend on others. They have to look after their families. Because of this, they are often blamed for witchcraft. Also, they are not educated. But these conditions are opposite in Norway. I have not experienced any incidents of witchcraft. Instead, women are more powerful here in this country. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, LS, UC)*

Another respondent has also seen that the situation of women is quite different in Nepal and Norway. She has her own current observation that Norway has almost null prevalence of witchcraft. This may be because of the availability of different opportunities. Here is the expression expressed by her-

*Women in Nepal are more vulnerable to violence, while in Norway witchcraft have almost null prevalence (as per my experience among Nepalese) and they have given equal rights and freedom as men. (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

The other respondent also has the similar observation. When he was asked whether he had any changes in his perception after living in Norway, he said-

*Yes, I do. As I said earlier, the socio-economic context determines the social problems and evils of the society. The socio-economic condition of Norway is advanced, civilized and qualitative in comparison to Nepal. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, SS, UC)*

Violence in any name should not be acceptable. Based on the current perception of a respondent, the issue of witchcraft is a social stigma in Nepal. The women are deprived of their basic human rights due to such stigma. The respondent has told in her own words as-

*I realized any kind of violence is not normal and acceptable at all. And when it comes to witchcraft in Nepal and its effects on women, I realized it's a social stigma that stops women from enjoying their basic human rights. (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

One of the respondents has unique perception. According to him, people take their traditional beliefs and primitive thinking with them unless they get proper education and awareness. However, Nepalese people living Norway are educated and do not follow superstitious beliefs. He said-

*Experiences vary based on the context and social structure. But the primitive and conservative thinking go with the people wherever they go if they do not get proper education. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, LS, LC)*

Similarly, looking at the behaviors and activities of the women both from Nepal and Norway, it has been found that allegation of witchcraft is common among women in Nepal which is not in Norway. Women themselves are the creator of this problem which has led to frustration and different incidents. However, women in Norway are busy in their own work. This view is reflected in the following expression-

*Allegation of witchcraft is common among women which results physical and mental injury, loss of freedom and to a greater extent loss of life. (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

So, why is there such a difference between women in Nepal and women in Norway? This has been answered with another respondent as-

*The reasons are the education status, effects of humanism and post modernism, human rights and strict legal provision. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, SS, UC)*

The situation of women is more vulnerable in rural areas than in urban areas. The lack of access to different opportunities to women is a major concern related to the accusation of witchcraft as a violence against women. The following expression of a respondent reflects it-

*In the context of Nepal, women have access to low levels of education, healthcare, and economic, social, and political opportunities in comparison to men in the rural area. No, any organization understands the social behavior of women in society. And modern culture shows that we remain both haunted and fascinated by ideas about witchcraft and the supernatural that we have inherited from the previous centuries. (Interviewee: M, S, SE, SS, UC)*

The same respondent said that the seriousness of the problem varies in terms of regions and places in Nepal which is not seen in Norway. Although there are many NGOs which

are working to avoid this problem, it has not been effective. The respondent went on saying-

*I do not hear about witchcraft in Norway but there are many cases of violence against women in the case of witchcraft especially in Terai region of Nepal. There are many NGOs and organizations that helps to reduce such incidents happened in the community, but it has not been that much effective. (Interviewee: M, S, SE, SS, UC)*

Most of the responses in this section are based on the respondents' present experiences living here in Norway. With the comparison of their experiences from both Nepal and Norway, they have made their current perceptions on the topic that they never experienced the witchcraft related accusation and its violence against women in Norway. However, they still hear and read the news that this problem is prevalent in Nepal. Based on the experiences from Norway and comparing them to the situation of Nepal, the respondents made the observations that there are various factors behind the accusation of witchcraft against women in Nepal. Some of these factors are- the lack of proper education, low economic and social status, bad cultural traits, weak family structure in terms of relation among members, and no strict legal provisions.

### ***5.5 Changes in the perceptions due to societal change***

Many of the respondents expressed their views that there are different factors which affect the perception of any person. These factors include such as economic status, culture, social contexts and many other things. This is seen in the following expression of a respondent.

*.... The place shapes a person's perception on the issue of any social problems. The perception varies according to the social context, standard of living, education status, friend circle and companies involved with. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, SS, UC)*

In the similar sense, another respondent has given the example of Norway and Nepal. The social and economic context of Nepal is quite different. With the understanding from the respondent's responses, it can be predicted that the child born and grown up from Nepalese parents in Norway and the child born and grown up from Nepalese parents in Nepal have different perceptions on the same issue. This is because of the social context and environment the person grows up. Let's look at this expression-

*Yes. Societal context defines a lot. Concept of equality and equity plays a vital role in here. Financial empowerment is another one. Which we have here in Norway but that is somehow far from imagination in Nepal. (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)*

There is similar view regarding how societal change shapes one's mindset. The western people are busy in their own work and they are educated. They do not get time to talk unnecessary things. However, the situation in Nepal is different. Many people are not educated, and they do not have stable jobs. As a result, they do find time for gossiping about other people, which is not good. The following responses of the respondent talks about this as-

*Yes, the culture and social context of particular place shapes a person's perception on the issue of witchcraft. Many incidences could be learnt just by seeing or by hearing other experiences. Western people are educated, have busy working life and have little communication with others which hinders them from sharing their experiences. In addition, they are more progressive and focused on their own lives than others. Whereas in our society illiteracy is high, and we are focused more on collective ideology rather than individual. (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

Another respondent also agrees and says-

*Yes, societal change plays a major role. Empowerment, education, employment of the society where the child grows up shapes the child's perception. (Interviewee: M, Ma, SE, LS, UC)*

Many people in Nepal still follow caste system. The people from lower caste in Nepal cannot enter into the house of upper caste people. They cannot go to the temples. They are not allowed to touch the food of upper caste people. Many women from lower caste (so called Dalit People) are the victims of witchcraft accusation. They are blamed but they are innocent. This has been told by one of the respondents as-

*Caste system is somehow responsible to increase the problems of witchcraft. Many women from this group are the victims. But the primitive and conservative beliefs are responsible too. The habit of ignoring the innocent is another key factor. (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, SS, UC)*

As has been seen from the above presented responses, everyone has his own perception. A man makes his perception based on where and how he has grown up. Everyone should be confident on his own perception. He/she should not think much on how other people

consider him or her. All should perceive that human beings are equal, and they should be treated equality. It is the societal environment that develops the specific perception on person. This has been reflected in the expressions of one respondent as follows-

*It is all about the individual perception, if you are afraid that what others might think about you then this concept could be more hazardous than your fear. So, one's own perception is what matters in life. So, I think changing the perception of human is best way to change the concept. Being human is what we should be rather than making ourselves human. The concept of equality is what we should bear in every nook of our heart and mind. (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)*

Overall, a person's perception gets changed according to the society where he / she has grown up. The perception is also affected by different opportunities provided to him or her. For example, a child born and grown up in Nepal certainly has different perceptions on an issue than a child born and grown up in Norway. Similarly, it has been also found that a person who passes his / her childhood in one country and adulthood in another country can compare the situations from his two different perspectives of experiences. This helps him/her to make a concrete perception on an issue learning from the situations.

### ***5.6 Possible measures to solve the problem of witchcraft as violence against women***

Based on the experiences of Nepal and Norway, many of the respondents have given their possible suggestions on how to solve the problem.

Most of them pointed out that education and employments are the major factors which can solve this problem. It is also important to remove discrimination between male and female. Strict implementation of laws is equally important. Let us look at these two responses below:

*Yes. It (Education) contributes to the fact that people become independent and gain knowledge about gender inequality, discrimination and human rights violation. Empowerment is the key to economic growth and social transformation. (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

*The problem can be avoided by educating the people. And if people do the violence in the name of witchcraft, they should get the strong punishment by the society and the government. (Interviewee: F, Ma, LE, LS, UC)*



Along with education, the employment opportunities, awareness programme, and formation and implementation of proper laws are found to be important to reduce the accusation of witchcraft. With job opportunities and education, women can be empowered. The following two responses of the respondents indicate the same:

*Female empowerment, employment and education are really important. (Interviewee: M, Ma, SE, LS, UC)*

*Educate people, empower females, and enforce (the law). (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)*

Similarly, providing equal opportunities can lead the women to the mainstream. Therefore, equality and equity in different social sectors are significant. Here is a response made by a respondent:

*We should maintain equality and equity in all social amenities (Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, SS, UC)*

Besides, one of the respondents has felt that both lack of education and misuse of religious faith are also the causes of this problem. If we educate the people and remove misinterpretation of religions, this may help to solve the problem to some extent. Let's look at this in his own words-

*In my opinion, illiteracy and the religious faith are two different sides of same coin. In the issue of witchcraft, the religious faith (misuse in your terms) plays such a role that even the literate suppressor suppresses any women and tags them as 'witch'. Illiterate people just need the path to go wrong because they cannot decide the wrong doers. So, both the role of illiteracy and misuse of the religious faith are the factors behind the crime. (Interviewee: F, S, SE, SS, UC)*

Linking this to the idea of another respondent, it is possible to remove misconception regarding religion. She said-

*Educate people so that one could differentiate right and wrong, forbid caste system and raise the economic standard of underprivileged people. (Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)*

When one respondent among from the ten respondents was asked, he gave different possible measures. He told in the interview point wise. His suggestions were as follows:

- a. *Should make strong law and implement it.*
- b. *In witchcraft especially old woman, poor women and voiceless women are accused. So, young girls should raise the voice for them and help the whoever caste, religion and age or class she belongs to.*
- c. *Should empower women, economically, educationally and politically so that women can speak against any form of violence.*
- d. *Try to avoid patriarchy, this system of Nepali society is oppressing women.*
- e. *Should emphasis on equality and respect all humans to solve problem.*  
(Interviewee: M, Ma, LE, LS, LC)

These points can be concluded as the summary of all the responses presented above except some extra points. These extra points include developing the feelings of respect towards all the women, raising voices against violence by the educated youths, erasing patriarchal system, caste system, religious and gender bias.

One of the respondents has given good example of possible measures looking at the small Nepali society in Norway. People living here in Norway are properly educated. They are economically sound. They do not have any feelings of discrimination. They know what is good and what is not. They consider witchcraft as a social stigma. This shows that the problem of witchcraft in Nepal can be solved by educating people, promoting their economic status, eliminating discrimination and so on. The following lines expressed by the respondent hint out about this:

*.... Inequality, illiteracy, and poor economy results violence against women in Nepal and they believe it as a family/societal legacy that should be passed down to the younger generation. While in Norway it is not in practice (among Nepalese). This could be because Nepalese here are well-educated and perceive it as a social stigma.*  
(Interviewee: F, Ma, SE, SS, UC)

After analyzing all the above responses, we can say that it is possible to remove the problem of witchcraft in Nepal. However, there are certain factors which the government and people must pay attention. These factors include- education, employment, job opportunities, strict implementation of laws, awareness programme and so on.

### ***5.7 Leading findings for the further discussion***

Many of the respondents directly experienced witchcraft related incidents while growing up in Nepal. However, 30% of the respondents who grew up in urban areas didn't experience it firsthand but had heard and read about such inhumane practices and were aware of the enormous monstrosity of the problem. Studying the situation in Nepal and Norway, they are now able to analyze and give reasons why Nepal is still facing the problem of witchcraft. Many of them believe that illiteracy, unemployment, caste system, misinterpretation of religion, weak economic situation, gender inequality and so on are the leading factors which are promoting the problem of witchcraft in Nepal. The misinterpretation of different religious text and scripture to maintain the power of religion in society (as in caste system) might be another vital reason behind this as lower caste women and widows are generally the victims. It has been found that the problem related to the accusation of witchcraft is more common not only against but also amongst women with in-law accusing daughter-in-law of being a witch but not her own daughter. The patriarchal Nepalese society considers women as second-class citizens and women are the weakest in the entire power dynamics of the society. The so called witch-doctors, who generally are men, assault women sexually in some cases.

People tend to take their traditional beliefs and primitive thinking with them unless they get proper education and awareness. And modern culture shows that we remain both haunted and fascinated by ideas about witchcraft and the supernatural that we have inherited from the previous centuries. It seems that education, consciousness and strict laws and their implementation play important roles along with female empowerment, employment and education. Inequality, illiteracy, and poor economy results violence against women in Nepal and they believe it as a family/societal legacy that should be passed down to the younger generation. While in Norway it is not in practice (among Nepalese). This could be because Nepalese here are well-educated and perceive it as a social stigma. Nepal also needs good policy and effective implementation along with education and empowerment. Most of the responses have shown that the problem of witchcraft and its accusation as violence against women is very severe in Nepal.

However, this is not the case in Norway either among Nepalese society or among Norwegian society.

In the next chapter, these major findings from the responses have been discussed in the light of selected theories discussed earlier in chapter three.

### ***5.8 Chapter summary***

The chapter presents the findings based on the responses provided by the respondents who took part in the interview. The responses were mainly based on the experiences of the respondents both from Nepal and Norway. The responses are related to the issue of witchcraft and its accusation as a violence against women. The responses have been presented in accordance with the research questions that were set. It presents the findings under different sections that deal with respondents' childhood experience and present experience on witchcraft and its accusation, the accusation of witchcraft as violence against women, change in the perceptions due to societal change, possible measures to solve the problem of witchcraft in Nepal and leading findings for the further discussion.

## Chapter VI: Discussion of the findings

This chapter discusses the findings presented and analyzed in the previous section in relation to the analytical framework and the reviewed literature by addressing the research questions and themes of importance emerged in the present study. The discussion presents a summary of the major findings and discusses them with reference to the theoretical framework that incorporates the insights of diaspora proposed by Vertovec (1997), Tinanjero (2013), and Flaskerud & Leirvik (2018), the perspectives on gender inequality by Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001), and the different forms of violence by Galtung (2018).

### *6.1 Discussion of seven selected cases from the point of general abstraction theory*

This section is supposed to be the base line for the discussions of other subsequent sections of this chapter. The section begins with the discussion of seven cases from news media in Nepal presented earlier in chapter two under ‘Background of the study’. Here, the attempts are made to discuss these cases in the light of the discussed theories specially different dimensions of violence by Galtung (2018) and gender inequality by Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001). Different activities which took place in the cases are sorted out based on what types of violence and which forms of gender inequality they belong to.

Below I present a table in which I have identified the victims, established what happened in each case, specified various points to note in each case, and connecting these points to relevant theory.

*Table 5: Applying general abstraction theory to earlier presented cases*

S N	Victims	What happened?	Points to note	General Abstraction theory
1.	Domani	A forty-five-year-old woman was	-Physical	-Physical

	Chaudhary	beaten by her neighbours over the death of a newborn in her village. She suffered several injuries. She was admitted to hospital. Her son and daughter were also injured when they tried to protect their mother. All the accused were arrested after few days but were released on bail 15 days later. Finally, the district court sentenced all five to three months in prison and fines of 5,000 each.	<p>violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Isolated from the social and community life</li> <li>-Even the family members got suffered and had to be isolated from neighbours.</li> <li>-No strong punishment to the offenders</li> <li>-Death of a child</li> </ul>	<p>violence (suffered several injuries)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Structural violence (isolated, no strong punishment to the offenders)</li> <li>-Gender inequality in terms of sexuality (Forty-five-year-old woman)</li> </ul>
2.	Pravati Devi Chaudhary	Forty-five-year-old woman was accused by a group of influential people in her village. She was accused of witchcraft for the illness of a local girl. A group of people that included women attacked her and she was beaten to death. She and her husband were ordered to leave the village. Police refused to register the case the next day because it was a Saturday (public holiday) which had given opportunity to the accused to flee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Beaten to death</li> <li>-Expelled from the society along with her husband</li> <li>-Female also involved in violence against women</li> <li>-Lacking seriousness from Government authority</li> <li>-Illness of child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Physical violence (beaten to death)</li> <li>-Structural violence (Police refused to register the case)</li> </ul>
3.	Laxmi Pariyar	On 9 December 2016, a thirty-two-year-old dalit woman was interrupted on her way back from a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Dalit woman (so-called lower caste)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Structural violence (victim from so called</li> </ul>

		<p>fair, by Hira Lama (a schoolteacher) and his mother Kali Tamang and tied to a basketball pole with a rope. In front of the villagers Lama had gathered to witness, he repeatedly beat Pariyar with a stick. He also kicked her on her chest.</p> <p>She was physically assaulted and force-fed human feces over witchcraft allegations. She and her family were continuously harassed, and she was found dead following a public torture and repeated assaults later on 13 December 2013.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Public torture</li> <li>-Repeated assaults</li> <li>-Inhuman behaviour</li> <li>-Forced to eat human faces</li> <li>-Inhumanity</li> <li>-Let to the death</li> <li>-Public as witnesses while beating</li> </ul>	<p>low-caste background)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Physical violence (was found dead)</li> <li>-Gender inequality in terms of social role (a dalit woman)</li> </ul>
4.	Kusama Devi Yadav	<p>She was blamed for illness of the daughter of Shiva Nath Yadav. She was attacked inside her home and beaten. Her husband also sustained injuries trying to shield her. She was taken to a medical center for treatment after being rescued with the help of other villagers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Got attacked inside her home and beaten.</li> <li>-Husband also got injured</li> <li>-A few villagers showed humanity and took her to hospital</li> <li>-Illness of child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-physical violence (got attacked and beaten)</li> <li>-Gender inequality in terms of sexuality (she was a woman and was blamed)</li> </ul>
5.	Radha Chaudahary	<p>She was a girl and was beaten black and blue on the charge of practising witchcraft by Ram</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Physical violence</li> <li>-Age did not</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Physical violence (beaten black and blue)</li> </ul>

		<p>Bahadur Chaudhary so called Bhole Baba (a disciple of Hindus' Lord Shiva). He had been pretending as the disciple of lord Shiva and mistreating many women and girls in the name of curing them from illness. Seven people caught her by her hairs and dragged her to the ground and thrashed. People sat around as if a fair was under way. When she begged for help, no one (even the elected members of the village) came to her rescue.</p>	<p>matter to be blamed as a witch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Misinterpretation of Hinduism</li> <li>-Violence against women in various forms in the name of religious tradition</li> <li>-Long rooted problem</li> <li>-No one (even the leaders) dears to fight against</li> <li>-Instead of protecting the victim, public wetness as a fair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-structural violence (even the elected members did not help)</li> <li>-Gender inequality in terms of sexuality (she was a girl)</li> <li>- Gender inequality in terms of sexuality and social role (Ram Bahadur Chaudhary- a male- as the disciple of lord Shiva)</li> </ul>
6.	Seti Maya Layo Magar	<p>A 73-year-old single woman from a remote village was thrashed and force-fed human excrement by a group of men led by a Nepal Army officer after three local shamans accused her of being the village witch. The shamans identified Seti Maya as the culprit and accused her of trying to eat his</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Widow</li> <li>- thrashed and force-fed human excrement</li> <li>-so-called witch doctors (shamans)</li> <li>-political power supporting violence against</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Structural violence (political power supporting violence against women)</li> <li>-Gender Inequality in terms of gender and social role</li> </ul>



		heart. While she needed hospitalization after the incident, she was threatened by the perpetrators, as well as the local leaders of political parties, against making a police report. A police complaint as only launched by the victim three days later. All four accused were arrested.	women -delay on registration of the incidents by the police -Male perpetrators	(single old woman) -Physical violence (force-fed human feces, needed hospitalization) -Psychological violence (she was threatened)
7.	A woman	A thirty-five-year-old woman was force-fed human feces by a group of five or six women in Birta village of Bangaha municipality 4, Mahottari district, on 18 August 2019 linked to accusations of witchcraft. The victim was taken to hospital for treatment and two of the alleged perpetrators were arrested at the same day.	-Physical violence -Inhumanity -village area -Female perpetrators	-Gender inequality in terms of sexuality (old woman) -Physical violence (victim was taken to hospital for treatment, was force-fed human feces)

All the victims are female in the above cases. Applying the concepts of gender inequality by Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001), there are different types of gender inequality present in the incidents. For example, gender inequality in terms of sexuality (women and girl in most

cases), social role (the case of Seti Maya Layo Magar, who is a single widow and considered not having important role in the society) and professional roles (the case of Laxmi Pariyar, who is a dalit and often has low prestigious profession) are observed in the cases. Regarding different typology of violence, Galtung (2018) is a good framework for the discussion. Applying the concept of Galtung, some of the types of violence present in the incidents can be referred as structural violence, physical violence, and psychological violence. For example, Seti Maya Layo Magar in the sixth case was threatened by the perpetrators, as well as the local leaders of political parties, against making a police report. This is an example of psychological as well as structural violence. Similarly, we have seen that the violence occurred in different ways in the cases of Pravati Devi Chaudhary (police refused to register the case), Laxmi Pariyar, (victim from so called low-caste background), and Seti Maya Layo Magar (political power supporting violence against women). Following Galtung (2018), all of them can be categorized under structural violence. Physical violence is common in almost all the cases as the victims got badly beaten and were taken to hospital.

### ***6.2 Recalling Childhood experience: A Diaspora point of view***

The data on childhood experience of Nepalese immigrants living in Norway can be categorized into two distinctions: primary source of experience and secondary source of information. The primary source of experience refers to the direct observation of the respondents as witnesses of witchcraft related incidents. The secondary source of information is an indirect way of getting information through hearing or reading about the witchcraft related incidents in different sources of media. Approximately, the former covers 70% up and the later does 30% up as presented and analyzed in the previous section. They appear in different forms of victimization of human beings and domestic animals of witchcraft.

As discussed earlier, diaspora in general refers to the act of dispersing people from their homeland to the different places across the globe (Flaskerud & Leirvik, 2018). The movement of people has become very common with the advancement of science and technology. The Nepalese people living in different parts of the globe refer to the act of

dispersing from their homeland to various host lands. And the advancement of science and technology, of course, has made it easier to Nepalese people to move to different parts of the globe. The Nepalese immigrants and their childhood experience of their homeland in Norway have been considered as an example of diaspora in this research context. As stated in the introductory part of this research, the history of Nepali people living in Norway goes back to more than 40 years. Most of the Nepalese immigrants have come to Norway in the last 10 years (Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) National Co-ordination Council, Norway, 2016), and it is assumed that around 2500 to 3500 Nepalese immigrants live in different parts of Norway. The majority of them, approximately 2000 to 2500 live in Oslo. This shows that Nepalese people live in different locations even inside Norway and try to keep the culture and other ideas with them from their homeland. This correlates with the idea of Wahlbeck (2002) which asserts diaspora as a concept tends to build on three common criteria: dispersal; settlement in multiple locations; and the idea of a 'homeland'

The findings indicate that respondents are from different parts (capital city, rural areas, Terai region, and different districts) of Nepal and they have been living in Norway for a long and different period of time. As stated, they have been living in Norway for various purposes: study, research, work, business etc. None of them have been living here less than two years. As one of the sources of data, the researcher has collected the childhood memory or experiences of some of these immigrants on witchcraft. The research has also observed the changed perception of the respondents after living in Norway for more than two years. The very way of collecting data from the immigrants' childhood experiences corroborates the idea of diaspora in terms of its meaning, level and development as proposed by Vertovec (1997), Tinanjero (2013), and Flaskerud & Leirvik (2018). They have different sorts of experiences based on the geographical location they are from and the socio-economic backgrounds they belong to. These backgrounds include such as- age, education, caste and so on. Moreover, they lived their childhood in Nepal in different time periods and collected experiences from those time periods.

Vertovec's (1997) conception of diaspora as individual consciousness, social form and cultural production supports the findings on the personal perception of the individual Nepalese immigrant on witchcraft, and socio-cultural issue (witchcraft) of Nepalese context in multi-national (Nepalese and Norwegian) experiences. The data analysis of the major findings does not fully address Tinajero's (2013) vision of the diaspora development at five levels in the Nepalese immigrants i.e., from the lowest level of information receiving to the level of self-mobilization. It is limited to the first two bottom levels – 1) Receiving information: the members of Nepalese diasporas passively receive information on development-related initiatives in their home countries, and – 2) Passive information gathering: the Nepalese immigrants of diasporas provide information to interested parties, often governments in their home countries. The findings, however have limitations with the rest levels of diaspora development in the Nepalese immigrant respondents; - 3) Consultation: the development actors of Nepal from the government or non-government sector does not formally consult members of Nepalese diasporas to inform policy or practice, - 4) Collaboration- there is nothing as such of sharing responsibilities with the immigrants living in Norway in designing or implementing development interventions and finally – 5) Self-mobilization: the Nepalese immigrants have no formal role or authentic responsibility for the development initiatives in their home country.

The purpose of the brief discussion on meaning, level and development of diaspora concept in the context of Nepalese immigrants living in Norway is to set a background for the further discussion of the gender inequality and the violence against women in terms of witchcraft in Nepal. It will also help to judge how far the experience of living in Norway is practical to shape their new opinion on gender and malpractice of witchcraft on it.

### ***6.3 Gender inequality and witchcraft in current perception***

The major findings indicated that most of the responses of the respondents, who live in Norway now, have shown that they do not believe in witchcraft. This, however, was not the case regarding their childhood experience. None of them said as such. They had

direct or indirect sort of experience on witchcraft in their childhood at the time they were in Nepal. They have different perceptions regarding the issue of witchcraft after they have lived in Norway. Studying the situation of Nepal and Norway, they are now able to analyze and give reasons why Nepal is still facing the problem of witchcraft.

This section, hence, discusses on the findings of updated or current perceptions of the respondents on witchcraft relating to gender theory as stated earlier. In other words, it discusses the questions on the gender situation and witchcraft accusation in Nepal in terms of the ideas proposed by Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001). Agassi (1989) has defined gender inequality in terms of: 1) production and property relation, 2) family and household structure, 3) social and occupational role and 4) sexuality. And Sen (2001) has observed the same issue of gender inequality in terms of: 1) morality, 2) natality, 3) basic family, 4) special opportunity, 5) professional, 6) ownership, and 7) household inequality. These proposed ideas on gender inequality by Agassi and Sen overlap each other to some extent. Looking at the situation of Nepal, there are gender inequality cases as put forward by Agassi and Sen. For example, there is gender discrimination in terms of property relation / ownership (property is in the name of male), family and household structure (male is the head of the family), occupational roles (males have prestigious occupations), sexuality (all become happy when male born in a family), family provides special opportunities to son but not to daughter and so on.

The presented and analyzed data in the previous chapter has stated that women are the most accused and victimized characters of witchcraft malpractice in Nepalese society. The findings also substantiate the 7 cases presented in the background setting of the research. Women are the victims and accused of the seven witchcraft related incidents: *Domani Chaudhary* of Siraha, *Parvati Devi Chaudhari* of Supadi Village, *Laxmi Pariyar* of Kavre, *Kusama Devi Yadav* of Siraha, *Radha Chaudhary* of Kailali, *Seti Maya Layo Magar* and A thirty-five-year-old woman of Mahottari. The italicized are the names of women who were accused of and victimized in the mentioned incidents. The age of these women ranges from 20 to 73. Referring to Agassi (1989) and Sen (2001), we can see that gender inequality in terms sexuality, social role, professional role and power occur in the above cases. This has been clearly presented earlier in section 6.1.

The accusation and victimization of women in witchcraft malpractice refer to the gender inequality or gender discrimination of the Nepalese society.

Women are supposed to be inferior in many respects: material or identity status, family or household structure, social or occupational role and sexuality in patriarchal society (Agassi, 1989). The notion of inferiority in a patriarchal society upholds the findings in this research. Women being accused of witch and becoming victims of it refer to the lower or inferior status or identity in the Nepalese patriarchal society. Because of the lower status in their familial, societal and economic structures in the society, the women in the Nepalese society are accused of witchcraft and victims of it. The women from higher social status are not found as the victims and charged of it in the Nepalese society. Agassi (1989), therefore, argues this is because society has assigned women work roles which are unpaid such as childcare work and domestic responsibilities. On the other hand, society has given men roles that are prestigious and which are market related. They still have the benefit of higher wages and faster promotions (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Haug, Aasland, & Aasen, 2020). These are apparently met in Nepalese society.

The findings of the victimization and accusation of witchcraft in the Nepalese society are mostly related to women rarely to male can be also discussed in term of the radical feminist theories of gender inequality; gender inequality is not because of economic dependence but because of the inevitability of the resulting emotional dependence of women on men (Atkinson, 1970b; Firestone 1971, as cited in Agassi, 1989, p. 167). According to Lacan's (as cited in Agassi, 1989) reading of Freud, women are raised to internalize their inferior status by being pushed from birth to sex heterosexuality as obligatory.

The findings of gender inequality in terms of the Nepalese women's victimization and accusation of witchcraft in the Nepalese society confirm to Sen's (2001) ideas of gender inequality that exists in most part of the world, but in different ratios and forms. Sen further illustrates the consequences of the gender discrimination as women's' deprivation of basic-facilities; social opportunities, professional development, property ownership, and

their victimization of brutal form of high mortality rates, sex-selective abortion (Natality) and the burden of housework and childcare. Keeping these ideas in mind, the discussion has found the degree or ratio of gender inequality in the Nepalese society at the higher level. The presentation and analysis chapter, and the 7 cases of the background part of this research have demonstrated the extreme level of torture to death and the brutality of feeding human urine and feces. A thirty-five-year old woman of Mahottari district of Nepal was force-fed human feces by a group of five or six women (Hindustan Times, 19 August 2019). Moreover, thirty-two-year-old dalit women called Laxmi Pariyar of Kavre was found dead in her home on 13 December 2016, following a public torture and repeated assaults on 9 December 2016, by a group of people led by schoolteacher Hira Lama (The Himalayan Times, 21 December 2016). These are the examples of the extreme level of gender discrimination that exists in remote parts of Nepal. The following section further illustrates violence against women as a consequence of witchcraft malpractice.

#### ***6.4 Current perceptions on witchcraft as violence against women***

The data presentation and analysis has demonstrated that the accusation of witchcraft has been a major social problem in especially rural areas of the Nepalese society. The childhood memories or recallings (diaspora experience) of the Nepalese immigrants living in Norway are presented and analyzed as proof of the mentioned statement. None of the respondents are unfamiliar with the incidents of witch-hunt related violence. Women are the most probable victims of this malpractice. The recent perceptions of the Nepalese immigrants have turned against their childhood experience of the malpractice of witchcraft. Violence against Nepalese women as a consequence of witchcraft practice will be discussed in relation to the personal and structural types of violence that Galtung (2018) proposes. They have been considered under the broad classification of violence under which the findings will be discussed: how women in Nepal are victimized due to witchcraft accusations.

The data presentation has demonstrated different forms of violence against women in different parts of Nepal. Degradation in health or death of some domestic animals or the

family members of a wealthy family are situations in which someone from poor socio-economic background are blamed for playing black magic of witchcraft. This means that when a person or an animal belonging to the economically high-status family becomes sick or dies, woman from the lower background in terms of economy or social status or caste is often blamed as a witch.

The following table is prepared to give an overview of the typology of accusation and violence. It is based on the background information and data presentation of this research to make the discussion easier and effective. The information of the cases has been borrowed from Table 1 (refer to Chapter II for the sources).

*Table 6: Witchcraft Related Incidents: Typology of Accusation and Violence*

SN	Name of Victim	Areas from	Accusation	Violence
1	<i>Domani Chaudhary</i>	Siraha district	Death of newborn baby	Beaten by (neighbours)
2	<i>Parvati Chaudhari</i>	Supadi village	Illness of a school girl	Beaten dead by (villagers)
3	<i>Laxmi Pariyar</i>	Kavre district	Village witch	Found Dead by (public involved.)
4	<i>Kusama Devi Yadav</i>	Siraha district	Illness of a daughter	Beaten badly by (Villagers)
5	<i>Seti M. L.</i>		Village witch	Fed human excrement by



	<i>Magar</i>			group
6	<i>Radha Chaudhary</i>	Kailali	Causin g illness	Beaten by Group (men)
7	A thirty-five-year old woman	Mahotta ri district	Village witch	Fed human feces by (villagers)

The table shows the list of victims, the places they are from, the accusation of witchcraft and the types of violence against them. This table also shows the real picture of the gender inequality and violence against women in Nepalese society. All the enlisted victims are female. This is the horrible situation of sex discrimination and violence against women.

The in-depth analysis of the incidents presented above in the table corroborates the typology of violence proposed by Galtung (2018) on a large scale. The act of killing the victims (Domani, Parvati, Radha etc.) on the charge of so-called witchcraft validates the personal violence, a situation where a little challenge would trigger considerable killing and atrocity. In a static society, personal violence will be registered and shown. In all the cases of witchcraft victimization, we can see the public involvement in a particular community. This refers to the structural violence in which a social structure perpetuates inequity, thus causing individuals suffering: the notion that harm can be inflicted to individuals by the social, economic, and political repressive structure they live in (Galtung, 1969). This in turn increases the risk for interpersonal violence as women are 'forced' into vulnerable social positions and dependency (Montesanti & Thurston, 2015). The study of structural violence helps to examine the ways that social structures (economic, political, medical and legal systems) can have a disproportionately negative impact on particular groups and communities.

The act of beating, killing, feeding human feces or excrement and threatening the victims (Seti, Kushma, Laxmi, Parvati etc.) by public involvement validates the physical and psychological violence as advocated by Galtung. Under physically violence, human beings are hurt somatically, to the point of killing whereas under psychological violence, there exist different activities like- lies, brainwashing, indoctrination of various kinds, and threats (Galtung, 1969). The public involvement in the mentioned violence verifies the notion claimed by Milaney, Lockerbie, Fang, & Ramage (2019), who said racial violence, gendered violence and family violence, for instance, do not exist in isolation of social structures that have been built on ideologies of inequality and dominance of one group, ethnic, gender or otherwise, over another.

The latent, unintended and without objects are the types of violence that are not manifested in the observation of the cases and the responses of the Nepalese immigrants living in Norway. Moreover, the accusation of degradation in health, deaths of somebody and village witch on the victims (Radha, Seti, Kusama, Parvati, Laxmi, Domani etc.) are fake, baseless and hypocritical. The victims are purely innocent. They however are punished for the accusations they are not responsible for or crimes they have not committed. As referred in section 6.1, women are suffering from physical violence, psychological violence and structural violence in the accusation of witchcraft in Nepal. This has been found after the discussion of the cases and responses of the respondents along with the ideas on typology of violence put forward by Galtung (2018).

### ***6.5 Possible measures to solve the problem of witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal.***

As presented and discussed in the previous sections, the accusation of witchcraft has been seen as a major social problem among the people in Nepalese society. The problem is deeply rooted and still it is very common especially in rural areas of Nepal. Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC) for human rights and social justice reported 52 incidents of witch-hunt related violence against women in 2012, 69 in 2013 and 89 in 2014 (INSEC, April 2015). The incidents of *Domani Chaudhary* of Siraha district (beaten

severely), *Parvati Devi Chaudhari* of Supadi Village (forced to leave the village), *Laxmi Pariyar* of Kavre (found dead), *Kusama Devi Yadav* of Siraha (attacked inside home and beaten severely), *Radha Chaudhary* of Kailali (beaten to black and blue), *Seti Maya Layo Magar* (thrashed and force-fed human excrement) and A thirty-five-year old woman of Mahottari (force-fed human feces) are some of the examples of them. This section will discuss on the possible measures to solve the problem of witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal.

The major findings pointed out that education or social awakening programs are the key factors to avoid the problems of witchcraft against women in the Nepalese Society. Superstition and religious dogmas have played a very important role in the issue of witchcraft in Nepal that even the literate people such as schoolteacher and army officer are involved in misbehaving so-called witch female and suppress them to death (Gurung, 2016). As stated earlier, most of the witch related incidents are very common to the conservative societies or remote parts of Nepal, where the level of literacy, source of income and employment rate are very low and rare.

In such a situation, education and social awakening programs are most important to avoid the problem of witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal (Gurung, 2016). People should be educated that the degradation in health or death of domestic animals or the family members of a wealthy family are related to the natural or scientific causes, but not to someone's black magic of witchcraft. If there is a case of sickness, people should consult the doctors for treatment; but should not accuse someone from a poor socio-economic background of witchcraft. This is a hypocritical assumption to call ill health or death as a cause of witchcraft. And if people do violence in the name of witchcraft, they should get strong punishment by the society and the government.

It is also stated that education and social awakening programs are also important to remove sex discrimination between male and female and their superiority and inferiority. Sex discrimination is also a product of illiteracy, superstition and religious dogmas (Gurung, 2016, Levack 1992). This is the reason for women being victims of the accusation of village witch. The education system and social awakening programs help

to make people understand about gender equality; that male and female are equal in respects. Education contributes to remove the misinterpretation of superstition and religious dogmas. As presented and analyzed in the previous chapter people living in Norway are well educated and economically sound. They do not have any feelings of discrimination. They know what is good and what is not. They consider witchcraft as a social stigma. We can utilize the finding of Grigaite's (2018) which asserts that the cultural, social and legal challenges are interrelated and deeply rooted in Nepalese society and it affects the context in which witchcraft accusations and persecution happen. It is important to find the root causes of these challenges before we find solutions for them. It has been found from most of the respondents that the problem of witchcraft in Nepal can be solved by educating people, promoting their economic status, eliminating discrimination, implementing proper laws strictly and so on.

Along with the discussed measures above, the data presentation and analysis has also proposed some additional measures to avoid witchcraft as violence against women. It includes employment, job opportunities, formulation and implementation of laws, women empowerment etc. The involvement of government and people at both local and central levels are most required for strict implementation of laws, awareness program to avoid gender inequality and witchcraft malpractice against women violence.

#### ***6.6 Reasons behind present day perceptions on the problem of witchcraft and witchcraft as a violence against women***

As stated in the data presentation and analysis chapter, the economic status, and socio-cultural context affect the perception of the people. In other words, the perception of the people varies according to the social context, living standard, education status, friend circle and companies involved. In a similar sense, the recent perceptions of the Nepalese immigrants have been turned against their childhood experience of witchcraft malpractice. The discussion in this section will focus on the matter.

The Nepalese immigrants living in Norway nowadays are very different in their perception from their childhood experiences. They were born in Nepal, passed their childhood and completed school education there and moved to Norway, when their

adulthood began. Their diaspora experience on childhood stated that they were not revolutionary and never stood against the malpractice of witchcraft, gender discrimination and the violence against women. None of them were found unfamiliar with these issues. However, their responses on these issues were very natural or normal as if these issues were or day to day news; as if there was nothing to be ashamed of and to be sad. High illiteracy, poverty, lack of education, unemployment, superstition and religious dogmas could be the factors to discuss (as almost all the respondents have articulated them).

They, however, are now revolutionary against the malpractice of witchcraft, gender discrimination and the violence against women. The cultural and social influence of Norway has been mentioned as a cause of the change in their perception. This is in line with the idea of Flakerud & Leirvik (2018, p. 417) which asserts that the people in diaspora community develop a recreation of hybrid plural identities and cultures after living in diaspora contexts for a few years. They may come with slightly changing and different ideas after living in a different place for a certain time period. Many incidences could be learnt just by seeing or by hearing. The Western people have a busy working life and have little communication with others. In addition, they are more progressive and focused on their own lives than others. By seeing and hearing the western life or western people, the changes in the Nepalese immigrants could be noticed. By analyzing their present perception, they can be viewed as capable of giving proper suggestions to avoid gender inequality, witchcraft malpractice and violence against women. They have suggested the measures like- to make strong law and implement it, to raise the voice for the empowerment of women economically, educationally and politically so that women can speak against any form of violence; to try to uproot patriarchal system and finally to demand for equality and respect in the society.

The finding has also stated that many women from lower caste (so called Dalit People as in the case of Laxmi Pariyar) are the victims of witchcraft accusation. This refers to the predominance of the caste system in Nepal. The lower caste people cannot go to the temple. They are not allowed to touch the food of upper caste people. The caste system is also an example of a superstitious and orthodox society. The majority of them are

poor in terms of economy and literacy. This denotes to their lower level of living standard; it has become one of the problems to accuse them as witch (Gurung, 2016). It is, therefore, most important to bring programs that help to promote their living standards by creating employment opportunities, that support them to elevate their economic status in the society. And it prevents them to be accused of witch and become of victims of it. These proposed ideas from the Nepalese immigrants could be considered as their cultural transformation. A man makes his perception based on where and how he has grown up which aligns with the concept of Vertovec (1997) which defines diaspora from three different perspectives- diaspora as social form, as type of consciousness and as mode of cultural production. It is the societal environment that develops the specific perception on person.

### ***6.7 Chapter Summary***

The chapter has discussed the presented data in the light of previously discussed literature and the developed theoretical background. The theories have been found very relevant in the discussion.

The discussion has shown that the problem of witchcraft in Nepal is long rooted. It is still common in different parts of Nepal. However, it exists in different forms in different parts. The discussion of the responses of different respondents have shown that the degree of seriousness of the witchcraft accusation problem varies from one place to another place. The problem is more serious in rural areas (where people are uneducated) than in urban areas (where people are educated). The finding has also shown that the problem of witchcraft is not common among Nepalese society in Norway. According to the findings, Nepalese people living here in Norway are mostly educated people and they are fully conscious about the superstitious belief of witchcraft. All of them are busy in their own work and they do not have any time to talk about irrelevant things. They have learnt and experienced many things from Norwegian society. Illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, no strict laws, patriarchal system of family, gender bias and caste system and so many other things are the factors that have helped the problem of witchcraft survive. Norway has progressed a lot in these areas and people have good opportunities

for their personal as well as social development. They do not have to face the problem of witchcraft as Nepalese people do in Nepal.

## **Chapter VII: Conclusion and recommendation of the findings**

This final chapter presents the summary of the findings and recommendations. The chapter mainly consists of four sections. The first part discusses the major findings and organizes them towards reaching a conclusion. The second section highlights brief methodical reflection, which covers limitation, reliability and validity of the study in short. The third section identifies and discusses important practical implication of the study relevant to those sectors, which are suffering from the problem of the accusation of the witchcraft as violence against women. The final section, which recommends some topics for further exploration and explanation in the field, is followed by the chapter summary.

### ***7.1 Methodological reflection of the study***

This study is a qualitative case study dealing with the perception of Nepalese immigrants residing in Norway. The study is confined to the data provided by the respondents residing in certain region of Norway i.e., Oslo. The respondents have full diversity in terms of their professions, age, gender, marital status, so called caste, duration of stay in Norway, their residence status in Norway and many other factors. Similarly, they are from different parts of Nepal and from both urban and rural areas. However, all of them have lived in Norway for at least two years.

The primary data were collected via interviews. Similarly, some of the secondary data were collected from different documents like reports, newspaper, journals and other materials. The chapter dealing with theoretical background and analytical framework has discussed different literatures and theories dealing with diaspora, gender and violence. The data collected through different sources have been discussed in the light of theories and analytical framework specially developed for the purpose of analyzing the data to reach to the conclusive findings. The attempts were made to establish high degree of validity and reliability. For example, there were multiple sources of data collection methods, minimizing bias, anonymity, consultations with the supervisor several times and many more. However, there were some limitations. They include for example- time, place, number of respondents and so on.



## *7.2 Findings of the study*

In this study, I have discussed the problems related to the accusation of witchcraft against women in Nepal. Many women are the victims of it. For examples, they are beaten badly, force-fed feces, given threatening, burnt badly, and cut off from normal social networks. As a result, this is considered as violence against women. More specifically, the present study aimed to find out how Nepalese immigrants perceive the accusation of witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal. To find out this, the study has analyzed the participants' childhood experience and present experience. The study also aimed to explore the reasons why the accusation of witchcraft is more common in Nepal than in Norway and what possible measures can be taken to solve this problem. In order to achieve these aims, the study was guided by a general research question: How do Nepalese ADULTS in the diaspora context of Norway, who grew up in Nepal AS CHILDREN experiencing the problem of witchcraft, perceive witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal after residing in the equity promoting Norwegian context?

The findings of this study pointed out that the problem of the accusation of witchcraft as violence against women still exists in Nepal results in violence against women. However, this problem does not have any existence among Nepalese immigrants in Oslo.

According to the opinion by Nepalese living in Norway interviewed for this study, the issue related to the witchcraft and its accusation as violence against women existed in Nepal long ago and still exists because of several reasons. Among the most frequently mentioned explanations, some relate to structural aspects of society. For example, there is a low-level education or lack of education among large segments of the Nepalese population. The people are not aware of the superstitious belief in witchcraft and its consequence. They do not know about the importance of good hygiene and balanced food for the healthy life. Instead, they think a person becomes sick due to witchcraft. The third factor is unemployment. This is again a structural problem in society. However, not every unemployed person makes accusations about witchcraft, so there must also be some personal drive promoting such accusations. Another aspect pointed

about by the interviewees is a general tendency of gender discrimination in Nepal in which women deprived of resources to defend their own integrity and safety. Important aspects are poor education among women, low economic security and political marginalization.

The reasons given by Nepalese immigrants to Norway for why the issue of witchcraft is not a matter in this context, reads almost like a reverse image of the reasons given for why it prevails in Nepal.

According to the informants, accusation of witchcraft against women do not occur in Norway because almost all the Nepalese immigrants are educated. For example, most immigrants came as students for graduation, post-graduation and doctoral degree. Another factor is that both men and women are economically independent, which is not the case in Nepal. Moreover, the Nepalese immigrants to Norway know that the laws and orders are very strict.

Finally, being away from cultural and social context of Nepal is held to also impact on the immigrants' distancing from witchcraft. They have their own typical social group developed in the diaspora context of Norway and have a negotiation with certain Nepalese culture for slightly modified cultural production preserving the major features that are scientific and valid. This has developed through their consciousness. With such activities, Nepalese in the diaspora context of Norway have remained far from superstitious beliefs like witchcraft. As a result, women feel themselves safe and do not feel any forms of violence such as physical, structural and psychological violence emerging from the accusation of witchcraft.

Diaspora as a social form can be understood as forming a typical social group with certain characteristics. Through consciousness, a negotiation is made between the country of origin and the place they live now. Diaspora as a mode of cultural production refers to the mode of preserving the culture from the country of origin by strengthening a strong relationship to the country.

Based on the discussed findings, the following are the major suggestive measures for eliminating the problem related to the accusation of witchcraft in Nepal:

There is a need for strict legislation to prohibit the legality of accusation of witchcraft as well as provision of punishment for those who break the law. In addition, there is a need for educational and awareness programmes among people. The programmes should advocate women's rights with the aim of empowering them. At a more general level, educational and awareness programmes should also discourage the caste system prevailing in Nepal. In addition, it is necessary to develop new employment opportunities for women.

### ***7.3 Practical implication***

The findings of this study have potential to identify and discuss some implications relevant for those concerned bodies who have been working against the problem of witchcraft. These bodies include government, local governments, different governmental as well as non-governmental organizations and other concerned authorities who have been against the problem of witchcraft and its accusation as violence against women. Those who are in the leadership positions of different levels of government and institutions can get some insights from these findings during the formation and implementation of the policies.

As the study has been carried out by analyzing the data collected from the respondents who are the Nepalese immigrants specially residing in Oslo, Norway, many of its findings can be helpful to solve the problems related to the accusation of witchcraft in Nepal. These findings can be implied to set the agenda regarding the issue of witchcraft. Findings have strongly given the hints that education is the main key to solve the problem and those people who have good education should provide awareness among the public by sharing their knowledge and positivity. They have an important role to eliminate the superstitious belief like witchcraft and its accusation.

#### ***7.4 Implication for further studies***

The study has investigated that the problem of witchcraft and its accusation is a long-rooted problem among Nepalese people in different parts of Nepal. The field of this study is very broad as the problems related to witchcraft can be studied from various perspectives such as gender, violence, economy, civilization, politics, comparison of the existence and prevalence of witchcraft related issues in different countries and many more. A single study cannot cover all the issues. Considering this, the present study has made its attempt to explore an issue from a particular angle to understand the current perceptions of Nepalese immigrants in Oslo on the accusation of witchcraft as a violence against women. In other words, the study has a focal point to investigate how Nepalese women are suffering from the accusation of witchcraft. So, this is a study on witchcraft with reference to gender and violence in Nepalese context specially based on the understanding of Nepalese diaspora in Norway. The study is very unique in the sense that no such study has been carried out in the field.

The finding of this study can be utilized to carry out other researches in the field. This study can be a basis to research further and in-depth. This study has a connection of witchcraft to diaspora, gender and violence. However, other studies also can be more interesting, effective and detailed if they are carried out separately in relation to the witchcraft. The similar type of study also can be carried out among the Nepalese people having their diasporas in other countries. Furthermore, it has been seen that many victims do not report the problem, as they fear that they will be attacked afterwards if they report. Therefore, it is also a good topic to explore further why many victims do not want to reveal the violence they face.

#### ***7.5 Chapter summary***

The chapter has summarized the overall findings of the study. It has been found that almost all the Nepalese immigrants I interviewed have the experience of both the cultural and social contexts of the place where they live their adult life and the place where they spent their childhood. The Nepalese people living in Oslo do not have any problem regarding witchcraft and women do not suffer from this problem. The situation

is just found reverse in the context of Nepal. Illiteracy, unemployment, gender discrimination, no strict implementation of laws, and misinterpretation of religious beliefs are identified as the major problems related to the issue of witchcraft. Improvements in these areas, it is suggested, can eliminate the problem of witchcraft. The study has explored these findings adopting the qualitative case study research method with high consideration of reliability and validity. The findings can be utilized by the concerned authorities like policymakers, government officials, social workers to deal with the problems, and researchers for further studies.

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## **Appendixes**

### ***Appendix 1: Interview Guide***

I am Bijaya Laxmi Chudali. I am a Master's Degree student at the University of Oslo. I am carrying out my master's thesis on the title "The accusation witchcraft as a violence against women: Perception of Nepalese Immigrants in Oslo". The problem of witchcraft has been one the major social problems in the context of Nepal. Therefore, I am researching to find out how Nepalese ADULTS in the diaspora context of Norway, who grew up in Nepal AS CHILDREN experienced the accusation of witchcraft in Nepal, perceive witchcraft as violence against women after residing in the equity promoting Norwegian context. I would like to share your experience and perception on the witchcraft as a violence against women. I expect the interview to last about 40-60 minutes (approximately an hour).

#### **A. Questions Regarding Personal Background**

- a. How long have you been living in Norway?
- b. How old were you when you moved to Norway?
- c. Are you married or single? If married, is your spouse from the similar caste?
- d. Are you from the so-called upper caste or lower caste family background in Nepal?
- e. What is your academic qualification?
- f. If you are married, what is the academic qualification of your spouse?

#### **B. Questions Regarding Witchcraft**

- a. What do you know about the witchcraft?
- b. Have you experienced any incident related to the accusation of witchcraft when you were grown up as a child in Nepal?

- c. Can you please share your experience if you have any?
- d. Do you have any experience of such incident related to the accusation of witchcraft after you have started to reside in Norway?
- e. If yes, what are the similar experience and if not, what may be different reasons of not happening such incidents?
- f. How serious was the matter of witchcraft when you were in Nepal?
- g. How serious is it here in Norway now? Does it appear among Nepalese community living here in Oslo?
- h. Have you realized any changes in your own concept regarding the witchcraft after migrating to Oslo from Nepal?
- i. What do you think are the different factors that promote the accusation of witchcraft? Is there any role of illiteracy, misuse of different principles of religions?
- j. Do you think the culture and social context of particular place shape a person's perception on the issue of witchcraft? How do you experience this issue as you have lived in both countries Nepal and Norway having different social contexts?
- k. Can you please suggest some possible measures from your own experience to avoid the problems of witchcraft?

### **C. Questions Regarding Witchcraft as violence against women**

- a. What do you know about the witchcraft as violence against women?
- b. What are your different experiences about witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal and Norway?

c. How important is it the concept of so-called caste system in the promotion/demotion of the accusation of witchcraft as violence against women? Can you please explain with some examples?

d. Do you think any particular religious faiths and beliefs have something to do in the promotion/demotion of the accusation of witchcraft as violence against women?

e. Have you realized any changes in your own concept regarding witchcraft as violence against women after migrating to Oslo from Nepal?

f. If there are changes, what may be the reasons behind to bring changes in your own concept?

g. Do you think proper education can be a panacea to tackle the issue of witchcraft as violence against women? How?

h. How responsible are the family and its religious background to solve the issue of witchcraft as violence against women?

i. Do you think the culture and social context of particular place shape a person's perception on the issue of witchcraft as violence against women? How do you experience this issue as you have lived in both countries Nepal and Norway having different social contexts?

j. Can you please suggest some possible measures from your own experience to avoid the problem of witchcraft as violence against women?

#### **D. Closing Question**

Is there anything you would like to add that we have not touched upon?

**Thank you very much for your active participation and valuable time!**

## ***Appendix 2: Participant Information Sheet***

### **Are you interested in taking part in the research project “The accusation of witchcraft as a violence against women: Perception of Nepalese Immigrants in Oslo”?**

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to find out how Nepalese ADULTS in the diaspora context of Norway, who grew up in Nepal AS CHILDREN experienced the accusation of witchcraft in Nepal, perceive witchcraft as violence against women after residing in the equity promoting Norwegian context. In this letter, we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

#### **Purpose of the project**

This project is for the fulfilment of master’s degree in Religion and Diversity: Conflict and Coexistence. So, it is a master’s thesis. The major research question (main purpose) of this project is as follow:

How do Nepalese ADULTS in the diaspora context of Norway, who grew up in Nepal AS CHILDREN experienced the problem of witchcraft in Nepal, perceive witchcraft as violence against women in Nepal after residing in the equity promoting Norwegian context?

The project will mainly study the perceptions of Nepalese adult immigrants on the accusation of witchcraft as violence against women. To find out the answer to the major research question, it has been further divided into other supporting questions which are as follows:

- a. How do they remember witchcraft as violence against women from their childhood?
- b. What are their current perceptions on witchcraft?
- c. Why do they think violence against women appear now?
- d. What (do they think) can be the measures to solve this problem in the Nepalese society?

e. Has the experience of living in Norway shaped their opinions? How?

**Who is responsible for the research project?**

The University of Oslo is the institution responsible for the project.

**Why are you being asked to participate?**

To include the informants from diverse group, the population can be divided on the basis of different categories such as- academic background, marital status, age, gender, duration of stay, types of marriage, caste (so called lower caste and upper caste) and so on. However, as per recruiting informants for this project, the researcher has considered those dimensions, which are really important for the topic. The important dimensions which are taken into consideration are- gender, partnership status, education, length of stay in Norway and the so-called caste. Each dimension is supposed to have two binary features. For example, Gender (male and female), Education (long education and short education), Partnership Status (married and single), Length of Stay in Norway (long stay and short stay) and so-called Caste (upper caste and lower caste). The informants having fewer overlapping features are in the priority to be selected for the interviews.

The study will employ semi-structured interview. The informants having fewer overlapping features will be selected using purposive sampling. For the semi-structured interview of this particular research, 10 informants will be selected. The snowball sampling will be used to recruit the informants. This means that the persons already participating in the project will help to recruit other new members. I hope this is okay for you.

**What does participation involve for you?**

There will be face to face interview. There may be changes on it and might have to take your digital interviews or written response if there comes any unexpected situation like corona pandemic. The interview will take for about 45 minutes to 1 hour. The interview will be mainly based on your experience and perception on witchcraft. The information

will be recorded electronically, on paper or through sound recording. The interview may slightly cover information about your family and family members.

### **Participation is voluntary**

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose not to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw. It will not affect your personal relations with other sectors like family, society and with other individuals.

### **Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data**

We will only use your personal data for the purpose specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

The project supervisor (Professor Ingvild Flakerud) and I (Bijaya Laxmi Chudali), in connection with the University of Oslo responsible for the project, will have access of to the personal data. Unauthorized persons will not have access to the personal data as I will replace your name and contact details with a code. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data.

The participants will not be recognizable in publications. Only, they will be identified with codes where it will include their personal information like age, education, gender, marital status, occupation, so called caste, etc.

### **What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?**

The project is scheduled to end by 30.06.2021. The names of the participants will not be mentioned for the purpose of anonymity. Personal details will be protected using ID numbers/codes and will be destroyed at the end of the research project. If you wish, I can provide my research findings at the end of the study.

## **Your rights**

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

## **What gives us the right to process your personal data?**

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with The University of Oslo, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

## **Where can I find out more?**

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- The University of Oslo via Professor Ingvild Flaskerud.
- Our Data Protection Officer: Roger Markgraf-Bye, Senior Advisor, Data Protection Officer, University of Oslo, by email: ([personvernombud@uio.no](mailto:personvernombud@uio.no)) or by mobile: +47 90 82 28 26
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: ([personvertjenester@nsd.no](mailto:personvertjenester@nsd.no)) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Ingvild Flaskerud

Bijaya Laxmi Chudali



Project Leader

Student (if applicable)

(Researcher/supervisor)

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**Consent form**

I have received and understood information about the project “The accusation of witchcraft as a violence against women: Perception of Nepalese Immigrants in Oslo” and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- to participate in an interview
- to participate in digital interview or providing written responses to the questions

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 30.06.2021.

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----- (Signed by participant, date)

### ***Appendix 3: NSD Approval***

#### **NSD sin vurdering**

##### **Prosjekttittel**

The Accusation of Witchcraft as a Violence against Women: Perception of Nepalese Immigrants in Oslo

##### **Referansenummer**

601485

##### **Registrert**

24.05.2020 av Bijaya Laxmi Chudali - bijayalc@uio.no

##### **Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon**

Universitetet i Oslo / Det teologiske fakultet

##### **Prosjektansvarlig (vitenskapelig ansatt/veileder eller stipendiat)**

Ingvild Flaskerud, ingvild.flaskerud@teologi.uio.no, tlf: 91792519

##### **Type prosjekt**

Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

##### **Kontaktinformasjon, student**

Bijaya Laxmi Chudali, blchudali@gmail.com, tlf: 96745436

##### **Prosjektperiode**

01.06.2020 - 30.06.2021

##### **Status**

20.07.2020 – Vurdert

#### **Vurdering (1)**

##### **20.07.2020 - Vurdert**

Our assessment is that the processing of personal data in this project will comply with data protection legislation, so long as it is carried out in accordance with what is documented in

the Notification Form and attachments, dated 20.07.2020, as well as in correspondence with NSD. Everything is in place for the processing to begin.

#### NOTIFY CHANGES

If you intend to make changes to the processing of personal data in this project it may be necessary to notify NSD. This is done by updating the Notification Form. On our website we explain which changes must be notified. Wait until you receive an answer from us before you carry out the changes.

#### TYPE OF DATA AND DURATION

The project will be processing special categories of personal data about ethnic origin , religious and philosophical beliefs, and general categories of personal data, until 30.06.2021.

#### LEGAL BASIS

The project will gain consent from data subjects to process their personal data. We find that consent will meet the necessary requirements under art. 4 (11) and 7, in that it will be a freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous statement or action, which will be documented and can be withdrawn. The legal basis for processing special categories of personal data is therefore explicit consent given by the data subject, cf. the General Data Protection Regulation art. 6.1 a), cf. art. 9.2 a), cf. the Personal Data Act § 10, cf. § 9 (2).

#### LEGAL BASIS THIRD PERSONS

During the interviews some data about family members of the informant, such as mother, father, wife and/or husband, might be registered. The informants will be asked about their upbringing and present day life, and in these descriptions some information about the third persons might occur. The information may include data about religious beliefs or ethnic origin, but the project will not register comprehensive/in-depth information about any third focus. The focus will always be on the informant and his/her story. The informants will be asked to not use names or unnecessary characteristics of third persons. During transcription all information about third persons will be anonymized.

NSD finds that the benefit to society of such research taking place far exceeds the potential risks to the rights and freedoms of the data subjects. The project will process special categories of personal data on the legal basis that processing is necessary for scientific or historical research purposes, cf. the General Data Protection Regulation art. 6 nr. 1 e), cf. art. 6 nr. 3 b), cf. art. 9 nr. 2 j), cf. the Personal Data Act §§ 8 and 9.

**PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PROCESSING PERSONAL DATA** NSD finds that the planned processing of personal data will be in accordance with the principles under the General Data Protection Regulation regarding:

- lawfulness, fairness and transparency (art. 5.1 a), in that data subjects will receive sufficient information about the processing and will give their consent
- purpose limitation (art. 5.1 b), in that personal data will be collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, and will not be processed for new, incompatible purposes
- data minimisation (art. 5.1 c), in that only personal data which are adequate, relevant and necessary for the purpose of the project will be processed
- storage limitation (art. 5.1 e), in that personal data will not be stored for longer than is necessary to fulfil the project's purpose

#### **THE RIGHTS OF DATA SUBJECTS**

Data subjects will have the following rights in this project: transparency (art. 12), information (art. 13), access (art. 15), rectification (art. 16), erasure (art. 17), restriction of processing (art. 18), notification (art. 19). In addition sample 1 has the right to data portability (art. 20) and third persons to protest (art. 21). These rights apply so long as the data subject can be identified in the collected data.

NSD finds that the information that will be given to data subjects about the processing of their personal data will meet the legal requirements for form and content, cf. art. 12.1 and art. 13. NSD find that an exemption from the third person's right to information can be made on the grounds that it will involve a disproportionate effort to provide information, seen in relation to the benefit to data subjects of receiving the information, cf. art. 14 nr. 5

b). No directly identifiable data about third persons will be registered, and the duration of processing is short.

We remind you that if a data subject contacts you about their rights, the data controller has a duty to reply within a month.

#### FOLLOW YOUR INSTITUTION'S GUIDELINES

NSD presupposes that the project will meet the requirements of accuracy (art. 5.1 d), integrity and confidentiality (art. 5.1 f) and security (art. 32) when processing personal data. Skype and zoom X is a data processor for the project. NSD presupposes that the processing of personal data by a data processor meets the requirements under the General Data Protection Regulation arts. 28 and 29.

To ensure that these requirements are met you must follow your institution's internal guidelines and/or consult with your institution (i.e. the institution responsible for the project).

#### FOLLOW-UP OF THE PROJECT

NSD will follow up the progress of the project at the planned end date in order to determine whether the processing of personal data has been concluded.

Good luck with the project!

Contact person at NSD: Henriette Munthe-Kaas/Kajsa Amundsen Data Protection Services for Research: +47 55 58 21 17 (press 1)