

Chaupadi Practice: A Cruel Discrimination against Women a Case Study of Achham District of Nepal

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Abstract : Chaupadi is a tradition widely practiced in the far and mid-western region of Nepal. It is a practice where girls and women are not allowed to enter the house and touch the food, water and milk during their menstruation period of 4-7 days. They have to spend all the nights during the period in a specific hut (Chhaupadi Goth) which is a bit far from their residence where they face various kinds of risk and violence like bullying, snakes and insect bite, wild animal attack etc. Sometimes the girls even do not go to school during their menstruation periods. After childbirth, the woman must stay in a cow shed for 11 days in such Chhaupadi practiced areas. This study limits the Achham district of the far western region which is the most vulnerable Chhaupadi practicing district. Several governmental and non-governmental organizations have been involving and spending huge amount of money for capacity building and awareness raising campaign for last 2 decades but still 9 out of 75 Village Development Committees (VDCs) have been partially practicing Chaupadi in the district. This study shows that the school attendance rate of the girls during the period have visibly increased which helps to increase the number of the girl graduation as well. Similarly, the practice of Chhaupadi is one of the reasons for increasing the number of cases of uterus prolapsus and poor reproductive health of women and girls. Triggering tools are the one of the best ways to accelerate the awareness campaign in the VDCs. This study recommends that the local bodies should coordinate and lead the overall awareness campaign program to sustain the Chaupadi free VDCs.

Keywords : awareness campaign, chaupadi practice, gender discrimination, violence

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