

UNTOLD REALITIES:
VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED BY WOMEN PUBLIC OFFICIALS
IN THEIR MARITAL LIFE

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Executive Summery

A culture of silence surrounds the issue of domestic violence which makes the collection of data on this sensitive issue challenging. In fact 99 percent of women never report violent acts occurred against them. This study has made an attempt to explore the realities of domestic violence and tries to show that violence against women does not limit itself only to the lower level, only the poor or the higher level and the financially well offs. It also occurs among the educated people, the public officials of different strata. Domestic violence is revealed in different forms but all originate in the abuse of power at the household level. National and international researches show that violence against women committed by the husband, or spousal violence, is one of the most common forms of violence experienced by women. The study particularly depicts the picture of violence experienced by women public officials in Bangladesh. **Public officials** in the interest of the study and for specifying its reach would include BCS cadre officers, class-I officers of government, semi-government and autonomous bodies, banks, and teachers of public colleges and universities.

The specific objectives of the study are: i) to assess the perception of both male and female public officials about spousal abuse; ii) to identify the pattern of violence experienced by women public officials in their marital life; and iii) to examine the consequences of violence experienced by women public officials in their marital life. The study looked into the issues of dominant patriarchal norms that legitimize subjugation of women at different spheres of life. The study deals with both qualitative and quantitative data. For this study 24 cases were collected from women public officials about their real life experience of spousal abuse. Primary data was collected through two sets of pre-tested questionnaires from 483 different public officials of which 325 were male and 158 were female. The collected data was analyzed by simple statistical techniques and presented in tables.

Most of the cases reflect the established power and dominance of men over women in our society. In many cases, wife's objection against husband's behavior results in violence of different forms. On the other hand, the cases also reflect the hidden fact that women, particularly those from the higher strata feel embarrassed to seek institutional or familial support against spousal abuse. This is again a reflection of women's utmost compromise with violence at the domestic level. The study found that a typical patriarch likes typical housewife who would be more engaged in domestic chores rather than in her profession or career. Sometimes mother-in laws and sister-in-laws were found involved in different forms of violence against even an educated professional women. Dowry, negligence of wife, maintaining illicit relationship even with maidservant and mistrust by the husband cause different types of violence against even a highly placed professional woman. The study also found that sometimes, women working in public offices who are the sufferers of marital violence were able to restore their right to economic dependency at the greater cost, i.e. breaking down of marital relationship. On the other hand, most of the Bangladeshi women surrender to their fate for the sake of children and thinking of the social security.

Among the male respondents of the study 84 per cent belong to different cadres of Bangladesh Civil Service while autonomous organizations, banks, NGOs and non-cadre services together make 16% per cent. Both male and female respondents were asked to give

their opinion about the perception and experience of spousal abuse in their marital life and they were also asked to suggest as to how to overcome such violence even when they are at senior positions of the government.

Responses were obtained on different aspects of violence and its consequences. The responses and case studies reveal a horrific scenario of violence both routinely and occasionally perpetrated on women. The study appreciates the complexities of the issue of spousal abuse and admits that there is no specific prescription to eliminate it at the family level but maintains that growing understanding and mutual respect between husband and wife will certainly mitigate that extent of violence.

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Chapter I

Nature of the Problem

Realities: Told and Untold

We keep a dog to watch the house,
 We keep a cat to catch the mice,
 We keep a pig to eat the scraps,
 But what can we do with a girl like you?
 (Traditional Chinese poem)

The scenario in China prevailed elsewhere in the world but as days passed by there has been significant changes in the scenario. Women also emerged as quite important partners of familial, social and national development if not equally important like men. Although rights of women are yet to be achieved, their role in every sphere of life has gained much recognition. Women were once meant for cooking and crying and now they work, cook and cry. Now the voice of women, even if it is feeble, cannot be said has remained unheard, but there are untold stories of their lives that need to be heard, explored and analyzed.

A Tale of a Vice President

Specioza Kazibwe was a very powerful Vice President of Uganda. Being a medical surgeon, when she was chosen for this very high profile position in the government, Uganda was lauded for advancing women's cause in an otherwise stagnant African perspective. No matter how powerful she was in the statecraft, she became a subject of a routine victim of violence by her husband. She, a powerful lady with state apparatus including police to command, found herself helpless against being abused both physically and mentally by her husband. Desperate on one occasion when tortures were unbearable she showed her injuries inflicted by her husband to her cabinet colleagues.

Finally Specioza, mother of five children decided to discontinue her married life of twenty years filing a divorce suit on the ground that her husband Charles Kazibwe had routinely beaten her, philandered and fathered two children by another woman.

In Uganda divorce is a disgrace and it is simply a rare event in marital history while beating wife and taking mistress or taking second or third wife is quite common. When Specioza rushed to the court asking for relief she was harshly criticized by the powerful patriarchal leadership for encouraging being rebel in marriages and for violating African taboo of taking issue of private lives to the public (WHO 2003).

The text above is a tale of an omnipotent Vice President. It remained untold for many years and it remained hidden even when she was made the Vice President of Uganda. It is a story of violence that was inflicted upon a wife who was far more qualified than the husband. The story, however, surfaced despite the prevalence of a very permissive attitude towards domestic violence.

The case of Specioza is cited to underline that occupying a high public office does not necessarily guarantee immunity for a woman against violence perpetrated by the husband. This is a study on women public officials' family saga of experiencing violence at the hands of their husbands- the story they often prefer to keep hidden from public eyes.

Statement of the Problem

"Violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation. And it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace" (Annan, 2003:8). Violence against women (VAW) is a universal phenomenon, which is often perpetrated by those whom women have been encouraged to trust and respect, those whom they love (Canadian Panel, 1993). The most endemic form of violence against women is spousal abuse, or, more accurately, abuse of women by intimate male partners (Rao and Latha, 1998:275). The abuse itself is universal, occurring in developed, industrialized countries with the same frequency as in developing countries. There is no country in the world where violence against women within marital life is absent. Although such violence is condemned almost universally, deep inside the texture of the society marital violence prevails, permitted and even encouraged.

Violence against women within marital life or wife abuse is a hidden, dark, undisclosed and very sensitive issue widely accepted by culture, tradition and customs. Wife abuse is a form of women's human right violation that occurs in the private sphere by a specific person, in most cases husband, in which state or social intervention is difficult. Moreover, as Rahman (2002) views, societies and states reinforce backward ideas that lead to accept violence against women within the household. On the other hand, secrecy, shame, inadequate

evidences, social norms and beliefs etc. act as obstacles to collecting information regarding violence against women in marital life.

In Bangladesh, murder of wife by husband accounts for 50 percent of all murders (Rao and Latha 1998:276). Bangladesh is the second worst country in the world in respect of violence against women (Mitra 2000). It is reported that 47 percent women are abused by their male partners, 60 percent wives of urban areas are battered by their husbands. In 2000, a total 81 women were killed in the notorious dowry murders (Rahman, 2002).

In her study, Jahan (1994:50) finds that husbands are the major perpetrators of all forms of family violence against women such as murder, beating and stabbing, acid throwing and causing injuries by inflicting other types of physical torture. However, in the case of sexual violence a husband is not reported as a perpetrator as the society granted rights in sexual matters to a husband so that concept of marital rape is absent from the law as well as public consciousness. Violence not only violates women's bodily integrity, it also impedes their full participation in social, economic, and political activities. 'Although techniques of estimating the economic and social costs of violence are imperfect, studies have begun to provide insights into the ways that gender-based violence undermines women's participation, reduces their productivity, and drives up costs to economy, including medical costs' (CHANGE, 1999:25).

Violence against women in marital life is a criminal offence, but the social structure, cultural norms and beliefs along with misinterpretation of religious code create a barrier for women to getting access to legal support. Law enforcing authorities are reluctant to recognize such offences as a legal matter. The discriminatory attitudes of the law-enforcing agency further discourage women from seeking access to the law. Complaints about violence by a husband are the most difficult to pursue. This is exemplified from a study conducted by Ain O Salish Kendra (2000:31) when a violence-survivor went to the police with dark bruises on her person, the police officer said 'What's wrong with this? Do you expect your husband to give you only kisses and not beat you up?' Thus, women as victims of such violence are reluctant

to seek legal aid for fear of being ridiculed, misunderstood or of inviting further abuse from their husbands (BNWLA, 2001).

As it has been stated earlier, being the Vice President of a country is not enough to resist violence inflicted by the most intimate partner. Holding an important and all powerful office does not necessarily guarantee a non-violent and peaceful conjugal life. Public officials, particularly women officials in Bangladesh, as well as in other developing and developed countries are the mirror of the society. The state, on occasions takes pride in showing the numbers of women public officials as indicators of development. These officials make notable contribution in the affairs of the state but how do they do in their families and how are they treated there? During review of research works on women issues it occurred to this research team that this mirror, what the state shows with a sense of pride needs to undergo special scrutiny. While the research team worked for long with female public officials and interacted with many of them and brought out untold stories it appeared to them these stories are wet in tears in their private life. The stories deserve to be heard, told and re-told, documented and analyzed.

There is a growing body of literature on violence experienced by women of lower income group in their marital life. Different NGOs and printing media also record the cases of marital violence as well as advocate stopping these criminal offences. However, violence experienced by women public officials in their conjugal life is almost undisclosed. A few studies on wife abuse were also conducted (Jahan, 1994; Haque, 2002; Ameen, 2005) but issue of violence encountered by women public officials, one of the most empowered and educated sections of the country, was not known to be addressed with due care and attention. This study made an attempt to identify the pattern of violence encountered by women public officials in their conjugal life and its consequences which further would help minimize the research gap in this untrodden field.

Rationale of the Study

Bangladesh has treaty obligations to protect human rights under a number of international human rights instruments such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action 1995 and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

In response to international conventions, several anti-violence laws have been enacted and initiatives have been taken in the recent years such as the Suppression of Violence Against Women and Children (Amendment) Act 2003, the Acid Control Act 2002, the Acid Crimes Control Act 2002 and the Speedy Trial Tribunal 2002. Moreover, the One Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) and the Safe Custody Home for women are established (GOB, 2005_a:13). The Central Cell is established in the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs for preventing violence against women. A 15-member Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee is set up to monitor and review activities (GOB, 2005_a: 15). A number of NGOs also put their efforts towards reduction of violence against women (VAW).

In case of VAW the main goal mentioned in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) is to eliminate all forms of violence against women. This covers: reduce reported VAW by at least by 50 percent; include domestic violence in the Women and Children Repression Act 2003 as a punishable crime; ensure protection of women in the custody of law enforcing agencies and punish the perpetrators of such crimes; provide VAW training to police personnel and medical corps; increase awareness and disseminate information about services available for victims of VAW particularly about the availability of resources with the Deputy Commissioner and district level Judges to get support for violence affected persons; increase allocations for the police service and the judiciary system aimed at counteracting VAW; sensitize the judiciary to apply CEDAW provisions in cases affecting women's rights (GOB, 2005_b:152).

Despite having notable legal provisions against violence against women and efforts towards its elimination, reduction of violence against women is still far from the expected level. Moreover, experiences of violence by women of educated class especially female public officials are still not known as they hardly come up with their stories. A culture of silence dominates the areas what the research intendeds to unfold. This study could be considered as a pioneering work dealing with the women public officials who appear happy and even sits

for photo sessions with the husband to give an impression that increasing peace in the family and riding the hierarchical ladders of bureaucracy go together.

Working Definition of Violence in Marital Life

Defining violence in marital life is a very complex and gigantic task. Violence could be any act starting from verbal abuse to physical torture and death. It can leave both mental and physical scars on the victim and, as will be seen in many cases, the perpetrator is dealt with leniently, if accused at all, while the victim has to bear the scars for the rest of her life (Khan, 2001: 120). Although violence in marital life includes violence between a husband and a wife (or wives, in case of polygamy), between a husband and in-laws or between wife/wives and in-laws, this study only considers violence between a husband and a wife. This study also considers wives as victims and husbands as perpetrators. In view of the definition of violence against women mentioned in the UN Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women, 1993, present study refers violence in marriage as any act performed by a husband that results in, or likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to a wife/wives including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty.

Public officials in the interest of the study and for broadening its reach would include BCS cadre officers, class-I officers of government, semi-government and autonomous bodies, banks, and teachers of government colleges and public universities.

Objective of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

- a) To assess the perception of both male and female public officials about spousal abuse;
- b) To identify the pattern of violence experienced by women public officials in their marital life;
- c) To examine the consequences of violence experienced by women public officials in their marital life;

Methodology

Though spousal abuse has been rampant in our surroundings, it is considered as a 'not to discuss' affair in our culture and it is more sensitive to ask any public official about his/her personal experience and observation of it. This is why data collection on this subject is really a daunting task. So, the research team found it comfortable to use network of acquaintance to collect primary data through questionnaire survey instead of following any standard sampling technique in this regard.

For theoretical clarification of the research, the team carried out a literature and Internet search. For this study both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Both male and female public officials were considered as the primary respondents of the study. For **primary data**, the team, firstly, collected 25 cases of women public officials who encountered violence in their conjugal life. Actual names of the victims as well as the perpetrators were deliberately camouflaged while writing the cases. Secondly, the team collected primary data from 483 public officials (325 male and 158 female) of different levels through administering two sets of pre-tested questionnaires. Questionnaires were sent to respondents and they themselves recorded their responses in the questionnaires. The questionnaires include questions related to their perception of violence in conjugal life, its consequences and possible remedial measures. In cases where respondents were unable to prepare their stories the team documented them and obviously ensured anonymity.

For confidentiality and ethical reasons, the researchers did not disclose the identity of the respondents and their workplaces. For **secondary data**, paper clippings as well as information from different data banks were consulted, examined and borrowed for relevant purposes. The collected primary data of the study has been analyzed by using simple statistical techniques and presented in simple tables.

The team followed WHO (1999) ethical and safety recommendations for domestic violence research. The safety of the respondents was of paramount importance to the research team. Protecting confidentiality was essential to ensure women's safety and data quality. Members of the research team were carefully selected and briefed accordingly. The data collectors

were asked to take into account stereotypes and cultural factors. In the identification of data the researchers were requested to be careful in understanding the disparities in the situation, contributions and problems of women and men as suggested in Rao and Latha (1998).

Limitations of the Study

Violence in marital life is a sensitive issue and still remains into the private domain. Cultural and religious factors are also important hindrances for doing a study on this issue. Underreporting of violence in marital life has also hindered in getting full and up-to-date data from secondary sources.

Since for the purpose of the study we only considered women public officials who encounter spousal battering, women officials of private sectors remain beyond the focus; and thus, this study will not provide any comparative picture.

Marital relationship is very complex. Even in Europe the wife who chases the husband with sharpened knife today, may be found to enjoy a rejuvenated honeymoon tomorrow. Even the police is found hesitant to intervene in such relationship despite proven records of marital violence. Women officials, who are more concerned about their social status, dignity in officialdom and scared of being identified as victims do not usually yield to requests to tell their story. It needs months-long interaction and persuasion to have access to their stories. Therefore, time constraints and limited allocation of resources are to be considered.

While the field work for the research was being undertaken the team very often encountered some questions. What about the husbands? Are not some of them, if not many victim of some kind of violence and exploitation perpetrated by the wives who are powerful public sector officials? The study took note of this question but did not try to address as it would open a newer avenue of debate that demands the scope of a similar research.

Outcome of the Study

According to the Constitution of Bangladesh and the National Policy for Women's Advancement (GOB, 2004), government is fully committed to eliminate all forms of violence

against women and girls. From this study we tried to identify the pattern, causes and consequences of violence against women public officials in their marital life. We also pointed out the major factors and hidden issues related to violence against women belonging to the public service, which, on the other hand, would help to curb these types of offences. Considering one of the mandated duties of BPATC, we hope that recommendations of our study may help the government to eradicate violence against women and ensure women's total participation in the development process of the country. Moreover, findings of this study can be used as training material of gender module of different core courses as well as 'Gender and Development' course conducted by BPATC.

Structure of the Study

The study follows a formal research structure. It is divided into five different Chapters. Introductory chapter (Chapter-I) starts with a brief about spousal battering both in Bangladesh and in some other countries. It also includes objectives, methodology, limitations and organization of the study. Chapter-II is basically an exploration of available literature elaborating theoretical aspects of violence in marital life. Chapter-III analyses and presents the primary data of the study collected through questionnaires. The collected cases have been presented in Chapter-IV. Finally, Chapter-V presents major findings, conclusion, and policy implication of the study.

Chapter II

Theoretical Exploration

"...the wife: however brutal tyrant she may unfortunately be chained to though she may know that he hates her, though it may be his daily pleasure to torture her, and though she may feel it impossible not to loathe him [he] can claim from her and enforce the lowest degradation of a human being, that of being made instrument of an animal function contrary to her inclinations." (John Stuart Mill quoted in Rao and Latha, 1998:82)

According to Hampton et al. (1993:168), 'violence in intimate relationships is a behavioural pattern that occurs in physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic forms to perpetuate fear, intimidation, power, and control.' Violence further refers to 'behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill...strength of emotion or an unpleasant or destructive natural force' (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 10th edition, 2001). Violence in marital life refers to the abuse of a spouse, usually a wife, to maintain control and power by the abuser, a husband (Gelles, 1983).

Violence against women is a universal phenomenon. It cuts across national boundaries, ideologies, classes, and all racial, social, cultural, economic, political and religious spectrums. Spousal abuse or abuse of women by intimate male partners is one of the most endemic forms of violence against women. Women can also be violent, but men perpetrate the vast majority of partner abuse against their female partners (CHANGE, 1999:5). The facts on violence against women are stunning:

WHO (2000) documented that 47% of women in Bangladesh have been physically abused in their lifetime by an intimate partner. The condition does not appear to have improved while shockingly even women have accepted this violence as a natural consequence of family life while for many others even the ones highly educated and highly placed it is their destiny over which they ought to have hardly any control.

In India, in a nationwide survey it is reported that over 40% of women are beaten by their husbands at some point of time. More shockingly, around 54% of the women surveyed thought that such violence was justified on one ground or the other (Sinha 2007).

WHO (2003) survey in Africa showed that of 2881 men surveyed 70 per cent claimed to believe that beating a female partner is justifiable in some circumstances while the more disturbing is the fact that of 5109 women surveyed 90 per cent said that women deserve to be beaten on some instances to keep them disciplined.

Jahan (1988) forwards the argument that family violence in Bangladesh and in similar context is the outcome of the accepted inequality in gender relation that is 'deeply embedded in the structure of the patriarchal society of Bangladesh. Male domination and female subordination are the basic tenets of the social structure'. She goes further to suggest that 'all Bangladeshi social institutions permit, even encourage the demonstration of the unequal power relations between the sexes and try to perpetuate the interest of patriarchy.' Therefore, she concludes that 'Bangladeshi families offer instances of the display of male dominance in intimate relations in the form of marital violence'.

Khattak et al (2008) show the structural violence drawing from Galtung (<http://www.lawresearch.com>) that endemic violence exists in the inequalities of social structures focusing on the gross power imbalances within a system as manifested in systemic discrimination. They argue that women's status is not homogenous because of interconnection of gender with other forms of exclusions in the society.

Gordon (1988) suggests that the concern for women being victim of family violence ebbed and flowed with feminism. When feminism was 'active and influential, interest in violence toward women was high, and, when feminism ebbed as a social movement, so did concern for battered women' (Gordon 1988, cited in Hampton et al 1993).

Wife beating as part of family violence is preferred to be explained as a system product, not as the result of individual pathology (Strauss 1973). Strauss agrees that more family violence

actually occurs than is reported and most family violence is either denied or ignored. Ameen (2005) sees wife abuse to be endemic and is operated overtly or covertly with some kind social sanction. This sanction however is not limited to the poorer and less educated section of women population.

While the present study was being undertaken it appeared that in case of denial of violence, even officers in class-I category, themselves victims of violence in many cases simply deny incidence of violence in their life. They are too shy or scared to reveal the truths of their battered life. When a woman chief executive of a sub-district was beaten and pounded down on the ground by the husband, a subordinate magistrate came to rescue her and desired that the husband be taken to custody for his act of brutality. He was not only discouraged to act on his own rather he was made promise not to divulge the story of her humiliation to anybody.

Strauss (1973) go further to explain that a person once labeled to be violent are encouraged to surface their forces either to live up to the expectation of others or to fulfill their own concept of being violent and dangerous (quoted in Gordon 1988).

Ameen (2005) draws from Dobash and Dobash (1979) suggesting that 'women are not victims because of various structural and stress factors; they are battered because their subordinate status has made them "appropriate" victims of marital violence.'

Exploring Theories Related to Violence Against Women

Male aggression as has been argued in Burges and Draper (1989) reflects male reproductive string. On further analysis it comes out that aggression becomes an effective tool to control female sexuality for males' reproductive advantage.

The socio-biological or evolutionary approach puts forward that violence is the result of reproductive success and males take the dominance in the male –female relationship.

Resource theory, as Goode (1983) explains- the more resources- social, personal and economic- a person can command the more force he can master. It has further been explained – a husband desirous of being the dominant person in the family, but lacks education and has job low in prestige and income may choose to apply a tool of violence to maintain dominance.

Exchange or social control theory suggests that violence and abuse are used when rewards are higher than the cost (Gelles 1983). It has also been attached that in many societies there remains cultural approval of violence, specifically wife beating in disciplining wives.

Patriarchy and Wife Abuse Theory

The focus of this theory is that economic and social processes operate directly and indirectly to support a patriarchal social order and family structure (quoted from Dobash and Dobash, 1979 in Hampton et al 1993). The patriarchal order ultimately leads to subordination of women and builds the pattern of systematic violence against wives. For patriarchy, it is easy to locate the source of male strength in the broader social structure.

Pagelow (1984) laments that academia has obscured and overshadowed the issue of wife abuse underneath the broader term of domestic violence. He sees that the too wide focus of domestic violence remains as a hindrance in understanding wife abuse.

Gelles (1983) proposes along with Murry Strauss and Suzanne Steinmetz steps for prevention of such violence:

- Eliminate norms that legitimize and glorify violence in the society and family
- Reduce violence-provoking stress created by the society.
- Integrate family into the network of kin and community.
- Change the sexist characters of society.
- Breach the cycle of violence in the family.

While focusing on the sexist characters of the society this team of three maintains that 'sexual inequality, perhaps more than economic inequality, makes violence possible in homes'. Their broad suggestion is that of elimination of men's work and women's work- the tradition, division and characterization of work at home and outside.

Hampton and Coner-Edwards (1993) summarizes marital violence as a behavior pattern that occurs in physical, emotional, sexual and economic forms developed to perpetuate intimidation, power and control of abusing spouse over the abused one. As for centuries women have occupied low status and have commanded little respect in the social hierarchy- such 'low standing made them natural victims of variety of impositions, including violence' (ibid. p 114). They also cited that from Pirsing (1991) that looks at the spouse abuse as hidden, disguised, ignored and even accepted as culturally consistent behavior.

Gondolf (1993) maintains that in American society, men who batter have emerged from dark corners to the spotlight of attention and mainstream treatment. This shift has been attributed largely to the success of women's movement.

Importance is attached to the significance of power structure of relationship. Murphy and Meyer (1991) maintained that in the contemporary western societies, a tradition of male domination in the family, men's relative greater size, weight and violence training, and the economic oppression of women typically yield quite different effects for aggressive action performed by a man toward a female partner and vice versa.

Women's career development is blocked by opportunity structure as lack of power. Even when women stay in public offices and they have powers to exercise, are in a sense appear excluded from the society as high offices do not reduce the authoritarian role of the husbands. The exclusion is a process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society in which they live (de Haan and Maxwell 1998). It has been quite logical to suggest that people are excluded by institutions and behavior that reflect, enforce and reproduce prevailing social attitudes and values, particularly those of powerful groups in society. Sometimes this is open and deliberate, such as when state institutions deliberately discriminate in their laws, policies or programmes (DFID, 2005). Women for example in many countries including Bangladesh are legally disadvantaged as fair share in the inheritance of property is a far cry and getting a job or signing a contract without the permission of their husbands is almost impossible. Women's access to income plays the most dominant role in mainstreaming gender. Unfortunately, the

truth remains that their earned income in many cases are controlled and spent by their husbands.

Khair (1995) explains the culture of dehumanization quoting from Bhatti (1988)– ‘little girls are fed on the model of tongueless, desireless, submissive, passive, obedient, sacrificing, serving, pious, women, non-persons who are to live and die as daughters, wives and mothers, who should never aspire to have an identity of their own.’ Drawing from Sangari and Vaid (1989) Abraham (2002) focuses on the danger of studying women as a category separate from the complex interplay of social relations which instruct and perpetuate their construction.

Sophia's Diary

July 1910

I am so tired of problems, plots, secrets, cruelty— my husband's acknowledged 'growing indifference' to me. Why should I be perpetually fever- loving him to distraction? My heart too can change and cool towards a man who all he can let me know of his indifference. If one has to live, not kill oneself one has to find some comfort.

When the great writer Tolstoy left Sophia he was 82 and in less than two weeks after leaving her he died of pneumonia. Sophia was a writer and a quite competent manager. The case has been drawn here to give an example that an event like abandoning wife might occur even at very later stage, only weeks before death by none other than the humanist writer Leo Tolstoy. Of course there are other arguments suggesting how helpless Tolstoy was before her wife that he was forced to withdraw himself from the company of once beloved Sophia (Rose 1993).

It is reflected in the study of Bohn et al (2003) that abuse often increases in frequency and severity over time and leads to significant social, psychological and medical consequences. Battering wives during pregnancy result in miscarriage, abrassio placenta, low birth weight, premature labour or birth and intra-uterine fetal death.

In the conjugal relationship it does not appear that the wife being in high position in the government gives her some extra benefit in the relationship rather it turns in to a burden. The case of Specioza, the Vice President of Uganda has been elaborated in the previous chapter. Perception is such that women in very powerful positions in Bangladesh, despite their power and riches did not enjoy a natural loving family life with their husbands. A coveted position does not necessarily guarantee familial peace.

The Case of Bangladesh

The Bangladesh Constitution provides for women's participation in all spheres of national life under Article 10 while the policy of non-discrimination on grounds of sex is pronounced under Article 28 and the State is further empowered under Article 28.4 that Article 28 shall not prevent the State from making special provision in favour of women or children or for advancement of any backward section of citizen.

Huq (1998) advances the argument that even with two women as the head of the government and head of the opposition women are surely oppressed and exploited in Bangladesh— as they do not have control over the conditions of their lives and over their bodies due to lack of reproductive freedom.

Ameen (2005) suggests that patriarchy for Bangladesh describe a situation of distribution of power and resources in the family where men exercise power and control resources and women are powerless and dependent on men. She draws from Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association's (BNWLA) research to show that over the years the magnitude and complexity of wife abuse have increased and taken newer and morbid forms in Bangladesh. She also draws from UNFPA (2000) to tell that 47 per cent of Bangladeshi women experience physical assault by husbands and men. The report states that gender-based violence is endemic and it takes place in various forms including wife beating. Quoting a BNWLA studies she noted that in 2002 at least 144 women were reported murdered by their husbands and 25 by their in-laws while another 58 were abused either by their husbands or in-laws and 112 wives committed suicide.

Ameen (2005) goes further to suggest that wife abuse remains a normal phenomenon in Bangladesh and women are also taught to endure it in silence. She also takes a note that wife abuse remains a hidden issue as women bestow their rights on the husbands who are believed to be the pathways to heaven. Legal provisions in Bangladesh against such violence are not too inadequate. But violence inflicted by intimate partners like husbands is only rarely reported while report of seeking relief in the court of law is even lower. Ameen (2005) suggests that law in Bangladesh more involved with 'stranger violence' against women. India outlaws wife-beating and marital rape (Foster 2006). Wife-beating was declared a crime in India as legislation was introduced to combat the high levels of domestic violence.

Education Matters

Gelles (1976) found that less educated women stay more in violent condition while analysis of Bangladesh Data in Ameen (2005) gives the reverse scenario. With the level of education being higher the level of tolerance is also notably higher. Of the illiterate abused wives the study found 73.6 per cent remained married while for masters' degree holders remaining married are as high as 100 per cent. The study put emphasis on education as it deals with public officials, not below the level of class-I or equivalent.

Does It Protect Women When They Assume Public Offices?

In a patriarchal social, political and economic arrangement women's access to public officialdom is limited. Once they assume the office it confers upon them a sense of honor, dignity and power. It undoubtedly enhances the position of women in the family as it makes her a steady wage earner, provides access to power structures and improved access to public facilities for all the members of the family. But it does not necessarily protect women from being subjected to violence in marital life. The power vested in high profile women is often found to be applied and abused by their husbands. In case the wife disagrees to yield to the undue pressure of the husband she faces worse consequences.

Binswanger et al (1982) shed light on women's wages 'males would hardly desire to participate in female submarkets; male wages... are roughly 80 per cent higher than female wages and male possibility of employment are much higher... The segmentation clearly

works in favor of the males and at the expense of the females... Low wages are attributed—by males and females— to lack of physical strength and stamina of women. One needs only to see the loads carried by them and the discipline of their paddy transplanting lines to realize the large observed wage differentials can hardly be explained this way’ (quoted in Haider 2000: 155).

“Women became a ‘social problem’ because technological and social changes over the past century and a half have disturbed an old equilibrium without as yet replacing it with another as a result; our society is a veritable crazy quilt of contradictory practices and beliefs. Some old attitudes persist stubbornly in the face of a new reality which has long since rendered them meaningless. New conditions have arisen which have not as yet been defined by public opinion— leaving human beings without guidance and protection. New goals have emerged without the social machinery required for their attainment. The old and new moralities exist side by side dividing the heart against itself.” (Komarovskiy M 1953, quoted in Haider 2000)

While elaborating community response to battered wives Ameen (2005) sheds light on the police reluctance to become involved while Hampton and Coner-Edwards (1993) state that in domestic violence calls for police action are reluctantly responded in the west as such interventions may become counter-productive. In question of arresting of perpetrator they note the following from Sherman (1992):

Arrest increases domestic violence among people who have nothing to lose, especially the unemployed.

Arrest deters domestic violence with cities with greater proportions of White and Hispanic suspects.

Arrest deters domestic violence in cities with higher proportions of unemployed African American suspects.

A small but chronic portion of all violent couples produce the majority of domestic violence incidents

Offenders who flee before the police arrives are deterred substantially by warrants for their arrests.

Aforementioned literature exemplifies that violence against women in marriage is systematic and common to all societies. Violence that occurs in marital life is generally the violence against women. This is characterized as 'private' violence because marital relationships have generally been understood to be an area in which governments should not interfere, and for which they are not accountable. The concept of domestic sphere is also contributed to making violence in marriage a non-issue by keeping it out of the focus of the public, and thus domestic violence is left unchallenged.

There is a rich library of literature on violence against women. Bangladesh has at least theoretically echoed voice against such violence since the independence. Of various explanations the study of social structure and the pattern of behavior of the husbands fit well into the patriarchal dominance that not only perpetuate abuse and violence but also justifies. Holding public offices by women does not bring about significant changes in the gender relations. It has been mentioned earlier that women used to cook and cry; now they cook, work and cry.

There is other side of the story too in India. Sarkar (2008) cites National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) statistics to underline the plight of men suggesting that in 2007, 57,593 married men committed suicide against 30,064 married women. A closer scenario might also prevail in Bangladesh. Tomorrow's researchers may undertake a study on the husbands of the public officials.

Chapter III

Data Analysis

In order to draw the opinion of both male and female public officials it is relevant that their age groups, academic qualification, nature of their assignments, their rank and status and monthly income are also studied and weighed. The reflection below is based totally on the responses obtained through administered questionnaires.

A) Demographic Information of Male Public Officials

Age distribution

A total number of 483 respondents mostly government officials or officers of equivalent status were interviewed of which 325 were male and 158 were female. Among the male respondents majority of them covering 54% belong to age group of 30-39 years followed by 40-49 years (25%). Corresponding figures for the officers belonging to the age group of 25-29 and 50 and above years are 8% and 14% respectively (Table 1).

Table1: Age distribution of the respondents

Age groups	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
25-29	25	7.7	7.7	7.7
30-34	127	39.1	39.1	46.8
35-39	47	14.5	14.5	61.2
40-44	12	3.7	3.7	64.9
45-49	69	21.2	21.2	86.2
50+	45	13.8	13.8	100.0
Total	325	100.0	100.0	

Academic Attainment

An enquiry into the educational status of the respondents through filled in questionnaire reveals that most of the male respondents (83%) have postgraduate degree and while the rest has obtained graduation (Table 2).

Table 2: Educational Qualification of the respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Graduate	56	17.2	17.2	17.2
Postgraduate	269	82.8	82.8	100.0
Total	325	100.0	100.0	

Nature of Service

While investigating into the types of service of the respondents it was found that most of them (84%) belong to different cadres of Bangladesh Civil Service while respondents representing autonomous organizations, banks and non-cadre services are 11%, 3% and 2% respectively (Table 3).

Table 3: Nature of Service of the Respondents

Service Type	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Cadre service	274	84.3	84.3	84.3
Non-cadre	6	1.8	1.8	86.2
Autonomous	37	11.4	11.4	97.5
Banker	8	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	325	100.0	100.0	

Rank and Status

Considering the rank and status of the male respondents the study found that the majority of them (58%) hold the position of Assistant Secretary or equivalent one. About a quarter (25%) of the respondents are in the rank and status of Deputy Secretary or equivalent position. Respondents holding the rank and status of Additional Secretary/equivalent and Joint-Secretary/equivalent positions are about 9%. Corresponding figures for Senior Assistant Secretaries/equivalent and other positions are 5% and 4% respectively (Table 4).

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents' Rank and Status

Rank & Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Addl. Secretary/ equivalent	14	4.3	4.3	4.3
JS/equivalent	15	4.6	4.6	8.9
DS/equivalent	80	24.6	24.6	33.5
SAS/equivalent	16	4.9	4.9	38.5
AS/equivalent	187	57.5	57.5	96.0
Others	13	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	325	100.0	100.0	

Monthly Income

Regarding monthly income of the respondents it is found that majority of them (58%) draw up to Taka 20000 per month. About 23% respondents have monthly income of Taka 20001-30000 and about 19% have Taka 30001-40000. Only about 2% respondent earns more than Taka 40000 per month (Table 5). An explanation is needed here in the calculation of gross income of public sector officials. Gross income include basic salary, house rent, dearness allowance, medical allowance and facilities, transport allowance as applicable, festival allowances and other facilities. Public sector officials have access to different other public services that adds a considerable increase in the income if monetized. Cost free access to services increases with promotion up the hierarchy ladder.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents' Monthly Income

Income (Taka)	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Up to 20,000	187	57.5	57.5	57.5
20,001-30,000	74	22.8	22.8	80.3
30,001-40,000	58	17.8	17.8	98.2
40,001+	6	1.8	1.8	100.0
Total	325	100.0	100.0	

B) Demographic Information of Women Public Officials**Age distribution**

A total number of 158 women public officials were interviewed. Among them a majority (about 56%) represented age group of 30-39 years followed by the age group 40-49 years

(27%). Corresponding figures for the respondents belonging to the age group of 25-29 and 50 and above years are 11% and 6% respectively (Table 6).

Table 6: Age Distribution of Female Respondents

Age groups	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
25-29	18	11.4	11.4	11.4
30-34	64	40.5	40.5	51.9
35-39	24	15.2	15.2	67.1
40-44	23	14.6	14.6	81.6
45-49	20	12.7	12.7	94.3
50+	9	5.7	5.7	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Academic Attainment

Most of the female respondents (85%) obtained postgraduate degree and the rest have graduation only (Table7).

Table 7: Educational Qualification of the respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Graduate	24	15.2	15.2	15.2
Postgraduate	134	84.8	84.8	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Nature of Service

About three-quarters of the female respondents (72%) belong to different cadres of Bangladesh Civil Service (Table 8) and the rest of them are representing autonomous organizations (12%), non-cadre service (6%), scheduled banks (4%), public university (3%) and government colleges (2%).

Table 8: Type of Service of the Respondents

Service Type	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Cadre service	114	72.2	72.2	72.2
Non-cadre	10	6.3	6.3	78.5
Autonomous	19	12.0	12.0	90.5
Public University Teacher	5	3.2	3.2	93.7
Govt. College Teacher	3	1.9	1.9	95.6
Banker	7	4.4	4.4	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Rank and Status

While considering the rank and status of the women public officials, it was found that more than half (53%) hold Assistant Secretary and equivalent positions. Respondents holding the rank and status of Senior Assistant Secretaries/equivalent and Deputy Secretary and equivalent position are 19% and 13% respectively. Only 3% respondents hold the rank and status of Additional Secretary/equivalent and the rest (11%) hold other positions 11% (Table 9).

Table 9: Distribution of Respondents' Rank and Status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Addl. Secretary/ equivalent	5	3.2	3.2	3.2
DS/equivalent	21	13.3	13.3	16.5
SAS/equivalent	30	19.0	19.0	35.4
AS/equivalent	84	53.2	53.2	88.6
Others	18	11.4	11.4	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Age Distribution of Spouse

Regarding age distribution of spouses of the respondents, 49% fall under age group of 30-39 years followed by the age group 40-49 years (33%). Corresponding figures for the spouses belonging to the age groups of 25-29 and 50 and above years are 3% and 15% respectively (Table 10).

Table10: Age Distribution of Spouses of the Respondents

Age groups	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
25-29	4	2.5	2.5	2.5
30-34	40	25.3	25.3	27.8
35-39	38	24.1	24.1	51.9
40-44	31	19.6	19.6	71.5
45-49	21	13.3	13.3	84.8
50+	24	15.2	15.2	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Academic Attainment of Spouses

In question of educational qualification of respondents' spouses, most of them (87%) obtained postgraduate degree and the rest have graduation only (Table11).

Table11: Educational Qualification of the Respondents' Spouses

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Graduate	21	13.3	13.3	13.3
Postgraduate	137	86.7	86.7	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Occupation of Spouses

Table12 shows as many as 11 different types of occupation of the spouses of the respondents. About one-third of them (32%) belong to Bangladesh Civil Service. Five other important occupations in which spouses are involved are– non-cadre/autonomous organisations (20%), business (9%), teaching in public university (7%) and government colleges (2%); scheduled banks (7%). The rest five occupations of the spouses include officials of NGOs (3%), engineer in the private enterprises (5%), physician in the private sector (1%), lawyer (2%) and others (12%). Table further shows that among the spouses 53 represent cadre service that includes 3 from Education Cadre.

Table 12: Distribution of Respondents' Spouses Occupation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1. Cadre service	50	31.6	31.6	31.6
2. Non-cadre	31	19.6	4.4	36.7
3. Businessman	14	8.9	8.2	44.9
4. Others	20	12.6	12.0	58.8
5. Teacher of Public University	11	7.0	7.0	80.4
6. Teacher of Govt. College	3	1.9	1.3	81.6
7. Banker	11	7.0	7.0	88.6
8. NGO official	5	3.2	3.2	91.8
9. Physician of Private Organization	2	1.3	1.3	93.0
10. Engineer of Private organization	8	5.1	5.1	98.1
11. Lawyer	3	1.9	1.9	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Rank and Status of Spouses

Table13 shows the distribution of rank and status of the spouses' of women public officials. Among 158 spouses, 53 belong to cadre services of which 3 represents Education Cadre. Since rest of the spouses represents service of different types of non-cadre, autonomous, schedule banks, private organization and other types of job it is indeed a cumbersome and ambiguous for the researchers to show their rank and status in different categories. It is also noted that two women public officials are widow and one did not mention her present marital status (Table17). However, respondents' spouses engaged in the occupation outside cadre service hold different important positions. Spouses belonging to cadre service hold the rank and status ranging from Assistant Secretary/equivalent to Additional Secretary/equivalent positions. Respondents belonging to public universities hold the rank and status ranging from lecturer to professor (Table13)

Table13: Rank and Status of the Respondents' Spouses

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1. Additional Secretary/ Equivalent	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
2. Assistant Professor (Govt. College)	3	1.9	1.9	3.2
3. Lecturer (Govt. College)	2	1.3	1.3	4.4
4. Others	90	57.0	57.0	61.4
5. No Response/ Not Applicable	3	1.9	1.9	63.3
6. Professor (Public University)	2	1.3	1.3	64.6
7. Joint Secretary/ Equivalent	5	3.2	3.2	67.7
8. Deputy Secretary/ Equivalent	9	5.7	5.7	73.4
9. Sr. Asst. Secretary/ Equivalent	12	7.6	7.6	81.0
10. Assistant Secretary/ Equivalent	19	12.0	12.0	93.0
11. Associate Professor (Public University)	6	3.8	3.8	96.8
12. Asst. Professor (Public University)	2	1.3	1.3	98.1
13. Lecturer (Public University)	2	1.3	1.3	99.4
14. Associate Prof (Govt. College)	1	.6	.6	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Marital Age

It is revealed from the Table13 that a greater majority (59%) of women public official got married between the ages of 25-29 years. Around 25% of them got married at 25-29 years of age and 12% at 30-34 years. Four women public officials got married before reaching the 18 years of age and one got married at the age between 35-39 and the rest one between 40-44 years of age (Table14).

Table14: Respondents' Age Distribution at Marriage

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Below 18	4	2.5	2.5	2.5
18-24	40	25.3	25.3	27.8
25-29	93	58.9	58.9	86.7
30-34	19	12.0	12.0	98.7
35-39	1	.6	.6	99.4
40-44	1	.6	.6	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Choice on Marital Decision

Table15 reveals the fact that 48% respondents selected their own bridegrooms followed by the selection by both parents (38%). Corresponding figure for selection of bridegrooms influenced by father and mother is 6% and 4% respectively. It also observes that in a few cases on selection of bridegrooms they were influenced by brother, relatives, colleagues and others.

Table15: Influence on Selection of Bridegrooms of the Respondents

Influential factors	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Own choice	76	48.1	48.1	48.1
Father's choice	10	6.3	6.3	54.4
Mother's choice	6	3.8	3.8	58.2
Both Parents' choice	60	38.0	38.0	96.2
Brother's choice	1	.6	.6	96.8
Influenced by relatives	1	.6	.6	97.5
Influenced by colleagues	2	1.3	1.3	98.7
Others	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

The study further reveals that in terms of sequence of marriage for almost all cases (99%) it was first marriage of both bride and groom and in one or two cases it was bride's second but groom's first (Table16)

Table16: Sequence of Marriage

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
First Marriage of both Brides and Grooms	156	98.7	98.7	98.7
Brides' Second, Grooms First	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

It is also observed that among 158 women public officials 151 are married. Among the rest seven, two are widows, one divorced the husband by herself, two are living separately on their own, one is compelled by her husband to live separately and one did not respond about her current marital status (Table17).

Table17: Present Marital Status of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Response	1	.6	.6	.6
Married	151	95.6	95.6	96.2
Widow	2	1.3	1.3	97.5
Divorced by self	1	.6	.6	98.1
Living separately by own choice	2	1.3	1.3	99.4
Forced to live separately by husband	1	.6	.6	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Length of Conjugal Life and Age Gap at Marriage

Out of 158 women public officials 151 responded to the question regarding the length of their conjugal life and the rest seven did not respond (Table18). It reveals that among the 151 women officials about 30% have passed 3-5 years of their conjugal life followed by about 27% having passed 6-10 years. Respondents have passed their conjugal life of 11-15 years, 16-20 years and 21 years and above are 11%, 8% and 10% respectively. Around 13% respondents are newly married who have passed only up to 2 years of their conjugal life.

Table 18: Length of Conjugal life of the Respondents

Years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-2	20	12.7	13.2	13.2
3-5	45	28.5	29.8	43.0
6-10	40	25.3	26.5	69.5
11-15	17	10.8	11.3	80.8
16-20	13	8.2	8.6	89.4
21 and above	16	10.1	10.6	100.0
Total	151	95.6	100.0	
No Response	7	4.4		
Total	158	100.0		

Regarding age gap at marriage, out of 158 women public officials 149 responded while the rest nine did not disclose the fact (Table19). It reveals from the study that amongst 149 public officials 45% have up to 2 years of age difference with their grooms while it is about 3-5 years for about 29% and 6-10 years for 24% women officials. Only 2% women officials

have 11-15 years of gap at marriage with their husbands. It can also be said that about three-quarters (74%) of the women public officials have 0-5 years of age difference with their husbands.

Table 19: Age Difference at Marriage

Years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-2	67	42.4	45.0	45.0
3-5	43	27.2	28.9	73.8
6-10	36	22.8	24.2	98.0
11-15	3	1.9	2.0	100.0
Total	149	94.3	100.0	
No Response	9	5.7		
Total	158	100.0		

Number of Children and Family Type

Regarding number of children the study reveals that about 39% women public officials have only one child while about 33% have two children. Officials having 3 to 4 children are 7% and only one official have 5 to 6 children. About 21% of women public officials have no children (Table 20). It can further be noted that more than two-third of the women public officials have 1 to 2 children.

Table 20: Number of Children of the Respondents

Number of children	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Nil	33	20.9	20.9	20.9
1	61	38.6	38.6	59.5
2	52	32.9	32.9	92.4
3-4	11	7.0	7.0	99.4
5-6	1	.6	.6	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

While identifying the family type, it is found that about 73% of the women public officials are living in the nuclear families while the rest 27% are living in the extended families (Table 21).

Table 21: Family Type of the Respondents

Family type	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Nuclear	115	72.8	72.8	72.8
Extended	43	27.2	27.2	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Monthly Income

Regarding monthly income of the women public officials it is found that about three-quarters of them (71%) have up to Taka 20000 while about 23% have Taka 20001-30000. Only about 6% respondents earn more than Taka 40000 per month (Table 22).

Table 22: Own Monthly Income of the Respondents

Income (Taka)	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Up to -20,000	113	71.5	71.5	71.5
20,001-30,000	36	22.8	22.8	94.3
30,001-40,000	9	5.7	5.7	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

While calculating on the monthly income of the spouses of the women public officials it is found that around one-third (37%) of their spouse earn up to Taka 20000 per month while around one-fourth of the spouses earn Taka 20001-30000. Corresponding figures for spouses' monthly income of Taka 30001-40000 and Taka 40000⁺ are around 17% and 18% respectively (Table 22). Comparing the monthly income of women public officials and their spouses it can also be said that women officials have lesser income than their spouses (Table 22-23).

Table 23: Monthly Income of the Respondents' Spouse

Income (Taka)	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Up to 20,000	59	37.3	37.3	37.3
20,001-30,000	43	27.2	27.2	64.6
30,001-40,000	27	17.1	17.1	81.6
40,001+	29	18.4	18.4	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

C) Information Related to Wife Abuse

Perception of abusive behaviour of husbands against wives

In the administered questionnaire of the study there was a question containing as many as 34 different types of behaviour of husbands. Both male (325) and female (158) respondents were asked to give their opinion through a rating scale presented against the each behaviour. Table 24 shows the weighted average score of their perception of abusive behaviour of husbands against wives. In case of male respondents weighted score varies from 64 to 80 while for females it is from 73 to 89. For male respondents weighted scores 64-69 represent 17 different kinds of abusive behaviour, that is psychological in nature. These include rebuking the wife in front of children (68), shouting at the wife during mutual discussions (67), dominating the wife in all matters (66), ridiculing the relatives of the wife (67), discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her relatives (68), not giving necessary money to the wife for maintaining family (67), establishing control over the wife's own income (65), not allowing the wife to do any job outside (64), neglecting the wife's feelings and emotions (68), discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her friends (64), preventing the wife from extending financial support to her father's family (66), reading the wife's private letters in her absence (67), blaming the wife for children's unwanted behaviour (66) and their failure to obtain desired results (65), breaking household goods to show anger on the wife (66), regulating the wife's outside mobility (68) and spying against her (69).

Weighted scores 70-79 represent 15 different types of behaviour, which includes psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual battering and destruction of property. Psychological abuse includes chiding the wife in front of others (74), treating the wife as a servant (77), debarring the wife from continuation of studies (70), blaming the wife for her inability to bear a child (75), maltreating the wife for son preference (78), beating children to show anger upon the wife (70), telling the wife that she is ugly and unimpressive (73), suspecting the wife baselessly if she returns home late from work (70) and pressing the wife to bring her paternal inheritance (74) and throwing dirty comments towards the wife (75). Physical abuse includes battering the wife to hide the husband's infertility (79), battering the wife physically (79) and not ensuring necessary health care during the wife's illness (77). Sexual abuse includes having sex against the wife's will (74) and destruction of property

includes the behaviour of destroying the favourite articles of the wife deliberately (72). Two of the stated behaviour that are considered as psychological abuse got the weighted score of 80. These are demanding dowry to the wife (80) and pressing the wife to mix with husband's bosses for the latter's personal gain (80). The former one is psychological abuse and the later in sexual abuse.

For female respondents weighted scores 64-69 represent 17 different kinds of the abusive behaviour, which are psychological in nature. These are: discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her friends (73), breaking household goods to show anger upon the wife (76) not giving necessary money to the wife for maintaining family (76), establishing control over the wife's own income (78), preventing the wife from extending financial support to her father's family (78) rebuking the wife in front of children (79), shouting at the wife at the time of talking (79) discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her relatives (79), debarring the wife if she wants to continue studies (79) and blaming the wife for children's failure to obtain good results (79).

Weighted scores for the rest 24 behaviour ranges from 80 to 89 which includes psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse and destruction of property. Psychological abuse includes chiding the wife in front of others (83), dominating over wife in all matters (82), ridiculing the relatives of the wife (80), treating the wife as a servant (84), demanding dowry to the wife (86), not allowing the wife to do any job outside (80), blaming the wife for her inability to bear a child (83), blaming the wife for children's unwanted behaviour (80), neglecting the wife's feelings and emotions (83), throwing dirty comments towards the wife (84), reading the wife's private letters in her absence (81), telling the wife that she is ugly and unimpressive (82), suspecting the wife baselessly if she returns home late from work (84), pressing the wife to bring her paternal inheritance (85) beating children to show anger upon the wife (80), regulating the wife's outside mobility (81), spying against the wife (80), and maltreating the wife for son preference (85).

Physical abuse includes battering the wife physically (89), not ensuring necessary health care during the wife's illness (84) and battering the wife to hide the husband's infertility (86). Sexual abuse includes having sex against the wife's will (85) and pressing the wife to mix

with husband's bosses for the latter's personal gain (87). Destruction of property includes destroying the favourite articles of the wife deliberately (80). It is also mentionable that weighted scores for abusive behaviour rated by the female respondents are significantly higher than that of their counterparts.

Table24: Perception About Abusive Behaviour Against Wives by their Husband

Types of behaviour	Weighted Average	
	Male (325)	Female (158)
1) Rebuking the wife in front of children	68	79
2) Chiding the wife in front of others	74	83
3) Shouting at the wife during mutual discussions	67	79
4) Dominating the wife in all matters	66	82
5) Ridiculing the relatives of the wife	67	80
6) Discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her relatives	68	79
7) Treating the wife as a servant	77	84
8) Not giving necessary money to the wife for maintaining family	67	76
9) Establishing control over the wife's own income	65	78
10) Demanding dowry to the wife	80	86
11) Debarring the wife if she wants to continue studies	70	79
12) Not allowing the wife to do any job outside	64	80
13) Blaming the wife for her inability to bear a child	75	83
14) Battering the wife to hide the husband's infertility	79	86
15) Maltreating the wife for son preference	78	85
16) Neglecting the wife's feelings and emotions	68	83
17) Throwing dirty comments towards the wife	75	84
18) Discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her friends	64	73
19) Preventing wife from extending financial support to her father's family.	66	78
20) Not ensuring necessary health care during the wife's illness.	77	84
21) Having sex against the wife's will	74	85
22) Destroying favourite articles of the wife deliberately	72	80
23) Reading the wife's private letters in her absence	67	81
24) Blaming the wife for children's unwanted behaviour	66	80
25) Blaming the wife for children's failure to obtain desired results	65	79
26) Beating children to show anger upon the wife	70	80
27) Breaking household goods to show anger upon the wife	66	76
28) Telling the wife that she is ugly and unimpressive	73	82
29) Regulating the wife's outside mobility	68	81
30) Spying against the wife	69	80
31) Battering the wife physically	79	89
32) Pressing the wife to mix with husband's bosses for the latter's personal gain.	80	87
33) Suspecting the wife baselessly if she returns home late from work	70	84
34) Pressing the wife to bring her paternal inheritance	74	85

Instigating Factors behind Abusive Behaviour of Husband

Both male and female respondents were asked to rate the factors that instigate abusive behaviour against a woman public official by her husband in their marital life (Table25). Respondents have rated as many as 30 factors by following a rating scale given against each factor. For male respondents, weighted scores for instigating factors range from 44 to 67 while for women corresponding weighted scores range from 54 to 77 (Table25).

For male respondents, weighted score 44-49 includes six different factors that instigate abusive behaviour against a woman public official by her husband. These are: if the wife travels to foreign countries for official purpose (44), if the children get poor results in the exams (45), if the wife converses with others over telephone (46), if the wife persists in giving her due amount of dower (48), for the social belief, "it is a husband's right to chastise his wife" (48) and if the wife advises the husband to give up a habit like smoking or drinking (49).

Weighted scores 50-59 represent 16 different factors. These are: if the husband's family status is higher than that of the wife (50), for the husband's belief, "women are inferior to men" (50), if the wife extends financial support to her paternal family (50), if the wife fails to give birth to a son (51), if the husband's family status is lower than that of the wife (52), if the wife does not maintain dress code prescribed by the husband (53), if the wife is more successful in career than the husband (54), if the wife's income is not spent as per desire of the husband (54), personality clash if the wife is of the same job status (55), if the wife fails to do household chores as desired by the husband (55), if the wife comes back home late from work (56), if the wife does not respond to the husband's choice of sexual behaviour (56), if the wife goes on an official tour accompanied by her male colleagues (57), if the wife goes outside without permission of the husband (58), if the age gap between the husband and the wife is very wide (59) and if the wife fails to give birth to a child (59).

Table25: Instigating Factors Behind Abusive Behaviour of Husband

Factors	Weighted Score	
	Male	Female
1) Personality clash if the wife is of the same job status	55	65
2) Inferiority complex in the husband if his job status is lower than the wife	62	70
3) Inferiority complex in the husband if his wife earns more than him	67	69
4) Frustration of husband if he fails to earn enough for the family	61	70
5) If the wife is more successful in career than the husband	54	70
6) If the wife does not comply with the husband's whims	64	74
7) If the wife's income is not spent as per desire of the husband	54	66
8) If the wife fails to do household chores as desired by the husband	55	61
9) If the wife extends financial support to her paternal family	50	62
10) If the wife goes outside without permission of the husband	58	62
11) If the wife fails to please the parents-in -law	62	67
12) If the husband's family status is lower than that of the wife	52	64
13) If the husband's family status is higher than that of the wife	50	62
14) If the wife denies to live with a joint family	64	65
15) If the wife comes back home late from work	56	64
16) If the wife advises the husband to give up a habit like smoking or drinking	49	59
17) If the age gap between the husband and the wife is very wide	59	58
18) If the wife persists in giving her due amount of dower (Moharana)	48	54
19) If the wife denies to give dowry to the husband	63	75
20) If the wife fails to give birth to a child	59	75
21) If the wife fails to give birth to a son	51	68
22) If the wife does not respond to the husband's choice of sexual behaviour	56	68
23) For the husband's belief, "Women are inferior to men"	50	69
24) For the social belief, " It is a husband's right to chastise his wife"	48	68
25) If the wife does not maintain dress code prescribed by the husband	53	59
26) If the wife converses with others over telephone	46	55
27) If the children gets poor results in the exams	45	58
28) If the wife travels to foreign countries for official purpose	44	57
29) If the wife goes on an official tour accompanied by her male colleagues	57	63
30) If the wife protests the husband's illicit relationship with other women	63	77

The rest nine instigating factors for abusive behaviour got weighted score 61-67. They are: frustration of husband if he fails to earn enough for the family (61), inferiority complex in the

husband if his job status is lower than the wife (62), if the wife fails to please the parents-in-law (62), if the wife denies to give dowry to the husband (63), if the wife protests the husband's illicit relationship with other women (63), if the wife does not comply with the husband's whims (64), if the wife denies to live with a joint family (64) and inferiority complex in the husband if his wife earns more than him (67).

For female respondents, weighted score 54-59 includes six different factors that instigate abusive behaviour against a woman public official by her husband. These are: if the wife persists in giving her due amount of dower (54), if the wife converses with others over telephone (55), if the wife travels to foreign countries for official purpose (57), if the age gap between the husband and the wife is very wide (58), if the children get poor results in the exams (58), if the wife does not maintain dress code prescribed by the husband (59) and if the wife advises the husband to give up a habit like smoking or drinking (59).

A number of 16 different factors got the weighted scores ranging from 61 to 69. These factors are: if the wife fails to do household chores as desired by the husband (61), if the husband's family status is higher than that of the wife (62), if the wife extends financial support to her paternal family (62), if the wife goes outside without permission of the husband (62), if the wife goes on an official tour accompanied by her male colleagues (63), if the husband's family status is lower than that of the wife (64), if the wife comes back home late from work (64), personality clash if the wife is of the same job status (65), if the wife denies to live with a joint family (65), if the wife's income is not spent as per desire of the husband (66), if the wife fails to please the parents-in-law (67) for the social belief, "it is a husband's right to chastise his wife" (68), if the wife fails to give birth to a son (68), if the wife does not respond to the husband's choice of sexual behaviour (68), for the husband's belief, "women are inferior to men" (69) and inferiority complex in the husband if his wife earns more than him (69).

Weighted score for seven factors ranges from 70 to 77. These are: despair in the husband if he fails to earn enough for the family (70), inferiority complex in the husband if his job status is lower than the wife (70), if the wife is more successful in career than the husband (70), if the wife does not comply with the husband's whims (74) if the wife denies to give dowry to the

husband (75), if the wife fails to give birth to a child (75) and if the wife protests the husband's illicit relationship with other women (77). It is also mentionable that regarding instigating factors for wife abuse the weighted scores for women are higher than that of male respondents. This variation is not so wide like abusive behaviour perceived by male and female respondents.

Respondents who are women public officials were asked to respond to the question related to their own experience of spousal abuse. The corresponding question consists of as many as 47 kinds of spousal abuse. Among the 158 respondents 23 never experienced any spousal abuse in their marital life. The rest 135 respondents have experienced different kinds of spousal abuse in their marital life. The rate of occurrence of abuse varies from rarely to very frequently. The 47 types of abuse can further be itemized under four broader categories such as psychological, physical, sexual and destruction of property. Table 26A shows 38 different kinds psychological abuse while Table 26B represents four kinds physical abuse, two types of sexual abuse and two types of destruction of property.

Among 135 women public officials about 50% have the experience of 10 different kinds of psychological abuse (parentheses show the number of the victims). These are: husbands become very furious if wives disagree with their views (99), talks with them harshly and angrily (95), scold them in front of children (82), want them comply with their whims (79), husbands ridicule wives' relatives (78), always find faults with wives (75), have no respect to wives' feelings and emotions (73), demean wives' common sense (71), and do not give wives enough money to maintain family (66) and insult wives in front of others (64). From 33% to 43% women have the experience of five significant psychological abuses that include blaming wives not caring for in-laws (58), husbands show temper if household chores are not done according to their choice (57), want wives stay always at home for taking care of children (55), blaming wives not much caring for children (49) and jealous of and suspicious about wives friends (45).

Table 26A: Psychological Abuse Experiencing by Women public Officials

N=135

Types of behaviours	Evaluation Scale (Please put $\sqrt$ mark)				
	(1) Never	(2) Rarely	(3) Occasionally	(4) Frequently	(5) Very frequently
1. He becomes very furious if I disagree with his views	36	43	33	15	8
2. He talks with me harshly and angrily	40	50	25	12	8
3. He scolds me in front of my children	53	50	19	6	7
4. He wants me comply with his whims	56	35	23	10	11
5. He ridicules my relatives	57	39	21	10	8
6. He always finds faults with me	60	34	18	12	11
7. He has no respect for my feelings and emotions	62	31	21	10	11
8. He undermines my common sense	64	26	23	15	7
9. He does not give me enough money to maintain the family	69	30	17	7	12
10. He insults me in front of others	71	40	10	7	7
11. He thinks that I am not much caring for my in-laws (NR= 1)	77	25	17	6	10
12. He shows temper if I do not do household chores according to his choice	78	32	14	7	4
13. He wants me stay at home all the time to take care of children	80	26	18	6	5
14. He thinks that I am not much caring for our children (NR= 2)	86	30	12	5	2
15. He is jealous of and suspicious about my friends	90	19	9	7	10
16. He blames me for any fault of our children	92	27	11	5	0
17. He blames me if the children fail to obtain desired results	98	18	14	4	1
18. He checks call records of my mobile phone stealthily	95	18	9	8	5
19. He reads my private letters in my absence	99	24	4	5	3
20. He becomes angry with me if I do not follow the dress code he likes	99	23	5	5	3
21. He does not let me maintain contact with my relatives	99	15	12	6	3
22. He behaves roughly and angrily if I advise him to give up smoking/ drinking/ gambling	100	13	12	5	5
23. He suffers from inferiority complex as I do a job and he inflicts mental torture upon me	102	18	6	4	5
24. He thinks that I am not much caring for his friends	103	17	6	6	3
25. He misbehaves with me if I go on a tour with male colleagues	104	12	9	6	4
26. He treats me as if I am his private servant	104	7	12	8	4
27. He considers me ugly and unimpressive	105	12	10	4	4
28. He tortures me mentally to take my income from me	106	11	6	6	6
29. He does not like my mixing with my female friends	107	13	10	1	4
30. He spies against me	109	12	8	4	2
31. He does not want that I will do any job or continue my studies	112	7	7	4	5
32. He misbehaves with me if I protest his illicit relationship with other women	112	8	5	2	8
33. He threatens me	112	11	3	6	3
34. He misbehaves with me if I go on an overseas tour	114	8	3	7	3
35. He threatens me of divorce every now and then	115	10	1	4	5
36. He rebukes me when he is intoxicated	119	6	5	3	2
37. He behaves badly with me for his son preference	121	4	5	3	2
38. He psychologically batters me for dowry	117	5	7	1	5

No response 23. Multiple responses recorded.

Besides, 26%-32% women have the experience of seven types of psychological abuse that include blaming wives for any fault of children (43) and if they fail to obtain desired results (37), check call records of wives' mobile phone (40) and read private letters stealthily (36),

husbands become angry if wives do not follow dress code they like (36), discourage wives to maintain contact with their relatives and behave angrily if wives advise husband to give up smoking/drinking/gambling (35).

About 19%-24% women officials encounter eight other psychological abuses. They are: inflict mental torture upon wives due to suffering from inferiority complex about their jobs (33), blame wives that they are not caring for husbands' friends (32), misbehave with wives if they go on a official tour with male colleagues (31), treat wives as their private servants (31), consider wives ugly and unimpressive (30), torture mentally to take their income from them (29), do not like wives mixing with their female friends (28) and spies against wives (23). The rest other psychological abuse experienced by 13%-17% women officials are: do not want wives do any job or continue their studies (23), misbehave with wives if they protest husbands' illicit relationship with other women (23), threaten them (23), scold wives if they go on an overseas tour (21), threaten wives of divorce now and then (20), scold them for dowry (18), rebuke wives when husband are intoxicated (16) and behave badly with wives for son preference (14). It is important to mention here that all husbands of the respondents (women public officials) are university graduates and involved in prestigious jobs having dignified positions in the service and in the society.

Table 26B: Abuse Related to Physical, Sexual and Destruction of Property

Types of behaviour	Scale (Please put √ mark)				
	(1) Never	(2) Rarely	(3) Occasionally	(4) Frequently	(5) Very frequently
1. He physically batters me for dowry	120	6	4	2	3
2. He tortures me physically to take my income from me	119	4	8	1	3
3. He always applies physical force on me	119	2	5	6	3
4. He scolds and batters me because of my infertility	126	2	5	1	1
5. He scolds and batters me to conceal his infertility	125	4	3	1	2
6. He demands sex with me against my will	91	27	7	6	4
7. He compels me to be engaged in such kinds of sexual act that I do not like	111	10	7	2	5
8. He throws the plates away if the dish is not up to his choice	112	17	3	1	2
9. He deliberately destroys my favourite articles like books, photos etc.	115	9	5	3	3

No response 23. Multiple responses recorded.

Table 26B portrays physical and sexual abuses as well as destruction of property experienced by women public officials. Though here the number of women officials is not too high, the issue is very important. There are five kinds of physical abuse disclosed by women public officials that they experience. These are— batter wives for dowry (15), torture them to take their income from them (16), always apply physical force on wives (16), batter for wives' infertility (9) as well as batter wives to conceal husbands' own infertility (10). Women officials experience two types of sexual abuse, such as— husbands demand sex against wives' will (44) and compel them to be engaged in such kind of sexual acts that they do not like (24). Destruction of property includes throwing of plates by husbands if the dish is not prepared up to their choice (23) and they deliberately destroy wives' favourite articles like books, photos (20).

Table 27: Consequences of Spousal Abuse on Wives' Life and on Children

n=31

Consequences	Frequency	Percentage
1. I Suffer from depression	15	48.40
2. Children sometimes suffer from depression that obstructs their physical and mental development and their studies suffer serious setbacks	11	35.50
3. I feel neglected in social and family life	6	19.35
4. It creates hopelessness, despair and helplessness in me and my creativity is hindered and I suffer from indecision	4	13.0
5. Love for and trust in husband diminish and I grow irritable and misbehave with children and others	4	13.0
6. Husband's misbehaviour creates drastic negative change in my professional life and I cannot concentrate on official duties	3	10.0
7. Physical and mental health deteriorates that disturbs normal family life and befalls financial loss	2	6.45
8. Children lose respect for their father and sometimes do not listen to him	2	6.45
9. My husband suffers from inferiority complex due to my prestigious job and opposes my future plan and higher studies	1	3.23

No Response 127. Multiple responses recorded

Among the 158 respondents, 135 experience spousal abuse in their marital life. Among them only 31 responded the question related to the consequences of spousal abuse on their physical

and mental health as well as on children, family and work life. However, 31 respondents identified as many as nine different types of resultant effect of spousal abuse in their life (Table 27). The three most important consequence of spousal abuse are: wives suffer from depression (48%), children of the family also suffer from depression that obstructs their physical and mental development as well as their studies suffer from serious setbacks (35%) and the wives also feel neglected in social and family life. Spousal abuse also creates hopelessness, despair and helplessness among the wives and their creativity is hindered and they suffer from indecision (13%), wives' love for and trust in husband diminish and they grow irritable and misbehave with children and others (13%), and husbands' misbehaviour creates drastic negative change in their professional life and they cannot concentrate on official duties (10%). Furthermore, due to spousal abuse, wives' physical and mental health deteriorates that disturbs normal family life and befalls financial loss (6%) and children lose respect for their father and sometimes do not listen to him (6%). Besides, husbands suffer from inferiority complex due to wives' prestigious job and hamper their future plan and higher studies (3%).

Suggestions Given by Women Public Officials to Stop Spousal Abuse

Among 158 female respondents 95 made their suggestions to stop spousal abuse against women public officials. They have made as many as 21 different types of recommendations to stop spousal abuse experienced by women public officials. The three most important suggestions are: raise social awareness through publicity in print and mass media for bringing change in social and familial attitudes and upholding social values (29%), mutual respect and trust should be enhanced and both should concentrate on their children and the family instead of running after money (24%) and mandatory arrangement of training on gender equality and good conduct with wives for male public officials (20%). Seven other significant suggestions include— wives should raise their voice against spousal abuse logically and firmly (16%), husbands should pay respect to wives' job and their contribution to the family and support them to perform their job sincerely by sharing household chores (16%), counseling for both husbands and wives (16%), legal aid for women public officials as victims of abuse (14%), wives should approach husbands responsively, tactfully and patiently to change their negative attitudes logically making husbands aware of their

contradictory behaviours with wives, mothers and sisters (14%), change of husbands' mindset about status of wives (13%), and extending family support to the victims (11%).

Table 28: Suggestions Given by Women Public Officials to Stop Spousal Abuse (n=95)

Suggestions	Frequency	%
1. Raise social awareness through publicity in print and mass media for bringing change in social and familial attitudes and upholding social values	28	29.47
2. Mutual respect and trust should be enhanced and both should concentrate on their children and the family instead of running after money	23	24.21
3. Mandatory arrangement of training on gender equality and good conduct with wives for male public officials	19	20.0
4. Wives should raise their voice against spousal abuse logically and firmly	15	15.80
5. Husbands should pay respect to wives' job and their contribution to the family and support them to perform their job sincerely by sharing household chores	15	15.80
6. Counseling for both husbands and wives	15	15.80
7. Legal aid for women public officials as victims of abuse	13	13.70
8. Wives should approach husbands responsively, tactfully and patiently to change their negative attitudes logically making husbands understand about their contradictory behaviour with wives, mothers and sisters	13	13.70
9. Change of husbands' mindset about status of wives	12	12.63
10. Extending family support to the victims	10	10.53
11. Joint decisions through open discussion in every aspect of conjugal life help solve many problems	7	7.37
12. Husbands should pay due respect to wives' liking, disliking and emotions and be patient and empathetic towards them	6	6.32
13. Ensuring proper punishment for the husbands' abusive behaviour through enactment and enforcement of law	6	6.32
14. Women public officials should be sophisticated and of strong personality and should not make mess between official life and family life	4	4.21
15. Husbands should avoid haughty and immodest lifestyle and keep good company and uphold morale in conjugal life	3	3.16
16. Husbands should consider wives as human individuals and should follow the life of the Prophet (PBUH) in dealing with wives	3	3.16
17. Maintaining regular contacts with relatives and friends of both sides helps sustain healthy conjugal life	2	2.11
18. Wives may even divorce their husbands or live separately for the sake of self-respect	2	2.11
19. Wives' opinion about husbands' behaviour to be considered as a part of performance appraisal	2	2.11
20. Skill development to attain economic empowerment of wives is crucial to bring change in prevailing situation	2	2.11
21. Others [wives' complaints against spousal abuse should be taken seriously and disposed of quickly and empathetically (1), women should be more professional to convince the society that they have substantial contribution (1), husbands should be invited on various occasions of wives' office (1), enactment of uniform family code to protect women from spousal abuse (1), retributive theory of punishment may be introduced to prevent spousal abuse (1), husbands should refrain themselves from interfering wives' confidential affairs (1), women should be more careful in selecting life partners (1), both husbands and wives should follow the religious codes (1) and sons should be taught from their childhood how to respect girls and women (1)]	9	9.47

No Response=63. Multiple responses recorded.

Ten other suggestions to combat spousal abuse are: joint decision through open discussion in every aspect of conjugal life helps solve any problems (7%), husbands should pay due respect to wives' liking, disliking and emotions as well as be patient and empathetic towards

them (6%), ensuring proper punishment for the husbands' abusive behaviour through enactment and enforcement of law (6%), women public officials should be sophisticated and of strong personality and should not make mess between official life and family life (4%), husbands should avoid haughty and immodest lifestyle and keep good company as well as practice morality in conjugal life (3%), husbands should consider wives as human individuals and should follow the life of the Prophet (PBUH) in dealing with wives (3%), maintaining regular contact with relatives and friends of both sides helps sustain healthy conjugal life (2%), wives may even divorce their husbands or live separately for the sake of self-respect (2%), wives' opinion about husbands' behaviour to be considered as a part of performance appraisal, (2%), and skill development to attain economic empowerment of wives is crucial to bring change in prevailing situation (2%).

Besides, nine respondents made few thoughtful suggestions to stop spousal abuse. These are: wives' complaints against spousal abuse should be taken seriously and disposed of quickly and empathetically (1), women should be more professional to convince the society that they have substantial contribution (1), husbands should be invited on various occasions of wives' office (1), enactment of uniform family code to protect women from spousal abuse (1), retributive theory of punishment may be introduced to prevent spousal abuse (1), husbands should refrain themselves from interfering wives' confidential affairs (1), women should be more careful in selecting life partners (1), both husbands and wives should follow the religious codes (1) and sons should be taught from their childhood how to respect girls and women (1).

Suggestions Given by Male Public Officials to Stop Spousal Abuse

Male respondents were also asked for making suggestions to stop spousal abuse against women public officials. Among 325 male respondents 210 noted their suggestions to stop spousal against women public officials. They have also made as many as 21 different types of recommendations to stop spousal abuse experienced by women public officials (Table 29).

Table 29: Suggestions Given by Male Public Officials to Stop Spousal Abuse (n=210)

Suggestions	f	%
1. Raise social awareness through publicity in print and mass media for bringing change in social and familial attitudes and upholding social values	27	12.86
2. Mutual respect and trust should be enhanced and both should concentrate on their children and the family instead of running after money	88	42.0
3. Joint decision through open discussion in every aspect of conjugal life helps solve any problems	34	16.20
4. Wives should approach husbands responsively, tactfully and patiently to change their negative attitudes logically making husbands understand about their contradictory behaviour with wives, mothers and sisters	33	15.71
5. Both husbands and wives should follow the religious codes	26	12.40
6. Change of husbands' mindset about status of wives	21	10.0
7. Husbands should pay respect to wives' job and their contribution to the family and support them to perform their job sincerely by sharing household chores	21	10.0
8. Husbands should pay due respect to wives' liking, disliking and emotions as well as be patient and empathetic towards them	18	8.57
9. Mandatory arrangement of training on gender equality and good conduct with wives for male public officials	18	8.57
10. Men should be educated from their childhood how to respect girls and women	17	8.10
11. Counseling for both husbands and wives	7	3.33
12. Both husbands and wives should be posted in nearest possible stations	6	2.86
13. Ensuring proper punishment for the husbands' abusive behaviour through enactment and enforcement of law	6	2.86
14. Both husband and wife should pay respect to their in-laws	5	2.40
15. Socio-cultural status of brides and grooms should be equal	5	2.40
16. Skill development to attain economic empowerment of wives is crucial to bring change in prevailing situation	4	1.90
17. Women public officials should be sophisticated and of strong personality and should not make mess between official life and family life	4	1.90
18. Maintaining regular contact with relatives and friends of both sides helps sustain healthy conjugal life	3	1.43
19. Husbands should be invited on various occasions of wives' office	3	1.43
20. Neither husband nor wife should try to dominate each other	3	
21. Others [legal aid for women public officials as victims of abuse (2), wives may even divorce their husbands or live separately for the sake of self-respect (2), women public officials should not be forced to work overtime (2), both husbands and wives should not be highly ambitious (2), wives' opinion about husbands' behaviour to be considered as a part of performance appraisal (1), wives' complaints against spousal abuse should be taken seriously and disposed of quickly and empathetically (1), wives should raise their voice against spousal abuse logically and firmly (1), incorporation of new clause on spousal abuse in the marriage registration form (1), extending family support to the victims (1), not sharing conjugal matters with others (1), wives should avoid foreign tour with male colleagues if not mandatory (1), husbands should not be greedy for wives' earnings (1), husbands should live the life conforming to their earnings (1), age gap between bride and grooms should not be wide (1), husbands should avoid haughty and immodest lifestyle and keep good company as well as practice morality in conjugal life (1)wives may quit the job if husbands' income is enough to maintain the family (1), husbands' job status must be higher than that of wives(1)]	21	10.0

No Response=115. Multiple responses recorded.

The five most important suggestions are: mutual respect and trust should be enhanced and both should concentrate on their children and the family instead of running after money (42%), joint decision through open discussion in every aspect of conjugal life helps solve any problems (16%), wives should approach husbands responsively, tactfully and patiently to change their negative attitudes logically making husbands understand about their contradictory behaviour with wives, mothers and sisters (16%), raise social awareness through publicity in print and mass media for bringing change in social and familial attitudes and up holding social values (13%) and both husbands and wives should follow the religious codes (12%).

Five other significant suggestions include— change of husbands' mindset about status of wives (10%), husbands should pay respect to wives' job and contribution to the family and support them to perform their job sincerely by sharing household chores (10%), husbands should pay due respect to wives' liking, disliking and emotions as well as be patient and empathetic towards them (9%), mandatory arrangement of training on gender equality and good conduct with wives for male public officials (9%) and sons should be educated from their childhood how to respect girls and women (8%).

Respondents also made seven other suggestions to combat spousal abuse. They are: counseling for both husbands and wives (3%), both husbands and wives should be posted in nearest possible stations (3%), ensuring proper punishment for the husbands' abusive behaviour through enactment and enforcement of law (3%), both husband and wife should pay respect to their in-laws (2%), socio-cultural status of brides and grooms should be equal (2%), skill development to attain economic empowerment of wives is crucial to bring change in prevailing situation (2%) and women public officials should be sophisticated and of strong personality and should not make mess between official life and family life (2%).

Besides, 30 respondents provided some thoughtful suggestions to stop spousal abuse. These include 1) maintaining regular contact with relatives and friends of both sides helps sustain healthy conjugal life, (2) husbands should be invited on various occasions to wives' office (3), neither husband nor wife should try to dominate each other (3), legal aid for women

public officials as victims of abuse (2), wives may even divorce their husbands or live separately for the sake of self-respect (2), women public officials should not be forced to work overtime (2), both husbands and wives should not be highly ambitious (2), wives' opinion about husbands' behaviour to be considered as a part of performance appraisal (1), wives' complaints against spousal abuse should be taken seriously and disposed of quickly and empathetically (1), wives should raise their voice against spousal abuse logically and firmly (1), incorporation of new clause on spousal abuse in the marriage registration form (1), extending family support to the victims (1), not sharing conjugal matters with others (1), wives should avoid foreign tour with male colleagues if not mandatory (1), husbands should not be greedy for wives' earnings (1), husbands should live the life conforming to their earnings (1), age gap between bride and grooms should not be wide (1), husbands should avoid haughty and immodest lifestyle and keep good company as well as practice morality in conjugal life (1)wives may quit the job if husbands' income is enough to maintain the family (1), husbands' job status must be higher than that of wives(1).

Chapter IV

Cases of Violence Experienced by Women Public Officials

Case 1: On Not Writing Her Own Story

Rifat did not get enough time to write her own story. As a colleague and neighbour I am writing her story as I saw her for over a year. I did not like Rifat at the beginning because of ultra modern approaches to life. She was a lecturer at the Department of Sociology at a public university. She was 28 years old and unmarried when she joined the department. She was not like other *shari*-clad colleagues of her. She never aspired to marry a colleague or an official. All she wanted was to marry an industrialist, a millionaire.

Rifat found her chosen husband 12 years older than her. A rich man indeed, her husband Jami Sattar took her to Europe on honeymoon trip. Many of us who could not make it beyond Cox's Bazar were jealous of her luck and fortune.

A jubilant young lady, quite acceptable as a teacher to her students, she started to look pale only after months of their marriage. She used to stay in the campus as my neighbour while her husband used to stay in Dhaka. She tried to grab every opportunity to go to Dhaka and we found it quite natural for a newly wed young lady. Her husband was also an infrequent visitor to the university campus away from the capital city.

Although she was too keen to go Dhaka she did not generally look jubilant and happy on her return to campus. On her husband's visit to the campus the night turned horrible for her and the neighbour. There used to be shouting, noise and breaking of glass plates etc almost on all of his visits. Since Rifat did not open her up to us we, claiming ourselves civilized did never ask her anything.

I drew certain conclusion myself that Rifat's husband did not want her to remain away from him and he probably did not want her to be in job at all since he has lot of money to spend for his wife.

But I was absolutely wrong when at one occasion she opened her up to me. Her husband does not want her to leave the job and he also does not want her to go to Dhaka too frequently leaving the campus.

The story is elsewhere. Jami Sattar used to maintain multiple sexual relationships with commercial sex workers to 'society girls'. She grabbed chances to go to Dhaka so that her husband cannot indulge in immoral sexual activities. On one occasion he brought one of his so-called girl friend to the bed room while she was there in Dhaka with him. When she objected his ignominious act of flirtation and sexual act with the lady he brought she was subjected to serious physical violence. But Rifat, even being a university teacher did not seek support of police or court and even she was reluctant to tell her tales of miseries to her parents as he was a husband of her choice-the millionaire she dreamt of.

I was not in touch for about a month with Rifat. Summer vacations were continuing. I was busy preparing myself for the next course to make myself acceptable and effective to the students. My husband was also a university teacher in the same university. We had been spending vacation with our only daughter making short trips to different hilly belts and tea gardens.

One morning, during the vacation, I woke to read the horrible news in the Daily Prothom Alo that university teacher committed suicide at her husband's flat. I did not have read the story in detail to know who the teacher was. The lady in the single column photograph published in the daily was none other than Rifat.

Yes, in the eyes of law it may be proved to be a case of suicide. But if the society is moved it could also be proved to be a case of homicide. As a colleague what else I can pray for her except that her soul rests in peace.

Case 2: Waiting for Devine Justice

I am Shireen Sultana, Age 30. My husband, Salahuddin is 32. We both are officers of BCS same cadre. I was born in a middle class educated family. We are two brothers and one sister. Under the affectionate guardianship of my parents I completed my university degree and subsequently joined the civil service five years ago. I am fairly beautiful to look at. Within few months of joining the service I got married to Salahuddin following my choice and my parents' subsequent consent.

My husband was born and brought up in a lower middle class oversized family. They were eleven brothers and sisters, quite difficult to maintain even in well off families. Due to economic insolvency of the family and no substantial help from other members my husband had to support them a lot.

We were quite happy, like most of the newly wed happy couples, during the first six months of marriage. My husband has a handsome look and he appeared to be a gentleman in his behaviour and interactions with me. But one day, to my surprise he asked for dowry from me and that was the unfortunate beginning of the problems. Initially I did not take it so seriously as I thought that he might have asked for it just out of some frustrations while pulling his parents' family forward.

As he continued demanding dowry from me, gradually I could discover the dirty beast in him. Because of my strong footing against dowry, Salahuddin would torture me mentally by hurling abusive words. I also paid back with similar abusive words. Gradually he started inflicting upon me physical torture instead of abusive words. Even he battered me in presence of my mother and grandmother. Sometimes he battered me in his father's house and her mother tried to prevent him from beating me but his father supported him. His father used to say that there might be something wrong with me otherwise Salahuddin would not behave like this. Failed to tolerate inhuman torture, I must confess, one day I chased him with a *boti* (vegetable cutter) in my hand to protect myself from his brutality.

Very often Salahuddin used to say that if he would marry a girl with HSC level education instead of me, she could value his status and feel proud of him. He also told me about his parents' interest to get their son remarried by divorcing me. Even a new bride was almost selected. To my utter surprise, sometimes he used to apologize for battering me and would promise not to repeat the same in future. But in the real world he used to break the promise and torture me physically and mentally even on the next day.

Considering all these things my parents sometimes told me to break the marriage. It always works in my mind that a girl gets married once only in her life and this thought constantly led me to continue the marriage tolerating all the tortures silently. Although demanding dowry and physical and mental torture for it is a serious offence I never went to seek legal protection. But my father was not in favour of remaining silent.

Meanwhile, in 2006, I attended the departmental training course as a prerequisite for confirmation in the service. Due to tight schedule of the training it was not always possible for me to maintain contact with Salahuddin regularly. Because of this, he used to scold me very often. Even, one day he came to my training hostel and publicly uttered abusive language in presence of my male and female co-participants. I informed my course coordinators of this matter. By this time he started creating pressure on me so that I might divorce him. But I thought that one day everything will be all right and I planned to start my family life with new hope and inspiration after completion of training. I dreamt to become the mother of a beautiful child in which I would build my future.

But my dream broke into pieces. Salahuddin sent me the divorce letter. Even after this I tried my best with the help of my superior authority to retain the marriage bond. Finally I failed and I found myself a divorced woman, the most detested creature in my society. On the other side, Salahuddin married an HSC examinee and started new life without feeling ashamed for his misdeed.

After the training now I tried to forget everything by absorbing myself in work and work only. But is it possible for me to get the life of my choice? Are not there my so-called well wishers colleagues around me? I am a new topic for them. Some of them are busy to find a new bridegroom for me and some others pass their time gossiping on my life. They are not only the males but the females as well. Due to break of marriage I usually do not keep contact with parents and brothers. I have a few good friends who sometimes keep in touch with me and share my sorrows and happiness. But people around me do not let me live peacefully. At the end of the office everyday I come home back tired and exhausted. Sometimes I fall sick and suffer from mental breakdown. The next day I go to my work.

A few of my friends suggested me for taking legal action against the torture inflicted upon me for dowry and to realize the due dower from Salahuddin. But I think of the uselessness of bringing him to the court of law as it will not let me get my life back. If I take legal action against him he may lose his job or he will be acquitted of the charge. I may get due dower. I think, if Salahuddin is punished in the court here he will get less punishment in the hereafter. So let the punishment be in store for him in the hereafter. Besides, what is the benefit of dealing with the bygone whereas I failed to prevent the collapse of my marriage and retain my husband in my own; my society holds me mostly responsible for breakdown of the marriage. Therefore, I presume, it is better for me to keep silent and wait for the divine justice.

Case 3: The Trauma of a Mismatch

I am Fahmida Khanam writing on a very sensitive personal issue. I am in my late twenties and my husband in late thirties. Being a lecturer of a public university and also being termed an intellectual I tried to hide my pains behind a smile. Back in 1988 I stood Third in the Secondary School Certificate Examination. I also secured a good position in the combined merit list of Higher Secondary Certificate Examination. Although I did not have any schooling in Dhaka, I could by dint of my merit find a place in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Dhaka. I secured First Class in Honours and Masters Examinations. Then I worked for an NGO that helped me a lot to sharpen my English

Language skill. I was not a beautiful lady and therefore was not much sought after for marriage. However, luck smiled on me and I was accepted for the permanent position of lecturer in Public Administration in one of the public universities. We were quite well off financially and such my parents were ready give adequate dowry to compensate for my visible lack of beauty. After three years I became an Assistant Professor and a senior colleague who was then an Associate Professor proposed me to give my hand in marriage. My parents had reasons to give consent. Although things started not so smoothly with my in-laws as my husband is from a different district having its distinctive cultural traits, I took it in a sporting manner consoling myself that only husband matters, not his relatives. Moreover, I took it proudly that my husband is a dignified teacher of a public university, while many of my lady colleagues' husbands are either businessmen or bankers or NGO officials.

Gradually my husband got himself unmasked echoing his mother that it was a mistake on his part to marry a woman from a different district, having no training on how to treat husband and in-laws. A marriage with a girl from my husband's home district could be the better option with guaranteed dowry of considerable size and a fair complexioned bride. All these changes occurred within a span of two months only. We had two maidservants to support our day-to-day domestic works. But my mother-in-law made it mandatory that I should be in the kitchen for cooking as my husband did not marry me to keep in the showcase and get food cooked by the maidservants. Again I was not a beautiful woman who is worth keeping showcase for display.

I was asked to get up at early, complete my *fazr* prayer, and then go to the kitchen for making breakfast. I used to be asked to return well before lunch so that I can prepare lunch for my husband and other relatives. I told my husband that it was too unbearable for me to teach like a true university teacher and cook like a housewife. He turned a deaf year to what I said.

Meanwhile my mother was detected with cancer, and I wanted to go to Dhaka to see my ailing mother. If I go who else is going to cook for my husband? He does not have a second wife. This is how my mother-in-law reacted when I begged for a few days' stay in Dhaka. My husband did not stand by me.

I was hoping for better days and it appeared that those days are not too far when I was congratulated by my colleagues for my success in achieving a two-year long post-graduation scholarship at a reputed university in one of the Scandinavian countries. I rushed to my husband's department to give him the message and a true gentleman in appearance he congratulated me before his colleagues.

The scenario changed when he returned home. My mother-in-law, extremely annoyed with the good news, retorted that she accepted me as a daughter-in-law not to send me abroad, rather to render my services for comfort and happiness of my husband and his old parents and relatives. I informed that my scholarship also provided for additional financial support to take my husband with me and therefore there will be no dearth of his comfort as we would be staying together.

She lost her temper and said that my husband cannot leave his parents to give me company abroad. When I said that my mother-in-law was considering her own interest I was awarded a big slap on my face by husband. That was the beginning of physical torture that increased gradually over time.

My husband was advised by his close relatives that impregnating would tame me down and help give up my ambition for higher studies. I had to submit myself for my husband's desire for a baby and he made me express my inability to go abroad for personal reasons. I informed University Grants Commission that for 'personal causes' I would be unable to utilize the scholarship.

On the other side, due to absence of the Head of the Department I had to remain acting Head for few months. Please imagine a lady pregnant with child, doing heavy works for the family, cooking food for husband and in-laws, teaching the students and running the department in absence of the chairman and what else one could expect out of a women in my position. There was an advertisement that Jahangirnagar University was looking for suitable candidate in my subject. I wanted to come to Dhaka or at its closer proximity. My husband did not

allow me to apply. Under mental stress and physical torture I am continuing with my husband. I know some day I will leave him.

By now I am a mother of male child. I am just waiting for my child to grow up and stand by me to make me strong and unyielding in my decision. I am probably scared of the society. The scaring effect is not allowing me to tear apart the net that I am wrapped with.

Case 4: Pulling the Cart Alone

I am Nujhat Laila, age 46. My husband Al Mamun is 54. I work in a scheduled bank. My husband is a BCS cadre officer posted in a Upazila. I was born in an educated and cultured family. We are four brothers and sisters. I was growing under the affectionate guardianships of my parents. During my study in the university I fell in love with him. I got married with Mamun without the consent of my parents. However, as it happens in most cases, later on, they accepted the marriage.

My husband has seven brothers and sisters. The first five years of marriage was peaceful. I became a mother in the fifth year. Now I am a mother of two daughters and a son. As it was love marriage, I ignored little disagreement and quarrel during the initial years. Daughters were growing up and my husband's behaviour was becoming intolerable day by day. Housemaids could not continue working for long time due to his objectionable relationship with them.

My husband never helps me in household chores. It is very difficult for me to manage the household alongside my job. Getting up at 5 O'clock in the morning I have to prepare breakfast and lunch in advance for my family before I go to the office. Fortunately, the office is only 10 minutes journey from my house. By noon I come home back to feed my babies. Sometimes I cannot even take my own meal because of heavy rush. If a housemaid were there in my house I could get relief.

Daughters are getting older. They are also against their father. When a housemaid is available, my daughters say 'manage your husband, mom'. Sometimes they say, 'why do you

continue this relationship?' I also ask myself why I live together. What can I do? Thinking about the future of my daughters I have to continue the relationship. Daughters are good at their studies but nobody help me in household affairs. Alone I have to manage every thing. Part-time housemaids sometimes work but they are not always available.

My husband picks up quarrels with me even without any reason. He speaks ill of me and doubt my relation with manager of the bank whom I work with. He does not allow me to go outdoors alone. If I talk to male colleagues or bank customers or make phone calls he suspects me. Sometimes life becomes miserable.

My husband has recently been transferred to a remote place. To bring him in Dhaka I was under pressure to make *tadbir*. He asks me to approach my elder sister, who is also a high official having association with other high officials, to help him to be transferred to places closer to Dhaka. My sister says, 'Why should he be transferred back to Dhaka, let him be away from you; he does not behave properly with you, so why should he be brought back?'

At times he quarrels with me seriously and grips my neck so angrily that I feel he would kill me instantly. Then I phone my sisters and younger brothers and tell them, 'save my life and if you don't take any action, one day you will find my dead body.' Often my father comes, younger brother comes. But nobody can take any action. My father consoles me and showers advices. So does my brother. I cannot make my mind to take any legal action. Looking at the faces of my two daughters and one son I again keep silent and compromise with life. This is the way life goes on. My son can understand my sorrows and helps me in household chores. I think the son will look after me when he will be adult; my daughters will get married and leave me. Moreover, I got married on my own choice so I cannot blame anyone. Sometimes the pain of living together with my husband becomes simply unbearable. Again I seek support from my parents; sometimes they readily respond, sometimes they don't. I share my troubles with my sisters. This is how I pass my days.

Case 5: A Wrong Second Step

I am Farhana Akther, age 40, a member of Bangladesh Civil Service working as a Senior Assistant Secretary in the Secretariat. My husband is an engineer. We got married 16 years ago. This is my second marriage. Before this, my first marriage was broken due to my husband's suspicion, rude behaviour and carelessness to family affairs. I have a daughter by my first husband.

I got acquainted with my second husband for a short time before the marriage. As he appeared to be cultured in outlook and empathetic for my daughter and me, I agreed to marry him. But soon after the marriage, his real appearance started to reveal and he started behaving with me in an unacceptable manner. The main problem was that he could not tolerate my daughter. So I sent my daughter to my elder brother's house. In the meantime I gave birth to another daughter. But my husband always neglects my daughter and me. My brother's wife died all of a sudden. And I need to bring my elder daughter from my brother's house to mine, but my husband opposed it. I kept my elder daughter with us for a few days, but in order to avoid further conflict I sent her to my sister's house. Now, she is being deprived of mother's love and affection and of opportunities to grow up properly.

In addition, I can't manage my family with my full salary but husband is totally indifferent about it. Quarrels take place too often on these issues. Sometimes I feel like leaving everything. But angelic face of my little daughter does not let me go. I am continuing the so-called family life in anguish and pains although it hardly affects my husband.

Case 6: For the Sake of Children Only

I am Taslima Ahmed, age 39; a member of Bangladesh Civil Service, currently working as an Assistant Director. My husband is also a BCS cadre official. We got married 15 years ago while I was a student. We studied in the same university. We were in love with each other before our marriage. He was two years senior to me. During his student life he was cultural minded and he used to actively participate in all kinds of cultural activities of the university. We were the members of the same cultural group and from there we got to know each other and came closer that over time turned into a passionate relationship.

After completing university degree he joined the service. Then we got married and I went to his place of posting. In the meantime I completed my study and appeared at the competitive examination to be inducted in Bangladesh Civil Service and I succeeded. As government rules provide, most of the time we worked at the same town. Meanwhile our first child was born and here started the wrap and woof of our relation.

He was very popular for his active involvement in cultural activities and in that connection he came into close contact with girls of different ages. Initially I took it easily. But later on, I found that he was more interested in mixing with those girls and his attention for me was diminishing day by day. As he was transferred from one place to another, he could develop relationship with new girls continuously. Even he did not hesitate to develop objectionable relationship with teen age girls. And for a long time, he continued illegal relationship with such a girl under the plea of recitation coaching. At that time nobody could perceive this matter as her family was in terms with ours. However, it was disclosed when he was transferred from there to another place. From that unpleasant incident, our relationship started to get worse. I decided not to continue our marriage any more. But he apologized and repented for his misdeed, and promised not to repeat the same in future. I forgave him for that time thinking of the future of my child only. Our relationship was quite happy for some months and in the meantime, I conceived my second child. He went to Dhaka for attending a long training course. I came to know from one of his colleagues that he again developed an undesirable relationship with a lady trainee officer and their relationship was deep.

In the midst of these mishaps, my second was child born. My husband returned from the training and denied that relationship with the lady trainee. However, I could understand the fact from his mobile calls and message records. Following this issue, our relationship suffered a serious setback. As I protested his misdeed he battered me physically.

Later on, I got a scholarship for higher studies abroad and kept myself away from him for two years.

Now I have returned home. Only for the future of my children I did not snap my social relationship with him. In fact, I don't have any mental and physical relationship with him though we live under the same roof. I cannot divorce him only for the interest of my children and their future. I do not know how long I am able to continue this life. Some day I might take a tougher decision.

Case 7: When the Husband is Mummy's Boy

I am Swapna, 28 years of age. I was born in Kishoregonj and now I live in my own house at Muhammadpur, Dhaka. We are two sisters. My younger sister is a student of BIT. My father is a consultant of a private firm. After obtaining my Masters degree from Dhaka University I joined 24th BCS. I enjoy shopping, chatting with friends and going outdoors. I developed friendship with Masum, my colleague of the same cadre. We became very close to each other and determined to get married.

Masum's father is a retired class-II officer. Masum has two sisters. We got married without consent of our parents. After our marriage I found that Masum nurtures a skeptical bend of mind. As I am a prettier lady than average, Masum suffered from a sense of insecurity as he lacked confidence. He could not tolerate my smart dress, movement, phone talks and visiting our house by colleagues. Listening to his mother's whispers he used offensive words and battered me physically. Once he beat me and cut my hand with a blade. I was admitted to a hospital and stayed for two days. My parents asked me to send him a divorce letter and thus our divorce took place.

After the divorce Masum insisted me to restore the relationship. Some of my colleagues also advised me not to remarry elsewhere and they said, 'Will your second husband be better than Masum?' My parents are looking for a new husband for me. I also want to marry again because I am fed up with others curiosity about me. All want to know how the divorce occurred, who is responsible for that and so on? I want to live a new life though I am yet to restore my mental stability.

Case 8: A Dream Shattered

I am Sharifa, 28. My home district is Natore. My father works in a public university in Dhaka. At present we are living in a one-story building at Gulshan. We are two sisters. After passing HSC, I got enrolled in Dhaka University as I dreamt of. My classmate Ashfaq was my reading partner. Our relationship gradually became deep. When we were in the final year we got married though neither of our two families especially Ashfaq's did not agree with it.

My husband has three brothers and one sister. His father was a schoolteacher in Comilla. His brothers and sister all are established. he was a lawyer in the Judge Courts and the Supreme Court.

I joined the service through BCS examination. I concentrated on my family life after marriage. His lifestyle was not like others that I came to know after our marriage. After joining my service I found that my husband was more interested in finding faults with me and pick up quarrel on those instead of cooperation. Very often he came home with his friends without any notice and I had to cook for them alone. When I was posted outside Dhaka he continuously insisted me to quit the job and start practicing in Dhaka courts. As a result, serious quarrels and even exchange of blows took place between us. In the second year of our marriage I decided to divorce him and sent a divorce notice to him. Thus we became separate.

I went outside Dhaka. When I attended different training courses many people passed different types of intentional comments regarding me. Some of them proposed to marry me. Now I realize how miserable it is for a woman to live alone in the society. Even colleagues in my office also sometimes tell bad things in the tone of sympathy for me. I came to know that Ashfaq got married again. Maybe, I will have to think afresh for some one new, sooner or later.

Case 9: Living with a Suspicion Maniac

I am Farzana, age 27. I hail from Narshingdi District. My father is a headmaster of a primary school. We are two sisters and one brother. I graduated from Rajshahi University. I joined

24th BCS at Manikgonj. Avik, an officer of 21st BCS was my colleague. We, the juniors, very often discussed with him about different matters. He helped us in different affairs. Even, he used to teach us the subjects required for departmental examination. This way I came closer to him. One day he proposed to marry me and accordingly our families formally arranged our marriage.

Avik has two brothers. After marriage we started our new life in a government house. Avik's mother also stayed with us. She liked me much. At times Avik's other two brothers also lived with us.

By this time I discovered that Avik was a suspicion maniac. He did not like my mixing with other colleagues and senior officers. When I attended different training programmes his doubt further enhanced. He spoke ill of me to many of my colleagues. We often quarreled on a simple issue. Our relationship deteriorated seriously when I went to attend the foundation training course. Referring to my association with fellow trainees and the faculty members of the training institute, he intensified his suspicion. When I went back home on weekends, the situation became worse and he physically battered me. Even sometimes he attempted to hurt me with knife and vegetable cutters. At one stage, finding everything intolerable and considering the future of the both I thought of separation. I started living separately with my baby of one and a half years and one day I divorced him.

After that event, I had to answer to lot of queries and tolerate comments and mental tortures in my office. Consequently, I collapsed psychologically. On the other hand, my family insists on my getting married again. But I am determined not to repeat the same and I have fixed my mind to pass the rest of my life with my baby. I cannot afford to take a costly risk at this stage of my life.

Case 10: When the Doctor Husbands falls for the Nurse

My name is Rawshan Ara, age 40. I hail from Rajbari District. My father was also a doctor in Rajbari. We are one brother and one sister. I am the eldest. My father was a solvent person. According my parents' desire I got admitted to a medical colleague. There, Rashed was my

reading partner. A culturally oriented young man Rashed had the voice and craft for recitation which immensely impressed and thereby we got into a relationship that resulted in a marriage right after our internship.

Rashed's father was a surveyor and they were also economically solvent. Rashed was about 25 at the time of marriage. After our marriage we joined the service as lecturer of a medical college through BCS examination. After that, we got our first son and when he was 6, our second son was born. We became busy with classes during day time and chambers and hospital at night. Gradually I found we were getting far from each other.

In 2002, I was an Associate Professor (Gynecology) and Rashed was a Senior Consultant (Surgery). Sometimes, I heard that Rashed developed an extramarital relationship with a nurse of his clinic. In the meantime, our relationship became so strained that we quarreled on simple matters. At one stage, Rashed married that nurse. I started to live separately with my two children. In the beginning I thought that I would pass the rest of my life with my two sons. But, finally my life turned into another direction. Compelled by the circumstances I got married to a doctor of Anesthesia. Although it was nice at the beginning I started to feel the pinch everyday as my sons appear unwelcome in my new relationship. I am facing difficulties to adjust with the new family along with my sons.

Case 11: A Different Man after the Marriage

I am Panna Begum, age 40. I have one brother and two sisters. My father was a college teacher. Besides, he was involved in politics. My mother was a school teacher. My father taught 22 students providing accommodation in our house. He established 4 schools and 2 collages. He was one of the model teachers that we read in novels. He did not come back from the battle field of the Liberation War of 1971. We were considerably well off when he was alive but his absence resulted in hardship and our family suffered.

My husband Obaidul Kader is 43. They are two brothers and one sister. As the eldest son, he looks after their family.

Both of us are officials of two different cadres of BCS. We got married in 1992. Our age difference is 3 years. We have one son and one daughter. We knew each other before marriage and got married on our own choice. I thought my husband to be a person of extraordinary talent before marriage. He was a bright student in the university and alongside academic activities he took part in various cultural activities. For his personality and cultural activities, I developed particular fascination for him. He wanted to get things he chose by any means. I thought a man with extraordinary talent is somewhat eccentric by nature. So, I overlooked that matter at the time of my marriage.

In reality, after marriage, gradually I got confused about his behaviour. Though I could understand some of his behaviour before marriage as he would feel sorry for his manner every moment I did not consider it so seriously.

Before joining the civil service he was in another job. I got higher salary than him from my job. But he qualified in the BCS examination without minimum effort and it was beyond his imagination. The cadre he joined was linked with execution of power which made him insolent and boastful. Then he formed the notion that if he did not marry me so early he could marry a better girl with better family background and resources. And he started behaving with me like a typical husband. He expected that the wife should prepare good meals and brush his shoes at the time of going to work.

At the age of 40, he was changed drastically. In the name of cultural activities his friendship with lady colleagues, his excessive mixing with them and his propensity to comparing me with lady colleagues – all were crossing the limit of tolerance. Sometimes he suspected me entailing my male colleagues. At a certain point, I thought of living separately with my children to protest his activities. Once, I sought help of a senior colleague of my husband, but it affected me reversely. We were always engaged in quarrels. Though he never assaulted me physically he increasingly put me in mental torture. As a result, I felt mentally imbalanced. Even I could not concentrate on my job in the office. If I feel better this moment I feel depressed the next moment. Now I have prepared my mind to, anyhow, pass the rest of my

life looking at the innocent faces of my children and thinking of the society and enduring the mental torture silently.

Case 12: On Sacrificing a Career

I am Tamanna Parveen, the eldest daughter of a retired officer of the government. My family members are well established and chair various important positions in the society. I passed from Dhaka University with an excellent result. I joined a multinational bank. There I was acquainted with another bright officer named Abul Hossain from a well reputed and rich family. And our matrimonial negotiation was going on between two families.

Meanwhile, I got a job in Bangladesh Civil Service. My marriage took place with that banker. I was posted in field administration outside Dhaka. We were blessed with a son. Then the problem between us started as I worked outside of Dhaka and taking care of the baby was a big question. My husband insisted on my being transferred to Dhaka or leaving the job. At that moment I got a scholarship and went abroad. I tried to bring my family there. But my husband refused to go with me because of his career in the bank.

After finishing the study I came back and again was posted outside Dhaka. The misunderstanding and the pressure to leave the job remained the same. Now my husband has been promoted to a very lucrative position in the bank and is earning a lot. To maintain the job I have to do every duty for my family more than any other housewife so that no one can blame my profession. My husband never helps me in this matter and continues to blame me for any simple fault or problem that occurs in our family.

Our child remains sick and is not doing well in the school. But the whole responsibility of his sickness and bad results are attributed to me because I am working outside Dhaka. I tried my level best to be transferred so that I can maintain both my job and family. When the situation further worsened I tried to join elsewhere and got job in an international organization. I applied for lien but failed. My husband stopped talking and assisting me anymore. He and his family gave me tremendous mental pressure and torture. At this moment fortunately I got job in another international organization and could manage lien from civil service. Now I am

doing that job in Dhaka sacrificing my career for the peace of my family.

Case 13: In Search of Happiness

I am Dr Roksana Begum, the eldest daughter of my parents. My father is an engineer of Bangladesh Government and my mother is a school teacher in Dhaka. I was studying in a public medical college outside Dhaka. I was very good at singing, painting and other extra curricular activities. In the 2nd year of my medical college our relatives gave pressure on my parents for my marriage. They even brought lots of proposals for me and tried to apprehend my parents that they might not get good proposals in future for their daughter. At that time I fell in love with one of my childhood classmates. When my parents came to know about my affair they did not like it and they became hostile to him. They decided to marry me off elsewhere. Under the huge pressure from the parents I sacrificed my love and cut off the relationship with the boy.

One of my uncles having much influence over our family came with a proposal of a doctor and my parents accepted that one. His name was Dr. Jafar Ali who passed medicine from abroad and worked in government health service of Bangladesh. But his family lived in a village and his relatives were not well educated. I tried to protest this marriage but failed. From the very beginning of our conjugal life we suffered from lack of understanding. I tried to turn the relationship into successful one and this prompted me to get a baby. In the 3rd year of my medical college I got a baby boy. My parents understood their mistakes and repented. They tried their best to assist me so that I could be successful in my career and family life. They took care of my child so that I could continue my study in the medical college outside Dhaka. But I always wanted to make my family happy and managed to transfer my husband in my medical college to live together and to eliminate all the misunderstanding between us.

My husband and his family always complained for not getting lots of furniture and other valuables from my father. I tried to adjust with them but there was huge cultural gap with them. I thought my husband would rent a house and bring our son to us from my mother so that we could live together with our son and finish my study. But all went in vain. He took a room in doctor's hostel and said that there is no reason to rent a house as I was living in the

hostel. With all these inconveniences I passed from the medical college successfully and got a job in a clinic. I came back to Dhaka and again managed posting of my husband in Dhaka through my relatives' influence. I rented a house and started living together. My husband did not help me to run the family. Even sometimes he did not buy milk for the baby. With my salary I could not meet all the expenses. Most of the time I took helps from my father.

My father is retired by now and my brothers are university students. It was difficult for him to continue the same support that he provided. My husband always complained that I spent a lot and he tried to defame me with my past lover whom I cut off long before. He even blamed me for hiding that information before marriage and suspected that I was still having relationship with someone else. I tolerated all for my son. I tried to maintain good relationships with my in-laws. I brought my husband's brothers and sisters to Dhaka for study. But my husband was indifferent about their future. That hurt me too. But my in-laws always tried to complain to my husband against me and he believed every single complaint that went against me.

Meanwhile, I got a job in Bangladesh Health Service. I could understand that this relationship had no future but I maintained it for the sake of the baby. The fighting and complaining against each other went on and finding no other shelter I became serious with my career. I started earning more than my husband that made him jealous. He always tried to restrain me from attending night calls or OT duties on emergency at night. I always took help of my brothers to attend those as my husband never assisted me in this matter. As a doctor I think it is my moral duty to attend my patients on emergency. Things went worse when I had an accidental abortion of our second issue due to the negligence of my husband. But when he tried to establish that I aborted the child intentionally, I protested. At that time I was totally frustrated about the relationship. We started living separately. Everyone tried to solve the problem but my husband was so rigid that he insulted everyone who spoke for me. When there was no hope I again thought of the future of my son and went back to my husband. My son also requested his father for the reconciliation but he refused to accept me.

Finally, after 12 years of our marriage, we got separated legally. As a doctor I was successful everywhere and I started earning a lot. After 2 years of our divorce I got married again to an aged widower who is an engineer doing a government service. My son also adjusted well with my second husband. I got back love, respect, and care again in my life and for my son too. But my husband was very frustrated with his job and the society. He had his reasons for becoming fed up with Bangladesh. He took citizenship in a foreign country and left the job. I wanted to stay in Bangladesh. My profession and practice was going on very well. I really enjoyed my work and felt happy to help the poor that I always did as a doctor. Even I picked up a beggar or any poor person from the road to the hospital, to give them free treatment whenever I met someone on my way. I was very popular in my locality for this. But my husband did not like the system in the go with him with my son for his better education and future. He loves my son very much. To save my new family I again sacrificed and left the job to fly abroad with my son. Now I have a very happy family and I have got a baby girl. I am now working in a hospital of that country as a paramedic (in that country one should have undergraduate degree from the universities of that country to practice as a clinical doctor) sacrificing my career in Bangladesh. However, with all these pains in my heart I have a feeling that now at least we have happiness there.

Case 14: A Timely Decision to Get Separated

I am Novera Hasan, the eldest daughter of my family. My father was a well-reputed and respected person in our district and he died when I was a child. We are two sisters. My mother struggled to bring up us, two sisters, with the help of her father's family. I had my M. Sc. degree from Dhaka University and joined Bangladesh Civil Service. I got married with another brilliant person, named Abul Hasan who also passed from Dhaka University.

My husband always suspected me with every man of my acquaintance. He also did not like the nature of my job. For my job I had to live in several districts and Upazilas across the country. I had some responsibility to my family also. This was also opposed and disliked by my husband. I tried to console and convince him. I am very careful about my own career. I took my job seriously and believed that nothing was impossible for any female officer and tried to prove it in every aspect of my work. I am hard working and efficient and I never

hesitate to do any duty that comes on my way. My superiors are very happy with me because they can rely on me.

Taking my job seriously, I have to remain busy and it increases my husband's suspicion that I have illicit affairs with my colleagues or controlling officers. Even he created obnoxious scene several times that embarrassed me in my workplaces. I tried to eliminate all his suspicion but failed. Sometimes he tortured me physically. He even phoned my boss at night from Dhaka to enquire whether I was passing night with him or not. These created lots of trouble for me in my profession.

In the meantime he got a scholarship and went abroad for his higher studies. From abroad he gave pressure on me to go and stay with him but it was not possible for me to manage 3/4 years of leave from my job. I have to bring up my younger sister and look after my mother also. I went to my husband with a short leave. There I met some of my senior colleagues but he started suspecting me again with them. I returned home and continued my job with success and waited for my husband's return. From abroad my husband kept giving me mental pains and insisted on leaving my family and my job. I kept refusing and still had a hope that everything would be alright after he comes back. But after finishing his study he refused to return to Bangladesh. We had lots of quarrels on this. When I understood that there was no hope in that relationship and my husband would never change his nature, I decided not to leave the job. And on my decision we got separated.

Now, I live alone and everyone including some male colleagues is obnoxiously curious on my family matters. But I never disclosed anything regarding my divorce. Even some male colleagues try to get closer, harass me in different ways and try to induce me but I am always boldly encountering them to save me and continuing my job with success.

Case 15: Living in a Strange Melancholy

I am Dilruba Akhter, a teacher of a public university. I have been working here for last 12 years. After obtaining my postgraduate degree with the first class first position from another university I joined here. Later on I got MS degree from a European university.

I was born in a middle-class family. My father was a service holder while my mother was a housewife. Within three years of my birth, my father died following a stroke. I do not remember anything of my father. I cannot visualize his appearance even. Whenever any girl calls her father '*abba*' over telephone, I cannot control my tears. Deprived of father's affection, I did not get an opportunity to call my father '*abba*' in his lifetime. We are one brother and one sister. My brother is older than me. He was a teacher of another public university. He has migrated to the United States and now lives there permanently as an American citizen.

I passed my childhood amidst the love and affection of maternal grand parents, uncles and aunts, and my caring mother. They never let me feel that I did not have my father in my childhood. I obtained very good results in primary, secondary and higher secondary levels. I got admitted in a public university in the honours course. My maternal uncles took care of escorting me to and from the university. Fortunately I got a seat in a ladies hall of the university. But I noticed tension and anxiety in my mother. She asked my uncles to look for a suitable bridegroom for me. I told my mother to delay the marriage so that I could complete my university studies. But my mother got worried and became more active to marry me off. At last with the help of my elder brother I could convince my mother and thus complete my Master's degree smoothly.

As I obtained very good result in Master's, many proposals of marriage came to me. But no suitable match was found. If I agreed, my mother or my uncles disagreed with certain proposal and vice versa. And this situation continued for a quite long time. At that time I could realize the problems of so-called settled marriage of our country. Almost 90% of proposals I did not like. As a result many of our relatives stopped cooperating anymore regarding my marriage and it enhanced my mother's concern. After a long wait, I was happy that I could get rid of such a gloomy situation when I joined the university as a teacher. Everybody had a sigh of relief.

As a university teacher I faced the problem of staying alone. At one stage, my mother came to stay with me. She again took initiatives to expedite my marriage. But my job, especially its non-transferable nature, was not suitable to match a bride-seeker. Once my family insisted on my quitting the job, but I strongly tackled the pressure. And thus I passed a few years more.

After much calculation my family decided that I would get married with an officer of BCS (Education) Cadre. Accordingly, I got married at the age of 36 with Nasimul Gani, a teacher of a government college. But the problem was that my husband worked in a college 400 miles away from my work place. He could not manage leave frequently. I tried my best to get him transferred to my own town. At last he was transferred to a nearby district town of 46 miles away.

Now, it again became very difficult for him to come home daily. So, it was decided that he would come home on weekends only. My husband's family felt embarrassed and expressed the opinion that my husband had become henpecked. As a result the relationship between the two families suffered a lot. It made my husband depressed. So, our relationship started to decline. My mother used to live with us at that time. She tried to mend out relationship but failed. Then I got my husband posted in my own town. This time living together was ensured but the mental gap went on increasing. I found that my husband grew stubborn and he started finding faults in every small matter. My mother felt hurt and shed tears in silence. On many occasions I went to the university without taking breakfast. Nothing proved to be successful in bringing change in him. My colleagues and friends advised if my mother went back home, the everyday problems would be mutually solved in a better way. My brother living in the USA arranged everything to take my mother to him. My mother also consented with this idea. When everything was finalized, one day on the silly issue of Eid shopping my husband scolded me seriously and then attempted to assault me physically. I could not stand it any longer. Canceling my mother's trip to the USA, I rented a house to live separately from that very night. I felt so ashamed that I could not tell anyone about the mishap. My maternal uncles rushed to my house but I humbly requested them not ask me to go back to my husband's. Innumerable comments were passed from all around as if it was I who was to blame alone. In addition, as there was no child of ours after four years of marriage, everyone held me responsible for the strained relationship.

One year passed in this way. We, husband and wife, were living in the same town separately, but we had no relationship. I could not convince my guardians that I should divorce my husband. Life became a story full of intolerable pains and woes. I could not share my sorrows with students, colleagues, and relatives. I failed to make them realize my situation. I could not give satisfactory answers to their questions about my family. Taking all the blames on my shoulder I went on doing my job.

After one year of our separation, our two families- my maternal uncles and my in-laws- sat together and tried to solve the problem several times. But it did not bring forth any result. At last I was about to take the final decision of divorce. Meanwhile both the families sat together at our house and called both of us separately. Surprisingly in that meeting my husband apologized for his mistakes and thus all our relatives insisted on my living together with him to run a conjugal life. I agreed to what they suggested and started living again with my husband in the same house but let me admit it was against my will.

My mother went to the USA to live with my brother. We were quite happy for some time but gradually patriarchal attitude in my husband became stronger and he started showing absolute authority in family matters. He became fond of ordering me every now and then. Using all types of abusive words and rebuking me with a reason or without became a common practice for my husband. I have none to share the pains I am enduring. I am passing my days in a strange melancholy and thereby I have to pay a high cost of being born as a woman in this country.

Case 16: Thy Tyrant inside the Husband

I am Salma Begum, born in the family of a teacher couple of a public university. Among two sisters and one brother, I am the youngest. Having lived in the university quarters with my parents I passed SSC and HSC with brilliant results. I got admitted in English Department and passed honours with a second class. Rafiq Mahmud, a favourite student of my father from another department passed Master's with first position. Thinking that the very student will be a teacher of the university, my father arranged my marriage with him hurriedly. I requested my guardians to wait until I passed my Masters but I could not stop them. Within a

short span of time my husband was appointed as a lecturer in that department. My parents became very delighted. By this time I passed MA securing 2nd class 2nd position. As there was no vacancy in the English Department of my university, I had to wait and pass idle time.

Meanwhile I conceived my first baby. I suffered from all the symptoms of first pregnancy. Being sick I sought permission of my husband to live with my mother during my pregnancy. Initially he was liberal to let me live with my mother but later on he did not like it. Even sometimes we were engaged in altercation on this issue. My mother tried her best to convince him regarding this but she failed. My condition became worse following unkind and abusive words of my husband. Consequently I was compelled to stay at my mother's house for about 15 days. My husband, being angry on my stay with my mother spoke ill of me and my mother to his colleagues in the department. Mother felt insulted at this and tried to make him realize the situation of pregnancy but again she failed. Our relationship as husband and wife was losing its usual fervor. During the time of child bearing, he did not pay minimum attention to my sickness and inability to work and thereby for the first time I saw the ugly appearance of the patriarchal society.

However, in the middle of our bad relationship, the baby boy was born. My husband apparently became a good man after my son had been born. He came to see the new baby with a lot of toys and clothes and tried to improve our relationship. Also I tried to forget my sorrows and events of the past.

After three years of our marriage, my husband got a job offer in another public university. That time he gave them condition, "If my wife is appointed as a lecturer in the Department of English, I will join the university." The university administration examined my academic certificates and agreed with the condition. Thus I joined that university as a lecturer in the Department of English.

Particularly speaking, the university we joined as teachers is situated in the home town of my husband. So, we started living in my father-in-law's house permanently. But here started the clash of culture. At the very beginning I was advised to wear *hijab* (*borkha*) whereas the

culture I nourish does not tolerate such a dictation at all. Gradually the advice of wearing *hijab* turned into an order. Failed to live in that family, where criticism and maltreatment continued all the time, I was successful to convince my husband to live separately in a rented house. We were fairly comfortable there for two years and my second baby son was born. Alongside my job, and taking care of two children, and doing all the cooking and other household chores, were my responsibilities. These made me physically vulnerable. On the other hand, my husband passed his time with his friends. When I asked him to help me in household activities, he replied that these were all the duties of the wives not of the husbands. He commented that all wives can do their jobs except me. I got baffled hearing his comments. Both of us being highly educated and university teachers, and not sharing household duties, unmasked before me the tyrant that lives in my husband. As a result our relationship deteriorated.

In addition to the existing problems, new problems arose. I had to answer questions of my husband regarding my discussions with my colleagues, making of phone calls, and chatting with them. There occurred breach of trust between both of us. Baseless doubting and questioning my character crossed the limits. Consequently we used to quarrel in presence of children every night. The quarrel led to physical assault upon me. At one stage I was compelled to rent a house to live separately.

This decision that I took could not save me from my husband's cruel hands. Sometimes he used to come to my house to quarrel and threatened to batter me. Reaching the extreme point of torture, I decided to divorce him. Consulting an advocate, I sent notice of divorce first and at last I sent final divorce letter to him.

Everything could have been finished here but it lingered. Several times he attacked my house with the help of *mastans* to take my two sons away from my custody. I informed the Vice-Chancellor of the fact, and as per the recommendation of the committee formed to investigate our problems, my sons still live with me. Everyday when I see him in the campus, I wonder how sweet the relationship could have been in our life. But our life turned so sour.

Case 17: Nasty Words Replace Tagore

I am Rakhi Sultana, MA in Bangla from a public university. During free time after passing masters, I thought that I would write on different issues. My friends advised me to sit for BCS examination. I took BCS examination, passed without much effort and eventually joined the civil service.

My parents arranged my marriage with a member of same BCS cadre. The bridegroom Muhit Alam was older than me by 8-10 years but I agreed to marry him only to show respect to my guardians. Accordingly we got married and passed three years of our marriage quite happily. Meanwhile a baby daughter was born and till then we were quite comfortable. In the meantime, my husband got a job as a teacher in a public university. He went to the university campus. I was successful to get a transfer to a college of that town. Both took a house to live together.

After joining the university, my husband started suffering from superiority complex. He loved to pass time in the club with his friends and colleagues. On the contrary, I had to be busy with my daughter, cooking and doing household chores along with my job. I did not get his cooperation as before and whenever I was about to say something he shouted at me. So quarreling became a regular phenomenon of our daily life. In the meantime our son was born. I remained busy like anything to look after my two babies but got little support from his side. Gradually I started suffering from various diseases and became irritable with my husband. I could once tolerate ill words but nowadays I turned intolerant. As a result subconsciously I replied to him very loudly and used the same to retort his bad words. Being afraid of our angry behaviour our two children used to hide in a different room.

One day my husband called me by bad names following a very simple matter. Failed to endure I also replied in the same manner. He took a vegetable cutter and threatened to kill me with it. I became very angry and replied at the top of my voice. A number of neighbouring couples rushed into our house and prevented my husband. Coming back to sense, I felt ashamed.

Meanwhile, both of my parents passed away. Our two children are students of secondary schools. My husband returns home late at the night according to his sweet will. He reproaches me in the name of my father and mother for every simple matter. I also lose my temper as if I have gone mad. It seems that I am suffering from schizophrenia. All the time I reply very loudly. I utter bad words to retort his bad language. Initially the neighbours used to come to settle our dispute but now they do not respond any more. They call us 'quarreling family' and they laugh at us silently.

Maybe I should have divorced my husband long ago, if my parents were alive. I lack the courage to run life alone. So, I am enduring without blaming others. Though I am a teacher of Bangla, forgetting everything of Tagore and other poets, I utter only abusive words and this is the way I live.

Case 18: A Dream marriage Turns Sour

I am Bindu Khan and Tutul Chowdhury is my husband. Both of us were students of the same department of a university. Our friendship turned into love affair. Families of both of us raised strong objection against our relationship. They expressed their opinion that there should never be a marriage between us. To save our love we got married in the court before our Master's examination. None but four class friends who arranged our secret wedding knew the matter. Tutul used to live in boys' hall while I was a resident of girls' hall. We got married but there was no bridal chamber, no consummation. Both promised to do better results and studied accordingly.

I was the only daughter of my parents. My appearance was charmingly beautiful and my height was 5 feet and 6 inches. I had the charm one young man aspires to get in his wife. I know, my demand in the wedding market was really high. My parents gave words to a number of guardians of bridegrooms that they should come up with their proposals after my master's examination. After finishing our final examination, we had our first night as husband and wife in the house of a friend and it was arranged very secretly. At one stage, we were compelled to disclose the fact to our parents. Both the families became very angry and

then they shouted much in anguish. Particularly my parents remained bed-ridden for a quite long time but I had nothing to do at that time.

The results were published and we obtained desired results. Now we started searching jobs. We two got jobs in bank. Being beautiful to look at, my acceptance in that bank was visibly high. The bank authority did not know that we were married. Meanwhile a member of the Board of Directors of the bank personally called me to his room and proposed me for his eligible expatriate son. Here I was compelled to inform him that I had already been married.

In the meantime, an advertisement for the teaching position in the university was published and both of us applied. My husband was appointed in the university, I was rejected. We shed tears to forget the sorrow of my not getting a job in the university. Next day, when I got ready to go to the bank, my husband holding my hands requested me to leave the bank job. I got surprised. However, that day I remained absent from my office showing the excuse of my illness. At night we started discussion. He showed reasons in favour of his argument that women's job in a bank is really troublesome. I could not convince him that I did not have any problem in doing my job in the bank for a certain period of a day. In the bank job, one does not need to go on tour frequently and to attend meetings outside alone. To attend a meeting several officers have to move together. So I thought that I would not have any problem there. There is no valid reason for fear. As the night was deeper, our discussion took the shape of altercation. Lastly he said, 'You must quit the job, this is my order.' I replied boldly, 'I will never quit the job.' We stopped our discussion but I passed that night sleepless.

Next morning I prepared breakfast and asked him to take it but he did not come to the table. Taking breakfast I went to the bank and did my office job as usual. Returning to home, I found that he did not come back from the university. When he came back late at night I told him that I had not eaten anything in his absence. Without any reply to my words he flopped on the bed to sleep. Anyway, following the issue of quitting my job, our happy relationship deteriorated. Both were living in the same house but he used to take meals outside. I cooked meals for both of us but gradually I cooked only for myself. The decay of our conjugal relationship continued without any stoppage. All the love of the past was blown away. He

arranged a room in the bachelors' dormitory of the university and started living alone there. On the contrary, I lived lonely in the rented flat with minimum feeling of security. As it is not usual for a woman to live alone in any town of our country, I took help of my friends. They tried in many ways to persuade him but failed. His only stance was if I did not resign the job in the bank, he would not continue our relationship.

Finding no way out, I got transferred to the town of my parents. My father denied to see my face but my mother accepted me. I started living with my parents. For last one year I have been working in the bank. My husband did not want to know my whereabouts and even made a phone call to me. Rather I called him several times but he did not receive my calls.

One day my mother said to me, 'As you got married in the hope of becoming happy in life inflicting a lot of pains on us and making us shed tears, please return to your husband to get that happiness back leaving the job.' I kept mum. Recollection of his memories gives me pains. Deep in love for seven years, lots of memories, lots of small gifts— all became meaningless only for a single decision. I am taking a little longer time more time in the hope that he will call me back.

A few days ago, a friend told that my husband is often seen in Chinese restaurants with one of his lady colleagues. Possibly he is preparing himself to execute divorce. But I could not wipe away his sweet memories from my mind yet. I wait for his comeback and only think of the time when our girls will be able to take the right decision.

Case 19: Is that Called Destiny?

I am Sabina Sheikh. After passing BA I got admitted into a university college. A handsome classmate introduced himself almost unwanted and unexpectedly. The introduction turned into friendship and then into a love affair. While I was absorbed in dream, my viva voce of master's examination took place. A young teacher of a university hailing from a nearby village of my own came to conduct the viva voce as the external examiner. Hearing my pronunciation he asked me whether I was an inhabitant of such and such Upazila. When I said 'yes', he deliberately mentioned about my family background and other things and he

told the other members on the viva board that he came from a village adjacent to my native one.

Two days later, a matchmaker came to my father with a proposal of my marriage with that university teacher named Abu Taher. Guardians of my family sat together and discussed that the suitor is the son of a very poor teacher of a primary school. Financially his father was no match with my father. So the majority opined negatively. My ailing grandfather listened to everything and said, 'It is not a credit to be introduced by the name of one's father, the bridegroom is a university teacher, this is his identity. A university teacher must be a great scholar. I hope my granddaughter will be happy in marriage with a university teacher; you proceed.' It was very much like a verdict of the court as passed by my grandfather. Love with my handsome class friend came to no use at all. On the fourth day of the proposal, our marriage took place. I became a newly married wife.

I was born and brought up in riches and much care and did not have the real life understanding of poverty and want. The place where I was brought into as a newly wedded wife was full of poverty and hunger. One of my two sister-in-laws was HSC waiting at home and other was studying in BA. One of my brother-in-laws was a student of 3rd year in a polytechnic college and the other was an HSC examinee. Shabby tin-shed house where sign of poverty was prevalent everywhere, made me very sad. According to their family norms, I had to go to kitchen to cook with other members of the family. As I did not have habit of cooking, I burnt my hands, dropped the pitcher and such other faults of mine became subject of talk among the people around me. Even I had to tolerate some odd comments being inexperienced. I became exhausted within a few days.

My father came to take me back home. My mother could realize that I was undergoing huge pains at the very sight of my appearance. She gave me solace. After 10 days I went with my husband to his working place. My elder sister-in-law, who has passed HSC and unmarried, came with us. We took a small house with two rooms. Coming to the new house I and my sister-in-law started cooking and doing household chores. As I was inexperienced in household chores and my sister-in-law inflicted sufferings, I could not take rest. Again I

became very tired within a few days. My husband spoke to me in a very calculative manner and he considered me as his student. There was no tinge of love in his dealing with me. The lion portion of my husband's salary was spent for the education of his brothers and sisters. But I have to manage my family with much hardship. The problem was, my sister-in-law sometimes whispered to my husband and I found him gloomy while talking to me. I got no sympathy of my husband. Whatever small good things used to come from market, they were brought for my husband's sister, not for me.

Whenever I approached my husband to buy some personal things he replied, 'Give up luxury.' My sufferings intensified. At a stage it was intolerable to me and I asked my mother to send me some money secretly. My mother said, 'Where should I send money?' I told her to send money order to my husband's office address. Other than that I did not have any alternative means. My mother sent me Taka five thousand to my husband. He received the money and came home. He asked me the reason of sending money and I replied that I told my mother to send it so that I can spend for my personal necessity. At this, he became furious and scolded me saying that I had undermined him before my parents and my family.

Here began the rude behaviour of my husband. They two found faults with me every now and then and rebuked me even without any reasons. I fell sick. Thus I passed my days. I became unsound physically and mentally. One day my husband gave me a form to fill it up. Some days later, I sat for oral test and I was selected as a teacher of the secondary school under the university. I got relief. I felt glad to go out and teach students daily. The problem arose at the end of the month. My husband took the whole amount of my salary from me. I concealed tears secretly.

What should I mention here? Being an MA, I undergo medieval forms of torture by my husband and his sister without protest. I do my job, I earn my salary but I have to give it all to my husband. Brought up under the shade of parents in solvency but it has been a long time since I took a sumptuous food or bought a new dress of my choice. A highly educated women having no right to take decision of my own, is it life? Perhaps it is called the life of a woman.

Case 20: On not Bearing a Child

I, Parul Haider, joined the university as a lecturer nine years back. After two months of my joining, I got marriage proposal from Syed Raihan, one of the colleagues of my department, through a senior colleague. My father was not alive to marry me off. My elder brother and mother accepted the proposal immediately as I was alone here as well as I did not find any house nearby to rent for my accommodation. I was staying with another family. And I was also facing some problems. Thus wedding happened between two teachers who were born in two corners of Bangladesh.

Days were passing peacefully despite a few problems due to cultural conflicts. Even though this issue was not so significant, it was too cumbersome for me to adapt to the situation. After three years we went abroad and came back to Bangladesh with PhD.

During our stay abroad I became pregnant but my husband asked me for MR (menstruation regulation) as it might disturb the studies. But my mother made a phone call to me and asked not to go for MR. It created conflict between us. He considered informing my mother about my pregnancy as a serious fault of mine. However, my husband did not hear me and I was compelled to do the MR. After that we concentrated on our studies though sometimes I felt pain in my uterus and had to take medicine for that.

After 4 years we returned to our country. Then we jointly decided to take a baby. But it was not successful. Then I was compelled to visit a physician at Dhaka. After doing sufficient diagnosis the doctor identified some problems with my uterus and prescribed me some medicines. About two years of medical treatment I failed to conceive. My mother always refers to that MR and shed tears. I also cry a lot remembering that MR that was forced upon me by my husband.

Now my in-laws advise my husband over telephone, 'This woman is infertile, you should marry another woman'. I am physically weak due to complexity with my uterus on the one hand, and after listening to this type of words I am now mentally very depressed on the other.

Few days back while we were arguing with this issue I reminded him about the MR. He became very angry and slapped me on the face. Being angry and sad, I did not take any food for couple of days. Now my husband behaves badly by blaming me alone for inability of giving birth to a child. I have become subjected to his physically tortures.

Humans suffer from different kinds of pains and sorrows. But sorrows of women in this country remain same as it was in the ancient time. A lady having PhD degree is suffering from physical abuse only for inability to give birth to a child. I don't know where it will end up. If finally, I fail to conceive a child, perhaps my conjugal life will not sustain any longer.

Case 21: Falling in Love with the Maid Servant

I am Shahina Begum, age 32. After completion of my postgraduate studies I joined Bangladesh Civil Service. Now I am working as an Assistant Commissioner. As eldest child of a middle class family I had to shoulder family responsibilities. I did not have enough time to take care of myself. I was busy with studies and job. Influenced by colleagues as well as society I got married to Abul Basher of my same age. I did not have any disliking for my husband though my colleagues influenced my marriage. My husband is an Assistant Professor (IT) of a private university. I have passed 11 months of our conjugal life but yet to be fortunate to conceive a child. We are only two members in our family. My husband does not behave badly as I am yet to conceive.

However, after marriage I came to know that my husband is an alcoholic. He usually comes home late at night from the bar. He becomes angry and uses abusive words and even physically batters me if I request him to stop drinking. Sometimes he breaks my favourite articles. He is fond of talking to other women. Moreover, he is used to maintaining illicit relationship with maids. He loves to chat with maids and discuss everything with them. My husband undermines me in front of maids using demeaning words. Finding no way out I discharged the maid and took all household responsibilities on my shoulder. Now he creates pressure on me for appointing new maids especially a young one. He does not like my relatives to visit me.

I cannot cook anything which he does not like. He also dictates me about use of utensils. Moreover he bars me from using my own articles which I bought with my own money. Furthermore, he takes my salary instead of giving me money for maintenance of the family. I pay all the bills such as house rent, electricity bill etc. He takes control over all of my income. He uses ill words at me if I refuse to give him money. Sometimes he becomes so furious as if he would kill me. I ask myself is this why people get married? Now I am passing my days with fear of death, loneliness, mental anguish and financial crisis.

Case Study 22: On Getting Confidence Back

I am Shabiha Khandaker, a lecturer in the science faculty in the most prestigious public university in Bangladesh. I am 30 years old, married and mother of a cute daughter. I have heard husbands in cases assaults wife. I am probably lucky that I have never been subjected to physical violence by my husband. Morshed, my husband is 36 years old. A member of Bangladesh Civil Service, currently posted in Rangamati, he is holding an important position in the district.

Not to beat the drum of my beauty, I may submit that my beauty has turned into my enemy. At the early days of our marriage he used to say that he was very proud that his wife is a university teacher while most of his friends' wives are just housewives having no relationship with studies but concerned with shopping and Hindi films. I was also equally proud although he does not look like a film-hero, he is not bad looking either. Moreover, he is a permanent bureaucrat and I know politicians are just facades, bureaucrats rule the country and they are quite powerful too.

He promised that my marriage with him will never stand on my way to higher studies, developing skill and flourishing as teacher. Even on occasion he used to call me 'hello professor'. These are the stories first two months of my marriage. On the third month when I visited him at his workplace, a good number of his colleagues and friends came to see me and naturally I was trying to be as nice as possible. They praised in front of him and about my beauty. Even one of his friends said on my face that brain and beauty do not go together and I was an exception.

Their praises of my beauty and brain had acted differently on him. He started suspecting me. He entwined my name with any university teacher we both know and that is what he did in a very ugly way. My mother-in-law used to live with me near the university campus.

Apparently she was nice with me, never appeared to be quarrelsome traditional mother-in-law. Naturally my husband used to phone frequently to talk to his mother. It just occurred one day that she informed him over phone that my male colleagues visited my Dhaka residence and we had long talk and laughter.

He was furious and hurled abusive words from the other end of the telephone. I had to dramatize to my colleagues that my mother-in-law being an old fashioned lady does not want outsiders at home. Thus I closed the doors for my friends and colleagues.

Now I have my students. To my surprise I had to hear it from my husband that I am sexually involved with students. I also closed my doors for them. Whatever there is, I promised to complete it at the campus, nothing to be brought home to put psychological burden on my in-laws or husband.

I was spending my time mostly with my little daughter, again to bear the allegation that I am ignoring his mother. I was pressed hard by husband to leave the university job and become a just housewife, cook for him, pray to god and rear my daughter. On my vehement protest he agreed that I can continue teaching provided I put on *hijab*.

I have nothing to say against *hijab*, but I prefer not to put it on. There were various other rounds of bargains and shouting and finally I asked him for a divorce. He does not want to leave his legally married wife.

Meanwhile, he has propagated it to many of his relatives that that was the greatest blunder of his life to marry me. Now that he is living with an educated sex worker. I am tolerating all these unbearable accusations and waiting for a good time to leave him. I am halfway through getting a scholarship. I have personally met an influential member of University Grants

Commission and told him my stories. He assured that taking my daughter abroad with me will not be a problem while the University that primarily selects me has got wonderful crèche facilities. I will certainly avail this scholarship and I don't if I will at all return on completion of my study.

Case 23: Husband's Temptation for Judiciary

I am Jahanara Rahman, thirty-six years old and a former magistrate. My husband Wakilur Rahman 42 is virtually unemployed and uses various business cards suggesting that he is an international consultant on different subjects. He is a very handsome gentleman capable of making friendship very quickly. He is also of the habit of presenting various mementoes to new friends and acquaintances to keep friendship alive. This is his art of business.

I am a mother of two daughters and a son, now all back to Dhaka from a district I was posted to, looking desperately for some space for two kids at a reputed school. But prospects appear bleak as she came just in the middle of the year.

My husband brokered for bail of accused persons put tremendous pressure on me to grant bail or bring money from my parents. I was determined no to sell justice like some of my colleagues. But on occasions situation forced me to yield as my husband already took money in connivances with pleaders of ill repute.

When judiciary was separated there were reasons for magistrates to be frustrated, but I was happy that I was no longer required to submit to undue pressure of my husband. Now he says instead of me he should marry a lady member of judicial service. I am enduring what I call my destiny for the sake of children only.

Case 24: A Saga of a Murder and a Suicide

This is a true story known to many of us. Considering that issues related to her being killed by her husband and her husband's subsequent committal of suicide and the case pending in court, only a sketchy picture will be presented. A brilliant officer of the Bangladesh Civil Service, Ayesha was posted as protocol officer at the office of the Chief Advisor. She also

got a posting abroad. There were misunderstanding and probably mistrust between Ayesha and her husband. In one October night in 2001 after attending a sumptuous dinner outside with some of the colleagues and friends when the couple returned home argument heated up between them and at one stage the husband brought out his firearm and shot Ayesha Afsari to death. Perplexed at the situation and visualizing his fate the husband did not long to decide on his life. He shot himself to death. The couple died leaving lots of questions and children to mourn their death.

Chapter V

Major Findings, Conclusions and Policy Implication

ONE is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine. (Beauvoir, 1949:295)

Findings

It has been stated at the beginning that violence against women is perhaps the most shameful human rights violation. And it is perhaps the most pervasive. It knows no boundaries of geography, culture or wealth. As long as it continues, we cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace. It has also been stated that violence against women within marital life or wife abuse is a hidden, dark, undisclosed and very sensitive issue widely accepted by culture, tradition and customs. The study goes further to state that occupying high offices by wives does not necessarily guaranty that they obtained immunity against spousal violence. Considering the prevailing condition of Bangladesh it will not be out of place to mention that in 2000 some 91 percent violent deaths in the world occurred in low and middle income countries and almost half of such deaths were suicides (quoted in Momsen 2004)

The study advanced keeping the following objectives in mind:

- To assess the perception of both male and female public officials about spousal abuse;
- To identify the pattern of violence experienced by women public officials in their marital life;
- To examine the consequences of violence experienced by women public officials in their marital life;

All efforts available within the command of the team were made and resources employed to get the right information towards a meaningful analysis. While exploring theories of violence against women the study found it pertinent to follow the patriarchal dominance line for explaining behaviour of husbands. Limitation of the study has been detailed at the onset.

In this chapter attempts have been made to excavate the major findings from the data gathered by administered questionnaires used to identify the perceptions of both male and female public officials regarding marital violence, factors, nature and consequences of abusive behaviour. Furthermore, some of the cases that have been developed from real life experiences of marital violence of public officials have also been analysed.

Quantitative Data

Tables (1-23) depict a lot of demographic and socio-economic information of the public officials who were interviewed in this study. Tables (24-27) deal exclusively with the perception of public officials regarding marital violence, and the nature, factors and consequences of marital violence. On the other hand, Tables (28-29) have come up with suggestive measures in addressing the issues of marital violence. It is evident from the demographic and socio-economic information that most of the respondents have attained highest academic degree and they are employed in respectable professions. So, considering the level of education and status of the respondents, the responses that have been made by them should be given due weightage. Besides, this may be a supporting tool to validate the findings of the research.

As many as 34 parameters were set before the respondents on a 1 to 6 point scale in Table No. 24 to know the perception regarding abusive behaviour against wives by their husbands. As a matter of fact, every parameter comes up with a definitional or categorical proposition of abusive behaviour as well as surrounds a particular theoretical formation of marital violence against wives. One of the important features reflected in the Table is that, female respondents put more emphasis on each of the parameters than male since a significant variation is noticed on the weighted average score put against the parameters. In the case of female respondents, out of 34 parameters, 24 fall into the weighted average scores between 80 and 89, and 10 between 73 and 79. While in the case of male respondents the highest score 80 was placed on only for two parameters, scores between 70 and 79 were placed on for 15 parameters and scores between 64 and 69 for the rest. Importantly, none of the weighted score made by the male respondents against a parameter could exhibit its

dominance over the weighted score made by the female respondents. As a matter of fact, it demonstrates the marked difference in the perceptions that prevail among both female and male respondents as regards marital violence.

Putting more emphasis on the parameters by the female respondents may be explained by feminist standpoint theory. Feminist standpoint theory establishes its starting points and testing grounds in women's experiences. In feminism women's experience has paramount importance in shaping knowledge. Undoubtedly, the goal of excavating the perception regarding marital violence is somehow to shaping knowledge; female respondents, in this study, have consciously or unconsciously coated their responses with their own experiences. As such, they have put utmost weightage on the parameters and produced such knowledge on marital violence which differs significantly from that of knowledge produced by their male counterparts.

Table 25 deals with the instigating factors behind the abusive behaviour of husbands. As many as 30 factors were placed before the respondents to know their perception about the extent of these factors in perpetuating marital violence. Again the male respondents have put less weightage on these factors than their female counterparts excepting the fact of 'wide age gap between the husband and the wife' as a precipitating factor of violence against women in marital life. On this particular factor the male respondents have put weightage having score of 59 in comparison to 58 by the female respondents. Theoretically, the set parameters in this study depict the multifarious role of patriarchy, men and masculinity and male sexuality in the process of denying every right of women and to the formation of various marital violence such as psychological, physical, sexual, and violence that leads to destruction of property.

Interestingly, it is evident that the male respondents have put maximum emphasis on those factors which have direct linkage to the constructs of men and masculinity. For example, weighted score 67 was put for the factor like inferiority complex in the husband if his wife earns more than him, 64 was put for the factor if wife does not comply with the husband's whims, if the wife denies to live with a joint family, 63 was put if the wife denies to give dowry, if the wife protests husband's illicit relationship with other women, and 62 was put for the factor like inferiority complex if husband's status is lower than the wife etc. The fact

that a wife is superior to her husband is humiliating for latter, it is considered as a problem for or a challenge against his masculinity or maleness. So to overcome this problem or to defend the challenge he wants to establish his perceived superiority by way of perpetuating violence against his wife. On the other hand, constructs like disobeying husband's order or wish and protesting husband's activity are the direct challenge for maleness. In these events, violence probably is the most effective means to make the disobedient obedient and bringing back femininity to the protestor.

On the other hand, the female respondents have also put more emphasis on those factors which seem to be destructive to men and masculinity. For example, wife earns more than husband (score-69), despair in the husband if he fails to earn enough, his job status is lower than the wife (score-70), wife protests husband's illicit relationship (score-77), wife does not comply with husband's whims (score-74), wife refuses to give dowry, wife fails to give birth to a child (score-75) etc. In fact, in patriarchal culture, men like to see women as submissive, sober and subordinate. They do not like women to challenge their activities. Finally, it may be said that these female respondents' own experiences have had a significant impact in putting emphasis on these precipitating factors. According to feminist point of view, men lack in women's experience. Therefore, a wide variation is noticed the way they have weighed the instigating factors.

Table No. 26A and Table No. 26B have been designed to reflect the real experiences of female respondents to psychological, sexual, physical violence and violence relating to destruction of property in their marital life. Accordingly, 47 different types of questions were asked. In this connection, if Table No. 11 and Table No. 12 are consulted, it is found that most of their spouses hold highest academic qualifications as 87% of them having postgraduate degrees, and almost all of them are engaged in various prestigious occupations. For example, 32% of the spouses do cadre service jobs. Again if Table No. 15 is consulted, it is found that most of the female respondents (48%) got married on their own choice, followed by both parents' choice (38%) and if Table No. 21 is consulted it is found that 73% of them are maintaining nuclear family. Generally speaking, average Bangladeshi women cannot make their own decisions on when to marry and whom to marry and maintain nuclear family. But according to the findings, most of the female public officials were able to apply

their own choices in decision making for selection of spouse and maintaining nuclear family. However, the reason to focus on these facts is to draw a general conclusion that violence that are experienced by women public officials in their marital life actually perpetrated by educated men who hold dignified positions and by someone whom they got married on their own choice, and with whom they live in separate homes. Having educated qualified husband and living in separate home are like dreams for many women in Bangladesh. Even the dreams are materialised, there is no guarantee that their real life would be peaceful.

As reflected in the aforementioned tables, out of 153 respondents, 135 have experienced some sort of violence in their marital life though the occurrence of violence varies from 'rarely' to 'very frequently'. According to the evaluation scale used in this study, female respondents experience violence mostly as rarely occurred incidents, but occurring violence as occasional, frequent and very frequent incidents may be viewed as a matter of concern since these women are not like the most other Bangladeshi women. The scales used to excavate women's own experience in this study come up with a conclusion that a woman irrespective of her status or qualification may face violence at any degree by her intimate partner. Again this is a reflection of vulnerability of women living in the typical Bangladeshi patriarchal culture.

Table 27 and its subsequent description reveal that out of 135 respondents who experience violence in their marital life only 35 of them responded to the questions related to the consequences of marital violence. The stance of non-response adopted by most of the respondents might derive from a reason that women usually do not pay much emphasis on the fact of marital violence and its consequences. Generally women assume that violence is a part of life. The consequences that have been mentioned in the questionnaire are, therefore, nothing but part of everyday life. However, those who responded to the questions mostly identified violence as a cause of depression for themselves and their children. The latter cause may be explained by the social learning theory of violence which suggests that children who either experience violence themselves or who witness violence between their parents are most likely to use violence when they grow up. This is viewed as 'transmission of violence'. Children usually feel depressed when they see their mothers abused. As a matter of fact, when they grow up as men they are more likely to assault their wives. On the other hand, girl

children consider the matter from a different perspective. Most of them see their mothers are non-resilient to the event of violence because, to their mothers, violence is a common familial matter. Out of their depression, they bow down to fact that they have to be submissive or obedient to their husbands for the sake of maintaining familial relations. This is a very crude teaching of patriarchy.

Recommendations made by female and male respondents to stop marital violence have been shown in Table No. 28 and 29 respectively. Both the respondents have made 21 different types of recommendations. The female respondents have paid highest emphasis on social awareness for bringing attitudinal change and upholding social values (29%) while the male respondents give emphasis mostly on enhancing mutual trust and respect to each other and concentrating on children and the family rather than running after money (42%). The latter suggestion was given as the second most important one by the female respondents also (24%). On the other hand, 'Decisions to be taken through discussion in conjugal life to solve any problems' appeared as the second most important suggestion made by the male respondents (16%). As a matter of fact, both the respondents have predominantly agreed to propositions that without developing mutual trust and respect to each other, sharing ideas, and paying maximum attention to family matters problem like spousal abuse cannot be eradicated. The efforts to develop interpersonal relations in all family matters will make significant contribution to solve the problem— appears as the conclusion of such types of suggestions made by the respondents. Descriptively speaking, this has no alternative.

One of the slogans of feminist movements was to give a political shape to women's personal problems. Previously violence against women was viewed as a personal problem, but today, it has got its political shape. Throughout the world women are urged to raise their voice against violence against women. This is an effort to add political dimension to the personal issues. Probably for that reason, most emphasis was also put on the suggestion to raising the voice of wives logically and firmly against marital violence. It is found that 16% female respondents want to raise their voice against marital violence.

In conclusion, all the 29 tables used in the study have been designed to extract the entire gamut of marital violence experienced by women public officials. Though most of the tables deal with some sort of socio-economic and demographic information but they maintain a linkage to the main statement of the problem. But efforts have been made here by analysing those tables which exclusively deal with the problem to locate the major findings derived from quantitative data. It is to admit that quantitative information cannot give a real picture on what is going on in women's lives. Therefore, researchers who are dealing with women's issues suggest putting more emphasis on qualitative information that helps to locate women's problems more precisely. Keeping that perspective in view, some cases have also been collected in the study and they have been analysed in the following manner.

Qualitative Data: Cases

Theoretically, the case of **Rifat Sultana (No 1)** is a perfect example of hegemonic masculinity, which is associated with established power and dominance of men over women in a given society. According to the dominant notion of hegemonic masculinity, a husband might not be interested to be asked of his deeds by his wife. In many cases, wife's objection against husband's behaviour results in violence of many forms. And this is a fact with Rifat Sultana. On the other hand, this case also expresses the hidden fact that women, particularly women from higher strata feel embarrassed to seek institutional or familial support against marital violence. This is again a reflection of women's utmost compromise with violence at the domestic level.

Violence against women is culture-specific; for example, demanding of dowry is a culture specific violence, particularly evident in this subcontinent. This form of violence has made many women's marital lives extremely vulnerable. **Shireen Sultana (Case 2)** is not an exception. Dowry is also an effective mechanism and a norm to establish the rule of patriarchy in society. The demanding of dowry results in many forms of violence against women in marital life as perpetuated against Shireen Sultana. But Shireen was found quite pessimistic in terms of seeking help against what has been committed against her. This may be viewed as a long-standing patriarchal practice through which women learn that they themselves are responsible for their own consequences and they must bow down to what men say, do and demand.

A typical patriarch likes a typical housewife who will be more engaged in domestic chores rather than engaged with her profession and career. This has rightly been reflected in the case of **Fahmida Khanm (No 3)**. Despite being employed in a lucrative teaching profession, Fahmida was forced to do everything what a typical Bangladeshi lady does in her daily life. Moreover, Fahmida was denied of her right to higher education abroad and career prospect. But the most important aspect of the case is that, Fahmida's mother-in-law was found involved in all forms of violence against her. It is quite natural that in patriarchy the bone of contention between mother-in-law and sister-in-law encircles a patriarch. Patriarch is like the sun; women in the family are like the satellites. Satellites need to be shone by the grace of the sun, so they often quarrel with each other for a bigger share. This conflicting situation easily leads to many forms of violence against each other.

The case of **Nujhat Laila (Case 4)** depicts how a professional woman struggles in maintaining her public and private life at a time. Women usually do not find their husbands helping them in their domestic chores rather it is a common patriarchal norm that men will not be involved in domestic chores. It is also humiliating for an educated professional woman that her husband likes to maintain illicit relationship even with maidservants. On the other hand, it is also phenomenal that many professional women face suspicion of illicit relationship with colleagues by their husbands. Maintaining marital relationship is a prestige concern for women in Bangladesh. Many women like Nujhat, therefore, have to compromise with marital violence silently for the sake of honour and prestige. All these happened to Nujhat.

The case of **Farhana Akther (Case 5)** is another example of women's extreme vulnerability. Her first marriage was broken due to negligence and rude behaviour of her husband, but has she been able to find peace with her second marriage? Farhana's right to freedom of decision making and her right to render motherly service to her daughter were denied here since she could not live with her daughter in her second husband's family. Her daughter was a bone of contention between Farhana and her second husband. This case also depicts the fact of economic violence against Farhana. According to Farhana's statement, her full salary is spent

after family expenses. So many of her rights including right to investment, right to savings, right to spend own money independently have also been denied.

Sexuality, according to radical feminists, is a key mechanism of patriarchal control and an outcome of unequal power relations between men and women. This has been reflected in the case of **Taslima Ahmed (Case 6)** where extra-marital sexual relations of Taslima's husband have paved the way to create mental gaps between them as well as stood as a cause for physical abuse against Taslima. The common proposition, 'Men are unable to control in their sexual behaviour' has had significant implications in determining power relations between the couple. Sexuality of Taslima's husband is seemed to win in the battle. Taslima has nothing to do but compromising with her fate.

When **Swapna (Case 7)** says that her husband could not tolerate her smart dress, movement, phone talks and visiting house by colleagues, it meant that male-defined and expected femininity is completely absent in Swapna. On the other hand, the much exposed masculinity in her husband has been used violence as a tool to bring back femininity in Swapna. This case also says that marriage is very important for women in society. Society is not empathetic to a divorced woman. It is always better to remarry to live as an ideal social being.

The increased breadwinner responsibilities for women in the changing economy have created strains on the household. For example, **Sharifa (Case 8)** was able to restore her right to economic dependency at the greater cost, i.e., breaking down of marital relationship. Her husband's instigation to quit her prestigious job is an evidence of economic abuse. But Sharifa probably would not be able to live alone since society does not behave friendly with a divorced young lady.

One of the notions of psychological explanations of violence against women is that it theorises violent men as mentally ill or disturbed. Husband of **Farzana (Case 9)** should be viewed as such; otherwise he could not have been so suspicious about her wife's relation with her colleagues.

Dr. Rawshan Ara (Case 10) did not find any alternative but to live separately since her husband got married to a nurse with whom he developed extramarital relationship. It is, in fact, the male sexuality which always wins the race.

In **Panna Begum's (Case 11)** case, the notion of masculinity is in central position in perpetuating violence since a typical patriarch expects his wife prepares good meals and brushes his shoes as expected by Panna's husband. If demands and expectations are not met, the patriarch might be violent. Probably this happened to Panna. On the other hand, despite the fact of excessive mixing with lady colleagues by her husband, Panna like most other Bangladeshi women who surrendered herself to her fate for the sake of children and in fear of social stigma labeled to a separated woman.

The case of **Tamanna Parveen (Case 12)** tells how the right to a woman's economic dependency, right to independent decision making are denied. In fact, Tamanna had to compromise with many odds for the sake of her career. Professional women are generally blamed that they are unable to maintain familial matters well. Typical patriarchal society still likes to see a woman as a caregiver more than a professional.

Dr. Roksana Begum's case (Case 13) tells of various forms of violence against a woman at different phases of her life. Forced marriage as form of violence is very phenomenal in Bangladesh. Little consideration is paid to a girl's own choice of selecting her spouse. This happened to Roksana as well. On the other hand, constant conflict between the spouses resulted in permanent separation even after 12 years of their marriage. Though Roksana is now happy living abroad with her second husband, but she had to sacrifice her bright career in Bangladesh for that. Once again her rights were denied and this time by her second husband. So what was said by the great feminist Simon de Beauvoir, 'he is the Subject, he is the Absolute –she is the Other', is rightly applicable to the case of Roksana.

Novera Hasan (Case 14) is a hardworking efficient civil servant who had also been a subject of suspicion by her husband of having illicit affairs with her colleagues and out of that she was abused both physically and mentally. In fact, husband wants the chastity of her wife will

be maintained and thinks of himself as the sole proprietor over her body and often becomes suspicious of her wife's movement. Novera experienced that sort of behaviour. On the other hand, after being separated Novera's public life encountered a lot of difficulties. Again, this is common to a single lady in a typical patriarchal society like Bangladesh where women are thought of incomplete without men.

Dilruba Akther's case (No 15) is an example of a stronger patriarchal mind-set that works within a husband to dominate his wife. This case also reflects the vulnerability of a woman living in patriarchal society; otherwise, Dilruba's family would not have sat together with her husband's family to make things normal. It is no matter the status Dilruba holds in society. She is, *prima-facie*, a woman and therefore, should compromise everything.

A chain of violence perpetrated against **Salma Begum (Case 16)**, a qualified university teacher. At the first instance, Salma was forcibly married off against her will. Thus her right to decide when to marry was denied. Secondly, a gross violation of her reproductive health was also committed since her husband paid almost no attention to her during the crucial period of pregnancy. Then, she was forced to maintain *purdha* by wearing veil. *Purdha* is a powerful religious and cultural institution in Bangladesh and a mode of arrangement of male dominance which minimises women's outside movement and interaction. Salma's right to live safely with her kids, even after being divorced, was also violated.

Rakhi Sultana (Case 17) is, on the other hand, a different character. She is not like most other Bangladeshi women who used to bow down to their husbands. As a matter of fact, her husband found her masculinity in trouble. It was the most important reason of continuous tussle between the couple. Rakhi was also a victim of forced marriage and marriage with a husband of wide age gap which eventually led to marital disharmony.

Bindu Khan (Case 18) has rightly identified the dominance of male chauvinism in society that still does not allow even educated women to take independent decisions. In this case, Bindu's right to independent decision making or freedom of choice have been overlooked. This is a quite interesting case which reveals that a husband wants his wife paying heed to his

decision, love and affection comes as secondary in marital life. Bindu did not pay heed to that, love and affection, therefore, was blown away.

Femininity is found to be in trouble in the case of **Sabina Sheikh (No 19)**. A woman should be a perfect cook, should leave luxury and should not have any personal choice. Sabina confronted difficulty to negotiate with so-called femininity and had to pay price for it in the form of psychological torture. Moreover, Sabina's earnings are snatched away by her husband, and this is, in fact, a crude economic abuse.

In this patriarchal society if there are any complications in conceiving a baby, the wife is always automatically blamed, no matter whether she is a PhD like **Parul Haider (Case 20)** or an illiterate. Such a woman becomes isolated and called *baja* or *banmdha* (sullied) and often has to bow down to her husband's or his family's threat of polygamy. Polygamy surely is an ugly form of violence. This happened to Parul. It has also been evident from the case that Parul's right to reproductive decision was denied and she was compelled to go by MR which led to enormous physical complications. Her physical complications were due to the fact of denying her right to reproductive decision, but who cares.

Arguing with husband on the matter of bad habits may precipitate violence, as happened to **Shahina Begum (Case 21)**. From the feeling of perceived superiority with his masculine role, men consider it shameful if explanations are sought concerning their activities. In this case, again it is evident of the dominating role of male sexuality and how this role has become a matter of humiliation for a wife when she explores her husband's illicit relationship with a maidservant. Besides, Shahina's right to her own earnings has also been denied. Like many Bangladeshi working women Shahina cannot make best use of her earnings.

Shabiha Khandaker (No 22) is amongst many professional women who are the victims of suspicious mind of their husbands. In this case, another woman (mother-in-law) has fueled the furnace. 'Women against women' is a common phenomenon in patriarchal culture. Sabina's freedom was curtailed to a great extent. Again and again she was forced to quit her

prestigious job and expected to work as a typical submissive housewife. Definitely, this is a tool used by the patriarchs to dominate women.

A woman may be exploited through various ways. Sometimes they are blackmailed too. **Jahanara Rahman (Case 23)** is blackmailed by her fraud husband. Granting bails on persuasion of her husband was a matter of huge psychological pressure for Jahanara. Husband is theoretically a patriarch, no matter even if he is worthless like Jahanara's husband.

Family is the most important primary group in our society since most of our impersonal relations are grown and nurtured in the family. If any misunderstanding or mistrust continues to prevail between husband and wife, there is no guarantee that at some stage it might not explode, as did in the case of **Ayesha Afsari (No 24)**. Ayesha was not only killed by her husband but her husband also committed suicide instantly. Probably their level of misunderstanding was so severe that Ayesha had to pay the highest price for that. Her bright career, her brilliance all went in vain by a bullet. By killing Ayesha what his husband wanted to establish, what he wanted to show? Is it not his male chauvinism?

Conclusions

The study set to examine the perception of public official finds that spousal violence and abuse is theoretically condemned while its prevalence is widespread. The wives have in general taken a fatalistic view as they blame their fate for being the victim of violence and abuse. The arguments relating to welfare of the children restrict the victims from seeking divorce. It has also been revealed that a silent revolution is continuing affecting the life and work of women. The voice of women is not just muffled. Access to income gives women wider recognition beyond traditional wives and mothers.

Violence experienced by women public officials in their marital life is revealed in various forms including battering physically. In the case study section the unfortunate incidence of a university teacher committing suicide and a member of the civil servant being shot to death is very unfortunate. But it shows the extent of brutality perpetrated in the marital life even when

the wives are highly placed in the society. Violence has a far-reaching effect on family life and children. Women public officials in their marital life once subjected to marital violence continue to remain the victim of atrocities of their husbands. The study finds the roots of the problem at the patriarchal characteristics of the society.

Policy Implications

The study undertaken cannot give any single-shot solution to problem of violence experienced by women public officials in their marital life. The issue is deeply ingrained with problem of patriarchy. It is intertwined with various social, cultural, psychological and economic issues. It will also be unwise to expect an overnight change in the situation through one or a set of decisions apparently empowering women. The strategies that should be evolved must rise from within. The sensitivity of the issue should be well understood in order to create a women friendly regime in the public service. Responses obtained in the process of the research, interaction with different stakeholders and examination of various publication including issue based research help develop the following policy issues to address the research question. Time is passing fast and there is no reason for 'waiting for fish to grow feet' Alimo-Metcalfe (1994).

It is suggested that strategies need to be reinvented to bring about changes in the policies and structures that perpetuate women's subordinate status. Pragmatic steps to be taken to establish a mechanism of institutionalized gender balance at every stage. It is also emphasised that gender awareness programmes for men and women should be redesigned focusing on the familial, social and economic contribution of women.

Again an operational counseling cell for both male and female officials may be established to help mitigate spousal abuse and enhance mutual trust and respect to each other. The cell will pay special attention to address the problems of divorced women officials. Moreover, a special cell may be operationlised in all ministries to collect information on spousal abuse among the public officials and take that information into account. Women public officials' opinion about husbands' behaviour could be reflected in the annual performance appraisal.

Furthermore, a process of generation of gender-disaggregated statistics should be evolved to make women's contribution visible. It will generate, promote and strengthen solidarity among women through information, education and sensitization activities. Some websites exclusively for women public officials can be developed so that they can at least ventilate their grievances. Particularly the women public officials should be encouraged to raise their voice against spousal abuse logically and firmly and legal aid for women public officials as victims of abuse should be ensured.

Most importantly, there is no alternative to bring change in social and familial attitude towards women. As such attempts need to be taken to raise social awareness through publicity in print and mass media for bringing change in social and familial attitudes and up holding positive social values.

Even within a pessimistic framework there a breakthrough is possible provided the society is awakened. Bardhan and Klasen (1998:120) have rightly focused on the good news that now there is much greater understanding and appreciation of 'women's role as agents in the development process and of the impact of development on gender well-being and equity'. The double jeopardy of women— exploitative boss at office and violent husband at home must end.

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Annexure: Questionnaires

Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
Savar, Dhaka

Untold Realities: Violence Experienced by Women Public Officials in Their Marital Life

[People experience both good and bad in their marital life. The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect those sorts of information from married women, which are related to abusive behaviour they are experiencing in their marital life. Here we consider only those abusive behaviours which are conducted by their husbands to their wives in their marital life. These behaviours include physical, psychological and sexual abuse. **Class-I women public officials** are considered as respondents for this questionnaire. We humbly wanted to know your past/present experience of abuse in your marital life. The information you provide us will be used for research only. You do not need to mention your name. We solicit your support in conducting our research by providing the information required.]

(A) Demographic Information

1. Please identify your age group (put $\sqrt{\quad}$ mark)
(1) 25-29 (2) 30-34 (3) 35-39 (4) 40-44 (5) 45-49 (6) 50 & above
2. Please identify your highest academic qualification (put $\sqrt{\quad}$ mark)
(1) Under graduate (2) Graduate or equivalent (3) Postgraduate or equivalent
3. Please identify your occupation (put $\sqrt{\quad}$ mark)
(1) Member of BCS Cadre (2) Non-cadre govt. service
(3) Service in autonomous organisation (4) Teacher of a public university
(5) Teacher of a public college (6) Officer of a scheduled bank
4. Please mention your present rank/designation: -----
5. Please identify your husband's age group (put $\sqrt{\quad}$ mark)
(1) 25-29 (2) 30-34 (3) 35-39 (4) 40-44 (5) 45-49 (6) 50 & above
6. Please identify your husband's highest academic qualification (put $\sqrt{\quad}$ mark)
(1) Under graduate (2) Graduate or equivalent (3) Postgraduate or equivalent
7. Please identify your husband's occupation (put $\sqrt{\quad}$ mark)
(1) Member of BCS Cadre (2) Non-cadre govt. service
(3) Service in autonomous organisation (4) Teacher of a public university
(5) Teacher of a public college (6) Officer of a scheduled bank
(7) Officer of an NGO (8) Physician of a private organisation
(9) Engineer of a private organisation (10) Lawyer
(11) Journalist (12) Businessman
(13) Politician (14) Others (Please mention)-----
8. Please mention your husband's rank/designation: -----
9. Please identify your age group when you got married (put $\sqrt{\quad}$ mark)
(1) Below 18 (2) 18-24 (3) 25-29 (4) 30-34
(5) 35-39 (6) 40-44 (7) 45 & above

10. You got married by (put √ mark)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| (1) Own choice | (2) Father's choice | (3) Mother's choice |
| (4) Choice of both parents | (5) Brother's choice | (6) Sister's choice |
| (7) Influenced by relatives | (8) Influenced by teachers | (9) Influenced by colleagues |
| (10) Influenced by society | (11) Others (please mention)----- | |

11. Please identify your marriage type (put √ mark)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (1) First for both | (2) Your first & husband's second |
| (3) Your second & husband's first | (4) Second for both |

12. Please identify your present marital status (put √ mark)

- | | | |
|--|-----------|-------------------------|
| (1) Married | (2) Widow | (3) Divorced by husband |
| (4) You divorced your husband (5) Not divorced but you are living separately | | |
| (6) Living separately due to husband's second marriage | | |
| (7) Husband compelled you to live separately | | |

13. Please mention the duration of your conjugal life: Years

14. Please mention the age gap between you & your husband: Years

15. Please identify number of your children (put √ mark)

- | | | | | |
|----------|--------|--------|---------|---------|
| (1) None | (2) 01 | (3) 02 | (4) 3-4 | (5) 5-6 |
|----------|--------|--------|---------|---------|

16. Please identify your family type (put √ mark)

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| (1) Nuclear family | (2) Joint family/extended family |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|

17. Please identify your own total monthly income (please include income from house rent allowance and other sources) (put √ mark)

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) Up to Taka 20,000 | (2) Taka 20,001-30,000 |
| (3) Taka 30,001-40,000 | (4) Taka 40,001 & above |

18. Please identify your husband's own total monthly income (please include income from house rent allowance and other sources) (put √ mark)

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) Up to Taka 20,000 | (2) Taka 20,001-30,000 |
| (3) Taka 30,001-40,000 | (4) Taka 40,001 & above |

(B) Information Related to Abuse of Women

19. What are the behaviours mentioned below you generally consider abusive against a woman in her marital life? (Please put √ mark in the rating scale presented below).

Types of behaviours	Scale (1= Lowest, 6= Highest)					
1) Rebuking the wife in front of children	1	2	3	4	5	6
2) Chiding the wife in front of others	1	2	3	4	5	6
3) Shouting at the wife at the time of talk	1	2	3	4	5	6
4) Dominating the wife in all matters	1	2	3	4	5	6
5) Ridiculing the relatives of the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
6) Discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her relatives	1	2	3	4	5	6
7) Treating the wife as a servant	1	2	3	4	5	6

Types of behaviours	Scale (1= Lowest, 6= Highest)					
8) Not giving necessary money to the wife for maintaining family	1	2	3	4	5	6
9) Establishing control over the wife's own income	1	2	3	4	5	6
10) Demanding dowry to the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
11) Debarring the wife if she wants to continue studies	1	2	3	4	5	6
12) Not allowing the wife to do any job outside	1	2	3	4	5	6
13) Blaming the wife for her inability to bear a child	1	2	3	4	5	6
14) Battering the wife to hide the husband's infertility	1	2	3	4	5	6
15) Maltreating the wife for son preference	1	2	3	4	5	6
16) Neglecting the wife's feelings and emotions	1	2	3	4	5	6
17) Throwing dirty comments towards the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
18) Discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her friends	1	2	3	4	5	6
19) Preventing the wife from extending financial support to her father's family.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20) Not ensuring necessary health care during the wife's illness.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21) Having sex against the wife's will	1	2	3	4	5	6
22) Destroying the favourite articles of the wife deliberately	1	2	3	4	5	6
23) Reading the wife's private letters in her absence	1	2	3	4	5	6
24) Blaming the wife for children's unwanted behaviour	1	2	3	4	5	6
25) Blaming the wife for children's failure to obtain desired results	1	2	3	4	5	6
26) Beating children to show anger for the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
27) Breaking household goods to show anger for the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
28) Telling the wife that she is ugly and unimpressive	1	2	3	4	5	6
29) Regulating the wife's outside mobility	1	2	3	4	5	6
30) Spying against the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
31) Battering the wife physically	1	2	3	4	5	6
32) Pressing the wife to mix with husband's bosses for the latter's personal gain.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33) Suspecting the wife baselessly if she returns home late from work	1	2	3	4	5	6
34) Pressing the wife to bring her paternal inheritance	1	2	3	4	5	6
Others (if any, please mention below)						
35)	1	2	3	4	5	6
36)	1	2	3	4	5	6
37)	1	2	3	4	5	6

20. What do you think about the reasons that result in abusive behaviour against a woman public official by her husband in their marital life? (Please put $\checkmark$ mark in the rating scale presented below).

Reasons behind abusive behaviours	Scale (1= Lowest, 6= Highest)					
1) Personality clash if the wife is of the same job status	1	2	3	4	5	6
2) Inferiority complex in the husband if his job status is lower than the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
3) Inferiority complex in the husband if his wife earns more than him	1	2	3	4	5	6

4) Despair in the husband if he fails to earn enough for the family	1	2	3	4	5	6
5) If the wife is more successful in career than the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
6) If the wife does not comply with the husband's whims	1	2	3	4	5	6
7) If the wife's income is not spent as per desire of the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
8) If the wife fails to do household chores as desired by the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
9) If the wife extends financial support to her paternal family	1	2	3	4	5	6
10) If the wife goes outside without permission of the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
11) If the wife fails to please the parents-in-law	1	2	3	4	5	6
12) If the husband's family status is lower than that of the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
13) If the husband's family status is higher than that of the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
14) If the wife denies to live with a joint family	1	2	3	4	5	6
15) If the wife comes back home late from work	1	2	3	4	5	6
16) If the wife advises the husband to give up a habit like smoking or drinking	1	2	3	4	5	6
17) If the age gap between the husband and the wife is very wide	1	2	3	4	5	6
18) If the wife persists in giving her due amount of dower (Moharana)	1	2	3	4	5	6
19) If the wife denies to give dowry to the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
20) If the wife fails to give birth to a child	1	2	3	4	5	6
21) If the wife fails to give birth to a son	1	2	3	4	5	6
22) If the wife does not respond to the husband's choice of sex	1	2	3	4	5	6
23) For the husband's belief, "Women are inferior to men"	1	2	3	4	5	6
24) For the social belief, "It is a husband's right to chastise his wife"	1	2	3	4	5	6
25) If the wife does not maintain dress code prescribed by the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
26) If the wife converses with others over telephone	1	2	3	4	5	6
27) If the children gets poor results in the exams	1	2	3	4	5	6
28) If the wife travels to foreign countries for official purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6
29) If the wife goes on an official tour accompanied by her male colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	6
30) If the wife protests the husband's illicit relationship with other women	1	2	3	4	5	6
Others (if any, please mention below)						
31)	1	2	3	4	5	6
32)	1	2	3	4	5	6
33)	1	2	3	4	5	6

21. Please evaluate your husband's behaviour with you¹:

Types of behaviours	Evaluation Scale (Please put $\sqrt$ mark)				
	(1) Never	(2) Rarely	(3) Occasionally	(4) Frequently	(5) Very frequently
1. He scolds me in front of my children	1	2	3	4	5
2. He insults me in front of others	1	2	3	4	5
3. He ridicules my relatives	1	2	3	4	5
4. He always finds faults with me	1	2	3	4	5
5. He demeans my common sense	1	2	3	4	5
6. He talks with me harshly and angrily	1	2	3	4	5
7. He becomes very furious if I disagree with his views	1	2	3	4	5
8. He wants me comply with his whims	1	2	3	4	5
9. He treats me as if I am his private servant	1	2	3	4	5
10. He has no respect for my feelings and emotions	1	2	3	4	5
11. He shows temper if I do not do household chores according to his choice	1	2	3	4	5
12. He does not let me maintain contact with my relatives	1	2	3	4	5
13. He is jealous of and suspicious for my friends	1	2	3	4	5
14. He considers me ugly and unimpressive	1	2	3	4	5
15. He does not give me enough money to maintain the family	1	2	3	4	5
16. He wants me stay at home all the time to take care of children	1	2	3	4	5
17. He does not want that I will do any job or continue my studies	1	2	3	4	5
18. He does not like my mixing with my female friends	1	2	3	4	5
19. He behaves roughly and angrily if I advise him to give up smoking/ drinking/ gambling	1	2	3	4	5
20. He rebukes me when he is intoxicated	1	2	3	4	5
21. He threatens me	1	2	3	4	5
22. He deliberately destroys my favourite articles like books, photos etc.	1	2	3	4	5
23. He spies against me	1	2	3	4	5
24. He reads my private letters in my absence	1	2	3	4	5
25. He scolds and batters me because of my infertility	1	2	3	4	5
26. He scolds and batters me to conceal his infertility	1	2	3	4	5
27. He behaves badly with me for son preference	1	2	3	4	5
28. He thinks that I am not much caring for our children	1	2	3	4	5
29. He blames me for any fault of our children	1	2	3	4	5
30. He blames me if the children fails to obtain desired results	1	2	3	4	5
31. He thinks that I am not much caring for my in-laws	1	2	3	4	5
32. He thinks that I am not much caring for his friends	1	2	3	4	5

¹ This question is modified from Hudson, W., & McIntosh, S. R. (1981) The assessment of spouse abuse: Two quantifiable dimensions. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 43, 873-88.

Types of behaviours	Evaluation Scale (Please put ✓ mark)				
	(1) Never	(2) Rarely	(3) Occasionally	(4) Frequently	(5) Very frequently
33. He physically batters me for dowry	1	2	3	4	5
34. He always applies force on me	1	2	3	4	5
35. He psychologically batters me for dowry	1	2	3	4	5
36. He suffers from inferiority complex as I do a job and he inflicts mental torture upon me	1	2	3	4	5
37. He tortures me mentally to take my income from me	1	2	3	4	5
38. He tortures me physically to take my income from me	1	2	3	4	5
39. He checks call records of my mobile phone stealthily	1	2	3	4	5
40. He becomes angry with me I do not follow the dress code he likes	1	2	3	4	5
41. He misbehaves with me if I go on a tour with male colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
42. He misbehaves with me if I go on an overseas tour	1	2	3	4	5
43. He misbehaves with me if I protest his illicit relationship with other women	1	2	3	4	5
44. He throws the plates away if the dish is not up to his choice	1	2	3	4	5
45. He threatens me of divorce every now and then	1	2	3	4	5
46. He demands sex with me against my will	1	2	3	4	5
47. He compels me to be engaged in such kinds of sexual act that I do not like	1	2	3	4	5
Others (if any, please mention below)					
48.	1	2	3	4	5
49.	1	2	3	4	5
50.	1	2	3	4	5

Source: Modified from Hudson, W., & McIntosh, S. (1981) The assessment of spouse abuse: Two quantifiable dimensions. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 43,873-884 cited in Edward W. Gondolf (1998) *Assessing Women Battering in Mental Health Services*. London: Sage.

22. Please mention the consequences (if any) of abusive behaviour (if you encountered any by your husband) on your physical and mental health as well as on your family life, social life, and work life and on your children:

23. Please give your suggestions to stop abusive acts against women public officials by their husbands:

We are very grateful and indebted to you for your cooperation.

Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
Savar, Dhaka

Untold Realities: Violence Experienced by Women Public Officials in Their Marital Life

[People experience both good and bad in their marital life. The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect those sorts of information from married women, which are related to abusive behaviour they are experiencing in their marital life. Here we consider only those abusive behaviours which are conducted by their husbands to their wives in their marital life. These behaviours include physical, psychological and sexual abuse. **Class-I male public officials** are considered as respondents for this questionnaire. We humbly wanted to know your past/present experience of abuse in your marital life. The information you provide us will be used for research only. You do not need to mention your name. We solicit your support in conducting our research by providing the information required.]

(B) Demographic Information

1. Please identify your age group (put $\sqrt{}$ mark)
(1) 25-29 (2) 30-34 (3) 35-39 (4) 40-44 (5) 45-49 (6) 50 & above
2. Please identify your highest academic qualification (put $\sqrt{}$ mark)
(1) Under graduate (2) Graduate or equivalent (3) Postgraduate or equivalent
3. Please identify your occupation (put $\sqrt{}$ mark)
(1) Member of BCS Cadre (2) Non-cadre govt. service
(3) Service in autonomous organisation (4) Teacher of a public university
(5) Teacher of a public college (6) Officer of a scheduled bank
4. Please mention your present rank/designation: -----
5. Please identify your own total monthly income (please include income from house rent allowance and other sources) (put $\sqrt{}$ mark)
(1) Up to Taka 20,000 (2) Taka 20,001-30,000
(3) Taka 30,001-40,000 (4) Taka 40,001 & above

(B) Information Related to Abuse of Women

6. What are the behaviours mentioned below you generally consider abusive against a woman in her marital life? (Please put $\sqrt{}$ mark in the rating scale presented below).

Types of behaviours	Scale (1= Lowest, 6= Highest)					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1) Rebuking the wife in front of children	1	2	3	4	5	6
2) Chiding the wife in front of others	1	2	3	4	5	6
3) Shouting at the wife at the time of talk	1	2	3	4	5	6
4) Dominating the wife in all matters	1	2	3	4	5	6
5) Ridiculing the relatives of the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
6) Discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her relatives	1	2	3	4	5	6
7) Treating the wife as a servant	1	2	3	4	5	6
8) Not giving necessary money to the wife for maintaining family	1	2	3	4	5	6
9) Establishing control over the wife's own income	1	2	3	4	5	6

Types of behaviours	Scale (1= Lowest, 6= Highest)					
10) Demanding dowry to the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
11) Debarring the wife if she wants to continue studies	1	2	3	4	5	6
12) Not allowing the wife to do any job outside	1	2	3	4	5	6
13) Blaming the wife for her inability to bear a child	1	2	3	4	5	6
14) Battering the wife to hide the husband's infertility	1	2	3	4	5	6
15) Maltreating the wife for son preference	1	2	3	4	5	6
16) Neglecting the wife's feelings and emotions	1	2	3	4	5	6
17) Throwing dirty comments towards the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
18) Discouraging the wife to maintain contact with her friends	1	2	3	4	5	6
19) Preventing the wife from extending financial support to her father's family.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20) Not ensuring necessary health care during the wife's illness.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21) Having sex against the wife's will	1	2	3	4	5	6
22) Destroying the favourite articles of the wife deliberately	1	2	3	4	5	6
23) Reading the wife's private letters in her absence	1	2	3	4	5	6
24) Blaming the wife for children's unwanted behaviour	1	2	3	4	5	6
25) Blaming the wife for children's failure to obtain desired results	1	2	3	4	5	6
26) Beating children to show anger for the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
27) Breaking household goods to show anger for the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
28) Telling the wife that she is ugly and unimpressive	1	2	3	4	5	6
29) Regulating the wife's outside mobility	1	2	3	4	5	6
30) Spying against the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
31) Battering the wife physically	1	2	3	4	5	6
32) Pressing the wife to mix with husband's bosses for the latter's personal gain.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33) Suspecting the wife baselessly if she returns home late from work	1	2	3	4	5	6
34) Pressing the wife to bring her paternal inheritance	1	2	3	4	5	6
Others (if any, please mention below)						
35)	1	2	3	4	5	6
36)	1	2	3	4	5	6
37)	1	2	3	4	5	6

7. What do you think about the reasons that result in abusive behaviour against a woman public official by her husband in their marital life? (Please put $\checkmark$ mark in the rating scale presented below).

Reasons behind abusive behaviours	Scale (1= Lowest, 6= Highest)					
34) Personality clash if the wife is of the same job status	1	2	3	4	5	6
35) Inferiority complex in the husband if his job status is lower than the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
36) Inferiority complex in the husband if his wife earns more than him	1	2	3	4	5	6
37) Despair in the husband if he fails to earn enough for the family	1	2	3	4	5	6
38) If the wife is more successful in career than the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
39) If the wife does not comply with the husband's whims	1	2	3	4	5	6
40) If the wife's income is not spent as per desire of the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6

41) If the wife fails to do household chores as desired by the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
42) If the wife extends financial support to her paternal family	1	2	3	4	5	6
43) If the wife goes outside without permission of the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
44) If the wife fails to please the parents-in-law	1	2	3	4	5	6
45) If the husband's family status is lower than that of the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
46) If the husband's family status is higher than that of the wife	1	2	3	4	5	6
47) If the wife denies to live with a joint family	1	2	3	4	5	6
48) If the wife comes back home late from work	1	2	3	4	5	6
49) If the wife advises the husband to give up a habit like smoking or drinking	1	2	3	4	5	6
50) If the age gap between the husband and the wife is very wide	1	2	3	4	5	6
51) If the wife persists in giving her due amount of dower (Moharana)	1	2	3	4	5	6
52) If the wife denies to give dowry to the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
53) If the wife fails to give birth to a child	1	2	3	4	5	6
54) If the wife fails to give birth to a son	1	2	3	4	5	6
55) If the wife does not respond to the husband's choice of sex	1	2	3	4	5	6
56) For the husband's belief, "Women are inferior to men"	1	2	3	4	5	6
57) For the social belief, "It is a husband's right to chastise his wife"	1	2	3	4	5	6
58) If the wife does not maintain dress code prescribed by the husband	1	2	3	4	5	6
59) If the wife converses with others over telephone	1	2	3	4	5	6
60) If the children gets poor results in the exams	1	2	3	4	5	6
61) If the wife travels to foreign countries for official purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6
62) If the wife goes on an official tour accompanied by her male colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	6
63) If the wife protests the husband's illicit relationship with other women	1	2	3	4	5	6
Others (if any, please mention below)						
64)	1	2	3	4	5	6
65)	1	2	3	4	5	6
66)	1	2	3	4	5	6

8. Please give your suggestions to stop abusive acts against women public officials by their husbands:

We are very grateful and indebted to you for your cooperation.