

CASTE AND GENDER- BASED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN NEPAL



Summary Report 2025



Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO)
Kupondole, Lalitpur

INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of Nepal (2015) represents a landmark commitment to ending caste- and gender-based discrimination and to building an equitable, inclusive, and socially just society. Through its preamble, fundamental rights, directive principles, and affirmative action provisions, the Constitution guarantees equality, dignity, and protection for women, children, Dalits, and other marginalized groups. These commitments are reinforced by Nepal's ratification of numerous international human rights conventions and the establishment of constitutional commissions and specialized institutions to promote and protect human rights.

Despite this strong constitutional, legal, and institutional framework, structural caste- and gender-based discrimination and violence continue to persist in Nepali society. Women, children, and Dalits—particularly Dalit women and girls—continue to face multiple, overlapping forms of physical, psychological, social, economic, and cultural violence. A significant gap remains between the state's formal commitments and the lived experiences of marginalized communities. Existing efforts by state and non-state actors, while important, have not fully succeeded in eliminating these deeply rooted inequalities.

The rationale for this study lies in the continued prevalence of caste- and gender-based violence and the lack of integrated, reliable, and comprehensive data. Information related to violence against Dalit women and girls remains fragmented across institutions, limiting effective evidence-based policymaking and intervention. The study therefore aims to integrate data from government bodies, non-governmental organizations, and media sources to identify trends, structural causes, lived realities, and institutional responses to violence. The study seeks to produce an integrated documentation of violence against Dalit women and girls, analyze barriers they face, examine media representation of caste- and gender-based violence, and propose policy reforms and practical interventions.

This study used a rigorous and ethical mixed-methods approach to examine caste- and gender-based violence against women and girls in Nepal, with special focus on Dalit women and girls, by combining qualitative and quantitative data from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through systematic online media content analysis and consultations with experts and key informants working in gender equality, Dalit rights, child protection, and human rights. Secondary data were obtained through a purposive desk review of reports and official records from constitutional and government bodies such as the National Women Commission,

National Dalit Commission, National Human Rights Commission, Nepal Police, and the National Child Rights Council, as well as national civil society organizations including FEDO, WOREC Nepal, INSEC, CWIN Nepal, CWISH, and Access Planet Organization. Media analysis focused on Nepali-language online news and opinion content identified through Google searches using the keywords *Kotha*, *quota*, and *online violence*, drawing materials from around twenty major media platforms such as Gorkhapatra Online, eKantipur, Onlinekhabar, Nagarik News, Setopati, BBC Nepali Service, and Ratopati, allowing triangulation and validation of findings while capturing diverse perspectives and patterns of violence. It provides a valuable evidence-based overview of prevailing trends and challenges and serves as a foundation for future research, policy development, and advocacy aimed at advancing justice, equality, and social transformation.

WOMEN AND GIRLS: STATUS, ANTI-VIOLENCE EFFORTS AND COMMITMENT

Status of Women in Nepal

Women constitute 51.13 percent of Nepal's total population (14.91 million out of 29.16 million), mainly due to male out-migration and improvements in maternal and child health services. The average life expectancy of women is 67.9 years, and the total fertility rate stands at 2.1. Institutional delivery has increased, with 79 percent of women giving birth in health facilities, yet access to preventive health services remains limited, as only 6 percent of women are screened for cervical cancer and 4 percent for breast cancer.

Women's literacy rate is 69.4 percent, compared to 83.6 percent for men. Economic empowerment remains weak: only 22.9 percent of women are employed, 23.8 percent own land or housing, and just 11 percent own land individually. Although 93 percent of women can make household spending decisions alone or jointly, only 28 percent seek help after experiencing violence, and merely 14 percent disclose such experiences. These indicators reflect ongoing gender inequality despite constitutional guarantees.

Status of Children in Nepal

Children under 18 are 9.87 million, comprising 51.82 percent boys and 48.18 percent girls. The sex ratio among children is 0.94, indicating fewer girls than boys. Approximately 15 percent of children are engaged in child labor (14 percent boys

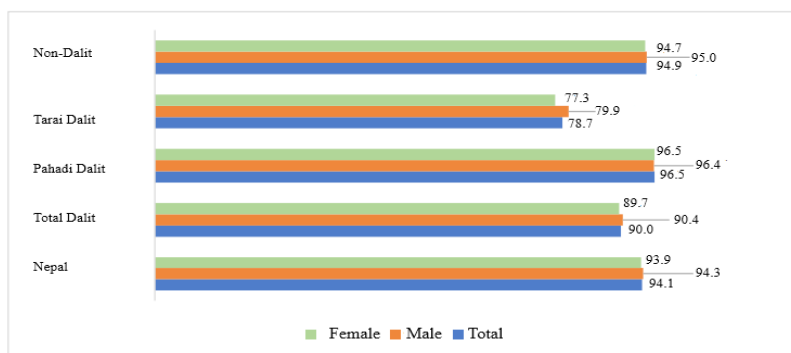
and 17 percent girls), with higher prevalence among children from poor and female-headed households.

Child marriage remains widespread, with 32.8 percent of girls married before age 18 and 8 percent before age 15. Adolescent pregnancy affects 14 percent of girls aged 15–19, with higher rates among the poorest households (19 percent) and in Karnali Province (21 percent). Birth registration coverage stands at 73 percent, and 72 percent of children under five possess birth certificates. Educational indicators show progress, with a Gender Parity Index of 1.05 at primary level and full immunization coverage achieved in all 77 districts by FY 2081/82.

Population and Status of Dalits

Dalits comprise 13.4 percent of Nepal’s population (3.9 million), with women constituting 13.61 percent of the female population. Among Dalits, 8.6 percent are hill Dalits and 4.8 percent are Terai Dalits. Poverty is disproportionately high: 35.5 percent of Dalits fall into the ultra-poor category, with 41.5 percent of Terai Dalits classified as ultra-poor, compared to 32.2 percent of hill Dalits.

Educational disparities are stark. Dalit literacy stands at 67.4 percent, compared to 77.6 percent among non-Dalits. Among Dalit women, literacy drops to 61.2 percent, and only 0.6 percent of Terai Dalit women have completed higher education. Early marriage is widespread, with the average age at first marriage for Dalit women being 17.5 years, compared to 20.2 years for men. Among Dalit children aged 5–17, literacy is 90 percent, still 4 percentage points below the national average. These figures demonstrate the persistent structural disadvantages faced by Dalits, particularly Dalit women and girls.



Source: National Census 2078 B.S

Efforts and Commitments

a) International-Level Commitments

Nepal has ratified over 24 major international human rights instruments. These include core conventions focused on eliminating discrimination against women (CEDAW), protecting children's rights (CRC), eradicating racial discrimination (CERD), and combating forced labor and human trafficking, demonstrating its formal commitment to global standards.

b) National Efforts to Implement Commitments

Nepal has established a robust domestic framework to translate its commitments into action. The "Constitution of Nepal 2015" serves as the cornerstone, with specific articles guaranteeing fundamental rights and prohibiting discrimination. It enshrines rights for women (e.g., equality, freedom from violence), children (e.g., protection from exploitation and child marriage), and Dalits (e.g., protection from untouchability, rights to inclusion and affirmative action).

This constitutional mandate is supported by a comprehensive "Legal and Policy Framework" including laws against domestic violence, sexual harassment, caste-based discrimination, and human trafficking, alongside national strategies on gender equality and child protection. Furthermore, dedicated "Institutional/Structural Arrangements" have been created for implementation and oversight. These include constitutional commissions (National Women Commission, National Dalit Commission, National Human Rights Commission), specialized government ministries and directorates, local judicial committees, crisis management centers, and free legal aid services.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Status of Violence Against Women in Nepal (Document Review) Review of Nepal Police Documentation

Based on information obtained from the Information and Communication Directorate of Nepal Police Headquarters, the review of police documentation for Fiscal Year 2081/82 (2024/25) reveals that a total of 21,465 women and girls were reported as victims across sixteen different categories of violence. The data indicate that violence against women and girls in Nepal remains widespread and deeply rooted in domestic and social structures. Among all reported incidents, domestic violence constitutes

the overwhelming majority, accounting for 81.56 percent of total cases. During the review period, domestic violence resulted in 41 fatalities, including 30 women, 7 men, 3 girls, and 1 boy, highlighting its severe and often fatal consequences.

Table 1: Types of Violence Recorded

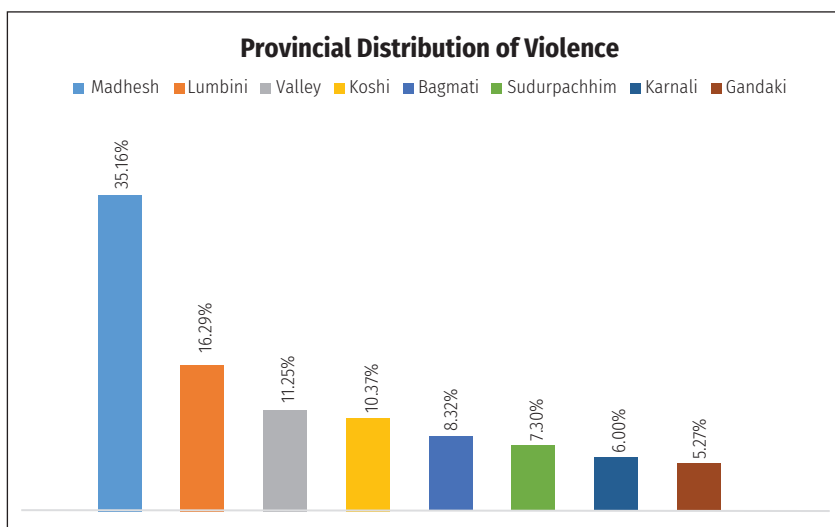
S.N.	Type of Violence	Percentage (%)	Number of Cases	Remarks
1	Domestic Violence	81.56%	17,509	—
2	Suicide due to Domestic Violence	0.11%	41	—
3	Rape	10.53%	2,262	—
4	Attempted Rape	2.14%	461	—
5	Forced Sexual Act Resulting in Death	0.01%	4	—
6	Kidnapping and Rape	0.25%	55	—
7	Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation	0.06%	15	—
8	Illegal Abortion	0.01%	3	—
9	Abuse in Public Places	0.10%	23	—
10	Abuse Against Senior Citizens	0.19%	41	—
11	Caste-based Discrimination (Untouchability)	0.16%	36	—
12	Witchcraft Accusation	0.14%	31	—
13	Child Marriage	0.17%	37	—
14	Dowry-related Offences / Death	0.05%	12	—
15	Child Sexual Abuse	1.73%	373	—
16	Polygamy	2.61%	562	—
	Total	100%	21,465	—

Source: Nepal Police Headquarter, 2025

Sexual violence emerges as the second most prevalent form of violence, accounting for 10.53 percent of total cases, with 2,262 rape victims recorded nationwide. Girls constitute the majority of rape survivors, with 1,437 cases compared to 825 women, demonstrating the heightened vulnerability of minors. In addition to rape, the data record 461 cases of attempted rape, 4 cases of rape followed by murder, 55 cases involving abduction and rape, and 15 cases of rape linked to human trafficking. Other forms of violence, though individually accounting for less than

one percent of total incidents, collectively affected 298 women and girls and include 37 cases of child marriage, 36 cases of caste-based discrimination (untouchability), 31 cases of witchcraft accusations, 23 cases of sexual abuse in public spaces, 41 cases of abuse against senior citizens, and 12 cases of dowry-related violence, two of which resulted in death.

The provincial distribution of violence shows significant regional variation. Madhesh Province reports the highest incidence, accounting for 35.16 percent of all cases, with 7,549 recorded incidents. This is followed by Lumbini Province with 3,497 cases (16.29 percent), Kathmandu Valley with 2,415 cases (11.25 percent), Koshi Province with 2,227 cases (10.37 percent), and Bagmati Province with 1,788 cases (8.32 percent). Sudurpachhim Province accounts for 1,567 cases (7.30 percent), Karnali Province for 1,290 cases (6.00 percent), while Gandaki Province reports the lowest number with 1,132 cases (5.27 percent). Across all provinces, domestic violence remains the most prevalent form of violence.



Madhesh Province stands out not only for the highest number of incidents but also for the intensity of domestic violence. Of the 7,549 cases recorded in the province, 6,950 cases, or 92 percent, involve domestic violence, representing 39.69 percent of all domestic violence cases nationwide. Domestic violence in Madhesh resulted in four deaths. Other forms of violence reported in the province include 290 cases of rape, 81 attempted rapes, 26 cases of abduction for sexual assault, 94 cases related to polygamy, 43 cases of child sexual abuse, 23 cases of witchcraft accusations, 16 cases of child marriage, and 12 dowry-related cases, including two murders.

In contrast, Gandaki Province reports the lowest number of incidents, with 1,132 cases, although this figure reflects an increase compared to previous years. Domestic violence accounts for 852 cases in the province, representing 75.26 percent of all incidents and 4.86 percent of domestic violence cases nationwide. One death due to domestic violence was reported in Gandaki. Other incidents include 165 cases of rape, 20 attempted rapes, 32 cases each of child sexual abuse and polygamy-related violence, 19 cases of abuse against elderly persons, and smaller numbers of caste-based discrimination, public sexual harassment, witchcraft accusations, and child marriage.

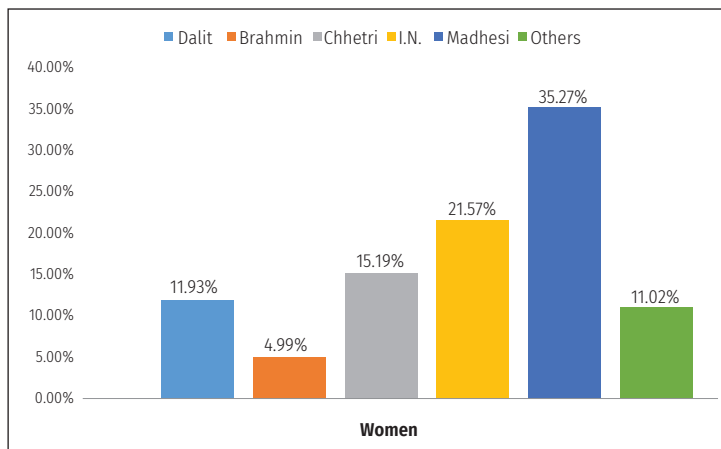
An analysis of victims by gender and age shows that women constitute the majority of victims, with 17,189 cases, accounting for 80 percent of total incidents. Girls account for 2,037 cases (9.48 percent), and together women and girls represent 89.48 percent of all victims. In comparison, 2,218 men (10.33 percent) and 21 boys were reported as victims. Domestic violence affects both sexes but remains heavily gendered, with 15,376 women and 126 girls experiencing domestic violence compared to 1,993 men and 14 boys.

Table 2: Gender Wise Types of Violence

SN	Type of Violence / Incident	Female	Male	Girl	Boy	Total
1	Domestic Violence	15,376	1,993	126	14	17,509
2	Death due to Domestic Violence	30	7	3	1	41
3	Rape	825	0	1,437	0	2,262
4	Attempted Rape	296	165	0	0	461
5	Murder by Forced Sexual Assault	0	0	4	0	4
6	Rape by Kidnapping	5	0	50	0	55
7	Rape in Human Trafficking	3	0	12	0	15
8	Illegal Abortion	2	0	1	0	3
9	Public Sexual Assault	21	0	2	0	23
10	Sexual Assault Against Senior Citizens	10	31	0	0	41
11	Caste-based Discrimination	14	19	2	1	36
12	Accusation of Witchcraft	29	2	0	0	31
13	Child Marriage	6	0	31	0	37
14	Dowry-related Offense (including 2 deaths)	9+2	1	0	0	12

SN	Type of Violence / Incident	Female	Male	Girl	Boy	Total
15	Child Sexual Abuse	0	0	368	5	373
16	Polygamy	561	0	1	0	562
	Total	17,189	2,218	2,037	21	21,465
	Percentage (%)	80%	10.33%	9.48%	0.09%	100%

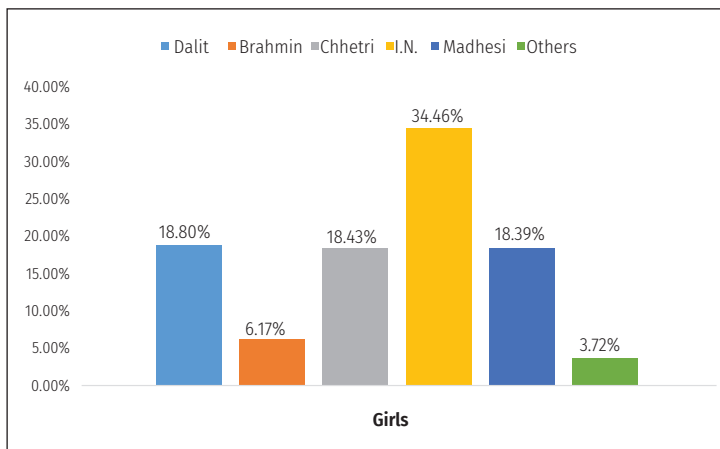
Caste and ethnic disaggregation of women victims reveal significant disparities. Madhesi women constitute the largest proportion of victims, with 6,061 cases (35.27 percent), of which 5,738 cases involve domestic violence. *Adivasi/Janajati* women follow with 3,706 cases (21.57 percent), including the highest number of rape cases at 283. Chhetri women account for 2,610 cases (15.19 percent), while Dalit women represent 2,051 cases (11.93 percent). Among Dalit women, domestic violence remains predominant, but caste-based untouchability-related violence is notably higher compared to other groups. Women from the Brahmin community report the lowest number of incidents, with 858 cases (4.99 percent), though domestic violence remains the dominant form even within this group.



Notes: I.N. = Indigenous Nationalities (*Aadibasi Janajati*)

Violence against girls shows a similar pattern of caste-based inequality. Out of 2,202 recorded cases involving girls, the highest number involves *Adivasi/Janajati* girls, with 759 cases (34.46 percent), followed by Dalit girls with 414 cases (18.80 percent), Chhetri girls with 406 cases (18.43 percent), and Madhesi girls with 405

cases (18.39 percent). Sexual violence, particularly rape, is the dominant form across all caste groups. *Adivasi/Janajati* girls alone account for 511 rape cases, representing 35.56 percent of all rape cases involving girls nationwide, underscoring their heightened vulnerability.



Notes: I.N. = Indigenous Nationalities (*Aadibasi Janajati*)

Overall, the analysis clearly demonstrates that violence against women and girls in Nepal is pervasive, structurally embedded, and disproportionately affects marginalized groups, particularly Madhesi, Dalit, and *Adivasi/Janajati* communities. The dominance of domestic and sexual violence across provinces, castes, and age groups indicates persistent gender inequality and highlights the urgent need for targeted prevention, stronger legal enforcement, and intersectional policy responses.

Caste-Based Untouchability

In fiscal year 2081/82, Nepal Police recorded 36 cases of caste-based untouchability, marking an increase from 29 cases in the previous fiscal year. These incidents affected people of all genders and age groups, including 12 women, 14 men, 2 girls, and 1 boy. The overwhelming majority of victims were from the Dalit community, comprising 12 Dalit women, 14 Dalit men, 2 Dalit girls, and 1 Dalit boy. Only a few cases involved non-Dalit individuals, including one woman each from Madhesi and Indigenous Nationalities (*Adivasi/Janajati*) communities. The data clearly demonstrate that caste-based untouchability remains a deeply entrenched form of structural violence disproportionately affecting Dalits.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)

During fiscal year 2081/82 and up to the end of Bhadra of the current fiscal year, the NHRC registered 247 complaints related to women and girls. Of these, 221 cases involved women and 26 involved girls. Domestic violence emerged as the most frequently reported category with 73 cases, followed closely by threats, psychological and physical torture, and security-related abuses with 70 cases. Economic, social, housing, education, and health-related violence accounted for 32 cases, while sexual violence was reported in 26 cases. Other reported violations included barriers to justice (19 cases), murder, assault, and suicide (13 cases), caste-based discrimination (9 cases), and citizenship-related problems (5 cases).

Disaggregation by caste/ethnicity shows that Chhetri and Indigenous Nationalities women each accounted for the highest share (28.05 percent each), followed by Brahmin women (19.45 percent), Dalit women (14.02 percent), and women from other communities, including Madhesi groups (10.40 percent). Among girls, the highest proportion of complaints came from Brahmin communities (38.46 percent), followed by Indigenous Nationalities (23.07 percent) and Dalit communities (26.92 percent). The Commission responded through coordination, advisory support, and referrals to relevant authorities to promote justice and prevent further violations.

National Women Commission

In fiscal year 2081/82, the National Women Commission registered 1,202 complaints related to domestic violence, denial of counseling services, and obstruction of women's rights. Of these, 398 cases fell within the Commission's jurisdiction, and 365 were resolved through reconciliation, although family reunification was not achieved in all cases. Complaints were received through multiple channels, including the 1145 helpline, email or QR submissions, written petitions, and in-person visits.

During the year, the Commission provided 615 counseling services and registered 394 domestic violence complaints. Analysis of causes shows that major triggers included husbands' extramarital relationships (182 cases), denial of care and livelihood support (117 cases), lack of support for citizenship or birth registration (121 cases), husbands working abroad without contact (101 cases), and legal disputes related to divorce, property, and maintenance (84 cases). In terms of the nature of violence, economic violence (277 cases) was most prevalent, followed by physical violence (246 cases) and psychological violence (195 cases), while sexual violence was reported in 9 cases. Ethnic analysis of 393 complaints indicates that

Janajati women were most affected (41.82 percent), followed by non-Dalit women (40.94 percent), Dalit women (11.34 percent), and Madhesi women (5.59 percent).

National Dalit Commission

The National Dalit Commission registered 64 complaints during fiscal year 2081/82 through direct submissions, monitoring activities, and media reports. More than half of these cases (56.25 percent) involved caste-based discrimination, verbal abuse, and physical assault. Violence following inter-caste relationships or marriages accounted for 14 percent of cases, while murder or death constituted 10.93 percent. Other complaints included violations of Dalit rights and miscellaneous forms of abuse.

Table 3: Nature of Complaints Registered with the Commission

S.N.	Nature of Complaint	Number of Cases	Percentage
1	Violation of Dalit rights	3	4.68%
2	Caste-based discrimination, verbal abuse, and physical assault	36	56.25%
3	Violence after inter-caste relationships or marriages	9	14%
4	Murder / Death	7	10.93%
5	Other types	9	14%
	Total	64	

Source: National Dalit Commission, 2025

The complaints highlight persistent challenges faced by Dalit communities, including obstruction of legal and constitutional rights, rejection of inter-caste relationships, difficulties in registering marriages, births, and citizenship, police reluctance to register cases, physical assault, murder, and abuse through social and digital platforms. These findings underscore the continued vulnerability of Dalits especially Dalit women and girls to intersecting forms of caste and gender-based violence.

Violence Recorded in the Data of Various NGOs

Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO)

According to FEDO, a total of 439 incidents of violence against Dalit women and girls were recorded across 18 districts from *Kartik* 2081 to *Ashoj* 2082. Domestic violence was the most prevalent form, accounting for 212 cases, followed by child

marriage (65 cases), other violations (52), caste-based discrimination (51), polygamy (24), rape including attempts (20), property disputes (13), and two cases of rape-related murder. The “other” category included denial of citizenship, birth registration issues, violations of girls’ rights, exclusion from local government services, and barriers to justice.

Provincially, Sudurpachhim Province recorded the highest number of incidents (169), followed by Lumbini (92), Koshi (75), Madhesh (54), Karnali (31), Gandaki (14), while Bagmati had the lowest (4). This distribution shows that violence against Dalit women and girls is widespread, with particularly high prevalence in Sudurpachhim and Lumbini regions.

Of the total incidents, 349 cases were recommended and supported for justice. These included 172 domestic violence cases, 50 child marriage cases, 39 caste-based discrimination cases, 19 rape cases, and 21 polygamy cases. The majority of justice-supported cases were from Sudurpachhim Province (150), indicating both high incidence and active engagement in legal processes.

Case Example 1: Violence on Top of Violence – Silencing the Voice, Forcing Death

The case of 17-year-old Rinku Kumari Sada from Siraha district illustrates the multidimensional violence faced by Dalit girls. After being gang-raped by three non-Dalit youths, her family faced intense pressure from a local panchayat, which attempted to settle the case for NPR 150,000 instead of pursuing justice. Despite threats, community pressure, and police reluctance to register appropriate charges, the family continued seeking justice. Rinku was later found dead under suspicious circumstances. Following media advocacy, police registered supplementary charges against eight individuals, leading to arrests and partial convictions. This case highlights how sexual violence, caste discrimination, poverty, and institutional failure intersect, intensifying victimization when access to justice is obstructed.

Women’s Rehabilitation Center (WOREC) Nepal

WOREC documented 1,363 cases of violence against women between November 2024 and October 2025. Domestic violence dominated the cases with 885 incidents (64.93%), followed by sexual violence (246 cases, 18%) and social violence (137 cases, 10%). Other reported incidents included murder (26 cases, 1.9%), human trafficking (17 cases), cybercrime (6 cases), suicide (6 cases), and stranded women (9 cases).

Caste and ethnic analysis show that Dalit women constituted 315 cases (23.11%), including 193 hill Dalits and 122 Terai Dalits. Indigenous Nationalities women accounted for 414 cases (30.37%), followed by Brahmin/Chhetri women (322 cases, 23.62%), Madhesi women (229 cases, 16%), and Muslim women (49 cases, 4%). These figures indicate that while violence affects women across communities, Dalit women remain among the most affected groups.

Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC)

INSEC recorded 5,886 incidents of violence between November 2024 and October 2025. Of these, 4,874 cases involved women, 988 involved girls, and 24 involved boys. Domestic violence was the most common, with 3,905 cases, followed by rape (1,184 cases), including 468 women and 712 girls. Other serious incidents included attempted rape (133 cases), sexual exploitation (247 cases), dowry-related violence (144 cases), and human trafficking (61 cases).

Among all reported cases, Dalit women and girls accounted for 1,034 incidents (17.67%), including 853 women and 181 girls. Dalit women experienced high levels of domestic violence (686 cases) and rape (73 cases), while Dalit girls were particularly vulnerable to rape (134 cases) and sexual violence (35 cases). INSEC also documented 44 cases of caste-based discrimination, primarily affecting Dalit women and men, further confirming the persistence of caste-based exclusion in public spaces, employment, and social life.

Technology-Facilitated Violence, Disability, and Child Labor

National Child Rights Council

Data from Child Rights Information Management System (CRIMS) and Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS) recorded 7,584 child-related incidents up to August 10, 2025, involving 3,805 boys (50.2%) and 3,775 girls (49.8%). By age, the largest group affected was children aged 6–11 years (3,814 cases), followed by 12–17 years (2,306 cases). By caste, Dalit children were the most affected, totaling 2,312 cases, followed by Chhetri (2,238) and *Janajati* children (1,585).

Major protection concerns included missing children, neglect, sexual violence, child marriage, child labor, and human trafficking. Based on risk assessment, 1,747 children were classified as high-risk, 3,326 as medium-risk, and 800 as low-risk, indicating a significant protection gap for vulnerable children, particularly Dalits.

Nepal Police, Cyber Bureau

The Cyber Bureau of Nepal Police reported a rising trend in technology-facilitated violence, particularly through social media and internet platforms, during fiscal year 2081/82. Increased misuse of digital technology has led to higher incidents of cyber harassment, online abuse, and cybercrime, posing new challenges for investigation and victim protection, especially for women and children.

Major Sources of Violence

Cyber Bureau of Nepal Police

During fiscal year 2081/82, the Cyber Bureau of Nepal Police registered 18,926 complaints, indicating a significant rise in technology-facilitated violence. Facebook was the most common platform, accounting for 9,829 cases (51.9%), followed by TikTok (3,086 cases; 16.9%), WhatsApp (2,305 cases; 12.17%), Telegram (1,509 cases; 7.97%), and digital payment platforms such as e-Sewa, Khalti, and bank accounts (451 cases; 2.38%). Other sources accounted for 317 cases (1.67%), while remaining platforms contributed less than 1% each.

According to Superintendent of Police Deepkaraj Awasthi, major patterns of cyber violence included photo mutilation, revenge porn, ransomware attacks, fake profile creation for defamation, website hacking, and online fraud and scams. These trends reflect a growing risk of cyber violence, particularly against women and children, emphasizing the need for preventive strategies, public awareness, and stronger legal enforcement.

Online Violence: Provincial Status / Women & Children

In terms of geographic distribution, 15,917 complaints (approximately 52%) were registered at the Central Office of the Cyber Bureau. Among provincial offices, Madhesh recorded 936 cases, Koshi 644, Lumbini 444, Bagmati 254, Taluk Office 250, Gandaki 212, Karnali 208, and Sudurpachhim Province 61 cases.

Regarding affected populations, among those below 18 years, 421 girls and 351 boys were victims of cyber violence. Among adults, 7,921 women, representing approximately 42% of cases, were affected. The Cyber Bureau has not yet recorded caste or ethnic background, limiting disaggregated analysis. The data suggest that areas with higher digital access and literacy face increased cyber risks, while lower reporting from rural areas may reflect limited access and awareness rather than lower incidence.

Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN-Nepal)

CWIN-Nepal recorded 873 child-related complaints through the Child Helpline between September 2024 and August 2025. The most common issues included abuse (270 cases), child marriage (138 cases), child labour and exploitation (117 cases), psycho-social problems (86 cases), and need for safe shelter (57 cases). Other concerns included domestic violence (34 cases), corporal punishment (34 cases), and transportation/trafficking (38 cases).

Across all provinces, 510 girls and 356 boys were affected. Bagmati Province recorded the highest number (435 cases), followed by Koshi (119) and Sudurpachhim Province (79). Dalit children accounted for 111 cases (12.8%), including 62 girls, 48 boys, and 1 LGBTIQA individual. From a gender perspective, 12.15% of affected girls and 13.48% of affected boys were Dalit, indicating consistent caste-based vulnerability among children.

Children - Women in Social Service and Human Rights (CWISH)

CWISH conducted a Situation Analysis of Child Protection Issues based on data from 580 respondents across 19 schools in Balephi and Sunkoshi Rural Municipalities. Of the respondents, 32.24% were Dalit, 29.66% Janajati, 20.17% marginalized communities, and 17.93% Brahmin/Chhetri. The study also identified 73 cases of child marriage and 25 persons with disabilities, including 21 children.

Situational Understanding

Child Marriage: Among the 73 child marriage cases, 93.2% of girls married by choice or elopement. The highest prevalence was among marginalized communities (44.59%), followed by Janajati (22.97%), Dalit (17.57%), and Brahmin/Chhetri (14.86%). Notably, 68.91% of married girls had discontinued their education.

Sexual Violence and Abuse: A significant 81.64% of respondents reported experiencing sexual violence or abuse at home, school, or within the community. Dalit respondents reported high exposure (80.11%), while incidents were more common at home and in the community than in schools.

Gender-Based Discrimination: Gender-based discrimination was more prevalent within households and communities, with parents identified as perpetrators in 66.7% of cases. The problem was 23.73% higher in Sunkoshi compared to Balephi.

Caste-Based Discrimination: Nearly 48.6% of respondents reported experiencing caste-based discrimination, primarily in community settings. Dalit children were the most affected, with 94.62% reporting discrimination, followed by marginalized groups, Janajati, and Brahmin/Chhetri children.

Discrimination Based on Disability: Among respondents with disabilities, 88% experienced discrimination, indicating compounded vulnerability.

Risky Migration, Trafficking, and Transportation: Over 52.8% believed trafficking occurs outside Nepal, while 45.3% reported it also occurs domestically. Most respondents (56.6%) identified unknown persons as traffickers, though 44.4% acknowledged the involvement of known individuals.

Overall Patterns of Violence and Reporting Behavior

The study identifies multiple forms of violence, including sexual violence, physical violence, psychological abuse, caste-based discrimination, gender-based discrimination, and technology-facilitated violence. Although respondents demonstrated some awareness of violence and abuse, underreporting remains a serious concern. Among those who experienced sexual abuse, 44.8% did not report the incident to anyone. The main reasons for non-reporting included fear of parents, community members, and teachers (18.35%), lack of a trustworthy person to disclose to (18.35%), lack of knowledge about where to file a complaint (7.24%), and a belief that reporting would not lead to any action.

Even when abuse was disclosed to parents, responses were often discouraging. In 50% of cases, either no action was taken or parents advised or warned the victims themselves rather than pursuing justice. Only four respondents filed complaints with the police, and among these, action was taken in only one case, reconciliation was facilitated in one case, and no action was taken in two cases. Schools appeared comparatively more responsive, as complaints made to teachers or principals resulted in punishment or counseling of perpetrators in around 90% of cases. For gender-based and caste-based discrimination, 47.53% and 33.21% respectively did not file complaints, largely due to social normalization and internalization of discrimination.

Access Planet Organization:

The Access Planet Organization conducted a study titled “*Voices from the Margins: The State of Access to Justice for Women with Disabilities in Nepal*” between November 2014 and April 2025, covering Morang (Koshi), Kaski (Gandaki), Rautahat (Madhesh), and Surkhet (Karnali). The study used a mixed-methods approach, including a survey of 200 respondents, 19 key informant interviews, and 19 case studies. In terms of caste and ethnicity, respondents included 44.5% Hill Brahmin/Chhetri/Thakuri, 20% Dalit, 24% Hill Janajati, 9.5% Madhesi, and smaller proportions from Terai Janajati and minority religious and linguistic groups.

Educationally, 34.5% had completed secondary education, while 26% were illiterate, and only 1% had attained a master’s degree or higher. Employment levels were extremely low, with 77% unemployed. A large majority (79%) reported experiencing violence in family, community, workplace, or public spaces. Violence was most frequently reported in community settings (50%) and within families (36.5%), and 87.09% of those reporting public-space violence experienced it in such locations. Forms of violence included sexual and physical violence, mobility restrictions, denial of care, economic exclusion, and disability-based discrimination.

Among those who experienced violence, 64% did not attempt to seek justice, while only 36% did. Of those who sought justice, 42% reported negative experiences. Key barriers included lack of knowledge about justice procedures (42.52%), absence of support (36.78%), financial constraints (22.98%), and lack of belief in justice outcomes (27%). Respondents emphasized the need for physically accessible courts (47.5%), supportive and non-discriminatory judicial personnel (62.5%), disability-friendly communication materials (41.5%), and priority handling of cases involving women with disabilities (84%).

Media Content (Subject Matter) Analysis

The study analyzed 46 media items, including 30 news reports and 16 opinion pieces, focusing on three thematic areas: private space (room/rental housing), quota (reservation), and violence through online platforms. Of these, 20 items related to rental accommodation, 10 to quota, and 16 to online violence. The analysis aimed to understand how caste- and gender-based violence is framed in the media and how the nature of discrimination is evolving.

Table 4: Analysis of Media-Published Content

Cross Media	Published Content		Remarks
	News	Opinion	
1. Room	14	6	20
2. Quota (reservation)	5	5	10
3. Violence through Online	11	5	16
Total	30	16	46

Analysis of Subject Matter

(a) Room / Rental Accommodation

Media analysis reveals a shift from overt caste-based discrimination to more subtle and indirect forms, particularly denial of rental housing in urban areas. Between BS 2074 and 2080, numerous reports documented individuals being denied rooms solely due to their surnames. However, reporting rarely follows up on justice outcomes or the psychological impacts of such discrimination. Notably, most reporting is done by Dalit journalists, reinforcing the perception that caste discrimination is a “Dalit issue” rather than a societal one.

Case Example 2: “I Came to Build a Future, but Caste Became the Barrier”

Deepa Nepali migrated to Kathmandu from Kailali to pursue higher education and a better future. However, she faced persistent caste-based discrimination, particularly in securing housing. Landlords often denied her rooms, evicted her, or returned deposits upon learning her surname. Her struggle forced her to navigate police stations and courts while trying to continue her studies. Despite speaking out and gaining media attention, Deepa experienced increased hostility rather than protection. Structural discrimination, compounded by gender vulnerability, continues to block basic opportunities like housing. Even legal requirements, such as citizenship documents, have been misused to reinforce caste barriers. Her experience highlights that caste discrimination in urban Nepal remains deeply entrenched, systematically obstructing the dreams and social mobility of young Dalit individuals.

Over the past decade, media coverage has centered on only five individuals who formally filed complaints, indicating severe underreporting. Legal data show that between FY 2071/72 and 2077/78, 349 caste-based discrimination cases were

registered nationwide. Of these, 185 cases were adjudicated, resulting in 82 convictions and 102 acquittals, while 164 cases were dismissed without final judgment. These patterns discourage victims from pursuing legal remedies due to fear, time loss, and career disruption.

Opinion pieces consistently argue that discrimination persists even among educated urban populations and that formal education alone has failed to eliminate caste prejudice. Authors emphasize the need for political will, strict enforcement of zero-tolerance laws, and proactive state intervention. Victims report cumulative harms, including loss of dignity, restricted opportunities, psychological distress, and normalization of exclusion.

(b) Quota (Reservation)

The analysis of 10 media items reveals that “quota” is increasingly used as a tool for humiliation and silencing, especially against Dalits. Demands for justice are often countered with calls to “abolish quota,” reframing discrimination as social division. Media reports highlight that reservation has significantly expanded inclusion: Dalit representation in civil service increased from 0.13% in BS 2064 to 1.76% in BS 2080, and representation now spans 67 caste groups, compared to only 11 before reservation.

Case Example 3: “The Pain of Quota: It hurts when they say he got in just because of his caste”

Kishor Bishwakarma, a Dalit, recently entered government service through Nepal’s reservation system, designed to ensure inclusion of historically marginalized groups. Despite his hard work and perseverance, he faced stigma and humiliation from colleagues who dismissed his achievement as merely a result of his caste. He highlights that reservation addresses centuries of structural discrimination, providing opportunities to those previously excluded. Yet, social attitudes often undermine this progress, labeling Dalits as “quota beneficiaries” and questioning their competence. Kishor’s experience reflects the invisible psychological harm of caste-based discrimination, even after legal and constitutional inclusion, and underscores the ongoing struggle for dignity, recognition, and equitable treatment in public institutions.

Despite benefiting multiple groups, Dalits are disproportionately targeted for ridicule. Opinion pieces argue that reservation is a form of compensatory justice for historical exclusion and that without it, thousands of Dalit women would never

have entered local politics. Authors stress that debates around merit often ignore unequal starting points shaped by caste, poverty, and exclusion.

(c) Violence through Online Platforms

Analysis of 16 media items highlights the rapid rise of online violence, including blackmail, extortion, fake accounts, character assassination, and sexual harassment. Women and children are particularly vulnerable, and violence often occurs among acquaintances. Studies cited indicate that one in four dating app users experience online violence, and children under 19 years face heightened risk.

Empirical studies reinforce these findings. A nationwide study of 4,501 youth aged 16–24 found that 40.5% had engaged in online intimate relationships, with one in four experiencing online violence, and 46% facing both online and offline abuse. Research on female politicians and journalists shows extremely high exposure to online harassment, with 88.6% of women journalists reporting such experiences, and 62.3% experiencing mental health impacts. Opinion pieces consistently argue that digital spaces have become extensions of structural inequalities and emphasize shared responsibility among the state, service providers, parents, and society to address online violence.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2 Conclusion of the Study

Based on the review of the documents from various official agencies, analysis of media content, and consultations with relevant stakeholders, the study shows that despite Nepal's government making numerous national and international commitments and efforts to reduce gender- and caste-based violence, the outcomes remain unsatisfactory. While societal awareness, education, equality, empowerment, freedom, and respect have reportedly improved, these achievements are not yet fully realized.

Domestic violence remains the most widespread and recurrent issue, with households identified as the primary source of violence across most official records. Sexual violence and targeted attacks on girls are high-risk areas. Caste-based discrimination persists structurally through practices such as child marriage, polygamy, and dowry-related violence. Regional data highlights inequalities, with limited access to state services exacerbating these problems.

Key findings from an integrated analysis of all data sources indicate:

- Among official records, Dalit women accounted for 11.93% of total violence incidents recorded by the police, and Dalit girls accounted for 18.80%. Human Rights Commission records show 14.02% of cases involve Dalit women and 26.92% involve Dalit girls. The National Women's Commission recorded 11.34% of incidents involving Dalit women, while the National Dalit Commission received 64 complaints involving women and children. The National Child Rights Council recorded that 30.48% of affected children were Dalits. Cyber violence data has not been disaggregated by caste, but trends suggest Dalit women and girls are particularly at risk due to digital divides.
- NGO records show similar trends: FEDO recorded 439 incidents, INSEC 5,886 complaints (17.67% involving Dalit women and girls), and WOREC 23.11% incidents affecting Dalit women. A study by CWIN found 17.57% of Dalit children drop out of school due to child marriage, and 80.11% of surveyed Dalit girls experienced sexual violence or harassment. Among respondents, 48.6% experienced some form of caste-based discrimination, with 94.62% of these being Dalits.
- Access Planet's study on women with disabilities (20% Dalit) found that 79% had experienced some form of violence in life, yet 64% did not seek justice, indicating significant gaps in the justice system.
- Caste-based discrimination incidents show weak institutional responses; police, human rights commissions, and NGOs recorded varying numbers, highlighting a lack of trust in official mechanisms and underreporting.
- Dalit women and girls face multidimensional violence within homes, communities, schools/workplaces, digital spaces, and interactions with state agencies.
- Violence is multifaceted, including physical, psychological, cultural, economic, and structural forms, with caste and gender intersecting to produce compounded oppression.
- Weak justice systems, limited-service delivery, and inadequate state protection lead to impunity and repeated violence.
- Regional disparities, social awareness, state outreach, poverty, and local structural factors influence the intensity and prevalence of violence.
- Media coverage rarely addresses the outcomes of reported cases or advocates effectively for justice. In the changing world, although it is said that **"Media is not only a mirror of society but also an idea shaper,"** the content did not give much attention to creating a positive perspective on the raised issues.
- The overall message emphasizes that structural reforms, gender and caste-justice policy interventions, stronger law enforcement, and community–state collaboration are crucial to ensure the safety, justice, and human rights of Dalit women and girls.

The findings make it clear that Nepali women and girls are not safe either inside or outside their homes. Rising cases of rape, attempted rape, and murder indicate a worsening security situation. Dalit women and girls face particularly high risk, enduring multifaceted oppression—caste, gender, economic, social, and cultural. Moreover, even when incidents occur, access to justice and protection remains obstructed due to fear, social pressure, lack of access, discrimination, and extreme vulnerabilities. Women, especially Dalit women and girls, face additional risks of violence while seeking justice, highlighting systemic insecurity and impunity.

Key Problems Identified from the Study

- Most institutions have not maintained separate records based on caste, gender, disability, or social diversity. As a result, the absence of disaggregated data limits a clear understanding of the actual situation.
- Among government agencies, only the Nepal Police maintain relatively systematic and detailed records. However, even though other incidents of violence are documented, online or technology-based violence is not recorded by caste or ethnic identity.
- There is a lack of studies and systematic documentation on violence in the media. Media coverage of violence against women and girls shows little improvement compared to previous years, often relying on reporters' opinions rather than factual or data-based records.
- Violence against sexual and gender minority communities is not separately categorized; they are often grouped under "others," making it difficult to understand their real situation.
- There is no systematic data on child labor. Available data are often limited to specific projects or working areas, preventing comprehensive analysis of the overall situation.
- Although efforts were made to coordinate with various agencies to analyze the situation of women and children with disabilities, no systematic records were available. Due to the lack of records in government institutions and limited documentation from proactive NGOs, this issue could not be fully included in the study.

5.3 Recommendations and Suggestions

Based on the review of documents, media analysis, and consultations with stakeholders, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Improvement in Documentation and Data Management

- All government and non-government agencies should institutionalize an integrated recording system that captures data disaggregated by caste, gender, disability, geography, and identity.

- Analyze evolving patterns of caste-based discrimination and violence, include findings in reports, and develop clear policies for their implementation.

2. Access to Justice and Legal Reform

- Expand institutional mechanisms, including legal aid, safe service centers, and fast-track services, specifically targeting the dual or triple forms of violence faced by Dalit women and children.
- Strengthen confidential reporting systems and victim-friendly justice mechanisms.
- Ensure the security of victims throughout legal processes.

3. Prevention of Digital and Online Violence

- Expand women- and child-friendly units within the Cyber Bureau.
- Enforce mandatory safety standards, reporting tools, and response times on dating apps and social media platforms.
- Ensure strict action against online blackmail, fake accounts, threats, and hate speech.
- Implement age-appropriate content filters and provide awareness and guidance materials to guardians.
- Strengthen cyber security and enhance technical capacity within law enforcement.

4. Strengthening the Role of Media and Journalism

- Establish ethical guidelines for media to produce fact-based reporting and create victim-friendly coverage of violence.
- Media houses should maintain topic-specific archives and strengthen self-regulation to prevent harmful content.
- Analyze media coverage of violence and prioritize equitable representation of issues.
- Promote content diversity and proportional representation in newsrooms (Inclusive Newsroom).
- Media councils or relevant authorities should develop a tracking system to analyze trends in media coverage and encourage inclusive reporting.

5. Strategies for the Elimination of Structural and Systemic Discrimination

- Develop long-term structural reform plans targeting Dalit women and children, persons with disabilities, and minority groups.
- Provide mediation, safe housing, and counseling to prevent violence arising from inter-caste relationships or marriages.

- Formulate policies to eliminate child labor, ensure safe workplaces, and promote skill development and employment opportunities.

6. Safe Digital Environment for Children

- Implement digital literacy programs as part of school curricula and community campaigns.
- Develop and disseminate online risk awareness, reporting mechanisms, and self-protection materials for children and adolescents.
- Enforce strict control, monitoring, and immediate removal of obscene or harmful content online.

7. Strengthening Policies, Laws, and Implementation

- Develop a policy framework for evidence-based decision-making using comprehensive data systems.
- Clearly define cyber violence and online exploitation and establish corresponding penalties.
- Ensure impartiality in investigation and complaint handling, free from political or social influence.
- Reform policies, laws, and mechanisms in line with international commitments.
- Mandate local-level violence prevention plans and ensure their implementation.
- Promote policy initiatives to develop an integrated database system across all relevant agencies.

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