

In recent decades, domestic violence (DV) has gained traction as an international concern. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) outlined steps that governments should take to live up to commitments expressed in the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and, largely in response to national women's movements, laws against DV have been passed in 144 countries. However, in low-income countries such as Nepal, policymakers and donors concentrated in wealthier (often Western) countries have disproportionate influence on DV policy and practice, both through international treaties and policies, and through donor funding priorities. Nepali activists and service providers working both within and outside of government organizations play a crucial role in the translation of international and national policies into local practice. Yet, in this context, two enduring questions exist: First, how could knowledge grounded in local practice meaningfully inform international understandings of DV, which in turn impact international policy? Second, what does the knowledge of Nepali DV practitioners elucidate about DV and strategies to address it? This dissertation explores these questions across three papers: one theoretical and two empirical papers. The empirical papers are based on fieldwork conducted with DV service providers in Pokhara, Nepal. It is informed by my situatedness as a white American daughter writing from a U.S.-based research institution and as a Nepal *buhāri* (daughter-in-law) with experiences living and working in Nepal.

Given the complex structures of power that shape—and are reproduced through—colonial knowledge production practices, the first paper outlines major contributions of postcolonial theory for epistemic justice in international social work research. This paper suggests three analytic strategies that extend from postcolonial theoretical insights: reflexivity, critical discourse analysis, and postcolonial translation. Subsequent papers apply these strategies to the analysis of Nepali-language interviews and focus groups with DV service providers in Pokhara, Nepal. Paper two presents a critical discourse analysis study in which service providers' constructions of DV were compared with those forwarded in major international policy documents (BPfA & CEDAW). This analysis revealed that service providers constructed DV both through an analysis of systemic oppression and through recognition of the centrality of family for individuals' economic and social well-being, as well as for their legal standing as rights-holders in Nepal. The third paper explored service providers' accounts of the types of support DV survivors sought from family members, and the ways in which family members addressed DV. This analysis revealed that family members provided emotional and instrumental support, as well as direct engagement and confrontation of those using violence. The results of this dissertation not only elucidate contextually and culturally responsive DV practice in Nepal, but also challenge dominant international assumptions about what it means to address DV.