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**HOW HAS CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN NEPALESE SCHOOLS IMPACTED UPON
LEARNERS' LIVES?**

by

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Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT:

This study explores how the corporal punishment experienced by learners in Nepalese schools can impact upon multiple aspects of their lives. I examine how these short and long-term effects can extend into adulthood using an auto/biographical methodology; from a perspective influenced by my own encounters as a corporal punishment survivor from Nepal.

Corporal punishment continues to be used in Nepalese schools, with the support of many teachers, parents and school management committees, despite several government policy initiatives and court rulings against it. In contrast to worldwide developments (notably in Scandinavia and America), research into corporal punishment in Nepal tends to be rare, quantitative and focused upon the prevalence and short-term effects as described by group participants and newspaper articles. This study addresses the urgent need to increase public awareness, using personal accounts describing the long-term outcomes of corporal punishment, with a depth of detail facilitated by an auto/biographical research methodology. Participants in the study expressed feelings of relief and increased self-understanding, although for myself at least, these were accompanied by feelings of grief and confusion.

The lives of five corporal punishment survivors are explored through a series of interviews carried out in the Devchuli municipality of Nawalparasi, Nepal, between November 2015 and January 2016. The first is my own story, the second is a pilot interview and the other three are discussed under the themes of immediate compliance, severing dichotomies, disempowered bodies and the spiritual threat of spatio-temporal appropriation.

The participants, whose identities are protected, look back, as adults, upon their experiences of corporal punishment at school and consider possible links between these and their current social, political, economic and spiritual challenges. Simultaneously, the study questions whether 'effects' can ever be conceptually or temporally contained within 'multi-faceted' and 'becoming' identities, using examples from the participants' self-appraisals.

I examine literature from the global debate on the effects of corporal punishment upon children, including the contrasting methodologies of Murray Straus, Alice Miller and Elizabeth Gershoff. The impact of corporal punishment upon notions of personhood is explored using Theodor Adorno's interpretation of reification and comparable notions of objectification challenged by Andrea

Dworkin, Martha Nussbaum and Paolo Freire. Corporal punishment is discussed in relation to power, conflict and the Holocaust, using Adorno and Bauman's descriptions of authoritarian behaviours and immediate compliance, and Nietzsche and Foucault's notions of punishment as a spectacle. Conditions for the possibility of corporal punishment are located to traditions deifying teachers, judgement-based belief systems and neo-liberal ideologies of competition and performativity. These are contrasted with alternative, non-punitive pedagogical and theological resources. Participants explore the ways in which healing and holistic self-development can be blocked by everyday vocabularies of violence and conditionality, triggering destructive individual and collective over-determined reactions.

My study 'concludes' with reflections upon how corporal punishment has affected my participants' lives: with their social roles hampered by defensive masks and evasive dances; their political lives blocked by fears of punishment; their economic lives stilted by caution and low self-esteem and their spiritual lives distorted by disenchantment and disappointment. Methodology and theory converge as my study rejects inherently disciplinarian, Enlightenment-led demands for rational or scientific 'proof' of psychological effects, by presenting auto/biography itself, especially 'child-standpoint' narratives, as valid revolutionary praxis, effervescent with resistance to punitive ideologies and practices and dedicated to the liberation of our present from a painful past.

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Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
ARNEC	All Round National Education Commission
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BNP	British National Party
BPEP	Basic and Primary Education Programme
CA	Constituent Assembly
CBS	Central Bureau of Statistics
CCCU	Canterbury Christ Church University
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIAA	Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority
CP	Corporal Punishment
CPN - M	Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist
CPN - UML	Communist Party of Nepal – United Marxist Leninist
CSP	Community Support Plan
CNNV	The Churches Network for Non-violence
CVICT	Care for the Victims of Torture
EDSC	Educational and Developmental Services Centre
EFA	Education for All
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GIEACP	Global Initiatives to End Corporal All Punishment
HDI	Human Development Index
HLEC	Higher Level Education Commission
HRW	Human Rights Watch
HSEB	Higher Secondary Education Board
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation

INSEC	Informal Sector Service Centre
LGBT+	Lesbian Gay Bisexual, Trans Person and other groups such as Questioning, Queer or Asexual.
LWF	Learn Without Fear
MoE	Ministry of Education
NEC	National Education Committee
NESP	The National Education System Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNEPC	Nepal National Education Planning
NRS	Nepali Rupees
OPHD	Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination
SEE	Secondary Education Examination
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
SMC	School Management Committee
UCPN	United Communist Party of Nepal
UKIP	United Kingdom Independent Party
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
US	United States
VDC	Village Development Committee
WW	World War

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Figure 1. Map of Nepal Showing Nawalparasi District

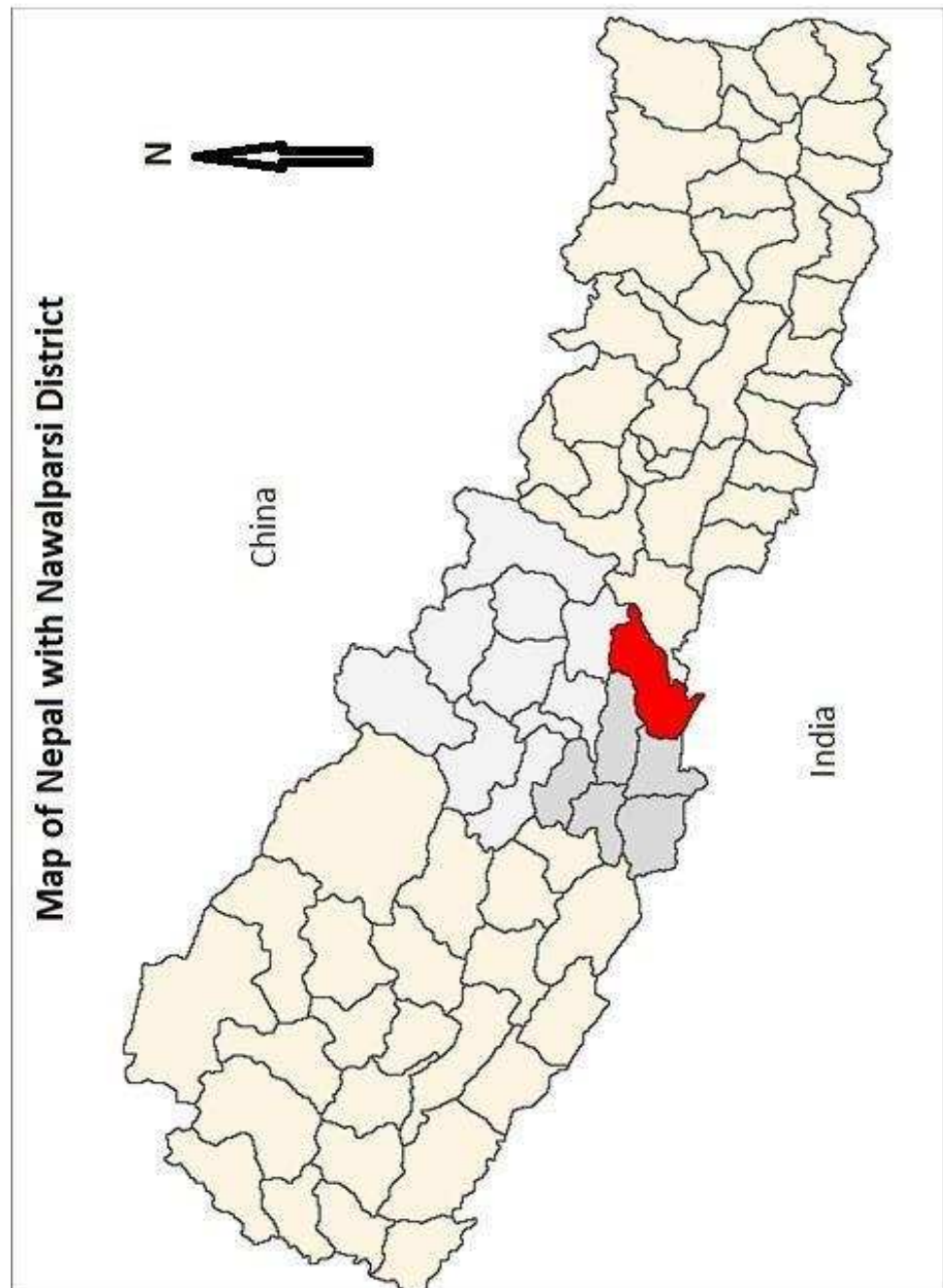
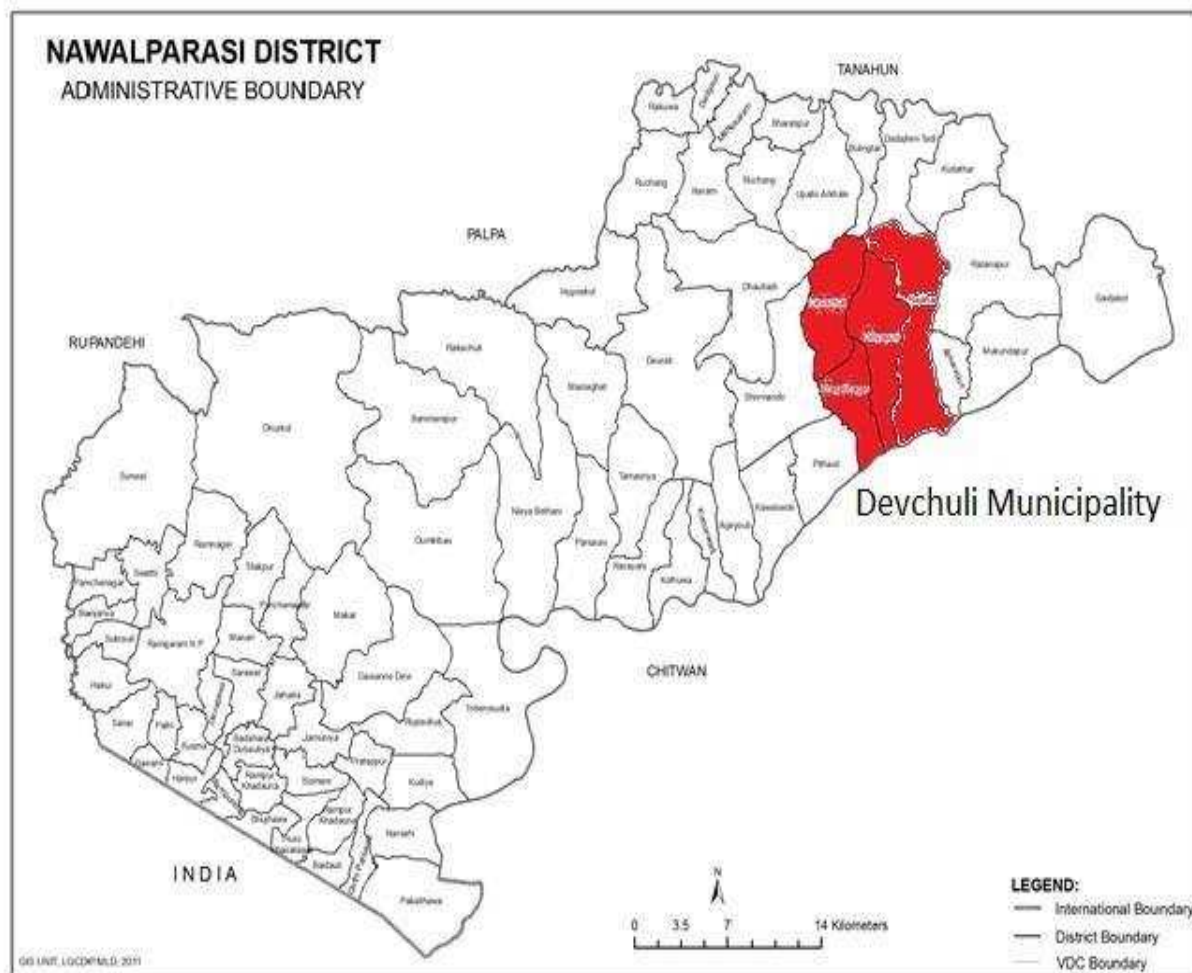


Figure 2 – Map of Nawalparasi District Showing Devchuli Municipality



Source: <http://umeshg.com.np/wpcontent/uploads/2016/02/Nawalparasi.jpg>
(my shading)

Chapter One:

Introduction

'There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children'.

Nelson Mandela

'Beneath the stains of time / The feelings disappear You are someone else / I am still right here'.

'Hurt', Trent Reznor, sung by Johnny Cash

Corporal punishment, known as 'beating for betterment' (Adhikari, et al., 2015, p. 8), is so common in the schools and homes of Nepal that many of my friends looked baffled as to why I should choose it as a research topic. An 'effective' Nepalese teacher was expected to be strict, cold, distant, unemotional and would be respected according to their level of violence and the fear that this could induce in pupils. Parents who objected to beatings were derided as 'backward' (Caddell, 2005, p. 21 & p.22). The teacher should pretend to know everything, walk proudly and retain an air of superiority. Compassion for students - whether they were crying, shaking or mumbling in fear - was viewed as a weakness and as demonstrating a lack of professionalism. Teachers as much as pupils suffered under this harsh persona, so alien from our inner selves: a mask which related to objects rather than subjects (Jung, 1983[1921], p. 99), to what 'must be done' rather than who we are teaching.

My previous research had focused upon barriers to education and how far poverty contributed to my participants' educational 'failures' and their dropping out of school. Gradually however, my focus shifted from barriers to education to education itself as a barrier, specifically, educational policies and practices which produced alienation, shame, trauma, waste and disappointment. Everybody I spoke to had horrific stories to recount of corporal punishment, stories which echoed my own experiences and those of my family and friends. The Maoist Revolution and the subsequent 'People's War', as described in Chapter Two, had proclaimed the rights of the oppressed and the overturning of injustice and inequality. However, it seemed to have bypassed one fundamental right of children: the right not to be beaten. This is despite the huge role that many children played in the war - as political activists, even combatants, and the personal sacrifices, trauma and hardship that so many of them endured throughout and in the aftermath of the conflict. Promises to further equality encompassed issues like caste and gender

discrimination, the right to food, water and shelter, the right to education and healthcare but as with many states born of revolution or anti-colonial revolts (including China, Russia, Australia, India, America and until recently, France), children somehow missed out on the equal rights accorded to the comrade or *citoyen*. Although full prohibition has now been achieved in the majority of South American countries and the majority of states within the European Union, corporal punishment remains a reality for 75% of the world's children (GIECPC, 2017).

Nepal's new republic failed to outlaw the corporal punishment of minors. Its constitution includes prohibitions against torture, but not physical punishment, despite the difficulty of defining torture. One reason for this omission is the narrowly materialist interpretations of political ideologies (whether capitalist or communist) dominating Nepal's impoverished society. A popular focus upon basic survival and financial outcomes has not ensured that children are viewed as valuable in themselves nor their bodies as inviolate. Subtler aspects of the physical and mental health of children have frequently been sacrificed for goals deemed more important, such as exam results, production targets and symbols of adult supremacy; with corporal punishment defended under the consequentialist reasoning of 'the end justifies the means'. Similarly, incomplete consequentialist reasoning was used to excuse the violence and killings carried out by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Royal Nepal Army combatants. Military conflict appeared on a continuum of violence which had been normalised by corporal punishment (Pherali, 2011, p. 145). Pherali suggests that the widespread use of beatings in Nepali society (including both homes and schools) made people accustomed to violence, which was then "accepted, almost paradoxically, as a means of achieving social justice" (Pherali, 2011, p. 145). It is no accident that jingoistic talk often includes verbs drawn from corporal punishment, such as to beat, thrash, pound, hammer, hit or strike one's enemy.

Theory allows us to step back from and reflect upon our experience. The progressive educational theories that I studied in the UK, from Paolo Freire to Alfie Kohn, gave me a child-centred, anti-punishment perspective which contrasted sharply with the god-like status and power that I had been accorded as a teacher in Nepal. Examples of successful, non-violent education and child-rearing - especially in Sweden, which first outlawed corporal punishment in 1979 (Greven, 1992, pp. 219-220) - ridiculed the notion, so prevalent in Nepal, that corporal punishment is an unavoidable necessity and that banning it would be a new-fangled gamble. On a trip home, I witnessed a woman beating

her four-year-old boy on the toes with a *kucho*, the Nepalese twig-broom, until he was screaming and his toes were bleeding. I confronted her, asking her what had happened to the idea of *mamataki khani* ('the mother as a reservoir of love'). She replied that if she didn't beat him to make him do his homework then his teacher would beat him tomorrow in front of everybody. His uncle, who had watched the whole incident said, 'I am a social worker for an NGO and believe me, children need lessons like that'. What hope did the boy have when the whole 'caregiver' establishment, his parents, teachers, social workers and even charities were supporting violence? The incident also revealed the vicious circle of punishment, whereby the mother felt that she had to beat her child to protect him from the teacher's blows, bizarre as this may seem.

The use of corporal punishment in Nepalese schools has also been influenced by neo-liberal interpretations of globalisation. Instead of 'liberalising' education, the hopes and 'choices' dangled by this discourse have motivated parents in Nepal to pressurise their children further, with beatings intensified for the sake of financial ambitions. Parents frequently voice their determination that their children will not 'suffer like they did' from poverty and endless manual work. Globalisation has heightened aspirations, epitomised in the fantasy of the white-collar job with a good salary - but its interpretation was purely material. Globalisation has not yet brought fresh childcare perspectives, such as the progressive teaching methods long practised in Scandinavia and parts of California.

Globalisation has championed modernity: undermining our religious and spiritual life with 'Western' rationalist and empiricist epistemologies; threatening our cultural diversity with the homogenisation of language (Nepali and English) and disrespecting our agrarian economy with teachers portraying subsistence farming as a 'low' occupation suited to students too stupid to migrate or become professionals: '*Why bother coming to school? All you are good for is ploughing*' being a familiar insult. This notion of mobile 'human capital' has motivated numerous young people to abandon their parents' farms, while the ones who don't feel that they are failures. Outside the spell of globalisation, perhaps only sages and guerrilla fighters (who survived on farm produce) understand the profound threat that agrarian decline poses to Nepal's self-sufficiency and political independence.

A focus upon economisation has brought in notions of competition and performativity that are results-based, regardless of the quality of learning experiences. Corporal punishment intensified in schools anxious to meet these

new globally defined targets, especially in the highly competitive private sector, where poor results could spell the death of a school. A long chain of pressure exists, from governments anxious to please INGOS (Regmi, 2016), to school managers eager to gain funding, to headteachers, then teachers and ultimately the pupils, whose feeble bodies take the full impact. Additional involvement from parents via School Management Committees (SMCs) often only exacerbates this pressure, as parents dream of their children's success on the global stage and the hard cash that this might bring in. The greater their ambitions, the more punishment the children receive for not meeting global standards which are often unfeasible in the current geographical and economic context of Nepal. Questions about the morality and benefits of this approach should be put not only to Nepal's state and educators but also to international aid agencies, whose considerable influence has increased since the earthquake of April 2015 and who must sometimes decide which educational institutions to support.

Corporal punishment can be traced from the qualities that make so many Nepalese workers attractive to global employers, such as modesty, politeness, self-sacrifice, a pleasant demeanour, a positive attitude, a dislike of arguments or complaints and immediate compliance. But corporal punishment has made far too many of us less likely to exhibit characteristics needed to reach management level and beyond – such as risk-taking, innovation, brainstorming, experimentation and speaking truth to power. Many 'charming' virtues prelude the acquiescence to fascism. Are we really being ourselves or what the people who beat us wanted us to be? Do we even know who we really are, or what we really desire? My own experiences of corporal punishment continue to saturate everything that I do and don't do. I flinch when people shout, feel sick before exams, expect punishment to follow pleasure, freeze when being criticised and always prefer humiliation to conflict. An auto-biographical methodology developed naturally as my participants' experiences echoed my own, providing significant areas of comparison and contrast. As explained later in more detail, only an autobiographical methodology could facilitate the sensitivity, life-long journeys and holistic approach to all aspects of the Self that befits the tortuous and complex stories of corporal punishment survivors. An autobiographical approach also helps us to focus upon language associations. Neo-liberal programmes to improve competition and efficiency often include vocabularies which are frightening to the corporal punishment survivor: words like 'deadlines', 'performance targets', 'cutbacks', 'snap decisions', 'hard choices', 'austerity', are saturated with violence and alienating from the outset.

Doreen Massey points out how such economic vocabularies are presented as the 'natural and eternal' rather than 'a political construction that needs contesting' (Massey, 2015, p. 7). But for those who associate these terms with the threat of violence, they can create an impenetrable wall between the individual and their ambitions, paralysing them with fear and preventing them from flourishing. In this sense corporal punishment is not just a problem from some little villages in Nepal, but a type of repression supported by hegemonic ideologies worldwide, and is replicated wherever the body and soul are controlled by what Stephen Ball describes as 'performativity terror' (Ball, 2003, p. 216), a concept which I argue, extends far beyond the classroom.

The structure of this study is as follows:

The first chapter introduces the topic of corporal punishment in Nepalese schools and the reasons why I chose it, within the context of globalisation, military conflict and neo-liberal economic vocabularies.

The second chapter contains a brief overview of Nepal's geography, social structure and political history, with a more detailed examination of the history of education in Nepal. I have tried to show the effects of political changes upon education policies and practices and the slow development of legislation against corporal punishment.

Chapter Three examines existing literature and definitions of corporal punishment. Due to the paucity of research on corporal punishment in Nepal, I have explored the global debate on corporal punishment and used its major themes as the basis for my theoretical framework. This interweaving of direct responses to corporal punishment with speculation upon its deeper significance is an attempt to keep my philosophical reflections grounded in the real experiences of corporal punishment survivors as far as possible.

Chapter Four is my autobiography, from infancy to the present day, focusing especially upon my experiences of corporal punishment and ways in which it may have impacted upon my life today. Here I recount my early career as a maths teacher and reflect on the mistakes that I made. My autobiography also includes challenges facing many Nepalese people, such as natural disasters, economic upheaval, disease, migration restrictions and cultural pressures. My autobiography provides an honest explanation for my anti-corporal punishment perspective, through which my participants' stories have been filtered.

In **Chapter Five** I explain my method and methodology and the journey that led me to auto/biographical research. Whilst noting the suitability of an auto/biographical approach to the stories of corporal punishment survivors, I also discuss its ethics, barriers and limitations. I illustrate how these arose in practice by describing obstacles that arose during my research, in particular, those related to gender discrimination and mistrust between castes.

Chapter Six is a brief outline of how my 'data' was analysed and my moral and philosophical reservations about the reduction of my participants' stories to 'data'. It includes both my experiences of 'letting go' enough to let data flow and my admission of my pre-conceived themes and an undeniable agenda. It also discusses the importance of examining details belonging to participants' whole stories, however time-consuming and disruptive to our themes these may be.

Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine tell the stories of my participants: Mukunda, Krishna and Preeti respectively. These involve short sections from their interviews, followed by both comparative and non-comparative reflections that attempt to explain the significance of their words in a Nepalese context. The selections focus more upon their sorrows and challenges than their joys and hope but this reflects the proportion of the interviews that they devoted to positive and negative aspects of their lives. Nevertheless, these chapters include indications of recovery and resolve and a 'keeping on in the battle for self and story' (West, 1996, p. 218): a struggle which could be as wordless as simply breathing, simply surviving. What more could Krishna do, tied up in the straw rice hut?

In **Chapter Ten** I attempt to identify common themes emerging from my participants' life stories, aiming to trace our shared experiences without allowing individual differences to be subsumed under generalising concepts. I consider the effects of corporal punishment upon creativity and innovation, the suppression of desire, the domination of docile bodies and the appropriation of the inner self, using my participants' language as far as possible and examples of difficulties provided by them.

Chapter Eleven seeks to 'conclude' my inquiry without using the vocabulary of endings or 'polishing off', which I analyse as potentially genocidal, using Adorno's association of conceptual closure with the will to annihilate (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 362). I assert that corporal punishment has multiple negative social, political, economic and spiritual effects, culminating in the denigration of the conscience as no more than 'the voice of some men in man' (Nietzsche,

1977[1880], p. 85). I posit auto/biographical research as a form of revolutionary praxis which might return voices to the people; return the voices stolen by the threat and administration of corporal punishment. Finally, I identify a main flaw of my study as its remoteness from the voices of children themselves at the time of their oppression. I consider how future studies of corporal punishment might use 'children's perspectives' to bring about 'child driven change' (Johnson, 2010, p. 1080). Meanwhile I honour auto/biography for liberating the voices of our 'inner child', for facilitating our visions of a better future and for transforming our real lives.

Throughout my study I tried to remain reflexive, constantly considering how my experiences, preconceptions, questions, responses and formulation of themes represent acts of power which separate me from my participants. Reflexivity itself is often only exercised by a researcher with the emotional independence to draw back from a particular tale and flirt with neutrality, a luxury which my most distressed participants, Preeti and Krishna, could not share. My reflexivity, however, was merely a cool persona, beneath which my story felt as raw, angry and bitter as that of my co-survivors. My humanity was all too often, 'impossible to transcend' (Merrill & West, 2009, p. 181).

Chapter Two:

Prior restrictions: Pre-existing Political, Caste and Religious Pressures upon the Disciplined Child

The impact of disciplinary methods upon Nepalese children cannot be fully understood without an awareness of the historical, political, caste and religious context of this study. Equally, a global perspective highlights the strategic and geographical importance of Nepal to other nations and hence the intense, external, international influences upon Nepal's education policies. Several products of these, such as decentralisation and privatisation, are not politically neutral (Timsina, 2011, p. 19) and have aided the intensification of corporal punishment rather than campaigns for its abolition. The Central Child Welfare Board have recorded a greater use of corporal punishment (The Himalayan Times , 2016; Khanal & Park, 2016) in private schools. This is enabled by three features which prove deadly to student welfare: a greater 'freedom' from and less accountability with regard to government guidelines on discipline; more interference from parents, who statistically favour corporal punishment, and more intense pressure upon the school, teachers and students to succeed in a highly competitive, results-focused education market. For the last two decades, these globally-initiated pressures have trickled down to state schools and helped to frame the pressures upon my participants.

The Geography of Nepal

Nepal is landlocked between the two most populated countries in the world, the emerging economic powerhouses, China and India. Metaphors abound which describe Nepal's power and vulnerability in contrasting terms. King Prithivi Narayan Shah (1723-1775) called Nepal a 'yam between two boulders', requiring internal unification to avoid being crushed. Former Prime Minister Dr Baburam Bhattarai described Nepal as a 'bridge' rather than a 'buffer state' between India and China (The Guardian , 2013). Protests have been made against the political influence of India (Fuchs & Vadlamannati, 2012) and China (Jaiswal, 2014) and its emergence as a condition of aid. Whilst Nepal's neighbours feel threatened by her political instability, the Maoist movement

believed Nepal could defend the international proletariat as 'dynamite between two rocks' (Kiranti, 2008, p. 5).

Although only 147,181km² in size, Nepal's total population is 29.31 million (World Population Review, 2017). Its inhabitants occupy three geographically contrasting regions. The mountainous region is found in Northern Nepal and along the border with China. It covers 16% of the country and includes 80 percent of the highest peaks in the world, including Mount Everest (Sagarmatha in Nepal). This is quite distinct from the far larger 'hilly' region: the hills, lakes and valleys comprising 67% of the total land area. This includes the capital city, Kathmandu and famous cities such as Patan (Lalitpur), Pokhara and Bhaktapur, as well as the headquarters of all five former development regions. The remaining 17% of Nepal, which is the 'flat' land, belongs to the Terai or Madhesh region which runs along the Southern border with India. This is the most fertile part of Nepal, with the most food and is therefore home to almost half the country's population. This has strained Nepal's struggling services and infrastructure, with dangerous public transport, overcrowded schools and hospitals and unreliable utilities, in particular, affecting the health and well-being of families. Despite being a water-rich country, many Nepalese people endure a chronic shortage of clean water due to poor governance and distribution of the water supply (Biggs, et al., 2013). Water shortages, along with open defecation, can cause considerable disruption and delay in many aspects of daily life and contribute to the spread of preventable diseases such as typhoid, arsenic-poisoning and dysentery. Nepal also suffers from poor investment in basic infrastructure, particularly electricity and roads, leading to multiple health and safety problems and road accidents leading to fatalities of almost 1500 people every year (BBC, 07/10/2014). Nepal lies on a fault line and is prone to earthquakes, with 9000 people perishing in two earthquakes in April 2015 and a million pushed into poverty. Nepal's rich water resources have prompted interest in hydro-power investments from India and others, but this has led to political protests (World Bank, 2016, p. 19).

The population of Nepal has a dependency rate of 64%. The average life expectancy is 66.51 and only 4% of the population is over 65 years old (World Population Review, 2017). Human Development Index readings differ dramatically across the country, due to 'social, political, economic and spatial exclusion' with Kathmandu estimated at 0.622, contrasted with the Mid-Western and Far Western Hills at 0.423, with corresponding gaps in productivity, access to facilities and household well-being (Human Rights Watch , 2014). The poverty rate is estimated at 25.2% (CIA: The World

Factbook , 2017) with 70% of the population relying on subsistence farming, but multi-dimensional poverty indicators (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative , 2013) put the rate closer to 44%. Income disparity persists alongside caste, gender, landscape and religious distinctions, especially rural versus urban populations. More than 80 percent of people live in rural areas, where there is little access to basic social services and few economic opportunities (IFAD, 2014). Over 3.5 million Nepalis work abroad, leaving a disproportionate demographic of females, children and elderly people in many villages. Money sent home is used chiefly for sustenance rather than capital investment. Opportunities for business expansion and job creation are rare. Nepal has a complex bureaucratic and governmental structure. It is split into seven federal states, containing 75 districts. At a local level, government is broken down further into 744 local levels including four metropolitan cities, 13 sub-metropolitan cities, 246 municipalities and 481 village councils (*Gaunpalikas*). The socio-economic instability of Nepal has been furthered by centuries of political upheaval, characterised by dramatic coups and disruptive conflicts, the most devastating of which was the civil war from 1996 to 2006, which took more than 17,000 lives.

Religion, Society and the Caste System

Nepal is a multicultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious country. According to the Census report of 2011, there are 125 different castes (*'jaat'* in Nepali) and 123 different ethnic languages in Nepal. The official language, Nepali, is the first language for only 44.6% of the total population. Other major languages are Maithili (11.7%), Bhojpuri (6%), Tharu (5.8%), Tamang (5.1%) and Newari (3.2%). There are ten different religions in Nepal but 81.3% of the population is Hindu. The remainder are Buddhist (9%), Muslim (4.4%), Kirat (3%), Christian (1.4%) and others 0.9%. Although Buddhism and Hinduism are distinct religions, many Hindu believers accept Lord Buddha as one of the 12 reincarnations of their god Vishnu. Nepal remains, however, predominantly Hindu ever since its introduction by the Licchavi dynasty 1500 years ago. The Kirat religion (still practised by 3% of Nepalis), along with various animist religions, flourished in Nepal around the 9th century (with a brief revival in the late 1700s) long before Hinduism reached its current dominant position, with references to Nepal as the 'land of the Kirants' in Hindu Scriptures. Up until the 14th century, the caste system was alien to Nepal and was written into Nepalese law (the Muluki Ain) as late as 1854. There is also hierarchy within

and between different castes where Brahmin and Kshatriyas are considered as 'higher castes' and 'Dalits' are labelled the 'lowest' and make up over a fifth of the Nepalese population. Each caste has its own language, culture and rituals but 'Brahminism' remains the dominant cultural practice.

Castes were originally divided according to people's occupations and consequent incomes, equating wealth with a general 'superiority'. Although this is no longer universally believed, the caste system still dictates who may give or receive water and other foodstuffs from whom. Brahmins, for example, may accept water from 'water-acceptable' castes such as Kshatriyas and Vaishya and their sub-castes but would not traditionally accept any kind of touched or cooked food such as cooked rice, chapatis, daal, curry from either Kshatriya, Magar or Newar castes, to name but a few. Boys may only marry within their caste and women usually face social and family rejection and lose their caste status if they marry into a 'lower' caste. The 'water - unacceptable' groups are mostly 'Dalits', from the group of 'Shudras'. The 'water-acceptable' groups do not accept food or water touched or cooked by 'Dalits' and even the proximity of 'Dalits' can be considered offensive, with reports of 'Dalits' being attacked for trying to use the same 'communal' water tap as 'higher' castes. Despite government efforts to outlaw caste discrimination, a huge gulf remains between ideology and practice. Although state education and popular culture has sought to overcome caste prejudice among young people (Valentin, 2005) many families and communities remain attached to caste traditions and exert an overwhelming influence upon individuals.

Gender discrimination remains rife across Nepal, especially in rural areas, with many women still being expected to carry out the majority of household tasks; treated as unclean and banished to a cowshed during menstruation (despite laws banning this practice) and frequently ostracised or punished for sexually 'impure' behaviour, such as having a boyfriend, seeking a love marriage instead of an arranged marriage or remarrying after widowhood. Literacy rates among women remain at 53.1% (CIA: The World Factbook , 2017) and women are frequently deterred from adult education by intensive labour and cultural disapproval of older women leaving the home to study. Women have protested about an increase in gender-based violence towards them (Human Rights Watch , 2014) but cases of violence to violence from other women also occur, especially from mother-in-laws. Although gender discrimination is outlawed in the constitution, an incomplete education and limited mobility continue to contribute to women's lack of political involvement. Korzenevica describes 'the shame they [young, married Nepali women] feel at not

‘becoming somebody’’: (Korzenevica, 2016, p. 44). ‘To be somebody’ in the economically fraught context of Nepal, mainly means to be financially successful: other forms of becoming, such as creative, intellectual, political, sexual, cultural or psychological developments are accorded far less prestige. Career opportunities accompanied by the rhetoric of competition have ironically given Nepal’s overworked women even more reason to feel that they are not ‘good enough’ and must be ‘somebody’ other than themselves. Ideologies supporting personal and cultural discontentment can be traced to schools, where school discipline is used to replace the ‘backward’ and local with the modern and national (Caddell, 2006, p. 4) and we may now add, the global.

History and Education in Nepal

Nepal Before 1846

The territory of Nepal consisted of small, fragmented feudal states until these were unified under the leadership of Gorkha King Prithivi Narayan Shah, in the early 18th century. The Shah dynasty remained ascendant for 240 years and King Prithivi Narayan’s successors maintained the unification process, fought wars with Nepal’s neighbours, winning new territories and the nation grew until Nepal’s defeat in the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1814-16. The resulting Sugauli Treaty gave the East India Company one third of its land, which now remains in India, a wound felt to this day by many Nepalese. The treaty also said that ‘perpetual peace and friendship’ should exist between Britain and Nepal; offered a generous financial settlement to chiefs carefully selected by the King; set up a British diplomatic presence in Kathmandu and allowed Britain to recruit Gurkhas in their own armies, whilst forbidding the Nepalese military from employing any American or European personnel. Although Nepal is officially a sovereign country and was never formally colonised, British ‘protective’ intervention in Nepali politics continued until Britain left India, after which India continued to influence Nepalese politics on its own and on the West’s behalf.

Education Before 1846

Unlike many other nations, Nepal does not have a long history of formal education, nor a history of education contributing to the nation’s development and prosperity. Prior to the establishment of the first ‘modern’ school in 1853,

most education consisted of religious instruction. Nevertheless, various examples of informal, non-formal and incidental education emerge throughout the history of Nepal, especially in the areas of agriculture, herbal medicine, warfare, cookery, superstitions and handicrafts. Archaeological findings such as temples, and metal, wood and stone artefacts indicate a rich cultural education. The Likshavi period (approximately 400-900 AD) was known as the golden period of Nepal. It was during this time that the Kathmandu Valley area (now including Kathmandu, Bhaktapur and Lalitpur) was built up and became known as 'Nepal'. The rest of the country that we know now was largely undeveloped. Likshavi architects also demonstrated their skill in China, most notably, Araniko, a national hero of Nepal who spread the Nepali pagoda-style architecture in China. Sophisticated educational developments were also made during the Likshavi period in the fields of Ayurvedic medicine and Jyotish Bidhha, Nepalese astrology (Bista, 1991).

Education existed in the form of religious instruction in the two main religions of Nepal, Hinduism and Buddhism. Hindu Gurukul and Buddhist monasteries and *gumbas* provided religious education and during the Malla dynasty (879-1768 AD), these were given equal priority (Sharma & Sharma, 2011 [B.S.2068], p. 137). A major development affecting education was the adoption of the caste system in the 14th century (Aryal, 1977); (Sharma, 2006). The Malla King divided the people into different castes and ordered them and their descendants to follow vocational training in the tasks designated for their caste. From this point, only 'high' caste male Brahmins were allowed to study Hinduism.

Hindu and Buddhist students would study under their 'Guru' or 'Lama' respectively and obey them completely or face harsh punishment. The teacher was viewed as a god; an idea which remains popular today. The Hindu curriculum was Sanskrit-based and comprised of learning and memorising all the Hindu holy books, Vedas, Puranas, chants and learning religious rituals, such as the avoidance of bad karma and the maintenance of the caste system. Education was dominated by Hindu principles governing every 25 years of life (Sharma & Sharma, 2011 [B.S.2068], p. 315):

0-25 years: **Brahmacharya** (Chastity period) Acquiring education.

25-50 years: **Grihastha** (marriage, householder period) Breeding, earning and becoming respected for religious and social work.

50-75 years: **Vanaprasthan** (retirement period) Spiritual life and removal of lust.

75-100 years: **Sanyasa** (renunciation and spiritual practice period) Spiritual life for the attainment of Moksha (freedom from reincarnation/eternal life).

Despite the dominance of the caste system, Malla rulers supported Buddhist education which ignored caste distinctions, included women (Timsina, 2011, pp. 56-57) and opened its doors to greater numbers of students, whilst still emphasising spiritual learning (Wood, 1965).

Educational developments of all kinds were however halted by the unification of Nepal by King Prithivi Narayan Shah, after many battles between the small Nepali kingdoms. The unification led to a series of conflicts with Tibet/China and British India until the acceptance of the Sugauli Treaty. The bulk of Nepali resources and its human capital were drained by war. Every citizen was involved, including women and children, with the defence of Nepal seen as a far higher priority than education. This period is therefore widely viewed as one of educational negligence (Sharma & Sharma, 2011 [B.S.2068], p. 317). An exception is the military training that King Prithivi Narayan Shah provided to the sons of the soldiers who died in the process of unification (Timsina, 2011, p. 58).

The Rana Regime (1846-1951)

Following the Kot massacre of 17th September 1846, the Rana family seized control of the government, military and civil service for the next 104 years, during most of which the King had merely a symbolic role. Nepal's citizens were deliberately isolated from the rest of the world and endured a life devoid of economic, social, cultural, educational or political freedom, especially freedom of speech (Ganguly & Shoup, 2005, p. 132). Unlike the Panchayat rulers, the Ranas never felt the need to create a Nepal that was 'unified in spirit' (Caddell, 2007, p. 253) (Mihaly, 1965, p. 14) as well as territory, only a Nepal that was obedient and physically controlled. In 1854, rules concerning an ethnic and caste hierarchy which supported Rana domination were officially made part of the Muluki Ain (General Law) (Caddell, 2007, p. 253). In terms of international relations however, Rana rulers made concessions to India both prior to and after its independence (Burghart, 1996, p. 257) and they had managed to charm the English, including Queen Victoria, by adopting the habits of European aristocracy (Carney & Rappleye, 2011, p. 4). Furthermore,

several Rana family members were honoured for outstanding military service to the British Empire.

After decades of political repression, in 1951 the Ranas were forced to share with, then yield their power to, the Nepali Congress Party and the hitherto marginalised King Tribhuvan Bir Bikram Shah. Inspired by this, as well as the defeat of fascism in the Second World War, the newly expanded People's Movement managed to bring about a decade of multi-party democracy in 1951. After years of conflict between the King and the political parties, especially the majority Congress party, democracy was suddenly extinguished with a coup by the monarchy in 1991. King Mahendra declared democracy a 'failure', banned all political parties and imprisoned Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala, the first Prime Minister of Nepal to be elected by the people's vote. The last Rana ruler, Mohan Shamsheer Jang Bahadur Rana, had already fled to exile in India in 1951, where he remained until his death in 1967.

Education under the Rana Regime

The Rana period has been described as the 'opposition' period of educational history (Sharma & Sharma, 2011 [B.S.2068], p. 319) since popular education was directly opposed by the regime, which brought in harsh punishments for unofficial tutors and sometimes cut off the hands of artists. Despite a century in power, the Rana educational legacy was an overall literacy rate of under 5%, with only 1% of children attending school. Nevertheless, the Rana regime did begin the modern school system, albeit deliberately elitist (Carney & Rappleye, 2011, p. 4). In 1850, the Rana regime founder and Prime-minister, Junga Bahadur Rana, visited Britain, including a school. He was so impressed that he sought to Anglicise several aspects of Nepalese life, especially education. After tentatively beginning to educate Rana children inside the palace, the first school, 'Durbar High School', opened in 1853 to educate a hand-picked elite in the superiority of the culture of the British Empire and India over multi-ethnic Nepal (Bista, 1991, p. 119).

An exception to the repressive educational policies of the Rana period were those of the Prime Minister from 5 March to 27 June 1901, Dev Shamsheer Junga Bahadur Rana. He managed to enlist enough teachers to open 200 schools during his brief Premiership. His family were alarmed by his liberal ideals and exiled him to India, then quickly shut down the schools that he had created. The Ranas brazenly voiced their fears about 'liberal and popular education' (Aryal, 1977, p. 124) and the danger of educating the masses 'lest they should

be awakened and be conscious of their rights' (Caddell, 2007, pp. 254-255) ; (Shakya, 1977, p. 19).

After the Second World War (WW2), the Ranas were unsettled by soldiers returning to Nepal as well as Indian artists and intellectuals who appeared to be politically conscious and aware of alternative methods of rule. Some Gorkha servicemen started up literacy classes, after the British army in India declared that literacy was a prerequisite for admission. Girls' schools did not open until after 1947 (LeVine, 2006, p. 23) but as the democracy movement gathered speed after 1951, there was a spontaneous growth in the number of schools. Many people decided to open schools, regardless of whether they could find suitable buildings or qualified teachers: some schools were even founded under trees! (Sharma, 2006). The Ranas sought to suppress many 'home grown' classes, fearing that they were a cover for political meetings.

Significant international intervention came from the US with the arrival of Hugh G. Wood, Professor of the University of Oregon, who was appointed as Special Educational Advisor to Nepal from 1953-1959. The US agenda was for him to introduce 'proper' schools, called 'Mobile Normal Schools' to Nepal (Wood, 1987, p. 227), along with the concept of democracy, to prevent the spread of Communism (Caddell, 2007, p. 257). He initially reported that he had found in Nepal 'no schools, no education system, and no educational traditions' (Wood, 1965). The literacy rate of 5.3% recorded in the first national census of 1952 has been judged to be an *over*-estimate (LeVine, 2006, p. 23). Wood was a chief architect of the Nepal National Education Planning Commission (NNEPC) of 1954-55 which set out a long-term educational programme including recommendations relating to teacher training, culturally contextualised learning materials, literacy campaigns, free primary education, along with advice as to how foreign aid could help launch schools (Wood, 1965). Perhaps inspired by the linguistic homogeneity of the United States, the NNEPC of 1955 promoted Nepali as the main language not only because it made learning easier and cheaper, but with the well-intentioned belief that if ethnic languages would 'gradually disappear', Nepal might experience 'greater national strength and unity' (NEPC, 1955; (Caddell, 2007, p. 259).

However, progress in the implementation of these goals was disrupted by King Mahendra's coup of 1961. The elected prime-minister Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala and many other top political leaders were jailed and party less Panchayat rule began in Nepal. At the end of the Rana regime Nepal had only 310 primary schools, eleven high schools, two colleges, one comprehensive

school and one special technical school. Education was mainly for the elite, such as a small number of rich Brahmins who managed to go to Banaras Hindu University, which opened in India in 1916, and study in Sanskrit.

The Panchayat Regime (1961-1990)

The political coup of King Mahendra had changed education goals and principles to fit around Hinduism and loyalty to the monarchy. King Mahendra introduced the new 'Panchayat' system which advocated one religion (Hinduism), one language (Nepali) and one set of values (Hindu Values), which naturally aroused resentment in Nepal's historically multi-cultural society. Although the King banned all political parties, he denied charges of autocracy, presenting the new system as a party-less, social-democratic, monarchist state. Power was delegated to village administrators who tightly controlled the law, business and social affairs. King Mahendra was preoccupied with modernising the Nepali state and improving its status in the eyes of the world with ambitious projects like the East-West Highway and a distribution of land to try to move the population from feudalism to small farm ownership. A clear commitment to developing Nepal's infrastructure and public services also provided incentives for international donors to provide support. The main donor to Nepal during this period was the US, which demanded evidence of modern progress. Isolation, ignorance and 'backwardness' were associated with the 'darkness' of the disgraced Rana regime (Caddell, 2007, p. 8 & p.13).

Education During the Panchayat Regime

In contrast to the Rana regime, the new constitution of 1962 declared education to be the given right of every Nepali (Ragsdale, 1989). In 1970 the Panchayat regime introduced the National Education System Plan (NESP), based around the Panchayat motto – 'One nation- Nepal, One language- Nepali and One political system- Panchayat'. Educational objectives – including the motto, school curriculum and text books - revolved around praising the Panchayat. I can remember seeing the photos of the King and Queen on the first two pages of our compulsory textbooks, which like the rest of the curriculum, were printed in Kathmandu by the Curriculum, Textbook and Inspection Development Centre then distributed nationwide. Instead of fostering creativity and critical thinking, the NESP was dominated by the political aims of strengthening 'national integration' around a common language and culture, namely, Nepali and Hinduism (Burghart, 1996; Shah, 1993) and to build up faith in the state and monarchy through constant

propaganda (Onta, 1996), from tales of 'national heroes' to mantras praising the King.

In terms of quantity, however, the education system was significantly improved with a 40% increase in the number of schools between 1970 and 1980 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 1987b), as well as higher enrolments of teachers and students, eventually dragging the national literacy rate up from 12.6 per cent in 1971 to 23.3 percent in 1981. The first private schools were opened, on the grounds that this would ease the burden on the state. Radically for the society, boys and girls were to have equal educational opportunities (LeVine, 2006, p. 23). King Mahendra set up the 'All Round National Educational Committee – ARNEC' and Hugh Wood was again brought in to advise, this time via UNESCO (Timsina, 2011, p. 61). The Wood report recommended the centralisation and nationalisation of all schools (Khanal, 2013, p. 26); universal free and compulsory primary education; control of the pupil-teacher ratio to prevent overcrowding and that compulsory technical education be phased in by 1985. The NESP (The National Education System Plan) of 1971 again specifically dismissed regional languages as limiting 'financial and social mobility' (Ministry of Education, 1971). Nepali language teaching was to take up nearly half of the primary school curriculum. This time around, the concept of the School Management Committee (SMC) was also rejected as threatening the nationalism and centralism of the state (Caddell, 2007, p. 16).

The Panchayat regime offered little in the way of child protection. The national code of law (the Muluki Ain) stated in 1963:

if a person, who has a duty to protect or give education to somebody else, causes injury to the victim upon using a reasonable minimum amount of force, the act of causing injury shall not be deemed to be the offence of hurt in all these situations (Article 4, Chapter 9)

Although sometimes excused as a justification for accidental or unintentional violence in certain circumstances, in fact the text of this hitherto unrepealed law can be used to defend considerable injury. It is not clear what is meant by a 'reasonable minimum amount of force', bearing in mind that punishment is not mentioned, only the teacher's responsibility to 'protect' and 'educate'. Even by the mid-eighties, corporal punishment may have contributed to the widespread absenteeism and the fact that 50% of pupils were dropping out of primary school within the first two years (LeVine, 2006, p. 26).

Calls for educational change came firstly from student protests against the NESP policies, beginning in 1966. Due to pressure from international donors,

the government had tried to boost vocational education in universities and colleges – but had done so by artificially bringing in a failure rate of 80% for arts and business students (Caddell, 2007, p. 14). In the Spring of 1979, a protest by Nepali students against the execution of former Pakistani prime-minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was violently suppressed. Students campaigned for a national referendum over the introduction of a multiparty democratic system. Although the pro-democracy movement lost to Panchayat supporters by a small margin, the referendum served to politically educate the populace and remind them of their rights.

The student movement gained strength after police fired on students protesting in a classroom in 1985 and several bombs were set off in retaliation. The Basic Needs Fulfilment Programme of 1988 sought to bring the poorest, most excluded members of society into schools but this came too late. What people most sought at this time was greater control. Instead, every aspect of education, including university education, was now being monitored by a monarchist-led education committee (Khanal, 2013, pp. 30-31).

The Democratic Period: 1990-1996

It was not until 1990 that the People's Movement (*Jana Andolan*) re-emerged to overthrow the Panchayat regime and restore democracy, at the cost of hundreds of lives. But the political parties still failed to meet people's expectations and the power struggle between political parties hampered Nepal's policy development. The government's National Plan of Action incorporated many equality goals, notably Education For All, which was prioritised after the Jometein Conference in 1990 and EFA goals (including the aim of achieving a 90% enrolment rate) were incorporated into Nepal's Eighth Plan (1992-1997) and Ninth Plan (1997-2002), in cooperation with UNESCO (Timsina, 2011, p. 64).

The constitution of 1991 described Nepal as a 'multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, democratic, indivisible, sovereign, Hindu and Constitutional Monarchical Kingdom' with people living 'in healthy, happy harmony with all other religions, ethnic groups, communities and languages'. However, it had only recognised all indigenous languages of Nepal as equally irrelevant 'national languages' (*rashtriya bhasa*). The Nepali language, in contrast, was described as 'the national language' (*rastra bhasa*) (Caddell, 2006, p. 21). By retaining Nepali as the official language, the government effectively implemented the same

agenda as the Panchayat regime of 'One nation – Nepal!, One language – Nepali!'. This 'institutionalisation' of prejudice (Carney & Rappleye, 2011) was to form part of the Maoist's justification for the civil war.

Education During the Democratic Period

On 26th February 1991, the government of Nepal formed a National Education Commission (NEC) under the leadership of Keshar Jung Rayamajhi but the commission failed to produce their report by the given deadline. On 1st August 1991, the NEC re-formed, with sixteen members, chaired by the Education Minister, Govinda Raj Joshi.

The commission submitted their report on 18th May 1992 (MoE, 1992). It contained several recommendations, including a move to encourage the private sector to play a greater role in the education system; the removal of tuition fees (although many other fees remained); a respect for indigenous languages; increased recruitment of female teachers reconfirming the goal of achieving 'Education for All' by 2000. Both the constitution and the NEC recommended (as did the HLEC) that primary education should be provided in the children's' mother tongue, but no funding was provided for the schools of ethnic communities (LeVine, 2006, p. 24).

Obsequiousness to international donors could be seen in the inclusion of the achievements of charities and the UN in the school curriculum (Caddell, 2007, p. 1) encouraging co-operation and participation (Caddell, 2007, p. 22), with an implicit message that modernity and development should not be resisted by traditional lifestyles, which were associated with overpopulation, environmental damage, poor hygiene and ignorance. The 1992 NEC Report also used the Western rhetoric of democracy and equal opportunities and rights for vulnerable and marginalised people which could not fail to impress international donors (Caddell, 2007, p. 22).

The World Bank supported the Basic and Primary Education Project of 1992 (focusing upon the curriculum and learning materials) as well as the Primary Education Development Project (focusing upon teacher-training) (LeVine, 2006, p. 24). This sought to improve access to education by criteria such as 'quality' and 'relevance' (Timsina, 2011, p. 64), although the latter tended to be defined

in Western terms as a vocational emphasis, rather than cultural contextualisation (Luitel & Taylor, 2007). Admirably, however, the BPEP organised a programme of non-formal schooling for children between the ages of 6 to 14 who were unable to come to official schools because of problems such as transport, family tragedy, geographical barriers or extreme poverty. The BPEP also vastly improved access for Dalit, female and disabled students through scholarships to cover the numerous school fees and incidental costs.

However, donors were disappointed that although the schemes had boosted enrolments, several years later Nepali students were still 'weak' in terms of 'achievement' - with EDSC (Educational and Developmental Service Centre) test results, particularly in Maths, of under 50% in 1997 and 27% in 1999 (Carney, 2003, p. 92). Financially stretched by the insurgency, the government introduced decentralisation and privatisation as a way to meet EFA targets (Shields & Rappleye, 2008, p. 271) and address the 'quality' concerns of donors by fostering competition. This neo-liberal approach put less emphasis upon issues of educational equity and social justice (Carney, 2003, p. 92) and instead created fresh divisions and resentments which were arguably a contributory factor to the civil war, with schooling itself sometimes bringing forth 'new forms of disdain' (Skinner & Holland, 1996, p. 274) and disruption to dominant traditions. The World Bank backed the CSSP (Community Support Plan) in 2003 which involved transferring the management of schools and their teachers to 'stakeholders', namely pupil's parents, through SMCs, with the World Bank providing incentive payments (Carney & Bista, 2009, p. 189).

Although the 90's saw a boom in parents ready to pay for private education (LeVine, 2006, p. 25), for students unable to afford school fees, the experience of privatisation was one of disappointment, confusion and exclusion. Besides furthering inequality, with dramatic differences in the public and private sectors in terms of pupil-teacher ratios, building quality and SLC results, educational institutions became highly politicised, with overt links between governor bodies and local politicians. Reports of corruption persisted. Despite the promises made by the democracy movement, the experience of non-Nepali speakers in schools remained baffling and stressful, whilst economic hardship continued to make school attendance difficult, although the government continued to provide some non-formal out of hours classes to fit in with farm work schedules. Poverty could not only prevent payment of school fees but schooling was affected by multidimensional aspects of poverty such as lack of

food, family health and the fear of losing precious crops if they were not harvested in time.

The Children's Act of 1992 had also contained a piece of legislation which was a double-edged sword. It stated:

No child shall be subjected to torture or cruel treatment, provided that the act of scolding and minor beating to the child by his father, mother, member of the family, guardian or teacher for the interests of the child himself shall not be deemed to violate the provisions of this section.

(Children's Act, 1992, p. Article 7:4)

Whilst manifesting as a child-protection measure, it effectively legalised violence against children, leaving open the definition of a 'minor beating' and justifying it 'in the children's interest'. This legislation has frequently been cited by teachers accused of using excessive corporal punishment and used as a defence. The UNCRC (Convention on the Rights of the Child) picked up on this point specifically, with the following comment:

Interpretation of a child's best interest must be consistent with the whole Convention, including the obligation to protect children from all forms of violence and the requirement to give due weight to the child's views; it cannot be used to justify practices, including corporal punishment, which conflict with the child's human dignity and right to physical integrity. (General Comment, 8)

Despite being a signatory to the UNCRC however, the government failed to intervene to prevent corporal punishment. A 1998 study claimed that 14% of students left school prematurely due to fear of the teacher (Haq & Haq, 1998, p. 81). The Nepal Human Development Report (1998) showed a dropout rate of 63% of primary school children and 27% of secondary school children in 1994. In particular, students were burdened by pedagogies involving rote-learning and memorisation. Not only history dates, maths formulae, patriotic poems had to be remembered but also set answers to social studies questions designed to promote 'critical debate'. A question such as 'What are the uses of television?' usually had to be answered with the ten points given by the teacher, not with a student's own ideas. A popular chant of the time that children were forced to recite was '*Ghokante Bidhya Dhawante Kheti*' ['education through memorisation is like agriculture: it requires hard work without a break']. This was easy to understand for most pupils, who combined

their studies with working on the land. The nineties focus upon 'outcomes' failed to address quality issues in general pedagogy, beyond the narrow criteria of test results (Carney, 2003, p. 95).

The Civil War 1996-2006

The origins of Nepal's Civil war have been traced back to structural inequalities (Bhattarai, 2003), 'rampant' political corruption and cultural alienation (Ganguly & Shoup, 2005, pp. 136-139). Occasionally, the rebellion has been connected to the well-intentioned intervention of foreign nations (Carney & Rappleye, 2011, p. 2), such as USAID's replacement of cannabis production in the Rapti zone (a key region in the civil war) with aid to elites (Rappleye, 2011, pp. 8-9)). Such redistributions of wealth could be catastrophic in a country where 90% of the population were living in poverty (Carney, 2003, p. 91). The catalyst however, was when Prime Minister and Congress Party Leader Sher Bahadur Deuba chose to ignore a list of 40 demands presented to him by the CPN Maoist United People's Front, which differed little from those raised in the People's Movement of 1990. The CPN-M responded to this rejection by attacking several police stations and factories in February 1996 (Pherali, 2011) and declaring the start of the People's War.

The rebellion gained popular support after June 2001, when nine members of the royal family including King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya were shot dead. Prince Deependra was also shot and allegedly fell into a coma, during which period he inherited the throne, but after two days he died. The throne then passed to King Birendra's only surviving brother, Gyanendra, who had been visiting Pokhara during the killings. A Royal Investigation Commission announced that the shootings were carried out by Prince Deependra and that he had committed suicide. Many Nepalese did not believe this account and believed that Gyanendra had instigated the killings (Shrestha, 2012, p. 204). King Gyanendra Shah seized political power, appointing and dismissing ministers at will. By November 2001, peace negotiations had collapsed. Maoist troops - with very little in the way of clothing, arms or training - launched a nationwide attack on police and army posts and began seizing control of post offices, council offices and schools. A state of emergency was declared and in 2002, the Royal Nepal Army began fighting the Maoist rebels, backed by \$12 million dollars from the United States and helicopters and guns from India. The war lasted for ten years, during which more than 13,000 people died, with atrocities on both sides. Thousands were left mentally and physically disabled or forced to flee their homes.

Finally, the seven main political parties of Nepal and the revolutionary CPN Maoist Party, concluded the 'Twelve Point Understanding' in New Delhi on 22 November 2005. This treaty pledged to end the rule of autocratic, absolute monarchy in Nepal by peaceful means. Although several parties were formerly monarchist, all now took a republican line and elections were agreed for the formation of a Constituent Assembly, with the Maoists, in turn, indicating their readiness to accept a multi-party democracy. King Gyanendra restored the parliament in 2006 and a peace deal was struck between the revolutionary CPN Maoist and the Government of Nepal. This was co-signed by the Prime minister of Nepal Girija Prasad Koirala and Chairman of CPN Maoist and Supreme Commander of the People's Liberation Army, Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'.

Education During the Civil War

Educational issues lay at the heart of the civil war, with the Maoists' '40 points' demands including the establishment of mother-tongue education, universal education and the closure of all for profit schools (Shields & Rappleye, 2008, p. 269). The Maoists also demanded an end to the 'commercialisation of education' (Shields & Rappleye, 2008, p. 272). Disappointingly, the first communist-led government of 1998, led by the Prime Minister and Chairman of the CPN UML, Manmohan Adhikari, had insisted on preserving the programme of decentralisation and privatisation following the setting up of the High Level Education Commission to review the progress of the NEC. Nevertheless, the Tenth Education Plan of 2002-2007 prioritised social justice, opposed discrimination and drew up a 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper' through vocational training but the upheaval of the war delayed its implementation.

Resistance in schools had translated into an unwillingness to sing the national anthem, a refusal to hail the King and a rejection of Sanskrit subjects in the school curriculum, on the grounds that it was the language of the dominant Hindu Brahminism and thus disrespected the ethnic and religious diversity of Nepal. In the Rukum and Rolpa districts, where the conflict began, the Maoists established a '*janabadi* ('new democratic') school to provide an alternative education with a curriculum created by Maoist intellectuals. This included learning about the history and cultural diversity of Nepal, an emphasis upon science and vocational training to empower the workers (Baral, 2011, p. 1). Maoist education policies boldly condemned school privatisation and the 'bourgeois education system', gaining many followers among poor and

indigenous people seeking educational inclusion. Patriotic, monarchist textbooks were side-lined and Maoist troops allegedly taught children a revolutionary alphabet containing phrases like 'chha is for chhapamaar' [*guerrilla*] (a resistance strategy going back to 19th century England (Thompson, 1991, p. 778).

Whilst child-soldiers are often presented as only vulnerable victims, many schoolchildren joined the rebels willingly (Pherali, 2011, p. 137). They believed that the revolution would bring them justice, having become increasingly angry with the body searches and torture carried out by the security forces. Many had also witnessed the burning of the houses and the executions of anybody suspected of sheltering Maoist soldiers. Both the PLA (People's Liberation Army) and the Royal Nepal Army regularly used schools as bases and shelters, with bombs and cross-fire frequently leading to the closure of schools. Schools were frequently searched for child combatants (Caddell, 2005); and some pupils were even used as human shields (Thapa & Sijapati, 2005). Many teachers and students were murdered, some accused by the Royal Nepal Army of being Maoist activists; others accused of spying for the government side. Students witnessed the overturning of traditional power relations. Maoists rebels painted the face of a principal of a private school then forced him to do sit-ups with shoes around his neck (Caddell, 2007, p. 1 & p.19) whilst the Royal Nepal Army made another teacher kneel, holding his ears (a common punishment in Nepalese schools) in front of his pupils. In the Parbat district, the royal army dragged two teachers from their homes and tied them to a tree with rope, in the playground of the school where they taught, and shot them dead. A note accompanied the bodies warning that if anybody tried to give them a funeral ceremony they would also be killed. Many teachers paid lip service to both sides, singing patriotic songs when government inspectors were present then supporting the Maoists when they arrived. As the revolution spread, often schools were the only representatives of the state left in areas deserted by other government institutions, which forced them into politicisation (Sharma, 2006).

Learning was badly affected by the 'bandhs' (strikes) called by the Maoists (Shields & Rappleye, 2008, p. 270) which schools were expected to support as a show of solidarity, with some opening for less than 100 days a year. Many students, especially in the hilly region of the Far West and Mid-West dropped out of school through fear of abduction, or accusations of partisanship. Some

were relocated by their parents to India or safer towns; others were orphaned by the war and had to leave school to look after younger siblings and run farms. By 2003, national enrolment rates were less than 70% in primary schools and about 40% for secondary schools (Carney, p91, 2003). During the war, from 1996-2006, 617 students and 216 teachers were killed during the war and 154 students and 24 teachers went missing (according to the human rights organisation INSEC), with the majority of students and teachers being victimised by government forces. 3000 teachers stopped teaching during the war, which left remaining teachers forced to teach huge classes of up to 70 pupils (Thapa & Sijapati, 2005).

The Maoist rebellion introduced new ideas of equality and human rights into educational discourse. In particular, schools during this period rejected caste prejudice and superstitions and 'used egalitarian, rights based values and rhetoric to indirectly oppose and challenge the authority of elder community members' (Valentin, 2005, p. 137). But although the children of Nepal had been politicised and lured into the war by promises of human rights improvements, the Maoist rebellion resulted in little protection from corporal punishment, which continued in schools (Shrestha & Thakuri, 2004) and at home (UNICEF ROSA, 2001) quoted in (Mishra, et al., 2010)) although it was no longer used for offences such as 'disrespecting the national anthem'. In 2002, an amendment was brought into the Education Rule stating that 'no student should be physically and mentally violated', however this was broadly interpreted to mean that extreme cases of abuse should be prohibited. Maoist courts had also sometimes meted out sentences of corporal punishment to their enemies. In a later chapter, I discuss the influence of corporal punishment upon the civil war especially the notions of automatic compliance, war as collective punishment and rebellion against patriarchy. Ganguly and Shoup (2005) make the psychologically interesting point that during the war, submission to authoritarian rulers was swiftly transferred from the monarchy to the Maoists: as they became the 'winning side'. Nevertheless, a significant development in corporal punishment legislation took place on 6 January 2005 when the proviso of the 1992 Children's Act that beating is acceptable if it is in the child's 'best interest' was declared 'null and void' by the Supreme Court (*Mr Devendra Ale et al v Office of the Prime Minister & Cabinet et al in (GIEPCP, 2017)*). The case was brought by the Centre for the Victims of Torture in 2004, (whose report included details of several deaths and suicides by schoolchildren physically punished during the late nineties) on the grounds that beating children was unconstitutional and violated Nepal's constitutional protection for

the rights of children (UNICEF & CVICT, 2004). In 2007 a government-backed teacher training manual was circulated amongst Nepali teachers entitled 'Teaching Without Punishment' but its recommendations were often ignored in practice.

Nepal 2006 to 2015 – From Ethnic Conflict to Global Identities

The civil war was officially over by 2006 but political repression and mass demonstrations against the monarchy continued. The People's Movement (Jana Andolan) thrived on the accord struck between Nepal's main political parties and the Maoists. A General Strike was declared on 6 April which was followed by frequent curfews, with thousands of arrests and the shooting of anti-monarchy protestors 2006 (BBC, 19/04/2006). The crowds chanted slogans such as 'Killer Gyanendra leave the country [*Hatyaro Gyanendra desh chhod*],' and 'May the current dysentery take Gyanendra [*yas paliko haija Gyanendralai lai*]' . One group managed to get within a few hundred yards of the King's palace before they were tear-gassed (CBS News, 23/04/2006). After weeks of unrest, King Gyanendra finally began to cede power and the 240 year old monarchy was abolished completely. Nepal was declared a Federal Democratic Republic in 2008 by the all-party Constituent Assembly and the King was given notice to leave the palace, which he did 'gracefully' (Shrestha, 2012, p. 217) on 11 June 2008.

In 2008, the Maoist activists who had dominated the civil war were formally elected to form a government and shortly afterwards declared that a Constituent Assembly should be set up to create a new constitution for Nepal. After 2008, the Constituent Assembly faced time-consuming difficulties with constant wrangling between numerous political parties and indigenous groups pressing for greater recognition. The CA was also perceived as open to the direct and indirect intervention of external powers, especially India, China, the EU and the US. The CA included a wide selection of interest groups and contained not only representatives of ethnic communities but also business people such as representatives of the private school sector and large media corporations.

The consistent failure of the first Constituent Assembly to draft a constitution for Nepal resulted in political instability, despite seven years of engagement in the peace process and the increasing implementation of democratic practices.

On 19 November 2013, a CA election led to the formation of a new government but the relationship between Nepalese political parties often swinging between consensus and conflict (Lawati, 2005, p. 135) and some of the smaller, ethnic parties, in particular, feeling aggrieved at the continued exclusion of their agendas (Pherali & Garratt, 2013). Disruptive demonstrations and *banda* therefore continued. Meanwhile, rumours of corruption flourished, with representatives of some of the largest parties accused of attempting to bribe voters with offers of consumer durables such as bicycles and computers. Political and economic instability has continued to make young people perceive the nation as fundamentally 'broken' and flight as the only solution. Globalisation has led to mass migration, increased use of the Internet and widespread assistance from INGOs and neighbouring countries in the form of interventions frequently laden with conditions (Timsina, 2011) which may be either helpful for Nepal's future or somewhat interested and exploitative (Lechner & Boli, 2004, pp. 270-282).

Education 2006-2015: From Ethnic Conflict to Global Identities

The years since 2006 had been characterised by a tendency towards possessive individualism and 'owing nothing to society' (Macpherson, 1962) in contrast to the collective action of the war years. Ironically, political reconciliation was initially eased by families' preoccupation with self-interest. This ideology has been played out in schooling more than anywhere else, with many Nepalis subscribing to the myth that schooling is a religion that can offer 'salvation', even if this hope proves futile (Illich, 1971). Private schools have profited by 'selling dreams' (Caddell, 2006, p. 467), with globalisation promising 'freedom' (Olssen, et al., 2004, p. 14). In practice, however, students have experienced the cruel juxtaposition of 'connectivity and exclusion' (Madsen & Carney, 2011) and global 'progress' tantalisingly visible online, with glass yet impenetrable 'exclusionary walls' (Ferguson, 2005). Discontent has only been exacerbated by the knowledge of what they are missing, to the extent of suicides taking place after visa rejections and the possibility of armed conflict resurfacing (Carney & Rapple, 2011, p. 7).

The decentralisation measures of the School Sector Reform Plan (2009 - 2015) have put further pressure on schools to be accountable to parents who are often themselves more interested in the economic success of children than issues like diversity and inclusiveness. Intensifying competition from and within the private sector has led to schools being subjected to performativity 'terror'

(Ball, 2008, p. 49) and ‘effectiveness’ (Carney, 2003) concerns, without a consideration of ‘what ‘good’ schools might mean in different contexts’ (Carney, 2003, p. 88). This ‘over-accountability’ (Chitty, 2004, p. 205), especially over the issue of SLC results (upon which a school’s economic success depends), using the ‘loose signifiers of ‘quality’ and ‘excellence’ (Carney & Rapple, 2011, p. 3) has ironically led to a *lack* of accountability over the *treatment* of pupils, who are instead tormented over their performance, leading to numerous mental health difficulties, including suicides (UNICEF & CVICT, 2004, p. 25). As Ball notes ‘Targets, accountability, competition and choice...change what is important, valuable and necessary’ (Ball, 2008, p. 43). Schools are no longer based upon spiritual life (once beginning every day with a prayer to Saraswati, the goddess of education), but instead must follow the ‘cult of efficiency’ (Callahan, 1962) and ‘the theology of quality’ (Henkel, 1998, p. 291). These ideologies, with an economic base overtly linked to the Human Capital model of education (Spring, 2009, p. 19) have limited learning to ‘pedagogies of consequence’ (Unterhalter & Carpentier, 2010, p. 95), that is, what learning may lead to, rather than its value in itself. A focus on careers, in particular the ‘white-collar’ ambitions of parents for their children, led to educational institutions promoting subjects such as Maths, Accountancy and Engineering above Arts and the Social Sciences. The overwhelming economic pressure on Nepali learners to study for profit means that, at this stage in its history, at least, an intellectually fulfilling or ‘life-affirming’ (Luitel & Taylor, 2007, p. 647) education remains an unimaginable luxury. Inadvertently, this has satisfied the goal of the Rana regime to prevent any education which might encourage critical consciousness among the oppressed (Shields & Rapple, 2008, p. 267).

With few job vacancies in Nepal, educational institutions have produced cheap labour for the global market, with educated Nepalis being ‘exported’ to India, Gulf countries, Korea or many other countries around the world. Studying abroad is not without its challenges, with restrictions upon students (The Daily Express, 21/12/2014) and fees set at a third higher than those of domestic students by the government. The cost of an average PhD, for example, would normally be equivalent to 150 years of my first teaching salary in Nepal.

The Nepalese government illustrated its willingness to ban corporal punishment and other forms of abuse in schools by supporting the global Learn Without Fear (LWF) campaign, launched on 21st November 2008. The Ministry of Education and Department of Education co-operated with this initiative backed by charities including UNICEF, Save the Children and PLAN Nepal.

Despite these moves to ban corporal punishment, numerous severe cases continued to emerge (see *Appendix*). On 27 May 2014, student Ajay Dhobey had to be airlifted to hospital in Kathmandu after a teacher punished her by breaking her eye (*My Republica*, 27/05/2014). Shortly before that, four 12-year-old children were found in Kathmandu carrying 14 bags of rice, cooking pots, sheets and clothes. They had run away from their home in Bhateshwori and announced that they would rather be street children than endure any more thrashings from their teacher (*Republica*, 27/5/14). In February 2014 a child's eardrum was broken by a teacher at Swayambhu School in Kathmandu. On this occasion the teacher was prosecuted and sued. In July 2013 a child had their eye destroyed by a teacher at Banke Private School (*Ekantipur*). The school tried to keep it secret but eventually the matter was reported to the police. More typical is the incident at Gorkha in August 2013, where a pupil was knocked unconscious by a teacher. The teacher confessed and promised not to do it again and no further action was taken. A 5-year-old girl's leg was broken by a teacher who beat her regularly (*Nagarik News*, 15/09/2014) leading to the Nepal governments' Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare to propose a bill to ban corporal punishment, but this was not finalised.

Nepali schools have been subjected to the Western capitalist paradigm without the accompaniment of the progressive teaching methods and child protection measures implemented in European nations. Financial assistance has sometimes involved the polite but firm imposition of a specific definition of democracy which presents decentralisation and the privatisation of education as its essential components, rather than prioritising equality and child welfare. Decentralisation has been invested with the thrall of a 'fetish' (Carney & Rapple, 2011, p. 8) said to represent 'people power' and facilitate greater ethnic representation, rather than the minimisation of state support (Carney, et al., 2007) - an argument also used by advocates of 'Free Schools' in the UK (Adonis, 2012, p. 185). In practice, however, the increased power of SMCs may have limited participation and reproduced alienation in the form of elites (Khanal, 2010) and politically motivated teacher appointments (Carney, 2003, p. 92).

Global ideoscapes and financescapes (Appadarai, 1996) were beginning to undermine the right of the Nepali state and Nepali teaching unions to manage schooling (Timsina, 2011). The Education ministry became less relevant and is became more of a manager of the national education budget than an accountant for donor funds (Carney & Rapple, 2011, p. 7). The government's

education policy was and still is dominated by the demands of donors, such as the World Bank's insistence upon competitiveness in the education market (Ball, 2008, p. 32) , which might be threatened by the actual *achievement* of equality (Ball, 1990, p. 61). INGOs have sometimes had their agendas 'narrowed' by donors (Rappleye, 2011) and backed the privatisation of schools – who have sometimes approached them directly for assistance (Caddell, 2006, p. 475). Donors have also insisted upon the avoidance of waste and fraud. Recently suspicions were aroused further by the vast number of charities online claiming to build schools in Nepal and repair earthquake-hit regions.

Primary school enrolment gradually reached an impressive 95.1%, although the drop-out remained at over 30%, with one third of Grade One students unable to continue into Grade Two. Attendance rates also improved (Lohani, et al., 2010), but on an individual level, absence fees brought misery to many families under stress. Whilst it is undeniable that private school exam results were dramatically higher than government school results (Shields & Rappleye, 2008, p. 272) the flight of both middle-class students (in Nepalese terms, the comparatively less poor) and better quality teachers from state schools hastened their decline, with government resources and logistics unable to compete effectively (Carney, 2003). In 2014, only 43.92 % of pupils nationwide passed the SLC exam (Kathmandu Post, 14/06/2014), with 37,526 students not taking the exams (of whom 17,837 – in a deeply unprogressive tradition – were barred from the exam as a punishment for poor school attendance). I frequently heard complaints from fellow teachers in private schools that 'weak' pupils were being held back from taking the SLC exam and told that they were 'not ready' lest their poor performance affect their results tables. In some cases, private schools would not even take on students who were expected to have poor results that might damage their reputation.

Disaster and Division: 2015 and Beyond

It took the Constituent Assembly from 2008 to 2015 to ratify the Nepalese constitution, due to continual wrangling between the old political parties and the majority UCPN (*United Communist Party of Nepal*) Maoist Party. A consensus could not be achieved in several policy areas, as views differed between the large number of federal states and both directly elected and parliamentary representatives. After the first Constituent Assembly was dissolved, a new government was formed under the Chief Justice, Khilanath

Regmi and elections were proposed for a new Constituent Assembly. The Maoists UCPN split as a result with one faction renaming itself the CPN - Maoist, led by Mohan Baidhya. His party boycotted the second Constituent assembly and protested against the elections, arguing that a new CA would never represent the needs of the poorest and working-class Nepalese people. The CPN-Maoists set off bombs targeting CA candidates and especially members of their old party, the UCPN Maoists and their former party chairman, Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'. Despite these attempts, the Constituent Assembly elections were held on 19th November 2013. The election result was a great shock to everyone. The revolutionary and federalist forces, such as the UCPN Maoist party and the Terai/Madhesh based ethnic party, suffered big defeats. The traditional Nepali Congress party won the election with 196 seats and the moderate CPN-UML (United Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Nepal) came second with 175 seats. Instead of the victory that they were expecting, the UCPN Maoists only won 80 seats. The remaining 291 seats were taken by small parties, mostly representing different ethnic groups and regions of Nepal. Unexpected success also came for both of the parties who had dominated the Panchayat period: the Hindu monarchist Rashtriya Prajatantrik Party Nepal (24 seats) and the Panchayat Hindu republican Rashtriya Prajatantrik Party, who gained 13 seats. These two parties recently merged on the 21st November 2016. A new coalition government was formed, led by the chairman of the Nepali Congress Party, Shushil Koirala, in coalition with the UML (United Marxists and Leninists).

After the election, the political parties who had done worse than expected, particularly the UCPN (United Communist Party of Nepal) Maoists, made accusations of electoral fraud, bribery and demanded recounts. In response, the newly elected government set up an electoral committee but no investigation took place. The Congress party and the UML appeared willing to compromise by 'reaching out' to the Maoists (Gellner, 2014, p. 260) in its commitment to republicanism, secularism and the draft constitution agreed prior to the election. The last Constituent Assembly had already reached agreements on many issues and the main political parties had pledged to maintain these areas of consensus. But the new government instead started to draft a new constitution which sought to reduce the number of federal states, especially those which were identity-based, such as those recognised by Terai/Madesh parties and many other indigenous groups. Having felt sidelined by the government, these groups then accepted the solidarity offered by the UCPN Maoists, with whom they formed a coalition opposition party. Their

demands remained unanswered, leading to tension between the governing parties and indigenous protestors. Mass demonstrations took place in various regions of Nepal and some members of the Constituent Assembly resigned in protest against the draft constitution.

Suddenly, political disputes were postponed or forgotten when a 7.8 (some say 8.1) magnitude earthquake struck Nepal on 25 April 2015, followed by an aftershock of 7.3 magnitude on 12 May. 9000 people died and at least 24,000 were injured or disabled. Although Nepal has always been vulnerable to natural disasters, this event caused the highest economic and human losses in our history. Countries from all over the world offered tents and blankets, medical assistance, food and drink, financial help and day to day supplies to those affected by the earthquake. But the government was accused of blocking the distribution of aid to the earthquake survivors (Watson, 2016, p. 2 & p.11). Each political party wanted to earn the credit for the distribution of aid so sometimes created delays lest their rivals should gain future support from the communities they sought to help. The earthquake had devastated some of the poorest communities in Nepal and traumatised and often bereaved people had to exist with very little support. After the earthquake, came the rains, leading to landslides which swept whole villages away. Thousands of people were displaced and many vulnerable and orphaned young girls were trafficked to India, Gulf countries and elsewhere.

India had played a major role in providing help to earthquake victims, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi offering to 'wipe the tears, hold the hands and stand alongside every Nepali in this hour of crisis' (Mail Online India, 26/04/2015). This however, led to a nationalist outburst, as people found India's interventions to be patronising and patriarchal (Gyawali, 2015, p. 665) and were galled by Indian journalists, eager to further their careers, asking insensitive questions such as 'How does it feel to have lost all your family and your home?' (Radianti, et al., 2016). With a somewhat unseemly haste, India had demanded 'payback' for its assistance by sending a special envoy to pressurise Nepalese leaders not to promulgate the constitution.

Indian commentators seemed especially concerned about the religious freedom in the Nepalese constitution which it denounced as 'secularism' and a threat to Hinduism in the region. This gave rights to all minorities, including those often discriminated against in India, such as Muslim, Dalit and LGBT+ communities. The Indian administration was suspected of wanting to withhold

approval from the Maoist movement, whose members had played a major role in the crafting of the constitution, lest it boost Indian Maoists groups, one of which had killed 27 prominent Congress leaders including an Indian politician, Nand Kumar Patel, and his son in May 2013. Nepali nationalists argued that India had rejected the constitution as it could bring greater stability to Nepal, thus preventing India from playing the role of protective 'big brother' and exploiting Nepal's economic vulnerability. Control of foreign policy was also a major factor, given Nepal's proximity to China and narrow separation from Bangladesh. India's demands were ignored and the constitution was passed by 84.78% of the Constituent Assembly members – 507 out of 598 members - and promulgated on 20 September 2015. Just 25 members voted against it and 66 members abstained. The members who boycotted the vote were mostly members of Terai/Madhesh based political parties.

The Indian government were furious and from 23 September 2015 meted out a deadly punishment upon Nepal in the form of a blockade, cutting off essential supplies such as medicines, petrol and basic foodstuffs, perceived in Nepal as intended to 'teach Nepal a lesson' (Bist, 2015) about their dependency upon India. Nevertheless, India denied that the blockade was deliberate and blamed political unrest on the borders - an excuse reported by the World Bank, juxtaposed with a detailed report on the complex and far-reaching devastation caused by the blockade (World Bank, 2016, p. 12). This blockade came at the worst time in our history, whilst Nepalis were still reeling from the earthquake, with many severely injured civilians desperately needing transport, medicines and blood supplies. 95% of Nepali people were affected and the blockade was imposed between the two biggest festivals, Dashain and Tihar/Deepawali (Diwali), making it harder for families to be reunited. Following vigorous social media campaigns (Kathmandu Post, 22/09/2015) and international pressure, India eventually recommenced the supply of petroleum products but the blockade had seriously damaged Nepal's economy, people's health (Budhathoki & Gelband, 2016) and attempts to rebuild areas hit by the earthquake.

Although the blockade led to popular waves of anti-Indian feeling, this did not lead to a resurgence of support for the progressive political parties like the Maoists, but instead a resurgence of Panchayat-style nationalism. Hindu fundamentalists have also increased opposition to what they view as the 'interference' of American Christian evangelists and the ideas of secularism and non-traditional life choices being spread through electronic media. Nepalese

law retains harsh punishments for anybody attempting or succeeding in converting another person to a different religion, using a narrow interpretation of conversion as domination and nullifying the role of individual agency in religious choice. Some Christian schools have been criticised for making conversion a condition of entrance for poor children. My friend Sabita was told by her desperate parents, 'Say whatever they want to hear' but returned to Hinduism once her education was completed. The long delays in formulating the constitution, combined with the trauma of the earthquake, have meant that the ideals of the revolution have faded from people's minds. Communities have also been unsettled by INGOs such as Amnesty International pressurising for investigations into killings during the civil war, moves which are well-intentioned but are widely considered to threaten the peace, reconciliation and forgiveness achieved so far after years of delicate community negotiations and healing rituals.

Politically, the earthquake brought about a consensus between the main parties. Although their views had differed widely before the earthquake, most politicians agreed to the draft of the proposed constitution, apart from several indigenous groups and Terai/Madhesh-based political movements, who continued to protest against it. In October 2015, the Chairman of the UML, KP Sharma Oli, became the first Prime Minister following the ratification of the constitution, with the support of the UCPN Maoists. But his government only lasted for nine months after the Maoists withdrew their support when the government failed to bring in greater representation for ethnic groups.

On 3rd August 2016, a new government formed under Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', -the chairman of Nepal Communist Party (Maoist centre) originally the UCPN (Maoist). Prachanda's state visit to India from 15-18 September 2016, was intended to normalise the relations between the two countries and celebrate their historic ties. This diplomatic trip appeared to have gone smoothly, with courteous tributes and undertakings of economic co-operation. However, anti-Indian sentiments still ran high among Nepalis (Rising Nepal, n.d.), exasperated by foreign interference, leading to delays in promised investments.

The Prachanda-led government became very popular among the people and criticism of the government eased. There were three major contributory factors to this. Firstly, the availability of electricity. Power used to be cut for up to sixteen hours a day but in this period Kathmandu Valley received electricity 24/7 and power cuts were greatly reduced in rural areas of Nepal. Secondly,

the economic growth of the country reached 7.5%, the highest in 23 years (World Bank, 2017). Thirdly, the government ensured that the local elections passed off peacefully, despite the political turmoil in the Terai/Madhesh regions amongst the Terai/Madhesh-based parties and a revolt in the hilly region by the breakaway Communist Party of Nepal, led by Biplab, who had vowed to oppose the government and all its programmes.

Prachanda resigned from the government after nine months, following the second phase of the local elections, and handed over power to Sher Bahadur Deuba on 6th June 2016, the chairman of the Nepali Congress Party, as part of a gentlemen's agreement between the Nepali Congress Party and the CPN (Maoist- Centre). Following the local elections, the CPN (Maoist Centre), the UML (United Marxist-Leninist) and some left-leaning minority parties made a fresh coalition ready for the upcoming General and Federal elections. The Prime Minister, Deuba, had been removed from the government during the reign of King Gyanendra Shah and had been labelled as 'incompetent', after failing to hold a parliamentary election in 2002, an image he was keen to transform. The government decided to stage the election in two phases, on the 26 November and the 7 December 2017. In the meantime, the two major left parties, the Communist Party of Nepal (UML) and the CPN (Maoist Centre) agreed to take part in the election on a coalition basis, then formally merge the parties after the election. These left-wing parties justified their alliance on the basis that it would bring political stability with stable government, rapid economic growth and infrastructure development, implementation of the constitution, inclusive multi-party democracy and a balanced foreign policy.

The election was more peaceful than expected, despite several actions by the Communist party of Nepal who set off bombs targeting candidates from across the political spectrum and also blew up several local polling stations, including one at my old primary school. As had been predicted, the Leftist coalition won the majority of seats in the election, gaining a majority in 6 out of 7 provincial states. In Province number two, Terai/Madhesh, a coalition between the Rashtriya Janata Party and the Sanghiya Samajabadi Party gained a majority. On 15 February 2018, KP Oli, the Chairman of the UML, became the Prime Minister of Nepal with the support of the Maoist Centre. This merger between the UML and Maoists, along with ongoing negotiations with smaller parties, may indicate a move towards consensus politics, in contrast to the paralysing conflicts over ideological minutiae which had driven workers abroad, held up infrastructure development and damaged Nepal's agrarian stability.

Education Developments after 2015

The most significant recent change in education has been the abolition of the School Leaving Certificate (SLC) and the Higher Secondary Education Board (HSEB) in 2016, with an 8th Amendment to the 1971 Education Act.

This amendment also simplified education into two categories – Elementary (Classes 1 to 8) and Secondary (Classes 9 to 12) instead of the multiple divisions such as Primary/Lower Secondary/Secondary/Higher Secondary used previously. A letter grading system has been brought into replace numbers and divisions, in the belief that this, along with the abolition of the SLC, would also reduce the pressure on students. This obscures far more serious problems. Many of the suicides linked to SLC failures and poor grades (Bhattarai, 2014, pp. 12 - 13) took place in contexts of corporal punishment. Until this is abolished, students will continue to experience intolerable pressure, whatever the method of assessment and testing.

Corporal punishment incidents were seldom reported in the press during the year of the earthquake, 2015, but in 2016 their regularity continued (see *Appendix* for all related news articles). Teachers burst the eardrums of a 17-year-old boy in Gulmi (3/2/16) and a 10-year-old boy in Sindhuli (13/06/16) and a Dalit student had a rope put around his neck by his teacher and was provoked to commit suicide in front of his parents (27/9/16). Unusually, at the Shree Baghbhairab Higher Secondary School, Kuleshwor, a group of parents of children who had been caned united together and organised the arrest of the teacher (06/03/16), complaining about both the physical and psychological effects upon their children.

Corporal punishment scandals have not lessened in the last twelve months. In January 2017, two students from Palpa were hospitalised after being forced to remain in the ‘chicken’ position – one for four hours and one until they became unconscious (Kathmandu Post, 26/1/17). In February a teacher ran away after beating a student, terrified of repercussions (KalikaFM, 03/02/17). A student from Purwanchal was struck with a stick on the legs in May, which caused him to develop a blood clot and an infection (Nepal Monitor, 08/05/17). The following month six students from Pathariya required treatment after a maths teacher injured them during beatings for not doing their homework. (Nepal Monitor, 12/06/17). In both August (Thahakhabar, 04/08/17) and December (Thahakhabar, 19/12/17), teachers were arrested for beating students excessively. In an increasing number of cases, teachers are suspended or arrested and the issue of legal action does arise, but seldom is the use of corporal punishment itself

questioned or the sticks removed from the schools. This sends a message to teachers that corporal punishment is acceptable providing that it doesn't cause visible injuries. The 'shock' and 'horror' that some schools express when confronted with evidence of violence used by their teachers is sometimes a highly cynical and hypocritical attempt to avoid legal action and paying compensation. Who supplied the teacher with his stick? Who trained him to use it? Were they told by colleagues, like I was, that beating was fine so long as the marks didn't show? Levels of pain and distress however, are not always visible.

The trail of responsibility leads to every head-teacher and SMC that does not outlaw corporal punishment from the outset. Successive governments have failed to clarify laws on corporal punishment, which remain vague and contradictory, as discussed previously. Their application usually depends upon the determination of parents to pursue legal actions. There are occasional campaigns, such as an attempt by Tarak Dhital, of Nepal's Central Child Welfare Board, to make existing legislation more effective but progress is continually hampered by attitudinal barriers. As a 2017 study demonstrates, nearly fifty per cent of children are still physically punished at home (Kandel, et al., 2017, p. 108), making parents less likely to challenge physical punishments administered at school, unless motivated by the prospect of compensation. The real figure may be considerably higher than this, given that this data was supplied by households themselves. Are the higher levels of corporal punishment among less educated participants (Ibid, p109) due to worse parenting, or a less defensive response to quantitative surveys? My research has suggested, on the contrary, that corporal punishment is no less prevalent (just more effectively concealed) in comparatively well-educated, wealthier households – and indeed, may be exacerbated by the performativity pressures of middle class aspirations. In March 2017, a nine-year-old Dalit boy was thrashed for entering the kitchen of a different caste, who believed that he was 'unclean' (Kathmandu Post, 01/04/17), demonstrating that acts of extreme violence towards children are never just restricted to an 'underclass' and may even be used to reinforce class divisions.

The difficulty of the 'iron-gate' SLC could also have been a way of deliberately limiting the numbers eligible for costly higher-level education (Davies, 2016, p. 595) but it caused many barriers in everyday economic life, such as people being forbidden from driving without an SLC. Under the heading, 'The Right to education', the new constitution states that elementary education must be compulsory and free education must be guaranteed up to the end of secondary school. Students experiencing extreme poverty and students with disabilities

are now entitled to free higher and university education. People registered blind are entitled to receive their entire education in Braille and people with impaired hearing have the right to an education using sign language. For the first time, people from ethnic minorities now have the right to receive an education in their first language and to open schools for this purpose. (Government of Nepal , 2015). The SLC exam has now been replaced by the SEE, and no longer marks the end of school life.

There has been no change to the INGO-backed policy that education in Nepal should be scientific, technical, vocational, occupational and job creating. This 'manualisation' of education and careers emphasising 'standards, targets and efficiency' (Reid & West, 2016, p. 562) carries with it an imperialist bias towards modern forms of production. Instead of allowing time for the nurturing of wisdom, an impatient force is applied: colonising, dominating and pressurising wisdom as if it were a lemon being mechanically squeezed. The importance of transformative studies and those which necessitate time for quiet reflection, such as politics, sociology and philosophy is ignored in this paradigm, as are traditional skills, arts, crafts and religious rituals unless they prove lucrative, for example, in the tourist industry.

Instead of reflecting concerns raised in the considerable amount of critical literature on decentralisation, the new constitution has fully implemented decentralisation across its seven federal states and 744 new local authorities. Local authorities may now create educational policies and implement them at both elementary and secondary education level. Whilst manifesting as a means of returning 'power to the people', decentralisation is an example of one of the many neo-liberal interventions which express neutrality whilst in fact playing a major political role (Regmi, 2016, p. 9). The World Bank, which sought to challenge the 'serious politicization of the profession and the exertion of political influences' (World Bank, 2001, p. part 4) clearly does not advocate teachers playing a role in social transformation along Freirean lines. Its commitments to 'end extreme poverty' and 'boost shared prosperity' focus upon wealth-creation through neo-liberal economic policies, far removed from the Maoist concept of revolution to facilitate the redistribution of wealth. Since 1969, the World Bank has invested millions of dollars in the Nepalese education system and the cost of current project exceeds US\$1.506 billion (World Bank, 2016), with a further \$600 million dollars made available following the earthquake (World Bank, 2016)) Given these figures, it is unsurprising that governments of all political persuasions have capitulated to

donor demands and followed education policies that satisfy their wish to see 'progress'. Regmi suggests that this acquiescence is not only due to Nepal's lack of economic capital, but also a lack of 'intellectual capital' in its bureaucracy (Regmi, 2016, p. 11), which has perhaps weakened the bargaining power of the Ministry of Education. There has been some resistance however, to the privatisation of education and the neo-liberal ideology of unfettered competition. The government have now brought in measures to prevent private schools with inadequate facilities from over-charging students and from denying their employees protection from teachers' unions, a practice which had become normalised (Poudyal, 2015, p. 554).

A truly multi-ethnic and multi-cultural education remains pivotal to the maintenance of peace (Pherali, 2013, p. 7) and equality and diversity must be proved to be achievable, without being mutually exclusive. Notions of learning are being discussed which could work in harmony with, rather than directly against, learner's cultural contexts (Luitel & Taylor, 2007), with ethnic languages in the classroom no longer seen as a binary opposite of nationalism (Pradhan, 2016, p. 18). The additional strain upon many families following the earthquake, including losses of family members, livestock and buildings, have made it even more urgent for school to balance educational needs with 'survival needs', from mental peace to agricultural work schedules. Full engagement with learners of all castes and social groups (Khaniya, 2007, p. 68) represents resistance to the homogenisation of education, whether due to a dominant political power or hegemonic ideologies of 'success'.

Decentralisation is an example of the kind of deliberately 'de-politicised official civil society space' (Rappleye, 2011, p. 45) which manifests as the *vox populi* whilst forbidding any change beyond its strict social and economic limits, thus pushing discontented people to political extremes (Rappleye, 2011, p. 46). A similar criticism has been levelled against citizenship studies: that a place to vent concerns and be heard, may also be an attempt to contain dissent. The neutrality of decentralised citizenship spaces is undermined by their preference for verbalism over direct action to disrupt existing power structures. The suspicion that such organisations could not bring about real change has led to them being dismissed in favour of more extreme pathways.

Flashbacks to the militarisation of schools during the civil war – which many of us have – should not make education policy-makers run to the opposite extreme and create spaces which are devoid of politics, critique or transformative learning. Not only is this intellectually stifling, it represents a fake neutrality and conformity to a hidden, neo-liberal agenda, in which both

speech and oppression may flow freely. Decentralised or not, classrooms continue to be places of fear and oppression all the while corporal punishment is allowed to continue by ineffective law enforcement, reactionary SMC elites and educational models which prioritise the results that a student or teacher produces over their feelings of well-being. My participants' stories have emerged from a historical context of high pressure, enforced conformity and fear of conflict and death. These aspects of education in Nepal have yet to be challenged.

Chapter Three:

Conceptual Journey

Introduction

'Conceptual journey' seems a less restrictive title for this chapter than 'theoretical framework'. It describes my journey through constellations of thoughts (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 163) which illuminate and associate without conceptual ossification. Maxwell provides a notion of theory that is more akin to the narrative approach of autobiographical research:

Theory is a statement about what is going on with the phenomena that you want to understand. It is not simply a framework, although it can provide that, but a story about what you think is happening and why (Maxwell, 2013, p. 49).

The notion of a 'framework' suggests containment and confinement, conditions abhorrent to corporal punishment survivors such as myself whose movements have been violently suppressed. The idea of a 'literature review' is similarly stifling and would have limited my freedom of association with the theoretical friends, waifs and seekers that I have met along my research road, from all academic disciplines and none. Maxwell warns against too narrow a focus on existing literature and points out the multifarious sources of research ideas, including piecemeal and casual conversations with other learners, our experiences, 'speculative thinking' and 'exploratory research' (Maxwell, 2013, p. 40).

Can any theoretical framework be reconciled with an auto/biographical methodology? Is there something about auto/biography, emerging as it does from the flux of life and feelings, that defies thematization? By previously studying and developing themes around the effects of corporal punishment, I am not receiving my participants' accounts upon a blank page; I am surely less receptive and more interpretive, with the risk that I might seize upon those details from my participants which fit my preconceived opinion that corporal punishment is damaging, or even, consciously or unconsciously, steer them towards the answers that I seek; slotting their data into the grid of my conceptual framework rather than letting their stories run free.

However, firstly, no researcher is ever a 'blank page' and instead, comes to a topic (which they have deliberately chosen) with their own opinions on it

already and in my case especially, poignant auto/biographical experiences which already helped to shape my views long ago. Rather than feigning neutrality, I am openly confessing my perspective; 'where I am coming from', through my autobiographical section and 'mining it' (Strauss, 1987) with reflections upon my experiences throughout my thesis. Secondly, I hoped that my influence could be reduced to some extent through short, leading questions. I attempted to encourage my participants to give lengthy, detailed and as far as possible, unbroken answers in order to provide a greater degree of authenticity. Thirdly, my former research for my MSc helped to highlight the general areas of theoretical interest. Whilst the response of each individual participant is different, many of the pressures upon them are continuing themes in Nepalese history. As a result, my participants have produced familiar interpretations of experiences and meanings which my conceptual referents seek to clarify in each context rather than assign exclusively to my participants. Researcher domination can persist in the 'clarification' process itself, but I may move freely from the particular to the general, or the single to the eternal/universal, to use the metaphor from William Blake (Reid & West, 2015, p. 175), through the echoes of shared experiences and collective sighs. This is quite distinct from restrictive generalisability (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006) involving fixed predictions of outcomes.

Auto/biographical methodology approaches the phenomena of ideas, and the feelings from which they arise, with the awe and reverence of a poet and the receptivity and respect of a friend. The restless search for a deeper understanding resists the violence of conceptual containment. It gives my participants' experiences a wide-open space, rather than dragging them, cadaver-like, into a laboratory full of labels. This fluid notion of conceptualisation is described in Adorno's metaphor of constellations as illuminating, 'circling' and connecting but without 'freezing' or containing (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 163). Although such comparisons suggest new dichotomies, these are merely defensive, as I seek to protect the stories that I receive from my participants from the domination of and manipulation by pre-existing theories. On a conceptual journey, theory may serve to clarify, interpret and aid experimentation without a 'masterplan'.

Existing Literature

Literature on the subject of corporal punishment in Nepal is scanty, although several studies exist on corporal punishment in India (for example, (Raj, 2011); (Morrow & Singh, 2014); (Cherualath & Tripathi, 2015); (Ghosh & Pasupathi,

2016). The largest study in Nepal was a UNICEF backed project in 2004 carried out by CVICT (Care for the Victims of Torture). This study interviewed students, teachers and parents' groups and included a comprehensive list of the physical, social, intellectual and psychological effects of corporal punishment, humiliation, sexual abuse, confinement and other harsh punishments used in Nepali schools. The negative effects of corporal punishment in Nepal have been explored by Nepali paediatricians ((Mishra, et al., 2010); (Rimal & Pokharel, 2013)) but without following the life-stories of individual participants in the long-term. The majority of existing studies have been quantitative accounts in which survivors' accounts are summarised and accounted for in researcher commentaries rather than the survivors' voices being dominant.

Researchers on corporal punishment in Nepal have invariably noted the inconsistencies in the law and a failure to enforce the legal protections which children do have against violence ((Rimal & Pokharel, 2013, p. 157); (Khanal & Park, 2016, p. 54). Article 39.7 of the Nepali Constitution, ratified in 2015, specifies that:

No child shall be subjected to physical, mental or any other form of torture in home, school or in any other place and situation whatsoever.

In addition to the inevitable public resistance to defining the common practice of corporal punishment as torture, Article 39.7 has not clarified the contradictions between the Muluki Ain (defending corporal punishment), the Children's Act of 1992 (defending 'minor' beating) and a Supreme Court ruling in 2005 that condemned all forms of beating outright. The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment has welcomed the government's stated commitment to full abolition, but has published a Report exposing how policies to ban corporal punishment have seldom been applied in law and the prevalence of corporal punishment in homes, schools and care settings (GIECPC, 2017). Poor enforcement is also reinforced by cultures of impunity for teachers, who are often accorded a god-like status. The most accessible evidence of the prevalence of corporal punishment in Nepal is national newspapers (see Appendix A), which regularly include reports of extreme examples of severe injuries from burst eardrums to broken legs, as well as child suicide cases related to corporal punishment. These are often backed by harrowing photo evidence, medical reports and details of legal proceedings where parents have sought compensation.

Beyond the studies mentioned, the issue of corporal punishment in Nepal has emerged only briefly within research on other aspects of the Nepali education

system, such as Tejendra Pherali's research on conflict and education (Pherali, 2011, p. 145), Gayatree Timsina's work on gender discrimination (Timsina, 2011, pp. 32-33; 158-159) a study on the drop-out rate (Wagle, 2012, p. 55) and the incidental research of some NGOs such as (Plan International)(2008 & 2012). What has yet to be explored, is the effects of corporal punishment upon personal lives; including the intellectual, spiritual and economic effects upon individuals. In approaching these largely uncharted waters, I have needed to take a flexible approach to literature, gathering ideas from sources as diverse as feminism, child-standpoint theory, theological texts, critical theory, genocide studies, anti-colonialism resistance texts and the biographies of abuse survivors.

Although my study focuses upon lives affected by corporal punishment in schools, many key contributors to the debate over decades, for example, Murray Straus (Straus, 1994); (Straus, et al., 2014)), Alice Miller (1983), Elizabeth Gershoff (2002); (2010) (2017)) and her critics (Baumrind, et al., 2002; Larzelere, et al., 2017) have focused upon corporal punishment within the family. The outcomes identified are similar to those of corporal punishment in schools, despite differences in the emotions, motives and rituals involved. Gershoff also notes the negative impact of school corporal punishment upon learning and physical and mental health (Gershoff, 2017, p. 13) and the additional risk of injury due to the use of an implement (Gershoff, 2010, p. 49).

The literature that I explore not only considers possible effects and outcomes of corporal punishment but also illuminates the ideological conditions for the possibility of corporal punishment and how this interplays with different social and economic conditions. The social acceptance of corporal punishment also colours its effects upon the individual. For example, its normalisation could have made my participants question whether they had any 'right' to associate it with negative outcomes and minimise or deny their anguish and anger.

Definitions – Corporal Punishment and Rights Talk

My study begins with defining corporal punishment. The definition provided by UNICEF relates to common practices of CP:

Corporal punishment means to inflict punishment on the body. It is to beat, hit, spank, swat, pinch or cane a child with belt, hands, sticks or any other tool. (UNICEF ROSA, 2001, p. 4)

Whilst UNICEF has provided a definition which deliberately seeks to include as many implements and methods as possible, Straus & Donnelly define corporal punishment by its intention:

the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correcting or controlling the child's behaviour.
(Donnelly & Straus, 2005)

Straus distinguishes between 'expressive' and 'instrumental' corporal punishment; the first being an expression of a feeling such as anger, whereas the second is when it is used as a means to an end, for example, in order to assert control. The latter is generally favoured in the classroom, since it is less brutal and chaotic in appearance, but appears to be cold-blooded and premeditated. The avoidance of injury is not always a condition of corporal punishment however with bruising, marks and even injury 'normalised' in some societies (Runyan, et al., 2010). In Nepal, corporal punishment in schools has frequently included practices which might elsewhere come under the category of torture, for example, children being forced to kneel on sharp stones, hold heavy weights, stand for prolonged periods in direct sunlight in degrading positions and having fingers crushed by objects (UNICEF & CVICT, 2004).

Definitions of corporal punishment raise issues of ownership, in particular, the question of who owns the body. Does anybody have the right to cause another person pain? Can a parent own the body of their child? Israel's anti-corporal punishment rulings specifically state 'children are not the property of their parents' (GIECP, 2015). Nepalese culture and law even suggest that teachers are 'substitute parents' with corresponding sovereignty over a child's body. Whilst feminism has rejected the notion that money, in particular, can buy power over a woman's body, whether through patriarchy or slavery (Petchesky, 1995, p. 397), it has been less vocal on the issue of children's ownership of their bodies and the corporal punishment of children. This shortfall has been explored in depth by Benjamin Shmueli in his article 'What has feminism got to do with children's rights?' (Shmueli, 2007).

A defence of children sometimes comes from intersectional feminist approaches which describe a gender discrimination compounded by ageism, amongst other extra forms of oppression. Taefi points out -

fragmenting girls' identity into the categories of "women" and "children" causes girls to be overlooked in favour of those who are more visible (Taefi, 2009, p. 345).

Whilst intersectionality may explain the multiple pressures upon girls, who may experience violence on account of their gender as well as their age and size, these pressures should not be seen as insuperable barriers condemning them to vulnerability, any more than a working class background should condemn somebody to failure. As Nevedita Menon warns, intersectionality also sometimes “concretizes categories” and “freezes notions of pre-existent identities” (Jagori & Sangat, 2015). For corporal punishment survivors no less than other victims of oppression, the acknowledgement of additional vulnerabilities can inadvertently restrict the fluidity of “becoming”. The beaten girl may suffer a double oppression, but this is not the limit of her strength and power.

Radical feminism may contribute to the defence of the child where women upturn whole systems based upon gender inequalities, seek to uproot patriarchal domination in all its forms and show solidarity with other oppressed groups. Shmueli points out the increase of children’s rights following the rise of women judges, scholars and decision-makers and how they achieved the ban on corporal punishment in Israel (Shmueli, 2007, p. 224). Where women have successfully destroyed patriarchal structures – be they political (for example, overthrowing punitive, male-dominated institutions) or personal (such as divorcing an aggressive man), children’s liberation from violence may be incidental, but has it been at the heart of these revolutions? What does it mean when a liberated woman either continues or even commences beating children? In turn, women who have been hated, blamed and criticised as ‘bad’ mothers because they have rejected the restrictions of traditional roles of womanhood may be especially defensive of their autonomy as parents and have an overdetermined reaction against what they might deem as interference in their disciplinary methods, especially from men. Venting anger against a patriarch on children, however, does nothing to halt misogyny. Alice Miller comments that “Nietzsche’s misogyny becomes understandable...in someone who was whipped so frequently as a child” (Miller, 1990, p. 98). Emotionally and physically dominated by authoritarian female figures, Nietzsche was unable to expose his rage to his specific persecutors, so transferred it onto women in general: “Thou goest to a woman? Do not forget thy whip!” (Nietzsche, 1997 [1885], p. 63). Yet Nietzsche’s life-story reveals his continued suffering at the hands of women, from repeated rejections from Lou Salome (who called him “the sado-masochist par excellence” (Leavy, 1964) and is photographed holding a whip while Nietzsche pretends to pull a cart) to his

sister Elizabeth's toxic interference with his relationships, writings and medical care.

Do liberated women necessarily show solidarity with children? Is compassion a specifically female virtue? Repeatedly, apparently powerful female stateswoman, from Teresa May to Aung San Suu Kyi, have refused to pass legislation outlawing corporal punishment. In the UK and the USA, women's rights issues are debated in both media and academia far more than the right of children not to be beaten. Does fear of women outweigh concern for children? Or is the liberation of women believed to be the priority, from which other liberations will follow? This is the view of both eco-feminists like Vandana Shiva, who bring together "the liberation of earth, the liberation of women and the liberation of all humanity" and revolutionaries such as Thomas Sankara, who said that women's liberation was essential to revolution, quoting Mao's declaration that women "hold up half of the sky" (Sankara, 2007 [1987]).

Improvements in women's rights have provided an opportunity for women to protect children: in contrast to the patriarchal Victorian father described vividly in Dickens' novel *David Copperfield* (Dickens, 1849), who could beat a child while his wife sobbed, never daring to intervene. Independent working women (a minority of women in Nepal) may threaten to leave or actually leave, knowing that themselves and their children will still survive. Women paying school fees likewise, either privately or through taxes, can influence disciplinary methods or threaten to withdraw their children. In Nepal, a woman may now take legal action to demand financial compensation for physical injuries inflicted upon their child by the school.

Who 'owns' a child? As detailed in my autobiography chapter, in Nepalese private schools, I frequently saw the children of wealthy parents exempted from corporal punishment after the family's first complaint, whilst those who hadn't paid their fees had less protection. Some parents, including those of two of my participants, asked teachers to beat their children, as if they were the 'property' of their parents to dispose of as they wished. Jordan Riak claims that children who are beaten are more vulnerable to sexual predators since they have learnt that 'their bodies are not their personal property', suggesting that 'the child who submits to a spanking on Monday is not likely to say no to a molester on Tuesday' (Riak, 2011, p. 5).

Ownership questions also enable us to ask, in the words of Lester Smith, 'To whom do schools belong?' (Simon, 1985, p. 56) and who owns the land upon which they are built? Whether it is the population, the state or a private

company, how far does this allow them to control what happens on this territory? Government schools are often viewed as a privilege or 'gift' rather than the property of the people. Many people of my mother's generation, over half of whom are illiterate, considered it as somewhat ungrateful to complain about the corporal punishment of their children when they had hardly received any schooling themselves. The views of mere 'stakeholders' might have an influence but not necessarily the power to stop corporal punishment. The disempowered black and disabled students receiving the most corporal punishment in US schools (Human Rights Watch, 2008) for example, are unlikely to influence their school's policies more than the ideologies held by its powerful shareholders. Feelings of hopelessness caused by corporal punishment can be exacerbated in the face of such hegemonic power.

Conceptual analysis should also be applied to the issue of whether children/parents/teachers have rights. If rights are merely an expression of moral tastes or emotivism (Ayer, 1971 [1936]), or just 'nonsense upon stilts' (Schofield, 2003) rather than pre-existent universal laws, then what does it mean to say that children either have the right not to be beaten, or that their caregivers/educators have the right to administer beatings?

An absurd inconsistency exists in those who defend corporal punishment whilst accepting that children have rights. If children are to be accorded rights, this assumes a previously accepted principle of equality: the belief that their lives are of equal worth to adults. Therefore, we are not able to pick and choose which rights they may have (for example, food and water) and which rights they may not (for example, the right to non-violence). This inconsistency is evident in the rhetoric of 'child-friendly zones' in Nepal, where children's rights are often defined by factors such as access to clean water and medicine, with photos of children smiling around a water pump, rather than a rejection of the violence to children which continues with impunity behind the glossy image. Well-meaning charities have rushed to assist the building of schools in Nepal as an obvious 'good', without considering the possibility that children attending a school in which they are beaten (once the exhilarated charity workers and their cameras have left) might be worse off than children not attending school at all. Such schooling may even just 'perpetrate disaffection' (Harber, 2008).

Finally, further conceptual examination is needed of the term 'punishment' itself. The history of penalty has brought forth various post-metaphysical notions of punishment (Howe, 1994), some of which are relevant

to the social and economic challenges of Nepal, from Bentham's description of it as evil but useful (Bentham, 1830, p. 2) to Marxist predictions that it will be 'superfluous' once inequality disappears (Engels, 1845). Sociological approaches focus upon the function of punishment, whether symbolic social cohesion (Durkheim, 1984 [1893], p. 63), the development of a repressive, 'civilised' super-ego (Marcuse, 1987[1956], p. 98) or the internalised control of bodies, activities, space and time (Foucault, 1979, p. 149). These interpretations are relevant to my participants at a time in Nepal's history when the traditional metaphysical justifications for punishment are being questioned. My participants sought to understand whether their experiences were due to socio-economic/gendered constructs or judgements authorised by an external reality. As children, we feared the latter -believing in a continuum between the gods and teacher/parent authority; as adults, we explored the former, wondering what earthly forces brought about our beatings. In painful confusion, my participants and I struggled to make sense of their beatings and our subsequent failures. Who was to blame? Was it due to 'the system'? Or was it just our 'fate'?

Dualism and Bodily Degradation

Corporal punishment relies to an extent upon the notion that the body and soul are separate. Many of the world's religions held the view that the body should be sacrificed to save the soul, similar to the Old Testament concept of 'spare the rod and spoil the child' (The Holy Bible, Proverbs 13:24, 19:18, 22:15, 23:13, 29:15). Fundamentalist Protestants have become famous for numerous books and other media condoning the corporal punishment of children (Dobson, 1992, p. 42); (Ezzo & Ezzo, 2007, p. 207), often from the age of 18 months (Churches Network for Non-Violence, 2011, p. 29). James Dobson, a strong ally of President Donald Trump, also promotes the work of actress, author and life-coach Lisa Whelchel. Whelchel quotes *Proverbs* to justify the diverse punishments recommended in her child-rearing guide 'Creative Correction' (Whelchel, 2008). These include putting chilli sauce on children's tongues and tying weights to their feet (p. 208), tying or handcuffing quarrelling siblings together (p. 203 & p.209) and putting manure in their bedroom (p. 75). Whelchel enthuses 'I thank/praise God for the gift of spanking' (Whelchel, 2008). US businesses sell 'rods of correction' and plastic switches to parents (Wen, 2005) and umpteen paddles to schools. In contrast, the Presbyterian Church USA (2012), the Mormon Church, the United

Methodist Church and groups such as *'The Churches Network for Non-Violence'* (2017) and *'Parenting in Jesus' footsteps'* have denounced corporal punishment (Swan, 2017), with several citing Christ's defence of children against oppressors in Matthew 18, the Gospel emphasis upon love and forgiveness and the elevation of children to 'models of faith' (Bunge, 2006, p. 57).

Unlike fundamentalist Protestant pro-spankers, several Jewish scholars have subjected the Torah's passages on the 'rod' (for example, Mishlei, Proverbs, 23: 13-14) to both halakhic modifications and modern psychoanalysis (Rosenak, 2002, p. 175), resulting in a total ban on corporal punishment in Israel since 2000. Michael Jost of CNNV argues in *'The Bible and Discipline'* that the Hebrew word for 'rod' used in Proverbs is *'shebet'*, which only means 'staff', a guiding stick. A rod for beating, however was known as a *'muwcar'* (Churches Network for Non-Violence, 2011, p. 37). Child-friendly attitudes can be found in all religions and periods (Yust, et al., 2010) and condemnations of corporal punishment from religions around the world have been carefully collected in CNNV's *Handbook* to support the ending of corporal punishment in religious communities (Churches Network for Non-Violence, 2011). Global research includes less well publicised facts such as the banning of corporal punishment in schools across 14 predominantly Muslim countries (GIECPC, 2017), condemnations of corporal punishment by the Ayatollah Sayed Mousavi Bojnourdi (UNICEF; Religions for Peace, 2010, p. 36) and its prohibition under Sharia law (UNICEF & Al-Azhar University, 2009, p. 9). Representatives of all religions and many different countries came together in Kyoto to denounce corporal punishment as an affront to the dignity of children (UNICEF, 2006) & (UNICEF; Religions for Peace, 2010, p. 39)). Despite a total ban on corporal punishment in many Catholic countries in South America and Europe, Pope Francis has unexpectedly condoned it (The Guardian, 2015).

In Nepal, teachers have referred to specific passages in the Hindu scriptures allowing the use of physical punishment during the ages 'from 5 to 16 when life is made',

A wife, a son, a slave, a pupil and a younger brother of the full blood who have committed faults, may be beaten with a rope or a split bamboo. (Manu, 1884, p. Verse 8:229)

This contradicts the commandment of ahimsa (non-violence) in the Upanishads, defined as 'not causing pain to any living being at any time through the actions of one's mind, speech or body' (Aiyar, 1914, p. 173). This applies to all Hindus and is central to both Jain and Buddhist philosophies. My

Nepalese teachers would try to justify corporal punishment using a dualistic saying about 'beating the offence and not the child' (similar to the Christian idea of 'hating the sin but not the sinner'). Ghosh and Pasupati quote the Marathi proverb 'the harder the stick beats, the faster the flow of knowledge' (Ghosh & Pasupati, 2016, p. 272) which again prioritises the existence of the stick and the 'knowledge', without recognising the presence and feelings of the child's emotions and body, as they are deemed of secondary importance and marked out for sacrifice.

The mind-body dualism of the Enlightenment provided no better protection for children than the metaphysical justifications for beatings. The Cartesian move 'What is this 'I' that thinks?' separated the body from self-consciousness, but downgraded it. The dubitable body was inferior to the '*res cogitans*', perhaps even superfluous. James KA Smith argues, conversely, that "we are the sorts of animals whose orientation to the world is shaped from the body up rather than from the head down" (Smith, 2009, p. 25). Children have suffered most from the definition of human being as chiefly cerebral. This denigration and forgetting of the body, meant that children's natural desires to play, to make a noise, to move around, to touch random objects were suppressed: the extreme being the Victorian maxim that children should be 'seen and not heard', re-enacted in many Nepalese schools long after its abandonment in Britain. Children were subjected to pedagogies of repression rather than "pedagogies of desire" (Smith, 2009, p. 24), with rationalistic education neglecting our "embodiment" (Smith, 2009, p. 45), our "temporality", our "being-in-the-world" and "our *kardia* - our gut or heart" (Smith, 2009, p. 47).

Having abandoned the right to condemn an action as cruel or evil, both rationalist and empiricist conceptions of childhood failed to denounce corporal punishment. All they could do was to assess it by utility-based criteria such as 'effectiveness'. This struggle to replace conscience with calculation is seen in an agonisingly contradictory discussion of corporal punishment by John Locke. John Locke's view of the body as a route to the mind is manifested in his *Thoughts Concerning Education*, in his insistence that children's desires be suppressed unless authorised by Reason 'even from their very cradles' (Daniel, C.1889, p. 103). Locke praises repression:

The great principle and foundation of all worth is placed in this, That a man is able to deny himself his own desires, cross his own inclinations and purely follow what reason directs as best, though the appetite lean the other way (Daniel, C.1889, p. 96).

Teachers have justified punishment saying that they are sacrificing the student's body in order to save their rational mind. Rationality itself, has been presented as a form of 'discipline' over bodies and emotions. Suppression of the body can involve controlling every movement (Foucault, 1979, p. 167) and even preventing children from urinating (Whelchel, 2008, p. 138). Reason is used to promote 'short-term' pain (punishment) for long-term gain (for example, character improvement, academic success). Protests against cruelty are prevented by a reasoning which recodes 'deadly habits as caring habits' (Khanal & Park, 2016, p. 59), presenting painful forms of discipline as signs of care. As Alice Miller notes, for the child receiving the punishment presented as 'For Your Own Good' (Miller, 1983), the gulf between the reasons given and their own experience of cruelty is wide enough to cause a mental split or dissociation (Greven, 1992, p. 148).

With a progressiveness remarkable for 1693, Locke's text is packed with warnings about the damaging effects of the 'lazy' method of corporal punishment and recognises the damage it might cause to learning, especially: "It is as impossible to draw fair and regular characters on a trembling mind as on a shaking paper" (Daniel, C.1889, p. 296). Locke also indicates that corporal punishment could damage the 17th century equivalent of career development, noting that "dejected minds, timorous and tame and low spirits, are hardly ever to be raised and very seldom attain to anything" (Daniel, C.1889, p. 42). Yet Locke defends severe corporal punishment, in fact, "whipping" in cases of "obstinacy or rebellion" (Daniel, C.1889, p. 158). In this contradiction, Locke surrenders his own compassion to the unquestioned authority of 'Reason', without subjecting his blind faith to either rational or empirical scrutiny.

The Enlightenment idea of the 'tabula rasa' has also been a precondition for corporal punishment. Locke's description of children as 'white paper or wax to be moulded and fashioned as one pleases' (Daniel, C.1889, p. 363) removed the Catholic notion of Original Sin as an excuse for beating. Nevertheless, it involved a reification and abstraction of children. The blank page is not revered, despite Locke's support for Juvenal's principle '*maxima debetur pueris reverentia*' (Daniel, C.1889, p. 148). The child is merely a thing, and a blank page upon which anybody may write. The child is thus open and vulnerable to the domination and abstraction of Enlightenment thinking, which, Adorno warns, 'liquidates' (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997 [1944], p. 13), through the imposition of conceptualisation. The feeling that a child is something sacred, sublime and magical, to be treated with the utmost care, is crushed by a

rational-empiricist coldness which stands back from the child then labels it, just as the imperialist conqueror shows no reverence or awe for the lands he conquers, but merely plants a flag, thinks up a name then redraws the map. No receptivity takes place, no listening to what people might be already or to what a land is whispering. Instead, the domination of these 'blank pages' silences, stifles and thus annihilates any previous identity or freedom. As an imposition from without, the blank page is never neutral. It breaks people, washes their former selves away, in order to recreate them according to the tastes of their conquerors.

Throughout colonial history, 'the native' was presented as a "congenital impulsive" (Fanon, 2001 [1963], p. 296) with "feeble cortical functions" (Fanon, 2001 [1963], p. 299). Like Kipling's "fluttered folk and wild...half-devil and half child" (Kipling, 2000), indigenous people have been labelled as driven by the whim of the body and senses (Fanon, 2001 [1963], p. 211) and must therefore be disciplined by reason:

We must counter these natural creatures...who obey the laws of their nature blindly, with a strict, relentless, ruling class. We must tame nature, not convince it. Discipline, training, mastering and today, pacifying, are the words most frequently used by colonialists in the occupied territories. (Fanon, 2001 [1963], p. 303).

Caning has prevailed in Malaysia and other former colonies since it was introduced by the British during the 19th century (Amnesty International, 2010, p. 6), who claimed it was in the child's 'best interest' (UNICEF, 2007, p. 35). French missionaries arriving in Canada in 1634 overrode the 'wonderful affection' of the 'childlike' native Huron parents, for whom corporal punishment was 'simply not acceptable' (Atkinson, 2001, p. 237). The style of discipline in Nepal remains Victorian and colonial (Bhattarai, 2010, p. 49) and shares many features with corporal punishment in India, such as the chicken position and the crushing of a pencil woven through the fingers (Ghosh & Pasupathi, 2016, p. 274). Control, of the self and others, has been judged fundamental to 'civilisation' and corporal punishment deemed a necessary weapon in the battle between education and cultural 'backwardness' (Caddell, 2005, p. 20). This is slightly different from the style of corporal punishment in English boarding schools. The formality and ritual humiliation are the same, but corporal punishment in Nepal has often lacked the notion of 'equality under the law' that was emphasised in novels such as *Tom Brown's Schooldays*, in which all pupils were fundamentally 'gentlemen', even if they were savagely beaten and bullied. In Nepal, however, the extent of violent punishments

inflicted upon a child (and opportunities for redress) remain largely dependent upon the financial circumstances of their parents.

Teachers and parents in Nepal have frequently used consequentialist defences of corporal punishment (Caddell, 2005, p. 18), claiming that its use is justified since an undisciplined child is doomed to a life of poverty, misery and degrading occupations (Wagle, 2012, p. 54). During this moment, the present feelings of the child do not even enter the equation as those in authority are credited with 'knowing what is best'. Their tears, cries and even bruises are considered irrelevant compared to the future that is envisaged for them in the long-term. Above all, future money for the family is the outcome that is believed to make all the pain worthwhile.

In contrast, where the body is believed to be intrinsically precious, then corporal punishment would be forbidden on deontological grounds under the imperative that it should remain unharmed and inviolate. Opponents of corporal punishment usually hold to the principle of violence as an objective moral law, stating that children should never be beaten. The Romantic movement benefited children insofar as the 'inner voice' (Hampson, 1968, p. 195), calling for compassion and liberty, gained a respect which could rival that of Reason. Jean-Jacques Rousseau condemned 'punishment as punishment' outright (Rousseau, 1979(1762), p. 101) and William Blake pitied school-children 'under a cruel eye outworn...in sorrow and dismay' and 'flogg'd into following the stile of a fool' (Blake, 2000, pp. 106-107).

In power-relations which oppose the degradation of the body and acknowledge the consciousness of all human beings, the concern may be expressed that bodily pain can also be mentally damaging, since what happens to the body is very much the business of the mind. Holistic viewpoints describe body and soul as intimately connected through 'embodiment' (Smith, 2009, p. 32) and fuse in phenomena such as the stress-related illnesses experienced by some of my participants and myself. The body is never 'just' the body, indeed it might even constitute 'the core of our identity' (Smith, 2009, p. 32), which would dispel theological justifications for corporal punishment in the form of self-mortification, flagellation and the punishing ascetism in many religions, described by Pate and Gould (2012, p. 59). Don Cupitt points out that the rejection of oppressive dualisms appeared centuries before post-structuralism. Mystic writers from Hindu, Sufi Muslim and Christian traditions, such as Mahadeviyakka (c.1130-1160), Rabi'a of Basra (c.716-801) and Meister Eckhart (c.1260-c.1328) respectively seemed to discard dry, patriarchal, disciplinarian

dogma for what Don Cupitt describes as a happy and “lazy, damp, female and self-indulgent” letting go (Cupitt, 1998, p. 81). Corporal punishment has traditionally enforced a compliance to religious rules, a rigid repression and a focus upon ‘*Thou shalt not*’. Cupitt describes another kind of spirituality based upon relaxing rather than striving, fluidity rather than dryness, pleasure instead of suffering, using the adjective ‘female’ (and evoking a metaphor of a female). He contrasts this comforting place with “military and masculinist values”, especially “the will, self-discipline, obedience, resolution, spiritual warfare” (Cupitt, 1998, p. 81). Centuries before any hippy or New Age movement, there were believers who emphasised love and happiness rather than fear and punishment in their pursuit of spiritual wisdom, even if they were an oppressed minority. Cupitt suggests that this subversion of masculine “Authority” can transform the world, replacing war and tyranny with dialogue and “horizontalized” connections (Cupitt, 1998, p. 91). For Cupitt, hope comes not in beating and suppressing bodies, but in a mysticism which harmonises with their fluidity and natural desires, bringing the supernatural “within human subjectivity” (Cupitt, 1998, p. 29).

A specific notion of humanity is a condition for the possibility of corporal punishment which shares similarities with other 'dehumanisations'. Feminist analysis has described the ‘objectification’ of human beings. Martha Nussbaum describes seven ways in which this occurs: “instrumentality”, “denial of autonomy”, “inertness”, “fungibility”, “violability”, “ownership” and “denial of subjectivity” (Nussbaum, 1995, p. 257). Not unlike the user of corporal punishment, the rapist holds a woman’s feelings to be unimportant whilst she is being raped and might even argue that it is ‘good for her’ or ‘what she needs’. Andrea Dworkin writes:

we see women also suffering the injury of objectification—that is to say we are dehumanized. We are treated as if we are subhuman, and that is a precondition for violence against us (Dworkin, 1993, p. 281).

Dworkin clarifies this notion of objectification:

Objectification occurs when a human being, through social means, is made less than human, turned into a thing or commodity, bought and sold. When objectification occurs a person is de-personalized so that no individuality or integrity is available socially.... Objectification is an injury right at the heart of discrimination (Dworkin, 1993, p. 268).

Similarly, in the collective and frequently corporal punishment that is war, some humans become ‘civilian objects’ or ‘collateral damage’. Such victims of wars and other disasters tend to be ‘invisible’ in proportion to their inequality and powerlessness (Bauman, 2011, p. Intro).

Whilst objectification can include a random or individual mistreatment of human beings as things, the term reification (*Verdinglichung*) is used by (Lukacs, 1971 [1923]) to mean the process of taking something as a thing, or the making of something into a thing, that is not one. This process is bound to a specific mode of production or set of power relations, which are perceived as absolutes. Marx's description of the objectification arising through alienation (*Verfremdung*), dehumanisation (*Entmenschlichung*) and autonomisation (*Verselbstandigung*) each represent a different aspect of reification (*Verdinglichung*). In the hyper-productivity of late capitalism the worker is 'effaced by his labour' (Marx, 2005 [1846-47]).

The worker puts his life into the object; but now his life no longer belongs to him but to the object.... Whatever the product of his labor is, he is not. Therefore, the greater this product, the less is he himself. (Marx, 2007, p. 70)

In our time, this loss of identity, accompanied by inequalities and social cleavages, assist 'fascist fantasy' (Lewis, 2006, p. 13) as the distressed look around frantically for an 'other' to blame, seen in the furious right-wing movements emerging in the Western world today. Reification overlays reality with commodity relations that are both passive and active: 'dehumanised and dehumanising' for 'society as a whole' (Lukacs, 1971 [1923], p. 92).

T.W. Adorno sees a continuum between reification and genocide. In Auschwitz 'it was no longer an individual that died but a specimen' (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 362). Reciprocally, the production of death also took on a Frankenstein-esque 'life' of its own, through manifesting as an inescapable necessity and objective reality; hence the guards might say 'this is just the way it is' and each person had their 'job to do' (Bauman, 1995, p. 133). Holocaust studies have found that resistance to Nazism (including risking one's life to rescue Jewish captives) was more likely to be carried out by people who had not experienced corporal punishment (Cooperson, 2014, p. 6); (Oliner & Oliner, 1988). In Nepal, 'dehumanising social norms' such as corporal punishment may have contributed to the acceptability of violence in Nepal's civil war (Pherali, 2013, p. 151 & p.155). If pupils are not human, empathy is nonsensical.

Reification is reflected in the language used for 'culprits' to be beaten: they might be addressed by their surnames, gender ('You, boy!'), or names such as *patamurkha* [idiot], *aloo* [potato], *gadha* [donkey], *thupri* [lump], *gobar* [animal faeces] and *tighre* [big thighs] (Timsina, 2011). The pupil's subjectivity disappears, her output and adherence to deadlines matter far more than her well-being: 'Time is everything, man is nothing' (Marx, 2005 [1846-47]).

Corporal punishment is perceived as oiling the education machine. Adorno

points out that the degrading practice of beating also reifies the teacher, summed up in the German slang word for teachers “*steiβtrommler*”, which Adorno translates as “butt-drummer” (Adorno, 1998, p. 178). In Nepal, the reification of pupils and teachers is merged with deification: the myth of the teacher as a deity and education, representing Supreme Rationality, as the highest end. In this way, abstraction ‘liquidates’ (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997 [1944], p. 13) no less potently than metaphysics, through the effacement of individual subjectivity and its replacement with a label in which a person is identified solely by their function within a particular system.

In the new era of accountability, Nepalese teachers concerned for the survival of their dependent families, have experienced ‘performativity terror’ (Ball, 2003). Fear freezes and reifies, producing automaton-like compliance to their managers and assessment systems. As in genocidal situations, their own fear has forced them to coldly reify others. It is easier for bombers to bomb and teachers to beat all the while they do not acknowledge the humanity of their victims. Focus on doing their job ‘properly’ or using their machines or weapons ‘correctly’ can also reduce their consciousness of the human implications: other workers, machinery and the immediate necessities of ‘the system’ block the view between cause and effect (Bauman, 1995, p. 133). Teachers have focused upon the demands of their managers, who in turn, have focused upon results and funding issues, whilst the tears of individual pupils have been disregarded. I also witnessed the feelings of parents opposed to corporal punishment in Nepal being ignored, with Principals loftily ignoring parents who begged ‘Please don’t beat my child’ (Caddell, 2005, pp. 19-20).

Politics and The Spectacle of Corporal Punishment

The reluctance of researchers to deal with corporal punishment has been attributed to the fact that corporal punishment is ‘highly political’ (Furnham in (Donnelly & Straus, 2005) in the West. In Britain and the US, it has traditionally been championed by the right-wing (Furnham, 2005, p142; (Ellison, et al., 1996); (BNP, 2016), but it often has cross-party support in many developing nations, preoccupied with fighting poverty. In Nepal, its prevalence has, until recently, made it politically acceptable to nearly all sides, with even Maoist revolutionaries subjecting people to beatings, called ‘stick actions’ (Lawati & Pahari, 2010, p. 310), contrary to their ideals. This contrasts with progressive movements across much of South America and Europe whose politicians have

managed to implement a full prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings (GIECPC, 2017).

The BNP (2016) and UKIP have sought the reintroduction of corporal punishment and praised the notion of ‘a government with the will to punish’ (UKIP Crime & Justice Policy, 2014). UKIP’s use of the word ‘will’ might be a deliberate reference to Nietzsche’s ‘will to power’, a phrase frequently contorted into a prescription by fascist thinkers. In fact, Nietzsche’s view was closer to the Christian notion of avoiding being judgemental, when he uses the phrase (often attributed to Goethe) “distrust all in whom the impulse to punish is powerful!” (Nietzsche, 1997 [1885], p. 98) Nietzsche’s position on corporal punishment also shared similarities with that held by Marx and Engels, tracing its genealogy to economic relations and the pressure of ‘multifarious social circumstances’ (Marx, 1853). Nietzsche says that children are punished due to the idea that ‘any damage somehow has an equivalent and can be paid off even if this is through the pain of the culprit’ (Nietzsche, 1996[1887], p. 45), which firstly exposes the bizarre and random nature of the connections made between many ‘offences’ and their punishments. Secondly, Nietzsche exposes its economic base:

...Where...has this idea of the equivalence between damage and pain, drawn its strength from?... from the contractual relationship between creditor and debtor which is as old as the concept of ‘legal subjects’ itself and points back in turn to the fundamental forms of buying, selling, exchange, wheeling and dealing’ (Nietzsche, 1996[1887]).

Nietzsche claims that ‘the central moral concept of ‘guilt’ [*Schuld*] originated from the very material concept of ‘debt’ [*Schulden*]’ (Nietzsche, 1996[1887], p. 44). This echoes the use of the word ‘debt’ instead of sin in earlier versions of the Lord’s Prayer such as that found in Wycliff’s 1395 Bible (corresponding to the Aramaic - *ħôbâ*, Greek - *ὀφειλήματα* and Latin – *debitoribus*) and in the Second Temple period of Judaism [515 BCE – 70 CE) (Anderson, 2005, pp. 9-10), and preserved in some Scottish church traditions. The word ‘trespass’ meanwhile, found in Tyndale’s 1526 Bible translation, could reflect increasing discontent against the intensification of enclosure after 1485, ineffective anti-enclosure legislation and protests and riots against enclosure, which climaxed in 1549 (Wood, 2007). The notion of Karma in Hinduism and other Eastern religions also evokes the idea of sin as a debt that must be repaid or a “a store of good and bad actions, accumulated over many lives” (Miller, 1988, p. 163). Belief in a Heaven and Hell enable the hope of redress denied in the impoverished life. Descriptions of gruesome physical punishments in hell, are promoted by religious extremists and may demonstrate sado-masochistic

impulses. Greven claims: “The Apocalypse of the Book of Revelation has been one of the enduring sadomasochistic fantasies obsessing many Protestants” providing “endless pleasure and satisfaction to those who consider themselves safe from the punishments that will be meted out”. Greven describes the “buried rage, hate and murderous aggression” (Greven, 1992, p. 211) in many apocalyptic visions, and describes the addictive masochism often created by the use of corporal punishment (Greven, 1992, p. 178). Thus, eschatological promises of a joyful Kingdom are distorted into the ultimate ‘Wait until your Father gets home’, regressing adults into miserable and terrified children. The emphasis is on a punitive rather than a loving, merciful and compassionate God. Foucault notes that tortuous punishments on earth were believed to help reduce the amount of punishment in hell (Foucault, 1979).

Foucault suggests that corporal punishment occurs where a moral ‘debt’ cannot be paid off in any other way with, during feudal periods, “the body being in most cases the only property accessible” (Foucault, 1979, p. 25). But this does not explain the widespread use of corporal punishment in a country as wealthy as America (where it is legal in schools in 19 states) nor the use of fines for non-attendance in Nepalese schools. Sometimes American schools offer pupils the ‘free choice’ between being struck with a wooden paddle, a detention or a fine, which echoes the idea of ‘ways to pay’, without ever questioning the necessity of this ‘debt’ (Human Rights Watch, 2008). For those people of Nepal who live in semi-feudal conditions and are frequently in financial debt, punishment has been widely accepted as a ‘price that must be paid’ for ‘wrongdoing’, even when children know this is not their fault and due to an economic reason, for example, failure to do study effectively because of agricultural tasks (Wagle, 2012, pp. 48-49) or having dirty clothes through poverty (Valentin, 2005, p. 69). Poverty itself appears as a punishment that many Nepalese people have come to expect.

Formalised corporal punishment supports the idea that ‘sin’ has a numerical element, with prescriptions such as the number of strokes that should be received, an increase in severity where ‘late payments’ take place in the form of resistance, with the whole procedure not unlike the ‘paying off’ of a debt or the settling of an account. Exchange theory also influences the punisher. Gelles describes a ‘cost-reward calculus’ in the mind of the user of corporal punishment which leads them to conclude that ‘the rewards of using corporal punishment exceed the costs’ (Gelles, 2005, p. 254). Studying these ‘costs’ for all parties concerned (including society itself) and particularly the negative effects of corporal punishment, is pivotal in calculations about its value.

However, can the vocabulary of a cost-reward calculus accommodate non-verifiable phenomena from psychological, intellectual or spiritual sources? These far deeper and more personal consequences can only be drawn from the stories of individuals and can be overdetermined, random, timeless and overlapping, rather than effects directly linked to causes. For all those who believe that corporal punishment 'never did them any harm', auto/biographical research shows us how complex its effects can be: strange twists and turns in life choices, chilling memories striking like a bolt out of the blue, perverse behaviours, special needs and rituals, bizarre over-reactions and harm that goes unnoticed until it produces further harm...these are just some of the ways in which the pain of physical abuse survivors is expressed over a lifetime. Rarely can these 'costs' be quantified and without techniques such as auto/biography or psychotherapy, their malignancy is concealed.

For libertarians, reactions to corporal punishment are mixed. A belief in free-will, rather than determinism, has been used to justify corporal punishment on the grounds that people are free to choose between punishable and non-punishable behaviours and if they choose the former, then that is their responsibility. Similarly, unforgiving is the objectivism of Ayn Rand, who identifies punishment as a simple matter of 'cause and effect' claiming that 'one should never attempt to deprive a man of the consequences of his actions, good or evil' (Rand, 1995). These consequences she presents as 'natural' and therefore an objective reality, rather than the product of a changeable system or removable tyrant. In both cases, any deferment to the social construction of both culprit and punisher behaviours is absent, in contrast to the argument of Adorno, for whom punishment is unjust given the extent to which the individual is unfree and dominated by a harsh world (Freyenhagen, 2013, pp. 99-100). Some libertarians have put forward the idea that schools and parents should be 'free to choose' their disciplinary methods without government 'interference', especially in America where it is also seen as a matter for individual states to decide. However, other libertarians have emphasised the 'personal sovereignty' of the child and furthermore, expressed distaste for the moral burden put upon the administrators of punishments (Vincey et al, 1982 in (Donnelly & Straus, 2005)).

In Elizabeth Gershoff's early and most provocative study, corporal punishment was observed to produce 'immediate compliance' (Gershoff, 2002), an outcome which many advocates of liberal child-rearing find repellent, along with various negative behaviours such as aggression and poor moral internalisation. Baumrind, Larzelere and Cowan, in response, defended

corporal punishment by using three categories to describe children's behaviour: "defiant non-compliance" (undesirable), "behavioural compliance" (desirable) and "internalised (dispositional) compliance". The authors only considered the last category to be an excess of subservience that might indicate psychological damage (Baumrind, et al., 2002, p. 584). They then link this to their recommendation of "moderate" rather than "harsh" corporal punishment (Baumrind, et al., 2002, p. 581). They argue that moderate punishment in order to prevent defiance and promote obedience is reasonable. This approach masks a great deal: the humiliation and psychological damage caused by even 'moderate' slaps; the impossibility of drawing a line between 'moderate' and 'harsh' punishment (reddening? bruising? bleeding?); the poisonous atmosphere in which such incidents occur and their damage to witnesses. In particular, they are unable to explain how to prevent their desired "behavioural compliance" – enforced with violence – from turning into "internalised (dispositional) compliance". How can a child who is beaten every time they don't "comply" not internalise this? Essentially, Baumrind, Larzelere and Cowan want children to do as they are told and want to enforce this with beating. For those who believe that any degree of violence to children is wrong, such arguments are morally repugnant, as would be attempts to justify "moderate" amounts of other forms of child abuse. Nor do they effectively remove the risk of creating children – and ultimately adults – with dangerous levels of submission.

Both Adorno and Zygmunt Bauman, have identified immediate compliance and unquestioning obedience as contributory factors to the Holocaust, from the guard who said "I have just been following orders" (Bauman, 1995, pp. 132-133) to the majority of the German population, whom Adorno claims were already primed for fascism through "antidemocratic potentials [obedience to higher authority]" caused by a "long history of authoritarian, threatening father figures" in the German family (Adorno, et al., 1959). So intoxicating was the idea of unity for the beaten and fragmented corporal punishment survivors of Nepal, that the Panchayat motto 'One Nation, One Dress, One Language, One King' could be used in 1970's Nepal without any significant protest regarding its similarity to Hitler's '*Eine Reich, Ein Volk, ein Führer*'. Now that democracy in Nepal has finally resulted in the ratification of a constitution, a serious attempt has been made to replace 'Oneness' with multiplicity. Nepal's leaders were subject to constant critique throughout the process of formulating the constitution, as numerous minority groups, inspired by the revolution, attempted to seize their stake in society. This led to the democratic

post-war governments being criticised as ineffectual, chaotic and unable to formulate many policies.

Here we can see how a dialectical reaction against tyranny (and perhaps the corporal punishment that it was associated with) can bring about indecision as a new form of self-destruction. Fear or getting it wrong can also lead to both personal and political indecision and hence immobility:

Neuroses are pillars of society; they thwart the better potential of men, and thus the objectively better condition which men might bring about (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 298).

The danger of indecision, whether in Nepal or the Weimar Republic, is an openness and vulnerability to the next “authoritarian personality” which might rise up to express their “intolerance of ambiguity” through destruction (Adorno, et al., 1959, p. 464). Since I first wrote this sentence, a new intolerance has threatened Nepalese politics, characterised by fundamentalism, racism and xenophobia. The dilemma is how to preserve democracy using multiple negation and critique, while preventing fascism from returning to fill any vacuum caused by any paralysing delay, indecision or ideological traffic jam.

Corporal punishment is a factor in both tyranny and the acquiescence to tyranny. Political leaders who have been beaten explode this rage not onto the original person who hurt them (such as a parent or teacher) but through transference onto a particular group or individual, who would then be persecuted. Alice Miller thus explains the atrocities of several dictators, especially Hitler (Miller, 1983, p. 142) and later Stalin and Ceausescu, all of whom experienced severe corporal punishment.

This hatred is then reproduced by the populace, with the assistance of their own corporal punishment experiences. Adorno describes how the “moral indignation first experienced in the attitude of one’s parents toward oneself is being redirected against weaker outgroups” (Adorno, et al., 1959, p. 385).

Oliver James summarises this condition precisely:

Because our parents were so frightening, using beatings ... we dared not acknowledge that we felt rage as well as fear at such maltreatment. Instead we put our parents on a pedestal, idealised them as wonderful, and all our rage became directed against those social groups regarded as despicable.

(James, 2002, p. 110)

Immediate compliance to a teacher or family patriarch threatening corporal punishment can lead to submission to adult abusers in later life (Bass & Davis,

1988). There is also a strong political case for 'defiant noncompliance' in certain situations, namely, where resistance is required, whether that involves saying 'no' to an individual oppressor, such as a sexual abuser, or defying an oppressive regime by for example, refusing to reveal the hideouts of refugees or rebels. For Freire, the possibility of noncompliance was so valuable that students should develop a 'permanently critical attitude' or a -

critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world (Freire, 1972, p. 54).

The political effects of corporal punishment are particularly significant where the presence of corporal punishment is no longer required as the 'lessons' of corporal punishment have become internalised. A single look from a teacher can be enough to freeze a pupil merely through the memory and association of long-since absent violence. Alice Miller includes a quote from Rudolf Hoss, a Commandant at Auschwitz who helped to kill 1.5 million people:

It was constantly impressed upon me in forceful terms that I should obey promptly the wishes of my parents, teachers and priests, indeed of all grown up people, including servants, and that nothing should distract me from that duty. Whatever they said was always right. These basic principles by which I was brought up became second nature to me. (Miller, 1983, p. xxxvi)

His grandson, Rainer Hoss said that he was forced to worship Rudolf's memory: "My father would punish my mum and me", leading to both of them attempting suicide. Finally, Rainer broke off from his family and became a campaigner against Nazi ideologies. For Rainer, resisting the effects of corporal punishment and resisting authoritarian politics were intimately entwined (Telegraph , 20/11/2014).

More subtly, the force used when schooling first introduces itself to the infant as a coercive institution can be sufficient to eventually make it appear as a non-coercive institution whose ideological domination we consent to. The Gramscian notion that ideology can induce compliance without physical force (Gramsci, 1971) might require a forgetting or burying of the violence to children which initially induces conformity Bauman describes how "Memories of rewarded and penalized actions bend gradually into the unconscious understanding of the *rule*" (Bauman, 1995, p. 27). Bauman says

It is precisely thanks to this forgetting.... that my knowledge is so well settled, that it has such a powerful grip on me, that I take it for granted as a 'natural' thing and seldom feel like questioning it. (Ibid, p26)

How much unconscious fear lies beneath the automatic acceptance of a hegemonic ideology dressed in the bossy uniform of ‘common sense’? It is significant that Robert Larzelere, who has defended corporal punishment for decades, criticises strong positive parenting for being “a philosophical movement”. This echoes the empiricist bias among reactionary populists who dismiss child-centred philosophies “as ideological fads” and the “cranky views” of the “*cognoscenti*” (Philips, 1998, p. 203). This anti-intellectualist rhetoric and mocking of “so-called experts” defending vulnerable children has a tabloid appeal to the “resentment of the philistine” (Lewis, 2006, p. 16) and echoes the fascist association of “hardness and coldness” with ‘common sense’. In researching corporal punishment, philosophical neutrality (and its social and political implications) is impossible, as Holden observes:

all child-rearing approaches reflect underlying philosophies and assumptions about the relationships between parents and children. For example, advocates of physical punishment, such as (Larzelere, 1998) himself, base their view on a philosophy that values parental authority, power and control, and obedience (Holden, et al., 2017, p. 467).

One intriguing phenomenon appeared in many children of Nepal during the civil war (which might have similarities with the children who fought alongside the ANC during apartheid): a greater willingness to resist the army than to resist their teachers. During the People’s War, hundreds of children – often enraged by Royalist brutality - became active combatants (Pherali, 2011, p. 149). They would sometimes leave lessons to carry out actions, but cases of pupils attacking teachers remained extremely rare. Perhaps this was because of their knowledge that the first action might have the support of their militarised parents but the latter would not! This seems to confirm the influence of a fusion of ideology, culture and early experience upon patterns of resistance.

Socio-Economic Contexts of Corporal Punishment - ‘A is A’

For Foucault, corporal punishment represents a particular stage in socioeconomic history. He discusses the dominance of public punishments such as executions during historical periods when it was necessary to terrify a large, uncontrollable populace by the easiest, cheapest and quickest means. As the ‘spectacle of the scaffold’ was replaced by incarceration, bodily control took on more subtle and complex forms (Foucault, 1979, p. 11), extending to activities, space and time. Corporal punishment in Nepal, similarly, is gradually

changing from the dramatic rituals during government school assemblies of up to a thousand pupils that I witnessed to the secret space of the Principal's office in the newer private schools. In some countries, however, public humiliation has been achieved through broadcasting the sound of beatings and cries of pain over a tannoy, as warning to other students (Gershoff, 2017, p. 232); an aural 'spectacle'.

Even where corporal punishment has disappeared, bodily control resurfaces in the increased regulation of ritualised movements, space restrictions and activities (Elkind, 2009) and total surveillance with over 4 million CCTV cameras across the UK and reported in schools by 85% of teachers (Taylor, 2010, pp. 382- 383). Foucault writes of surveillance:

This enables disciplinary power to be both absolutely indiscreet, since it is everywhere and always alert, since by its very principle it leaves no zone of shade and constantly supervises the very individuals who are entrusted with the task of supervising; and absolutely 'discreet', for it functions permanently and largely in silence. (Foucault, 1979, p. 177),

Teachers have begun wearing body cameras (Independent, 08/02/2017) as evidence for prosecutions. The teacher carrying a big stick has been replaced with a teacher wearing a camera and wielding the force of the law. The remoteness of such of repressive mechanisms however, can make them more, not less potent, as Foucault explains.

Thanks to the techniques of surveillance, the 'physics' of power, the hold over the body, operate according to the laws of optics and mechanics...without recourse, in principle at least, to excess, force or violence. It is a power that seems all the less 'corporal' in that it is more subtly 'physical' (Foucault, 1979, p. 177).

Is this preferable to physical beatings? The silent, remote oppression that characterises the modern technological society has one special disadvantage: no longer can students rant against a hated teacher. No longer can we confront Squires like Nicholas Nickleby. Healthy resistance to horrific corporal punishment is also described in the oral accounts of British school pupils prior to 1939 (Humphries, 1995, p. 62). Marcuse describes how, in modern society, in contrast, our rage against our repression turns inwards, deprived of the symbolic outlet of a visible master/principal:

Respect and fear could therefore be accompanied by hate of what they were and did as persons; they presented a living object for the impulses and for the conscious efforts to satisfy them. But these personal father-images have gradually disappeared behind the institutions (Marcuse, 1987[1956], p. 98).

As a result, “the aggressive impulse plunges into a void”, “the ego is again introjected” and “the aggressiveness turned against the ego threatens to become senseless” (Marcuse, 1987[1956], p. 99). The damage caused by corporal punishment is simply overt (such as the violent teacher) rather than insidious (Foucault’s surveillance state and Marcuse’s soul-destroying ‘civilisation’). However, this hidden discipline of the modern state rapidly becomes overt as soon as serious attempts are made to resist it. Not only, as Sartre said, does the bourgeois state “defend itself with violence” but it also threatens it. Adorno remarks -

society even now continues to be essentially based on physical power and impose its regulations when the stakes are real only with physical force.... only with the potential of physical violence can it achieve the so-called integration within civilisation that should be the task of universal pedagogical doctrine.

(Adorno, 1998, p. 183)

The threat of violence circles civilised society like an invisible electric fence. The corporal punishment of children is a microcosm of this greater violence, ironically justified as ‘protecting’ children from ‘getting into trouble’ as adults – be this through crime, starvation or rebellion. This taste of violence may prevent people acting to demand a fairer share of power and resources. On the other hand, memories of corporal punishment can push oppressed people over the edge and condense their sense of injustice until they feel ‘they have nothing to lose’ and engage in rebellions in a blind rage.

Since our intellect and problem-solving skills can determine our socio-economic success, corporal punishment may have financial consequences. Elizabeth Gershoff cites several studies demonstrating how corporal punishment can damage achievement, including how even attending schools that beat children can result in pupils having “Lower receptive vocabulary, lower executive functioning and lower intrinsic motivation” (Gershoff, 2017, p. 231). Innovation and creativity, in particular, can be affected by the negative effect of corporal punishment upon critical thought. A classroom dominated by fear prevents not only further questioning but forces learners to accept a teacher’s word as ‘final’, all that could be said about a subject. In our classroom in Nepal, our teachers would dictate our 'lesson feedback' – such as 'I really enjoyed my lesson today, we learnt about x, y and z'. Questions such as ‘What are the uses of television?’ could only be answered by set responses written by the teachers: any addition, excess or critique, any surplus meant violent punishment. This characteristic of rote-learning amidst terror has implications

for representation. In his critique of “philistine and barbarian” materialism, Adorno writes:

If the subject is bound to mulishly mirror the object – necessarily missing the object, which only opens itself to the subjective surplus in the thought – the result is the unpeaceful spiritual silence of integral administration. Nothing but an indefatigably reified consciousness will believe, or will persuade others to believe, that it possesses photographs of objectivity. (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 205).

Elsewhere, Adorno ponders why modern teachers are not held in the “magical veneration” that they were once in China and elsewhere (Adorno, 1998, p. 181). Perhaps this is because the materialist tendency of the modern teacher leaves no room for mystique. The rationalist bias of educators, likewise, shows no epistemological humility, nor the awe/respect which Adorno accords to the “ineffable” (Finlayson, 2002). The teacher with predetermined or limited answers operates on a material level in that they match questions and answers like nuts and bolts: A is A. Correspondence between the concept and thing is never enough, there is always a surplus, leaking out in critical philosophical questions like *‘But is it’* and *‘I wonder’*, which we never allowed to voice in my Nepalese school. The surplus is that thought that won’t settle down, that doubt in the students mind or the ‘and yet’ that promises so much more. All such thoughts are crushed by the reified teacher, who, reduced to a thing, wants their pupils to be things also. Any ‘educator’ that claims complete knowledge, whether a tyrannical teacher, a state bureaucrat regurgitating propaganda or a media outlet seeking to dominate consciousness with the latest ‘trend’, is seeking to ‘annihilate’ dissent, forbidding The One idea, from The One authority, from being challenged. It is a situation more precarious than the ‘banking concept of education’ denounced by Freire in which students are just stuffed full of information like empty vessels (Freire, 1972):

The more completely she fills the receptacles, the better a teacher she is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are.

(Freire, 1972, p. 53)

The banking concept of education at least evokes an image of blank-faced students, receiving information like robots. Once corporal punishment is brought in however, students become less like vessels and more like shaky acrobats, trying to walk a tightrope while balancing hundreds of books on their heads. One false move and there will be pain, yet the pressure is intolerable. The uncritical students of the Freirean image are often the ‘finished product’ having already been through an agonising disciplinary process which has enabled seamless rote-learning; all that nothingness comes from somewhere:

it is never the natural state of a child. Many teachers in the post-revolutionary period of Nepal were trained in Freirean theory but it was rarely applied. It conflicted with the intense performativity pressure that we were put under to ensure that our students reached globally acceptable testing 'standards'. The children had to be 'got through' the exam: reflecting upon the quality of their learning experience was an impossible luxury. Globalisation presents itself as multiplicity, but in Nepal, One idea was dominant: the human capital model of education (Spring, 2009) making globally marketable labour the main goal of education. Its domination constituted a new form of Oneness and was accorded the near-religious esteem given to perceived sources of wealth.

Nepalese people, so often beaten and taught that we have no intrinsic value beyond our material or 'use value', have served as perfect global work-machines: punishing our bodies by often working far longer hours and for less money than workers from other, comparably poor nations (Amnesty International, 2011). Ironically, socio-economic contexts can lead to circumstances in which the body is punished in order to save the body. Without the discipline of hard work, we will starve, as we have nothing to fall back on if we lose our jobs, just numerous dependants. Patton traces the corporal punishment in black families back to anxious parents trying to protect their children from even greater punishments by slave-owners (Patton, 2017, p. 13), whilst condemning its maintenance as 'colluding in the continued subordination of our race' (Patton, 2017). Corporal punishment in Nepalese schools has helped to refine our 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1979) ready for exploitation.

Post-war development has included increasing privatisation, inflation, unemployment, migration dreams and neo-liberal aspirations have intensified competition between not just pupils but teachers, schools, regions and even our neighbours. Increasingly teachers in Nepal have been forced to obey productivity targets (exam results, assessments) which are not state-led but market-led and therefore deemed as natural and inevitable; their tyranny masked by their presentation as an economic 'reality', rather than a changeable construct. In such conditions, pupils must be stuffed with 'deposits' (Freire, 1972, p. 46), 'got through the exam' then 'graded'. Existing traditions of corporal punishment have intensified under the pressures of economisation and development, with students labelled as 'backward' exposed to dehumanising ridicule (Caddell, 2005, pp. 16-20).

Spiritual Effects of Corporal Punishment

Whilst avoiding metaphysical assumptions that might not be shared by my participants, the 'spiritual effects' of corporal punishment are no less a part of our whole selves, and are precious precisely because they are so difficult to quantify and hence might only emerge freely, through narratives. I have defined 'spiritual effects' as how corporal punishment could affect our ethical behaviour, our self-worth, our views of God and religion and how we treat others, what could be described as how we love, beyond an exclusively rationalist or empirical paradigm (hooks, 2010).

A positivist view might reject the very notion of 'spirituality' and words like the 'soul', 'spirit', 'heart' and 'conscience' as non-verifiable. However, for critical theorists, the issue is not verifiability (since reason and science themselves both involve disputable truth-claims) but power. Oppressive mechanisms such as corporal punishment can produce a particular type of spirituality which is disempowering. Critical theorists have not opposed spirituality itself but an uncritical way of believing which is entirely submissive and devoid of free will, characterised by the "inhibition of spontaneity and the emphasis on conformity to externally imposed values" (Adorno, et al., 1959, p. 150). *The Authoritarian Personality* not only reveals the political prejudices engendered by corporal punishment but also its spiritual damage. "Authoritarian submission" is shown to "a variety of authority figures - parents, older people, leaders, supernatural power, and so forth" (Adorno, et al., 1959, p. 231). Corporal punishment 'breaks the will' - a deliberate goal of evangelist advocates of child-beating, painstakingly recorded in a whole chapter by Philip Greven (1992, pp. 60-72). In addition to directly contradicting the Christian notion of 'free will', the breaking of an individual's will fosters a sense of futility and despair, a feeling that they can never change anything. This brings about a regression into an infantile condition of powerlessness. Adorno and his colleagues describe a condition in which -

the ego has 'given up,' renounced the idea that it might determine the individual's fate by overcoming external forces (Adorno, et al., 1959, p. 236).

Since individuals feel too powerless to change their lives through, for example, revolutionary action, or to grapple with what is given, they yield to their 'fate', and transfer power – to a power perceived as higher than themselves. The researchers of the *Authoritarian Personality* discovered that denomination, church attendance and either accepting or rejecting religion were not as

significant as “the way that it is accepted or rejected” (Adorno, et al., 1959, p. 218). Those with a deep, personal faith that they had freely chosen appeared to be less inclined to fascist values than those that had been forced into religion. Authoritarian personalities were also attracted to superstition (and indeed conspiracy theories):

Superstition indicates a tendency to shift responsibility from within the individual onto outside forces beyond one’s control (Adorno, et al., 1959, p. 236).

Rather than engaging with and feeling empowered by the ‘external forces’ of faith, this form of religion can be merely a dumping ground, the place where an unsolvable problem must be left. Economically disempowered Nepalese students, with the ‘Nos!’ of a thousand authority figures echoing in their brains, might also ‘give up’ and find comfort in superstition (although much of what empiricists dismiss as ‘superstition’, we call religious ritual!). How many slaves, beaten constantly, despaired of ever escaping so sang gospel songs about a paradise that they could never hope to have on earth. Corporal punishment has taught them to flinch and keep their heads down. Religion based upon fear may be easily dispensed with once the fear has dissipated, for example, through adolescent rebellion or the more immediate economic fears of adulthood. Countless adults in the UK (usually over the age of 60) justify their refusal to go to church on the grounds that they were forced to do it when they were young, so abandoned it at the earliest opportunity, as if it were the equivalent of being made to play a difficult instrument or eat stringy vegetables.

Nietzsche describes punishment has having the opposite of its intended effect:

punishment hardens and deadens: it concentrates; it intensifies the feeling of alienation; it strengthens resistance’ (Nietzsche, 1996[1887], p. 62).

Andrea Dworkin describes resistance to reification as a ‘war’ (Dworkin, 1993). But corporal punishment can stir more than an immediate dialectical relationship of ‘Where there is power, there is resistance’ (Foucault, 1990). It can create an excess. Instead of an equivalent reaction, returning like for like, as when Dicken's Nicholas Nickleby beats the cruel headmaster (Dickens, 1958, p. 73), the response might be even more intense and complex through its condensation and over-determination, on both psychological and political levels. That is to say, on a symbolic level, a beating might give rise to numerous associations – feelings, memories, reactions, condensed like the content of a dream (Freud, 1976 [1899]) whilst it is also a real experience with determining elements which are reproduced in new reactions and rebellions (Althusser,

2005 [1962]). Such a package, stuffed to its limits, may burst in a reaction which is shatteringly disproportionate and which assaults the future with its pain. Tracing the aetiology of the resultant shrapnel-like fragments is a mystifying task.

One of my participants, Krishna, had a reputation for fighting, but his story explained how he had been pushed beyond all human endurance by corporal punishment and humiliation. History is saturated with examples of punitive violence leading to over-determined and extreme reactions: the mutiny on the *Bounty*, battered women who suddenly snap and kill abusive husbands (Walker, 2017, p. 304); colonised people, such as the Algerians who watched their neighbours guillotined, then exploded with violence against their French masters (Fanon, 2001 [1963], p. 31).

Children, likewise, can have an excessive reaction to corporal punishment, with statistics showing a correspondence between school shootings and corporal punishment in America (Arcus, 2002, p. 9). As with the transference of hatred of former punishers onto 'out-groups', violent reactions to corporal punishment can be displaced onto innocent bystanders. Punishment by peers, in the form of school bullying, can intensify this displacement to the extent of psychosis. Lewis describes how, after having killed a bully, Barry Loukaitis killed two innocent children and a teacher, saying 'reflex took over' (Lewis, 2006, p. 10). Mass killings often inspire others. Far-right commentator Milo Yiannopoulos shows an understanding bordering upon empathy in his article about Elliot Rodger, who went on a shooting rampage in 2014 in Isla Vista:

he was psychologically damaged, unable to respond to trauma in a normal way and determined to hurt the world he felt had injured him.... any target would have sufficed.... Like so many serial killers before him, he had come to view his own species, through the lens of self-loathing, as repugnant (Breitbart, 27/05/2014).

Milo insists that Elliot was not a misogynist, even though Elliot declared "Women represent everything that is wrong with the world" (Breitbart, 27/05/2014) and published numerous vicious statements about women. Milo asserts that Elliot's actions should be blamed on "nihilistic video games, not the myth of patriarchal oppression" (Breitbart, 27/05/2014). "Myth" is a strange word for somebody to use about patriarchy who has described his father as "terrifying", his step-father as giving him "black eyes" and his mother as a "complete c**t" who did nothing to protect him. Milo admits this led him to "set fire to things" and that he "microwaved a cat once" (VICE News, 2017). Games concern Milo more perhaps because his friend and fellow gamer, Lane Davies, stabbed his father to death,

who had called him a Nazi. Davies had denounced his innocent parents as “leftist paedophiles” (Independent, 26/10/2017), after becoming aroused by alt-right conspiracy theories online. Milo, Elliot and Lane have inhabited similarly angry worlds: what defines who becomes a murderer and who doesn’t? The consolation of a loving grandmother? An overcoming of isolation? An acceptance of one’s sexuality? Or the provision of arms?

Tejendra Pherali suggests that the normalisation of violence through corporal punishment was both a ‘cause and correlative’ of the civil war’ (Pherali, 2011, p. 145), with violence being seen as an acceptable means of redress. This justification transformed into action as the combination of domestic, school and military violence in Nepal pushed young people, in particular, into an overdetermined dialectical response. A release of pressure could occur through transference upon either the state or the rebels as sole oppressors, appearing as the oppressive ‘One’ that should be overturned by the many. The automatic compliance engendered by corporal punishment (Gershoff, 2002) created a fear of superiors among both rebel and army combatants. This fear, which I saw first-hand in the eyes of those I met during the conflict, could be enough to make individuals carry out atrocities if they were ordered to do so. Spiritual conflicts, such as whether or not to betray a comrade, especially under torture, could also be affected by corporal punishment experiences and determine whether or not the desire for self-preservation can overcome the spirit of solidarity. Lewis notes:

Hardness as an educational virtue makes the subject resistant to pain and likewise resistant to the guilt of inflicting pain on others (Lewis, 2006, p. 7).

Whilst reducing compassion, corporal punishment can distort ethics through an overdevelopment of the superego (Freud, 2010 [1923]) has created individuals who are pathologically overburdened with a sense of guilt, analysing and criticising their behaviour obsessively. Without the ego to balance this, the repressed Id might finally burst forth, with all the pent-up rage of Mr Hyde, and lead to total spiritual destruction. Unjust physical punishments can also lead to a collapse of trust in authority, as experienced by Rousseau as a child, when he was beaten after being wrongly accused of breaking a comb:

Imagine the revolution in his ideas, the violent change of his feelings, the confusion in his heart and brain, in his small intellectual and moral being...there ended the serenity of my childish life. From that moment I never again enjoyed happiness (Rousseau, 1953(1765) , pp. 29-30).

Given Rousseau's historical importance, it could be said that this single experience played a role in the world's revolutions. The effects of the beating were that his blood would 'boil' whenever he heard about a tyrant and he would want to 'stab the wretch myself, even if it were to cost me my life a hundred times over' (Rousseau, 1953(1765) , p. 30). Gould and Pate (2010, p. 198) have found that corporal punishment is more likely to exist where there is inequality, rather than poverty. Perhaps this is because of a greater need to suppress the population and prevent potentially revolutionary behaviour. As the example of Rousseau shows, however, it may result in the opposite of its intended outcome.

The association of corporal punishment with religion in schools may also have contributed to a rejection of religion worldwide and the increase in aggressive secularism. Accusations of hypocrisy arise as corporal punishment is seen to contradict other values proclaimed by a faith, such as justice, mercy and compassion. 'Faith schools' in Britain have incurred deep mistrust through their long association with corporal punishment. The website of the Christian Schools Trust, representing 40 Christian schools in the UK, promotes books by corporal punishment advocate James Dobson (CST, 2017) and salutes head-teacher Philip Williamson, who took the government to the European Court of Human Rights to protest against the 1999 ban on corporal punishment in schools (Wingspan, 2010). Reports of corporal punishment in Muslim Madrassas (Cherti & Bradley, 2011, pp. 62-63) have led to calls for their closure. Some of the most fervent critics of religious education received corporal punishment at school, from Richard Dawkins, who describes purple bruises (Dawkins, 2013, p. 87) to Sinead O'Connor, who stated

In the schools, priests have been beating the [shit] out of children for years, and sexually abusing them (Cullingford, 2002, p. 192).

Whilst Dawkins went on to promote atheism, Sinead O'Connor sang a song including the line 'Child abuse, yeah/ Sub-human bondage' then tore up a photo of the Pope, as she blamed the Catholic Church for child abuse (Cullingford, 2002, pp. 191-2). I return later to Sinead's more complex responses to 'religious' corporal punishment. Generations of children in Nepal, following the British model, experienced school assemblies, as a time of fear due to its inclusion of public beatings (Caddell, 2005, p. 76), rather than as a peaceful moment for prayer and moral reflection.

Alienation from faith, through corporal punishment, can have major consequences for the Self, inner life and flourishing, where survivors might be

robbed of the Beyond, as part of the more that they could be or experience; that less visible aspect of personal development, 'spiritual becoming'. The acquisition of an abhorrence for all things spiritual – through their association with violence – would result in the self being limited to a material dimension. Thus, the corporal punishment victim is doubly abused – once when we are physically violated and again when we are alienated from spirituality and its language appears fake and hollow, as we first heard it as the language of cruel hypocrites. As a result, we miss out on something valuable: the chance to discover our unique spiritual path, a 'becoming' that may take place beyond the material level. The subversive potential of transcendence, as spiritual, romantic and visionary, is pre-empted by corporal punishment practitioners who seek to either crush individual spirituality or demand that it follows their party line. Adorno notes "Within the inability of thought to transcend itself there already lurks the potential for integration, for submission to any kind of authority" (Adorno, 1998, p. 34).

Corporal punishment creates a hardness and cynicism which threatens to throw the baby out with the bathwater, rejecting faith entirely rather than rejecting instances of oppression and hypocrisy. Violent punishments can also lead to the collapse of morality. After being beaten for a theft that he didn't commit, Rousseau felt that he might as well be one and was 'driven to vices' deciding that 'to be beaten like a rogue justified my being one' (Rousseau, 1953(1765) , p. 43). The mental association of a teacher beating a pupil with an executioner (Adorno, 1998, p. 183); (Lewis, 2006, p. 8)) can turn resistance from a mere demonstration to a life-and-death struggle.

Finally, corporal punishment can affect the capacity for love and respect. The child's fundamental need: to know that they are loved (Feild, 1979, p. 31), is threatened by the conditionality, inequality, insecurity, degradation, fear and cruel lack of empathy present in corporal punishment. When an ideal role-model or one whose approval and affection are sought turns into a violent oppressor, it is harder for a child to maintain their respect and loyalty. The emotional damage caused by punishment itself is also recognised by spanking opponents Holden, Grogan-Kayor, Durrant and Gershoff. Their studies indicate that firstly, punishment impairs motivation and mental health; secondly, it ignores the needs underlying the 'misbehaviour'; thirdly, it leads to 'avoidance behaviour' (focus on 'not getting caught) and fourthly, that it causes 'aversion' and damages the relationships between children and caregivers (Holden, et al., 2017). Furnham noted similar effects from corporal punishment at school, in

particular: communication breakdown, alienation from school and education in general, destruction of good teacher-pupil relationships upon which learning depends, a dangerous role model of “successful violent behaviour” and finally, the risk of sado-masochism (Furnham, 2005, p. 146). The full abasement of the teacher as a good role model was finally achieved during the Nepalese civil war when both royalist and Maoist troops beat and killed teachers or made them assume chicken positions or do ‘up and down’ exercises whilst holding their ears (Pherali, 2011, p. 145). In this way, the troops own past sufferings in school were avenged, if displaced. Only the teachers’ previous actions could determine whether this was received as a ‘Nicholas Nickleby’ style of justice or fresh trauma by the pupils forced to watch.

Romantic relationships can also be distorted by experiences of corporal punishment, which for Rousseau led to masochistic fantasies (Rousseau, 1953(1765) , pp. 27-28). Freud also associated corporal punishment with sadism and masochism (Person & Freud, 2013) and introverted anger, leading to suicidal feelings (Straus, 1998, p. 60). The condensed effects of corporal punishment upon children continue to spill into the future, affecting both individual and collective minds, bodies and spirits. As a corporal punishment survivor and a participant in my own study, I do not feel that my feelings or experiences are caged by a conceptual framework. Perhaps this is because I do not view it as a construct but instead a place of recognition for the nameless connective threads emanating from the lived experience of my participants.

Chapter Four:

My Autobiography

Early Memories

I was born in the Nawalparasi district of Nepal, as the first child of my Brahmin parents. My father got his first job in India at the age of 11 – and continued working there until he was 49, so my mother spent long periods without him. Ever since their marriage, when she was 16 and he was 18, my father could only visit home occasionally so my mother did most of the domestic and agricultural work. This included looking after buffaloes, goats and oxen; weeding, sowing and harvesting a variety of crops and fetching firewood and animal food from the jungle, so I had little care and attention from my mother during the daytime. My grandmother was also preoccupied with running a shop and she had two children who were younger than me. As a baby and young toddler, I was confined to a homemade wooden cot during the daytime, as everybody was out working. I must have got used to being alone. I did not have nappies, like most Nepali infants, so was usually lying in and smeared with my own waste by the time my mother returned in the evening. My mum told me how much this used to upset her, but her workload was inescapable. Once I could walk, my Muslim neighbours often cared for me, giving me both affection and food. This made me question the caste and religious prejudice of our village in later life. I had been taught the rules of caste hierarchy, such as bans on accepting food from non-Brahmins or menstruating women and which castes were 'water-acceptable'. Once when my aunt and I ate lamb with some Magar neighbours, my grandfather declared me 'unclean' and banned us from entering the front door. I had to climb the wall of the house and enter via the upstairs balcony. I learnt about many mystical aspects of our culture: my other grandfather was a psychic and 'medicine man' who cured people with herbs and spells /incantations. Sometimes people were brought who showed signs of advanced mental illness, such as trembling, jumping and talking gibberish, but my grandfather would say some mantras, lay his hands on them and their symptoms seemed to ease. My grandfather's brother had died at the age of 17 when a load he was carrying proved too much and dragged him down a hill. My grandfather devoted a room in our small house to him and planted a stick there to represent his presence. We were told never to enter this 'Than' (memorial shrine) or we would fall sick. There was a second Than to my

deceased uncle – seen as a restless wind god - in the field and we would make offerings there of rice pudding and flowers, along with prayers for forgiveness.

Although my father worked in India, my mother was not permitted to have any money of her own and had to ask my grandparents for every penny, even for washing powder. When I broke my arm, the family believed it would be an unnecessary expense if I went to hospital, despite my mother's tears of protest. Courageously, she went to the Village Elders and showed them my arm and they commanded my uncle to take me to hospital. Like many Nepali children, I happily ran around in bare feet and would wear my family member's old clothes cut down to my size. We had new clothes twice a year, for the Teej festival and when my father came home for Dashain, which was also the one day a year that we were guaranteed meat. On the eighth day of the Dashain festival, *Ashtami*, animal sacrifices are carried out all over Nepal in the belief that this will please the goddess Kalarastri. Instead, my grandfather would 'sacrifice' a large *kubhindo* (white gourd). He would rest the vegetable on wooden sticks to represent 'legs', raise a knife, chop through it, then scatter red *abir* (powder) around it to look like blood.

At home we ate only at dawn and at dusk, to fit around farm-work and the food was shared amongst the 13 people in our household. We ate *daal* or vegetables on good days but sometimes we had to make do with cumin seed curry or bread dipped in whey. Like many Nepalis, I developed rickets through calcium deficiency and frequently had infections through lack of Vitamin C. I missed my father a great deal and although some of my uncles were kind, others felt that they had to compensate for my father's absence by subjecting me to extra discipline. I started farm-work from the age of 5 and had to collect wood from the jungle every day before breakfast, which was quite normal. I was always scared of one tree from which a 16-year-old boy had hanged himself after his dad refused to pay for a school trip. I had no books as a child and no toys except for those I would make out of scraps of wood, such as my wooden oxen, including the champion with the biggest horns! I would keep them hidden in the animal shed until some grown-up would throw them away and ridicule me for wasting time. I did, however, have many friends and we would always run in and out of each other's houses, as children still do in our village today.

Memories of Primary School

I started primary school at the age of six with my Aunt, who was seven months younger than me. My grandmother only let me have two sheets of paper and half a pencil, all tied to my bag with string, 'in case I lost them'. Our classroom consisted of a stone and mud hut without a wall. School was usually cancelled if it was too rainy or windy but never on test days. In the reception class test, I was sitting on the open side of the classroom and was too scared to ask to move. My exam paper got wet as the wind blew the rain inside. This led to my first experience of corporal punishment. My teacher shouted at me and pulled my hair. I was terrified and did everything to avoid being punished again, ranking 2nd in the class by the age of 7. I frequently witnessed my classmates being beaten and when I was 8 I was afraid that I would be beaten to death, having been caught stealing a lemon. I had seen thieves in the village tied to a pole and punched by mobs of villagers until they bled heavily. The owner of the lemon tree had come to my house in a rage, while I hid trembling behind a wall. I was too scared to go to school the next day but one teacher defended me. He said that the lemon theft was only because I had come under the influence of 'unsuitable' friends (a euphemism for '*dalits*', perceived as the lowest caste). Despite this caste prejudice, I was grateful for his protection.

It was dangerous to be too knowledgeable in primary school. One English teacher mis-spelt Wednesday as 'Wensday'. When I pointed out his mistake, he was furious and twisted my hair. Once a teacher demanded that we spell the word 'knife' but I protested that it had not been in the list of words that we had been given to memorise, all of which I had learnt perfectly. The teacher twisted my ear, shouted that it was not my place to decide right from wrong and dragged me outside, where I was forced to kneel on the hard ground. Another teacher ordered those who had memorised their lessons correctly to beat other children who had not. I felt horrible being told to hit the faces of my friends, who were very upset with me and stopped playing with me for a while. I received less corporal punishment than my classmates but hated the constant violence I witnessed. One of our maths teachers used to make a particular example of the son of his neighbours, presumably with the parents' permission. He would hang the boy upside down and beat his feet or strip him and cane his buttocks, claiming that he had caught him playing after school instead of doing his homework. I can still hear his screams and pleas in my

head. We were all too terrified to intervene. He left the school a few months later and told us that he would kill the maths teacher when he grows up. I found out that at the age of 16 he had become a Maoist rebel fighter and that he never completed his education. Another teacher dislocated a Muslim girl's hand with his cane. Her parents came to our school with a posse of villagers but the matter was settled after the teacher paid her hospital bill.

Our school buildings could not accommodate the number of classes so sometimes classes would be held outside in the heat. Chairs were also in short supply, so many students would bring in mats and sit on the dusty floor. I always felt a gnawing hunger and as our classroom was next to the kitchen, we could smell '*lito*' (porridge) cooking. The smell would drive us mad and we were often slapped for being distracted with our faces turned to the kitchen. On rainy days, the rain dripped through the holes in the zinc roof or its sound was too loud for us to hear our teachers speak. Eventually the roof was blown away completely during one storm. A group of villagers ran after it and managed to piece it together again. The wall of our classroom collapsed and two students were injured: luckily it was break-time.

There were no lavatories or water facilities in the school. All pupils used to defecate and pee on a designated filthy, saturated piece of grass, hiding behind the bushes and wiping ourselves with leaves and small stones. In exactly the same place we would fly our paper aeroplanes and cheered and jeered if someone slipped over and got smeared with faeces. The one lavatory that appeared years later was only used by teachers and a few girls. We were always thirsty. There was one frog-ridden drinking water tank but it rarely contained enough water for all the students and was often completely empty. Thirst drove us to walk 5 minutes away from the school, to the '*Mul-dhara*' (a natural spring dedicated to the 'snake god'). Here, however, were trees covered in thick vines that were irresistible, even though we knew that climbing them would mean being late back to school. None of us had a watch. Upon our return we would be either forced to do sit-ups, or we would have our ears pulled or be caned on our hands. It never occurred to us to take a bottle of water to school with us, we never had any containers.

My biggest crisis at school occurred when my friends and I found 20 rupees (about 13 pence) in the road on the way to school. This was a fortune when you consider that my grandfather used to work all day for the equivalent of 30 pence. My friends persuaded me to buy some biscuits and sweets for 8 rupees

and I kept the remainder. During assembly, however, after the usual exercises and national anthem, the head announced that a pupil had lost her 20 rupees exam fee. We all tried to look blank but to my horror, a witness had seen me pick up the money and I was called to the front, along with my three friends and publicly condemned as thieves. We were made to kneel and were tied up for nearly four hours. Even in that position my friend looked longingly at the pen on the desk and suggested we steal it but we all told him to shut up. The news reached my family before I got home and on my return my uncle grabbed me and force-fed me buffalo faeces. Everyone was furious with me for shaming the family.

Class five was the final year of my primary school and was very important for school authorities as we had to take district level examination at the end of term, which affected the school's ratings and reputation. A teacher had finally noticed that I could never see the board from the back of the classroom as I was so short, so I was moved to the front where I thrived. The school was always cleaned by the pupils and I was made cleaning captain as the Head of House. I got to organise extra-curricular activities as well as distribute leftover '*lito*' to pupils. This was fantastic as I could get extra helpings from the peons. The extra food and responsibility improved my confidence. My family's frugality still held me back though. I could not go on a school trip because my grandparents would not pay the fee which was about five rupees (about 3 pence).

Students were picked out at random to answer maths questions written on the board. Our teacher would wave his cane and thrash pupils' behinds or calves if they made any mistake. I remember one poor classmate just drawing a triangle on the board in desperation, then falling on the floor as he was beaten, knowing that he was doomed. Our whole class would hold our breath and try to avoid the teacher's gaze. I was lucky enough to get the right answers when I was called to the front, even though I remember my legs and hands shaking so badly that I could hardly write. Fear of the maths teacher was so great that every student except me (who could not afford it) paid for extra maths lessons. Despite this, when I took the exam, I got the top mark in the class. My delight turned to horror however, when the teacher then beat every single one of my classmates in turn, saying that obviously none of them had worked as hard as me since I had come first without extra tuition.

Our exam was held at Namuna School which was about an hour's walk from our house. I managed to come fourth place out of about 60 students. I had hoped for some form of recognition on the results day but unfortunately, instead of being honoured, I received a humiliating beating on my back in front of all the parents and pupils for wriggling out of our line and making a noise.

Secondary School – The SLC Pressure Cooker

After completing primary school, I started Secondary School, which was about twenty minutes from our house. For the first time in my life, I was given a pair of long trousers instead of shorts. But my joy of having new trousers didn't last long. I tried to enter the school by crawling under the fence but my trousers got caught on a hook and tore. I was so upset and dreaded telling my family, for whom money was so precious. Although I had managed to acquire some better-quality paper than I had in primary school, my teachers still scolded me for not having exercise books. I once tried to sew some pages together but the teacher threw my creation across the room and said that if I couldn't bring proper stationery then I shouldn't be in school. An attempt to recycle my precious paper by using a fountain pen then washing and drying sheets of paper in the sun also ended in disaster as they became crispy and crumbled. My schoolbags, however, were carefully made from my dad's old khaki trousers, which made them very strong.

At Secondary School I didn't feel alone as some of my fellow villagers were already at the school and tipped me off about which teachers were strict and which were not. Teachers were no longer viewed as god-like as they had been in Primary School. A form of resistance involved giving teachers nick-names such as *jery* (pudding), *rago* (male buffalo), *bhode* (fatso), *puthe* (fat arse), *chheparo* (lizard), *bapati* (pervert), *ghanti* (bell). Some of these names were distortions of their names, others based upon their physical characteristics. I found it very strange and was also shocked when I heard them referring to teachers using disrespectful words like 'ta' (comparable to the French 'tu'). The school was huge compared to primary school, with about 1000 students. There were no lessons on the first day, just a rather chaotic registration and division of pupils into classes of 120. By the time we got to SLC level, 50% of the pupils had dropped out leaving us in classes of about 60 students.

Shortly after I had started secondary school, my father had finally managed to build a separate house for us within my grandfather's property, which was easier than sharing a space with so many uncles and aunties. We even had our own small yard with a buffalo and her daughter. My father returned to India but this time he made me responsible for keeping all the financial records because my mum was (and still is) illiterate and could not do arithmetic. Even as a small child my mother would make me write letters to my father telling him about our problems and how we were struggling without him. I was her 'voice' in this way.

My stationery improved but school text books were scarce or printed too late for us to do the homework that our teacher demanded. The learning methods in secondary school were just as teacher-centric as they had been in primary school. Every day, we had seven different lessons with seven different teachers – which meant seven different pieces of homework. Our job was just to listen and obey. Homework, which was given in every subject, would usually involve rote-learning of set answers to questions, reciting famous poems, memorising the meaning and spelling of English and Nepali words and solving maths problems. With 60 students per class, the teachers could not mark everybody's work, so just selected a few students at random. Sometimes the class monitor would collect pupil's homework and take it to the office for inspection.

There was a monitor in every class selected by the class teacher usually on the basis of their physical stature and strength in order to control the class more effectively. The class monitor would help teachers carry sports equipment and either beat or write down the names of anybody who made a noise in the teacher's absence. The monitor's list was then given to the teacher who would scold or beat us upon their return. It was exasperating since monitors were only school pupils like us. One day a student protested about the monitor writing his name on the list and actually tore the paper. Once the teacher returned this student received an extra harsh beating, after which nobody dared to confront a monitor again.

Students had to read, write and recite exactly as the teacher dictated. Any critical ideas would be crushed. In social studies the textbook would introduce a topic then there would be discussion questions at the end of every chapter, which were intended to stimulate free debate. Instead, the teacher would write both the question and a set answer on the board. For example, to the question 'What career would you like to follow in the future?' the teacher

would write 'I would like to be a doctor so that I can help people who are in pain' and everybody would write it down. Anybody who deviated from the script would be punished, such as one student who disagreed with the teacher's set answers about the disadvantages of the radio. Umpteen activities and chapters were skipped as the teachers said they would not come up in the exam. Whenever a subject was on the exam paper that we had not covered, it was common practice for a teacher to fiddle with the exam paper, removing the section that we hadn't done and replacing it with something that we knew.

Learning science was also badly affected by the terrible poverty of Nepal. We never saw any laboratory or laboratory equipment, only sketches of experiments in books. The textbook would ask us about scientific experiments but we had to memorise the answers as we could never do any experiments ourselves. Just once a teacher brought in a telescope and a magnifying glass. We were amazed by these items and couldn't stop talking about them. The lack of real thinking meant that many students were totally disengaged from learning. My friend Gunja and I profited from this and started our own homework business, charging 5 rupees (about 3 and a half pence) for each homework assignment. Our friends fell behind in class as a result, however, and Gunja and I shot ahead because of all the extra practice that we had. Gunja had been the First Boy in the class but hanged himself from a tree at the age of 15, after the school refused to let him retake an exam that he had missed due to illness. I ran there an hour after his death, before he had been cut down. He looked like he was kneeling. I was devastated.

A great deal of learning time was wasted on rituals dressed up as lessons. In Class Six, for example, our social studies teacher told us the lesson would be about 'national integrity' and that we all had to stand up and practice singing the national anthem. To make it more 'interesting', we were told to sing it to a new rhythm. I thought this was ridiculous and started giggling. The more I tried to suppress it, the more I sniggered. The pupil next to me alerted the teacher who beat me on the head over ten times saying that I had disrespected the national anthem and the King of Nepal whom the anthem honoured. After that incident, I never sang that national anthem again, despite its presence at every morning assembly. Two years later, the student branch of the Maoist rebellion banned it and a new national anthem was created which celebrated Nepal's multiculturalism.

Our English teacher, who also was our class teacher, was the strictest teacher in the school and beat us mercilessly. One day, a friend of mine wrote 'I love you' on a paper and threw it to a girl, who immediately showed it to the teacher. The teacher caned his hand eight times and warned him that if he did anything like that again he would be expelled. His crime was announced to the whole school and he was denounced as 'disgusting'. He remained disturbed by the beating and his anxiety was compounded by his father's second marriage. He went on to do a Master's degree and became an accountant, but he hanged himself at the age of 27 in a hotel next to a cremation temple.

I managed to pass up to class seven, leaving several friends behind but again our textbooks were changed and we could not get hold of the new ones. I was beaten a few times for being noisy, for bad handwriting or for not knowing the spelling and meaning of English words but it was nothing compared to what other pupils received. Every day hours of study were wasted with ritualised beatings and all of us existed under a dreary cloud of violence and fear. My friend Ganesh dropped out of school after constantly being targeted by the science teacher. He tried to hide behind other pupils but stood out as he was chubby. The teacher would make him stand on the bench then subject him to degrading jokes about his body shape and inability to answer questions until he cried.

The smallest incident was magnified into a crisis. One student complained to the teacher that somebody had cut the toe-holder of his flip-flops. Why would somebody do that? Looking back, maybe it just broke and he was too scared to tell his parents because of the cost of flip-flops (about 25p) so invented a conspiracy. The teachers took the matter very seriously and cancelled the usual half-day holiday that we had on a Friday. Three teachers came into our class and searched everybody for razors. They had a theory that two students were guilty – one who had cut the flip-flop and another who had disposed of the weapon. Since they had no evidence, they used a lie-detection method and checked the heartbeats of every single boy in the class to see who was lying. Since every heartbeat was racing, they selected two boys to be punished who had razor blades, but we nearly all had razor blades as we used them to sharpen our pencils: few could afford the 5 rupees for pencil sharpeners. One of the accused was my cousin, who insisted he was innocent. He had recently lost his mother to cancer and his father had remarried. The injustice and humiliation of the flip-flops accusation was too much for him to bear on top of

his family problems and he dropped out of school completely at the age of 14 and ran away to India.

The flip-flops incident led to a change in disciplinary policing, which was perceived as having been too soft. Our class teacher selected a taller and tougher monitor who was told to beat us for even the slightest sound. The new monitor took us out to play football and volleyball during a leisure period, as was the school custom but the teacher saw even this as an outrage. He caned virtually the whole class upon his return. My friend protested that we had only obeyed the monitor but received a triple beating for questioning authority. After this injustice, I lost all respect for the teacher and although I did well, remaining in the top six per cent, I felt like a machine. In class 8, our textbooks changed again and once more, availability problems meant that we were bookless for some months. The district level exam was looming and we started to get pressure from our families as well as teachers. Corporal punishment increased. We had 50 students in each class. As in primary school, our benches were too small with six of us squashed onto a bench made for five. Three of us were from the Brahmin caste and three were Magar. We had many power struggles pushing each other on the bench. I was on the end and was always pushed off: this was at least, one happy memory of school!

I lost interest in studying Nepali syntax since it was worth only 2% of the marks in the final exam. Our Nepali teacher beat our palms twice a day for every word we didn't know. This was to be doubled every day if our mistakes continued. After I received six strokes, I stopped going to school out of fear. By the time the teacher was beating nearly everybody over eight times, he stopped, perhaps because it was so time-consuming. Any resistance was impossible. We disliked the methods used by our English teacher who would only speak English and refused to translate it, thereby excluding most of the class, who couldn't understand hardly anything he said. The whole class held a meeting and vowed that we would confront him together, standing shoulder to shoulder, and threaten to report him to the head-teacher if he did not change his methods. Once the English teacher entered, one student began to challenge his as we had planned. The beating he received however was so amazingly severe that we were all paralysed with fear. The English teacher shouted at him as he was beating him, saying 'How dare you criticise a teacher, who has so many years' experience and a proper English degree qualification'. The victim looked around for solidarity and we all looked at the floor. I still feel ashamed

that I did not have the courage to support him. Ironically, I won a class election to represent pupils at a 'child-rights forum' but it never even occurred to any of us that children's rights might include the right not to be subjected to violence.

Results of the district level exam were often confusing. My teacher told me that I had failed and would have to repeat the year since he could not find me in the 2nd and 3rd division. I had to plead with him to check the 1st division then he reacted with disbelief. I celebrated being third in the class then the school revised the results and I went down to fourth place. Class nine and ten were crucial as they prepared students for the national SLC exam. The pass-rates were seen as the ultimate indication of a school's standard and the best schools from district would receive prizes from the government. Our school was anxious to maintain its high reputation so the tension and difficulty of the work increased. For one month, I was stuck at the back of the class behind all the girls and latecomers, due to the school's mistake with my results. My chance came when our maths teachers presented the class with a difficult geometrical problem. Nobody dared to attempt the answer in case they got it wrong and were beaten. I stood up and the teacher called me to the front and gave me a piece of chalk. As a reward for solving the problem, I was moved to the front bench.

Our maths teacher took verbal humiliation and corporal punishment to a new level of brutality. He made us carry a notebook of maths formulae, terms and geometrical theorems with us everywhere. We were told to read it constantly at school, at home and during our journey and would be beaten if we were found without it. Even if we had nearly completed the hour journey to school, we would run home to fetch it if ever we had forgotten it, our terror of being found without it was so great.

If a girl made a mistake, the teacher would scream at her: '*Taile padhera kehi hune hoena, kina bauko paisa ra samay khera falchhes baru poila jaa*' ('You will never amount to anything, elope instead of wasting your father's money and time'). To the boys he would say: 'Leave school and open a '*pan pasal*' (betel leaf shop)' or 'Why don't you run away to India and make some money – cheer your dad up'. Some of his insults were supposed to be 'amusing'. To one student with severe learning difficulties he said: 'You will never get any good marks. You could become a *yogi* and beg for marks. Or become a priest in a temple. If you worship God night and day he might let you have a few marks

but there is no other way'. Like many other teachers, he called students names such as *badar* (monkey), *gadha* (donkey), *goru* (ox), *bewakuf* (idiot) and *Moti* (fat). He would beat anyone, anytime during the lesson for not knowing formulae, incorrect answers, incomplete homework. Punishments included twisting ears, slapping, pulling a student's hair, punching in the back or in the case of my unfortunate neighbour, grabbing his hair and smashing his head against the desk. The terror continued until the SLC exam. But I received only encouragement, rather than punishment from this maths teacher. He told me that I would get the all-time highest maths score in the SLC exam. I was also the only student exempted from compiling a maths answer book since I knew all the formulae by heart. In English, I was also favoured and encouraged to lead group discussions. This contrasted with my class teacher, who would permit no free discussion or critical thought. We had to merely recite the answers that he gave us to our 'debate' questions.

Getting hold of textbooks remained a problem. My friends and I made the complicated journey to the town of Narayangadh, hoping to buy books there but despite trawling around numerous book shops, they hardly had any of the books we needed: we came back only with a fever and a headache. In particular, I needed the Optional Maths book to understand and practice complex trigonometry and line equations. In the end, I only managed to get it one week before the first terminal exam so ended up failing, but came 2nd in the final exam. Ranking made those of us near the top more competitive and serious about study, especially as the positions of the students were announced on results day in front of all the parents. Those at the bottom were jeered at by the parents and students while their teacher would make a joke about their inability to study. Many bottom-ranking students dropped out rather than endure this day of mockery. Ranking destroyed the hope of those students outside of the top 10.

Fear of punishment may have affected me in a subtle way. Although I usually excelled at quiz competitions, essay-writing and debating, when I took part in a debating competition I found myself struck dumb. I was well-prepared and had started well but after one minute, I suddenly became unable to speak, through some unknown terror or anxiety. I forgot everything. All the students from my house were saying 'Go on, go on' but I could not. My mind was swimming. I concluded my subject matter within two minutes then apologised to my whole house. That was not the only time when I failed to remember subject matter. On numerous occasions, I have been able to describe a subject in depth but

forget it when I have to stand in front of teachers or other authority figures. Even today, this 'affective filter' continues to distort my performance in pressurised situations.

Class ten was the final year of school life – all effort was focused upon the SLC. Class ten students did not take part in any kind of extra-curricular or sports activity and the school day ran from 6am to 6pm. On top of that, teachers would pay spot visits to our homes to check whether we were studying or not. I remember hanging out with my friends one night, sharing some rude jokes when we noticed our headmaster coming in our direction. We all ran home to study at full speed. My mother noticed my unusual rush to do homework and said 'If that's your teacher coming, I will tell them you never study'. When he arrived at our house, however, she told him that I never stop studying. He seemed pleased and said that I had a good chance of achieving the gold medal for a high SLC result if I continued in this manner. The next day my fellow students shared their experiences of the teachers' home visits: many had been slapped for going to bed early, loitering or being found at home without their books open. No part of our lives was freed from the school's interference.

Our next exam result gave the boy at the top of the class a mere 1% lead over me. I thought that if I worked hard I could easily overtake him. But the 12-hour school day made us very tired. At a crucial time in my studies, my parents suddenly had to go to India. This meant I had to look after our buffalo and her daughter – including mucking out, milking, heating the milk into curds and whey and gathering buffalo food. I also had to cook for my grandfather who frequently complained that I was not looking after the buffalos properly and wasting my time on 'cow-eaters' education. Two of my friends often came over to my house to study, but we were often tempted away by my neighbour's TV. We three slept together in a bed under a shelf, which one of us would always bang their head on. We would study until ten but chat in bed for much of the night about girls, sports and tricks to pass exams. By 4am we had to get up again for extra tuition classes.

Our SLC exam centre was the Jana Jyoti Higher Secondary School which was half an hour away from our school by bicycle. The exam started at 7am and finished at 10am. Outside the exam centre many people turned up to support their family members. There were a few fights between the police and the relatives of students who came to help students cheat. On the last day, at the end of the exam a few of my class mates physically fought the invigilators as

they tried to collect the papers, so desperate were they for extra time. Finally, it was over and my friends and I went to the town of Narayangadh to watch a movie. We felt so free from the burden of studying. I went to India for about 6 weeks and was horrified by the news that the Nepali royal family had been massacred on 1st June 2001. Three days later, I returned to Nepal and found that I had passed my SLC. Everything was changing. Despite my maths success, I opted to study Science as it was considered more prestigious. I wanted to study in Chitwan but my father said that I had to stay at home and study nearby, to do my share of household tasks and take care of my mother and siblings. Unlike most 16-year olds in England, we were expected to take full responsibility for our families and make any sacrifices deemed necessary to help them.

Studying for the HSEB (Equivalent to A-level)

I started studying science at Higher Secondary School but the 9 to 5 schedule made me fall behind with my farm-work so I switched to Education and Maths, for which classes started at 6am. The college was half an hour bike round away which could be perilous in the dark and fog and we were frequently chased by dogs or fell into holes left in the road by the water authorities. I had very little money and only took ten rupees with me in case I got a puncture. I was teased for being a '*lobhi bahun*' (tight-fisted Brahmin) as I never spent money on school snacks. Food at dawn and dusk was sufficient.

Compared to secondary school, we had incredible freedom. Corporal punishment was no longer used (yet ironically, it continues up until the age of 18 in the private schools). We were no longer terrified of being late or not memorising texts. Learning methods remained very teacher-centric, however. Our lectures were attended by up to 90 students, so there was no chance for any discussion or analysis. The teacher would comment on the topics and tell us to make notes, which we were told to learn when we got home. Maths lessons consisted of the teacher giving examples on the board and us practising examples in the text book. We often didn't bother and our teacher seldom checked. The school had a very small library in the school but it only had text books: there was nothing to stretch our imagination or enable us to read around our subject.

My education was also haunted by numerous deaths which would have been considered preventable in the West. My great uncle died when his heavy

bundle caused him to slip and roll down a hill into a river. We had to dedicate a room to him and build him a *than* (shrine) lest his spirit stopped our buffaloes producing milk. We believed that he had become a wind-god and feared his anger. His sister was eaten by a tiger when fetching water from the *kuwa* (sacred tap) and my aunt was killed by a snake. My grandmother died a few months before my Class 11 exam, during the worship of the Goddess Swasthani. My gran had been speared in the head by an ox horn whilst removing the hard, inedible stems from the ox's leaves. When I arrived, my grandmother said she was feeling better as she had taken an Ibuprofen tablet and that it was not the ox's fault. About 20 people came in the room and I read the story of Swasthani to them all and my grandmother blessed everybody and gave them *tika* (red rice put on the forehead) and *Prasad* (holy sweetmeats). We sang *bhajans* until about 10pm. In the early hours of the morning, my grandmother's health deteriorated and she was laid in front of the sacred *tulasi math* plant. A village elder checked her heartbeat, declared her dead and told me to give her a spoonful of water. Almost immediately afterwards, I felt very feverish and realised that I had contracted typhoid. I was very ill in bed for weeks and missed a great deal of lessons. The only reading materials were at school so although I tried to study hard without them, I had large gaps in my knowledge and ended up passing all my exams but with very low marks.

In class twelve, my grandfather died, again just a few months before my end of year exam. He had fallen out of a tree whilst trying to cut some leaves that the buffalo found particularly delicious. Straight after his death, my typhoid flared up again but this time it lasted longer. I took an extra strong medicine that made me feel very weak. I struggled to revise for my exams at home and to teach myself the fifth of the maths syllabus that our teacher had not covered. I staggered to the exam centre in Devchuli feeling hot and confused and realised that I had forgotten my exam entrance card. An invigilator said that I might be failed on these grounds and should go home and get the card. I stayed and took the three-hour exam but was so worried about going back to fetch the card (a 90-minute journey) that I could not concentrate properly.

Civil War and My First Migration

My first experience of revolutionary politics was when I was 14. A group of Maoist students had come to our school asking for solidarity. They entered our classroom and told us that their comrade had been arrested unfairly and that

we should come and join a demonstration to liberate him. We were thrilled to have an excuse to leave school and most of the class went with them. We went to Kawasoti police station where we chanted 'Release Him' and listened to speeches. I got a bit bored and was more interested in the luscious lychees hanging on the tree above me so climbed up and ate some. The next moment the riot police arrived and everybody started running away. I climbed higher up the tree to get a better view and the police came out with masks and long bamboo sticks. The leaders who had pledged their lives to the cause were the first to flee and the majority of blows were taken by young students and one thin, elderly Maoist who stood in front of them and said 'These are just kids. You will hurt them over my dead body'. They beat him up very badly and dragged him into the police station. The police then whirled their sticks wildly at the students, injuring many. I jumped down and ran to hide in some shops, but all the shopkeepers pulled down their shutters, not wanting to get involved. Then a friend called me to where he was hiding amidst some sacks of potatoes and we huddled together there. Eventually I managed to get to the house of my uncle, who gave me some daal and rice, and 5 rupees for the bus, ordering me to go straight home. I walked the seven miles home instead, not wanting to waste 5 rupees so recklessly.

My last two school years of higher secondary school were disrupted by the 'People's War' finally erupting. We were terrified by rumours about the Maoist fighters coming to people's houses and demanding money and fighting, killing and abducting people. When they arrived however, they were very polite, asking us simply for food and shelter. They were mostly young and looked very frightened, especially one beautiful girl with a broken lip, but they still tried to explain their Marxist ideals to us. Shortly afterwards, however, on my way to my extra maths class, my bicycle was stopped by a group of Royalist soldiers who aimed their guns at me and accused me of mixing with Maoists. My uncle shouted out 'He's not a Maoist, he's my nephew' and a soldier replied, 'Shut up, old man, everybody is somebody's nephew'. The commander told me that I must report any sightings of Maoists to him. Eventually he let me go. I was shaking all day and could not study. I had never been so frightened in my life. Despite these challenges, I was the only one out of 90 students in our year to pass my HSEB exam. I had also completed my teacher training and received my Certificate of Practice. I was looking forward to a career in teaching but was disturbed to hear about our 45-year-old head-teacher being forced to do 100 'ups and downs' whilst holding his ears by the Royal military police. The police had searched him as he got off the bus, but when he said, 'I'm a head teacher',

they had replied 'You might be a head teacher in your village but you are nothing here' and made him exercise at gunpoint.

After my HSEB exam, I went to India to visit my father. He helped me get an assistant supervisor's job at a ribbon factory in Delhi. I earned about 1800 Indian rupees a month (about £18) and was told to consider myself very lucky as many other workers only got £12 a month and I was only 18 years old. Nobody complained about the company owner, whom they all called '*babu jee*' (respected father). I worked from 8am to 8pm with half an hour for lunch but the majority of workers wanted overtime money so they continued working until 11pm. Three of us shared a single room, sleeping on a *khatiya* (rope bed) in extreme heat, constantly attacked by mosquitoes. After six months I changed jobs, working this time as a machine operator but it was very intensive and dangerous and numerous workers were injuring themselves. I returned to Nepal to continue my studies. My father was very disappointed, sending family members and even Village Elders to remonstrate with me but I was determined not to go back to India. Everybody told me that studying was pointless as numerous Nepali graduates are unemployed and end up emigrating in the end anyway. Finally, my father said that if I insisted on studying, then he could not give me any financial support as he had others to feed. I told him proudly that I would find a job and fund myself.

My First Teaching Job

I was delighted when I managed to get a maths teaching job at a private school near my home as the application process had been tough – it included an exam – and I was desperate to be able to support myself. My wage was 2500 NPR (about £20) per month. I started teaching maths from class 1 to class 6. On my first day, I was told that 'The first impression is the last impression' therefore I should be very strict from the first day in order to control the class. I saw other teachers taking children to the lavatories and locking them in for half an hour or more. Many were beaten hard on their behinds and others made to kneel outside in the garden. It was very depressing. I soon realised that my child psychology studies would never have a chance to be used. The students were so enthusiastic compared to state school students and asked many intelligent questions. I didn't understand why they had to be ruled by terror.

It turned out that six out of twelve teachers in the school were family members of the principal. Four of them were in charge of 'teaching methods'. After a short time, the principal's brother said that there had been complaints that I was too soft on the students, who had not always completed their homework and had behaved 'badly'. He said that either I started to beat them or he would. I didn't want to hand my students over to him, nor have anybody interfere with my class, so I reluctantly agreed to use corporal punishment as mildly as possible. I was aware of how it would damage my relationship with my students but I was desperate to keep the job and knew that every school in Nepal used the same methods. On top of that, the Vice-Principal (the Principal's wife) told me not to let anybody into the class whose fees had not been paid up to date. The students were very upset but usually eventually the parents would pay up. I remember one poor boy in particular who kept saying 'My dad said he will pay the fees after he sells his pig'. Another boy's huge, burly father came to the school and threatened the staff. Immediately we were instructed to turn a blind eye to the unpaid fees of that particular boy and to only harass the others for money.

The principal's family members were all proud of their strict methods. On one occasion a father came to the school after his child had arrived home with deep red weals across his buttocks. The father was furious about the brutality used and called for the sacking of all unmarried teachers, claiming that they would always be unkind to children as they do not know what love and tenderness are! Anxious to keep their fees, the teacher concerned apologised profusely and swore that he would never beat another child from that day. Corporal punishment continued however: they simply avoided beating pupils from that family.

Exams were crucial since private schools were selected on the basis of their results. The exam questions would arrive at the school a couple of days before the exam and the Vice Principal told me to check the questions and give the students a hint about what to revise. The students knew that if a teacher said 'This topic is particularly important for the exam' then they should concentrate on that. We had to give the top students plenty of clues to help them achieve 'outstanding' results and 'double-check' the answer sheets of all students to make sure that everybody had passed the exam. Some of my colleagues would even rub out mistakes and write in the correct answers to make students pass. It was immoral but I was told that this practice was essential to protect the poorer children and to keep the funds flowing from the wealthier ones,

without which the school could not survive. One parent explained to me that she had chosen this private school precisely because it could guarantee that her son would not fail the Grade 8 exam that he needed to join the Indian or British army.

My Second Teaching Job – Teaching in the Public Sector

After two years at the private school, I managed to get a maths teacher job at my old school. It felt creepy going back there and working with the same teachers who I used to fear. Our classrooms were still inadequate so I taught in the stifling heat under a piece of zinc until an INGO arrived and created a six-room building for us. I enjoyed responsibility, becoming the superintendent of exams, head of sports and extra-curricular activities and even Vice Principal for a few months. Our school worked closely with the SMC (School Management Committee) and some ambitious parents tried to influence our decisions. This wasn't always desirable. One parent called me and said that her son had been playing football instead of studying him and that I must go to her house and beat him. I told her that children need some time to play and amuse themselves and refused to go. At the next parent-teacher meeting she complained to the head-teacher that I had ignored her complaint and neglected to discipline pupils under my authority. I was given a formal warning that I must be stricter with pupils and beat them whenever necessary because otherwise the school would not meet its targets in maths results. Every teacher in the school used corporal punishment and it was made clear to me that I could not continue working at the school unless I did too. The fact that it was nearly always the same students who were beaten seemed to prove its ineffectiveness to me.

In particular, I objected to punishments for homework offences. The excuses ranged from 'somebody stole my exercise book' to 'I slipped in the stream and it floated away'. I knew, from experience, that the real reasons were things that could not be put into a few words, like the children's endless pressure from their parents to do manual labour; their chronic exhaustion from malnutrition and sleeplessness; their terror of failure; frequent power cuts making it too dark to study and other complex factors. I tried to increase the sports and extracurricular activities at the school to give the pupils some happiness. Meanwhile, my job meant that my family expected me to contribute more to the household expenses and the studies of my siblings. I

was struggling to pay instalments on a motorbike and took on many private maths tuition classes to make extra money.

Bachelor's Degree and Student Activism

I studied my Bachelor's degree at a campus, part of Tribhuvan University. I rented a room in Kawasoti, near the university and went to college regularly but many of my fellow students had poor attendance records and were obsessed with politics. Students regularly vandalised university property, writing on tables and breaking light switches and doing all the things they had never been allowed to do at school. There were constant protests against tutors and the university authorities, organised by student groups affiliated to political parties, many of which I found quite meaningless and supported by students who just felt that demonstrating and shouting for the day would provide more of a buzz than studying. I was upset when one of my lecturers got branded an 'enemy' and sacked.

Although I had wanted to study peacefully, I got dragged into university politics, running for the office of Treasurer for the student wing of the breakaway Congress party. The party split led to the student election being lost to the Communists. Since our President had been locked in his home by his uncle for supporting the dissident faction, we were the only ones around to blame and the main party members grabbed me by the scruff of the neck and beat up one my friends. The civil war meant that even student politics was fraught with tension and violence. One-day Maoist fighters ambushed the police station near my room. I was cooking curry when some bullets came through our neighbour's window and railings so I crawled to the stairs for safety. Sometimes soldiers burst in to interrogate; on other occasions Maoist fighters came to ask for help.

My schedule was very strict: I would rise and cook my daily curry and rice at 4.30am, then attend university lectures from 6am to 9am; teach at a boarding school from 10am until 4pm then teach maths one-to-one in the evenings for extra pocket money. At weekends, I would go home to help my mother with farm-work and to check that my brothers and sister were studying effectively and to answer any maths questions that they had. I was disappointed to discover that my university, just like my school, did not encourage critical thinking. There were no class discussions, just notetaking in lectures. My maths tutor only covered just over half of the curriculum but when we complained to

the university, we were told that it was impossible to have him removed because of his powerful political contacts. I spent many hours in my rented room trying to teach myself the subjects that we had missed. Only 50% of us managed to complete our degrees. Our degree included a research project which was assessed by an external examiner, in the style of a viva. When we met him, he seemed very moody, rubbished our report, tutted with irritation at every answer we gave and awarded us the lowest possible mark. Later we discovered that the external examiners hadn't been paid by the university so resented coming to assess us. Despite these problems, I graduated in 2008 but in there was no graduation ceremony.

After university, I became a volunteer for a human rights NGO called the 'Campaign for Human Rights and Social Transformation', operating in the Nawalparasi district. The aim of the organisation was to provide legal service to those affected by the civil war and help them to re-establish in their roles in society. I attended many excellent training programmes run by senior lawyers and ex-judges, with detailed investigations of many human rights abuses. I went to local jails to probe possible breaches of human rights and helped to investigate murders with other human right organisations. We also attended the Nepal *banda* (strikes) organised by political parties to ensure that human rights were respected throughout the highly-charged protests. Our presence annoyed both the police and protestors, who sometimes swore at us and threatened us. I enjoyed helping survivors of the civil war but was constantly preoccupied with questions about the origin of so much violence. I was familiar with Marxist explanations of the war, but asked myself - could poverty alone really produce so much carnage? It seemed that there were also other inequalities contributing to the brutalisation of society.

My Decision to Come to England

Not long after my graduation, my father told me to get married and found me a wife. Chandra became a great support to our household, which required extensive domestic and agricultural labour. Our expenses were still not covered by my salary so she also started teaching full-time, earning £20 a month. She would be on her feet from 5am, when her domestic duties started until 10pm at night and taught classes of up to 60 primary school students during the day.

In order to advance my career, I began to study for a Masters' degree in Education and Maths at a Campus in Chitwan. This meant a dangerous hour-long motorbike journey every evening to and from my classes, which ran from 4pm to 9pm. It was dark and especially perilous as it was the rainy season. I was often nearly falling asleep on my bike, as I was still teaching all day and fitting in extra lessons wherever I could. I contributed as much as I could to the household expenses. When my father returned from India for the Dashain festival, he asked me for some money. I had only 20,000 NPR so asked a friend for a loan and gave my father 50,000 NPR (about £350). He was angry with me for giving him so little money and said, 'I left school when I was 10, you have a degree yet the amount of money you have given me is useless'. I tried to explain to him how expensive it was to run the household and support my mother, siblings, my wife and my studies. Instead of understanding the pressures upon me, my father was deeply disappointed and said he could no longer trust me with money-matters. This was a life-changing event for me. I was so devastated by his comment that I started to look for alternative paths to success.

There were very few options. I did not want to give up studying for a life in a factory. Initially I planned to go to Australia, but in 2008 I heard that the Australian visa regulations had got stricter whereas Britain had made it easier for foreign students to enter. I went to an educational consultancy which presented a package of promises which went far beyond their instructions from the colleges they promoted. They showed me a generic picture of a college with huge classrooms, an impressive library, a tennis and squash court and a campus with beautiful gardens. They said that I didn't need an IELTS certificate as the college provided English lessons. They said I could do a post-graduate diploma immediately and would easily get a job and earn £1000 a month working a 20 hour a week. This was a great deal more than the £60 a month I earned from working full time in Nepal! My father welcomed the idea but said that he could not afford to send both my wife and I, and that I should go alone at first and bring her to England later. My friend Keshab and I paid a service fee to the agency and gave them all our certificates to the agent: they claimed that if we went through them we would definitely get a visa. I was so confident that I dropped out of my Master's degree and paid the college £4150 in tuition fees, which my father and I borrowed from a finance company.

To our horror, the college that we had applied to had had its licence to sponsor foreign students suspended by the UKBA (I would discover later, this was largely due to the actions of unscrupulous agents). The agent told me that the college had refunded me but had deducted £500 for 'official expenses'. I lost another £500 because of a reduction in the exchange rate during this period. I abandoned the idea of going to England and threw myself into another Master's degree at a College in Nawalparasi. I taught maths from 6am to 4pm then studied for my Masters from 4.30pm to 9.15pm. On top of that I was the Treasurer and Secretary for the Community Forest Group, Campaign Leader for my teacher's union, a youth worker, ran the school alumni fund and kept up my human rights activist work. My day off, Saturday, was entirely taken up with meetings. I also had extra household and farm duties to do as my wife was pregnant. In our community, we shared tragedies and joys, which were also time-consuming. In addition to umpteen festivals, we always went to village weddings and other ceremonies. The women of the village congregated to make hundreds of leaf-plates, for example, for the weddings, including mine. Likewise, a crowd always turned up whenever somebody died. In the UK, death is often removed from public view with police barriers and screens, but we all gathered around a dead man found hanging from a tree, half-eaten by vultures and maggots. We were always upset but very accustomed to seeing dead bodies, due to frequent suicides, the war and disease. Family and property disputes, even over apparently trivial matters, would often lead to big crowds of us getting involved until eventually they were settled by the wise counsel of The Elders.

I was very unprepared when I suddenly got a call from the agent who said that I had received a visa for the UK after all, since the college I had applied to was no longer suspended. I had not wanted to reapply, feeling that I had already lost enough money on this project, but the agent threatened me by saying that if we did not go the UK we would have to pay them the full £4150 again and they would keep our academic certificates and passports. I was terrified of this, as the amount of money was enormous for Nepali people. After some agonising, I finally decided to come to England. I was partly excited but partly afraid, especially leaving my wife when she was pregnant, knowing the enormous burden of work upon her.

My Arrival in England

The Qatar airways flight to England was mind-blowing, I had never been in a plane before. We stayed the first night with family in Southall, then met a college representative who took us to a room over a Bengali restaurant and demanded an accommodation fee. We explained that we had already paid £65 to the agent in Nepal for the first week's accommodation but she said that that was her fee for collecting us from the train station. We had nowhere else to go. It was snowing heavily and our college was closed.

Eventually the college re-opened but it turned out to be very small. The teaching quality was good but most of the students at that time were Nepalese, Indian and Bengali so we spent too long speaking our own languages. Many openly admitted that they were there to make money, not to study. Some lived several counties away from the college and just came in occasionally. College in England was so different from Nepal. We called our teachers 'Ma'am' but they invited us to use their first names which seemed far too familiar. My English teacher was a hippy and shockingly outspoken compared to Nepali women. She was amazed when a 27-year-old Nepali student whom she had called to the front of the class burst into tears, probably due to flashbacks of being punished at school. Our college secretary was always joking with the students and wore clothes that would be considered salacious in Nepal - but were absolutely normal in the UK. Our college principal was not pompous, but warm and friendly and enjoyed having a drink with us. We didn't understand or like English food, especially when we tried a pizza from the supermarket. It tasted awful uncooked! Most of the time we skipped lunch to save money and Keshab and I would slice a boiled egg lengthways and have half each, in accordance with our budget plan. Last year Keshab died of a heart attack in Nepal at the age of 31. He had been very disappointed at not being able to extend his UK visa.

It took me a month to find a job washing up in a restaurant: others struggled for up to six months without work. Two of my classmates were arrested, imprisoned and deported back to Nepal for working – one had worked 22 hours a week instead of 20. My father was pressurising me for money, my studies were difficult and my wife had endured a difficult childbirth and wanted me to come home. I joined our college Interfaith Awareness Group, Dance Society and Debating Society, becoming President of the latter. Attendance however was poor, with many students just coming for the free

sandwiches then melting away once the debate started. I enjoyed English classes as my teacher used radical teaching methods such as comedy and music and asked us all the time about Nepali culture but I did not gain any international qualifications.

At the end of 18 months of England, I had little to show for it. I had sent my father nearly every penny that I had earned to repay my college fee loan so had no money to apply to another institution. I had tasted all the delights of the West but remained firmly on the outside. My dreams of a career in England were shattered and I went back to Nepal with virtually nothing in my pocket. Once there, my father reminded me what a total waste of time going to England had been and how I would have been better off sticking with the factory in India after all. I was also shocked by how thin and weak my wife had become without my support.

My Master's Degree in London

Having experienced life in the UK, it was particularly difficult to adjust to life in Nepal. Things that I had once accepted, such as the dangerous roads, unhealthy sanitation, long-winded bureaucracy and the judgemental attitudes of the villagers had now become unbearable for me. Suddenly I received a call from my English friends (including one comedian, one cleaner and one sex worker) to say that they had managed to club together to pay for me to do a Master's degree in the UK. I was overwhelmed with gratitude, but again emotionally torn. I had by then bonded with my one-year old son and dreaded abandoning him. I also had no illusions this time about the difficulty of surviving financially in England. My first weeks back in England were just a fog of grief, guilt and confusion over leaving my family behind.

I quickly secured a washing up job and began my studies at Birkbeck College. Although they were very inclusive and progressive in their ethos, the high cost of studying in the UK meant that in reality, the students were mostly rich. As we introduced ourselves in the first class, they said I work for this bank or that INGO. I said that I did washing up and they said 'Great!' with gusto, which made me feel worse. The library facilities were breath-taking and the reading lists provided opened up worlds within worlds in my consciousness. There was a huge amount of philosophy to get my head around but I read constantly,

despite a four-month bout of typhoid. My three main tutors said that they wanted to be 'kept in the loop' about my stool samples and their results, which I found quite embarrassing, despite my studies of Freud.

After five months, my wife managed to raise enough money to join me, but we still did not have enough to bring my son. It was agony for her to leave him, at the age of 2, but her arrival made my studies easier as she was able to work full-time and I relied on her financially, especially when I was so sick. Studying in Bloomsbury, surrounded by wealth and privilege made me even more aware of my different background. I also felt inferior academically. The women in my class in particular, seemed so big and powerful, with brains like surgical instruments. In seminars I would think of something brilliant to say, but when my turn came, I would lose all my confidence and start stuttering, forget my English and forget my idea.

Alone or with my dissertation supervisor, Dr Sue Dunn, however, I felt my intellect developing and a real excitement with educational ideas that I had never had before. I wrote my dissertation on 'In which ways does education create barriers to equality for the poorest people of Nepal?'. I had been fascinated with the idea (inspired by a tutor, Dr Peter Mangan) not just of barriers to education but of education itself as a barrier, especially oppressive forms of education. As soon as I had completed my dissertation, I applied to do a PhD.

My Journey Towards a PhD

I wasn't sure which institution to study at in England. In particular, I wanted somewhere that had experience of supervising students from Nepal. I had come across two theses from Christchurch, Canterbury by Nepali students whose work felt very familiar to me. I was also intrigued by its Christian heritage and hoped that this might make the staff more understanding of my research aim of exploring the spiritual effects of corporal punishment. I wanted to study a subject that I felt strongly about and that I was very familiar with, so chose the corporal punishment of schoolchildren in Nepal. For a long time, I have felt that the main topics dominating research— decentralisation and ethnic identity are very low priority compared to the daily suffering of children in Nepalese schools. Thankfully I managed to bring my son to England before he was subjected to any violence in a Nepalese primary school. Even at

his nursery, corporal punishment was being used and I witnessed a distressing example of this when I went to collect him from Nepal in June 2014. The fact that so many Nepalese academics have carried out school observations without commenting on the beatings that they have obviously seen also represents a shocking omission in my view; an absence that is loaded with political and ethical significance (in the same way that the absence of women's and black voices in history also reveals a violent erasure).

My work involved numerous ethical and logistical challenges, which I have now mostly overcome with the support of my supervisory team, who finally helped me to decide on an auto/biographical methodology and convinced me to drop the idea of focus groups. I had to let go of my messianic fantasies of stirring up consciousness across Nepal and realise that focus groups might be stressful and yield only shallow and perhaps inhibited feedback rather than the deeply personal, unique and detailed revelations more likely to appear in auto/biographical accounts. Work by Linden West and Hazel Reid also showed me how individual life stories can still be subversive and help instigate social change, just as they did in the time of Charles Dickens.

During the first half of my PhD, my typhoid came back several times, making me feel weak, feverish and giving me terrible headaches in addition to the physical unpleasantness. I was banned from working, especially at the local primary school where I had been helping out with maths, and could not come to university for long periods. Studying became slow and painstaking. Eventually I saw a specialist who recommended removal of my gall-bladder, as it contained multiple stones which were storing typhoid bacteria and making me a typhoid 'carrier' as well as increasing my risk of cancer. My gall-bladder was removed in an operation on 16th February 2015 and in March I was given the all-clear.

My financial problems were exacerbated by the earthquake on 25th April 2015. One of our Aunts died but most of our family were unhurt. Although the first quake only cracked our walls, the second earthquake on 12th May caused several walls to crumble and other parts of the house to become very unsafe. Fortunately, my family were able to relocate much of their living space to our buffalo shed, which is an exceptionally sound structure. Their needs reached an extreme point and I was in constant mental torture as I couldn't help them, since I was still struggling as a student. Nobody in my family's home had a job and they had sold nearly all the animals except for the buffalo. Without the land, they would have starved. The house of my wife's family was also

damaged apart from the kitchen, in which everybody, including my wife's grandmother, were sleeping. The pressure upon me to give up my PhD and return home to help family was immense, and was putting a strain on all my relationships, but when I looked at my son, settled and flowering in the non-violent English education system, I desperately wanted us to stay here.

On June 6th, 2015 my close friends had a Variety Concert at a glamorous venue in Piccadilly: Limkokwing University, to help fund my research. They spent months rehearsing different acts, making clothes and decorations, arguing about the programme and organising the food and drinks. It was a mixture of jazz, comedy, poetry and I sang a multi-faith hymn that I had written and some Nepalese songs. I did some traditional dancing and gave a speech and a PowerPoint presentation about my thesis and my hope that one day my findings might contribute to ending violence to children in Nepal. The *Global Initiative to End Corporal Punishment* kindly sent me 100 copies of their reports for me to distribute to attendees. Unfortunately, however, the concert made no profit, only a loss of £1000 and somebody stole my mobile phone with precious photos on it. A group of drunken youths following one of the bands stole a large quantity of alcohol and several musicians demanded travel expenses at the last minute. Many guests who had said they were definitely coming couldn't make it in the end. I became extremely depressed as the concert had been my last hope and my friends had put so much effort into it. My father said that he knew it would be a disaster and a waste of time and I started to believe myself that everything I did was bound to fail.

The earthquake also delayed my trip to Nepal to do my research. The infrastructure, communications and transport links in Nepal are precarious and dangerous during normal times but after the earthquake, chaos reigned. Many bus routes were still not operating, many shops were still empty and medical supplies were low (my father had to go to India to get his diabetes medication). I doubted that anybody would have been in the mood to talk about suffering at school 10 or 20 years ago when they were enduring such hardship now. I was asked at the concert why I was not doing a research project that could help earthquake victims. I replied that whilst earthquakes cause unimaginable suffering, they are neither preventable nor predictable, whereas violence to children is something that can be stopped if people just change their habits.

Research Adventures

I was at my lowest ebb after the earthquake, but then I received ethical approval for my PhD from CCCU. My supervisory team and the University management provided me with an extraordinary level of practical and emotional support which was my salvation. I no longer felt unable to carry on and embarked on my trip to Nepal with fresh energy. When I returned, my family were starting to rebuild their house and my wife's family had received assistance from the government to repair theirs. There were still parts of both of our houses that were unsafe, in my view, but everybody seemed to take a more pragmatic and fatalistic attitude to construction safety than they do in England.

The obstacles that I encountered in my research are detailed in my methodology, but as I struggled to find a female participant, my biggest impression was that gender discrimination remains an enormous barrier to research in Nepal. I had grown unaccustomed to a world in which women are not allowed to talk to strangers yet are expected to do the vast majority of the household and farm work. Us men were expected to help out with heavy manual tasks but were treated like kings, especially at meal-times and were allowed to have a busy social life. When I helped my mum with the washing up she was surprised and touched but my brothers looked rather worried. I had to explain to my relatives, who literally run into the thousands, that I could not observe the normal Nepali courtesies and engage in long conversations over tea as I had to study. I was worried about being perceived as snobbish but could not sacrifice my work for 'solidarity'.

After my research was completed, I returned to England. Nepal had boosted my confidence and I went on to present several academic papers at conferences, including in Greece and Denmark. I was still extremely nervous before every one, but my subject matter always inspired me: the rawness of my memories of corporal punishment strengthened my resolve to carry on my work, to speak up for those who were forbidden to 'answer back'. My performance anxiety was reduced by my engagement with the audience and their curiosity, support and poignant questions. Sometimes the most valuable intellectual contributions came from unexpected quarters – such as one chap who had thought my paper would be about dance and another one who had got the wrong room!

I had tried to culturally contextualise my paper in Greece by referring to the *Sirtaki* dance in the final scene of the film *Zorba the Greek*, and talking about

‘Dancing With Pain’ as a form of dialogue with oneself. It was interesting how the introduction of a metaphor of movement seemed to make my presentation flow more freely. I didn’t know if this was a libidinal or spiritual effect, but it did seem as though my work had become connected to an energy greater than itself. I began to consider how my thesis might also be able to tap into collective energies and use these to build its momentum. Confronting abuse – whether in politics, families or institutions – can be terrifying and draining. After reading about child mistreatment in the works of Alice Miller and Philip Greven, for example, I sometimes felt so ill that I had to lie down: the evil felt so overwhelming. In that situation, having the support and solidarity of people who believed in my work (particularly my sensitive, imaginative and outspoken supervisory team) helped me to literally get up and face the world again. I discovered that for all the multi-million dollar child-bashing industries across America (Greven, 1992, p. 68), there have been inspirational figures such as the late Jordan Riak, who campaigned to outlaw corporal punishment worldwide and kindly sent me useful literature prior to his death in April 2016 (Riak, 2011). My motivation was also aided by my discovery of numerous organisations opposed to corporal punishment, offering both critique and practical advice (see Appendix E). At a deeper level, I considered how opponents of corporal punishment, especially those who were also survivors, could unite to help each other and to help create a better world. I found similar ideas in the writings of women, for example this quote from ‘Gizelle’, a survivor of both corporal punishment and sexual abuse:

I feel there’s a great deal of magic in this healing process...It’s the knowledge of women who have healed through the centuries...This knowledge connects with the capacity to heal the rift that has the world in crisis, that has us in danger of extinction. It’s the healing power of mother earth. It’s been taken away and lost. And She’s coming back through us now (Bass & Davis, 1988, p. 457).

In Jungian terms, positive healing forces from the collective unconscious can challenge a collective consciousness which has sunk to an authoritarian “mob psychology” (Jung, 1981, p. 125); an outward expression of the rage and self-loathing caused by corporal punishment. Jung recalls how dancing a ‘mandala’ was used by some of his female patients in their healing, and traced it to the Indian *mandala nrithya*, the mandala dance (Leu, 2010[1931], p. 98) which I knew well. I sensed the positive energy shared by those opponents of child abuse in the past, present and future. In Greece, through the vibrant metaphor of dance, I seemed to access a collective life-force and universal love which could help both myself and the world to ‘keep on keeping on’ (West, 1996). This experience was not merely conceptual but warm and libidinal.

On the 14th July my father had a stroke, following a bus crash that killed five people, including the driver and one of our relatives. My father had been managing the bus company and owned a small share in the bus that crashed. Initially he was half paralysed, with no memory, but slowly he began to recover. This man, who was always the strong, powerful one in the family, became totally dependent upon others. I studied solidly throughout the Summer, sacrificing everything except cricket, since I thought the exercise would enhance my brain power. Around the period of the Brexit vote, my family and I started to receive some hostile looks from people fired up by the wave of anti-immigrant feeling. For the first time, I felt unwelcome in the UK. Prior to that, my wife and son were bombarded with eggs from a group of travellers in the village whilst they were playing in the park. I was disturbed by this, wondering how members of a social group that had experienced so much persecution themselves would want to persecute us, but it was a rare incident. Overall, my son's life is one I would wish for every child. Unlike children in Nepal, he suffers no violence whatsoever, neither at home nor at school. He is blissfully happy and flourishing; enjoying karate, violin and researching dinosaurs. He is living proof that corporal punishment is unnecessary.

My 7-year-old son is everything that I am not. He is confident, I am cautious. He dances around in the knowledge that he is adored. I scramble around restlessly, as if constantly ducking slaps. He receives accolades for his remarkable 'show and tells', whilst academic deadlines give me pains all over my body. I believe that my written work will never be good enough, so revise it constantly, painstakingly, until I can hardly bear to be in the same room with it anymore. He is rightly proud of his elaborate monster drawings, displayed on the wall. The support that I receive from family and my tutors kept me going throughout my PhD, along with sublime energies, not least the constant, acute reminder that my work might help to prevent my son and millions of children like him, from experiencing punitive violence. This critical and transformative element was – and remains - a source of passion and inspiration.

Chapter Five:

Methodology and Method

Research Setting

My research was carried out in the Devchuli municipality (see Figs 1 & 2) in the inner Terai, formerly known as four different VDCs (Village Development Committees): Devchuli, Pragatinagar, Rajahar and Divyapuri. Pragatinagar is historically significant since it was the first area of Nepal to be declared a 'child-friendly' VDC in 2013. It is relatively flat and hence the wealthiest and most cosmopolitan part of Devchuli, with shops and services benefitting from the Mahendra Highway. The hilly regions of what were formerly the villages of Devchuli and Divyapuri are the poorest villages in the municipality and the least developed. The main castes in the Devchuli municipality are Magar, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Tharu, Tamang, Gurung, Kami and Damai. The majority of residents are Hindus but there are also a few Christian, Buddhist and Muslim families. Whilst most people survive through subsistence farming, some own small businesses or work for the cottage industries and factories of Divyapuri, such as the Wai-Wai noodles factory.

Format

Between 1st November and the 28th December 2015, I carried out interviews with four adults aged between 18 and 35 who had taken their SLC exams in the Devchuli municipality between 1997 and 2010, including one pilot interview. They had all experienced corporal punishment at school. My three main participants were interviewed twice, to give them and myself the opportunity to bring in any additions which we occurred to us later, especially since my first round of interviews were only between 60 and 90 minutes, including tea breaks. I transcribed my recordings by hand and gave photocopies to my participants, offering them a day to read their interviews, reflect on the experience and decide if they wanted to make changes or additions. I presented the second interview as an opportunity for my participants to cover anything about their lives that we had missed which might be significant. I had hoped that participants would be less inhibited the second time around and they were, adding many rich details, some of which were in response to my being able to focus on key aspects of their lives, having had time to stand back

and reflect upon what they had told me. Whilst I kept the identities of my participants anonymous to protect their privacy, their ages, occupations and castes are revealed. My study involved a detailed exploration of various aspects of their lives, including their socio-economic, caste, geographical (including mobility), educational, relationship and family backgrounds. When I translated these into English, sometimes it was necessary to add some explanations for certain religious or cultural terms.

I used an auto/biographical methodology, looking at my participants' whole life histories and their personal struggles and achievements, from health issues or family arguments to creative projects, careers, hobbies or new friendships. I also included some relevant details about the lives of their parents, siblings, teachers, friends and neighbours. These personal details helped me to understand the contexts in which they have experienced corporal punishment; the connections between the past and present and the changing pressures upon them at different stages of their lives. This was particularly appropriate for my discussion of the long-term, sublimated or over-determined effects of corporal punishment, especially possible socio-economic, emotional and spiritual effects.

Why Auto/biography?

When I first began researching the impact of corporal punishment in Nepal, I had not planned to use an auto/biographical methodology. Coming from a maths background, I was concerned with statistics, facts and figures and obtaining evidence. I went on a very rocky theoretical journey before I realised that the type of 'proof' I was seeking could not be quantified. I was also dealing with people's emotions, faith and beliefs. These are largely immeasurable. The type of evidence required by quantitative research 'Could you describe your level of emotional pain on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the worst' would be totally inadequate to describe the feelings of my participants, which ebbed and flowed, contradicted and disguised themselves and had multiple triggers and ripple effects.

Furthermore, the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research on the issue of corporal punishment has itself been challenged. For nearly two decades, a debate has raged on the value of quantitative studies for proving whether or not spanking is damaging. Research by Murray Straus (Straus, et al., 2014, p. 18) and Elizabeth Gershoff (2002) has been criticised, in particular, for equating risk and correlation with causation (Baumrind, et al., 2002, p. 583).

Gershoff has produced numerous studies detailing the harmful effects of corporal punishment and in 2016, produced a meta-analysis of research from 75 different countries, representing 160,927 children (Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, 2014), thus discouraging any accusation of selection bias.

With an identitarian style of categorisation, Larzelere and his colleagues accuse the Gershoff camp of -

the correlational fallacy (inferring causation from correlations), *the trumping fallacy* (permitting correlational conclusions to trump stronger causal evidence), *the extrapolation fallacy* (extrapolating favorable comparisons of under-usage versus over-usage to zero usage), and *the lumping fallacy* (lumping inappropriate and appropriate usages together) (Larzelere, et al., 2017, p. 24).

In response, an article appeared entitled 'Researchers deserve a better critique' (Holden, et al., 2017) that was co-authored by four of the most well-known critics of corporal punishment - George W Holden, Elizabeth Gershoff, Andrew Grogan-Kaylor and Joan E Durrant. They emphasised, in particular, that distinguishing between harsh and mild corporal punishment, or frequent and occasional spanking minimises its impact and that correlation is at least a necessary condition of causation. Defenders of corporal punishment often use a basic chicken-and-egg argument, for example, suggesting that when children show aggression this is not because they have been spanked but rather, they were spanked because they showed aggression in the first place (Larzelere & Trumbull, 2017). Does this mean they were born evil? No progress is made out of this miserable circle of violence.

Larzelere and his colleagues continually assert that only clinical trials can provide 'proof' of effects. Not only were these effects very short-term, as Holden et al point out (2017) but such experiments on children are also alarmingly unethical (Gershoff, et al., 2017). Larzelere quotes experiments by Bean & Roberts, described in the eighties, in which children were spanked for moving out of a 'time-out' space (Larzelere, et al., 2017, p. 28):

In interventions with overtly non-compliant, clinic-referred pre-school children, enforcement for chair timeouts was accomplished equally well by a brief room isolation or the traditional two-swat spanking.... Some children cooperated more quickly with isolation and others more quickly with spanking, and continuing defiance was overcome by changing to the other enforcement.

What sort of parent would take their *four-year-old* child (pre-school) to take part in a spanking experiment? What sort of researcher would welcome the party at the door, order 'non-compliant' children to sit on a chair then subject

them to violence and/or isolation if they move off it (“enforcement of chair time-outs”) (Larzelere, et al., 2017, p. 28)? What sort of academics would still, in 2017, be quoting such an experiment as “successful”? Such cold detachment, complete reification of children and indifference to their feelings and psychological damage may not be at the level of Mengele’s experiments on children, but it is on the same pathway. By now those children will be adults in their thirties. Amongst their early memories of seaside trips and toffee apples, there is perhaps a hideous, grey, murky memory of ‘the day they went to see Dr Roberts’ and were forced to sit on a chair then humiliatingly beaten if they moved.

Whilst Larzelere, Baumrind and their colleagues praise what they call “empirically supported parenting interventions” (Larzelere, et al., 2017, p. 31) and have spent years analysing “scientific” surveys (Larzelere & Baumrind, 2010) and engaging in battles of logic with their opponents, at the heart of the matter lie fundamental ethical differences. If one has a deeply held, deontologically-based belief that hitting children is wrong, regardless of the consequences, then no amount of statistics and ‘clinical trials’ debated in the Gershoff-Larzelere battle will alter that. Larzelere is fully aware of this fundamental schism and attempts to rally his troops by saying –

we urge the scientific community to resist absolute or near absolute prohibitions against the use of disciplinary consequences (Larzelere, et al., 2017, p. 32).

Researchers are *not allowed* to oppose spanking for moral reasons. Daddy said ‘NO!’, as the custodian and definer of what science is. The pro-spankers’ empiricist mantra reifies “clinically defiant” (Larzelere, et al., 2017, p. 28) children immediately into things to be studied under the microscope, as if their actions were comparable to a virus. They are things that need to be fixed with a “toolbox” (Larzelere, et al., 2017, p. 32). An objectifying behaviourist approach shows no regard for children’s sanctity, emotions, complexity, motives, no imagination or empathy: children’s voices are overwhelmingly absent from these studies. False concepts of necessity are also constructed, as Larzelere and colleagues slip into non-academic, reactionary phrases such as “firm discipline when needed” (Larzelere, et al., 2017, p. 25). They also echo behaviourist dog-training when they suggest that “back-up” spanking makes it “less necessary in the future” (Larzelere & Trumbull, 2017, p. 3)– without considering that across the 52 countries in which hitting children is now illegal, hundreds of thousands of people are managing to rear children without violence, proving that it is *not* necessary. ‘Necessity’ in this context, is merely a

metaphysical power grab by spankers attempting to justify their desires with a mask of objectivity.

The loose signifiers “appropriate” and “appropriately” are used with abnormal frequency, for example, three times within two sentences in Larzelere and Turnbull’s presentation (Larzelere & Trumbull, 2017, p. 3). It is used to describe both a type of behaviour and “appropriate ways to carry out spanking” (Larzelere & Trumbull, 2017, p. 2), which Larzelere and colleagues have consistently defined as “on the buttocks” (Larzelere & Trumbull, 2017, p. 2). For those, however, who believe that this is a violation of a child’s body and thus morally repugnant, there can never be an “appropriate” way, even without the use of beating instruments. ‘Appropriate’ behaviour is also vaguely defined, leaving its interpretation open vulnerable to the risk of selfish – or even perverse - parental whims and politically contingent norms of uncritical compliance.

As I began to use the memory of my own life as a model, I became aware that questions about the causes and effects of corporal punishment needed to encompass the human emotions involved, the fluctuations and multi-dimensional pressures in people’s real lives, as well as the dialectical impact of their resistance to harmful treatment. As Howard Becker suggests, events have a pace of their own that can lead ‘different variables’ to impact at ‘different times’ (Gomm, et al., 2000, p. 13). Variables such as whether my participants had extra support in later life, whether their classmates were treated similarly, whether their parents defended or condemned them, whether their academic or career success made a difference to how they were viewed – these kinds of differences could help to determine the long-term effects of corporal punishment.

Ostensibly my approach was inductive rather than deductive: exploring the effects of corporal punishment through my participants’ narratives rather than beginning a priori with the hypothesis that corporal punishment is damaging. But it was impossible to deny the voice of my intuition. My neutrality was entirely fake. My research was supposed to be interpretive, drawing meaning from encounters with human actors and constructing my interpretations after listening to participants’ whole stories rather than trying to make the data from my participants fit my preconceived ideas and feelings. But again, from the very first day, my theoretical framework was already in my head, filtering the information that I received from my participants. As a qualitative study, I had to accept that my research would lack ‘reproducibility’ and ‘generalisability’

(Gray, 2013, p. 189) since it was based on the exclusive experiences of people in a specific area of Nepal. It could not therefore, provide proof of either the prevalence of corporal punishment in schools nationwide nor snapshots of its 'before' and 'after' effects. Anonymity protected my participants (and myself) for any future social or legal repercussions yet laid me open to accusations of anecdotalism. But as Schofield argues, qualitative research can still produce generalizability in the form of 'typicality' or potential 'fittingness' whilst maintaining the thick descriptions necessary for comparisons (Schofield, 2000, p. 79). Many of the smallest, most specific details in my study (for example, the numbness after a teacher has pressed a pencil woven between your fingers) will 'strike a chord' with Nepali readers. When I bring such incidents up, grown adults will still shudder and say, 'Oh I remember that one'. This shared memory appears to be a proof of authenticity. However, the dissemination of shared memories is vulnerable to ideological selection and exploitation. As Irwin-Zarecka points out,

Suffering itself survives as a visceral memory, while its explanation, still deeply felt, is more a result of ideological work, the work of framing remembrance in categories of victim and oppressor (Irwin-Zarecka, 1994, p. 60).

Irwin-Zarecka reminds us of how Nazism distorted past memories of oppression into anti-Semitic myths used to justify future persecution (Irwin-Zarecka, 1994, p. 58). In the context of Nepal, even memories of teachers were sometimes politicised in this way: with opponents of the revolution saying, '*You remember what your Maoist teachers were like!*', or defenders of the revolution saying, '*Those Royalist teachers – never forget what they did to you!*' even if the beatings they gave out were unrelated, indeed, antithetical, to a core ideology. Shared memory, then, must recognise the line between pure memory and memory-interpretation. But for victims of injustice, the memory may come with its explanation also "still deeply felt" (Irwin-Zarecka, 1994, p. 60). It may also depend on the explanations for cruelty that children were given at the time by their caregivers.

Nevertheless, the notion of shared memory led me to consider that auto/biography was not as individualistic and untrustworthy as I had feared. After completing my autobiographical chapter, which described my personal suffering due to corporal punishment, one of my supervisors remarked that it was immediately clear why I was motivated to write about it. My research was exceptionally 'value-laden' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 8) and 'ideologically driven' (Janesick, 2000, p. 385): it was impossible for me to detach myself and feign objectivity from a topic that I felt so strongly about. I believed that an

auto/biographical methodology would allow me to tell my story honestly. Was I ready to hand over so much text – three chapters plus the discussion – to my participants? I hoped to include many of their answers in full and I wanted to view them as contributing authors. But might that risk me not getting the findings that I wanted; findings which were inconsistent with my opposition to corporal punishment? I was relieved to find my views shared by Krishna and Preeti, and eventually Mukunda also came out against corporal punishment. But there was no guarantee that that would happen. Hollway and Jefferson discuss ‘Roger’ and ‘Tom’ who described the cruel punishments that they experienced as children yet complained that there was not enough discipline these days (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, pp. 16-18). Auto/biographical research should not be about getting people to agree with you. ‘Shared experience’ is an accidental bonus, not a necessary condition of such stories, which can illuminate a subject area with their contrasts no less than their similarities.

I had also been worried that my participants would ramble or go ‘off the point’. The positivist warnings against open-ended questions (Brewer, 2000) may seem especially pertinent to exchanges in my region of Nepal, where etiquette demands that talking is a long-winded process with multiple tangents. In my MSc research much time was spent on topics irrelevant to my research, such as frequent requests for tips on how to get a visa for the UK. In order to avoid this, I actually drafted predictive scripts and even tried to predict my participants’ answers, then abandoned the whole idea as false, dominating and in danger of preventing me from responding naturally. Surely there was a way of preventing tangents without entangling my participants in a net-like grid of predetermined options.

Auto/biography as Freedom

Taking an auto/biographical approach seemed a frighteningly liberal solution to the challenges raised by positivism, especially in regard to the control of interviews, which I had struggled to relinquish. Yes, there were tangents (especially Mukunda’s speech on the history of Hinduism). Yes, there were misunderstandings, with Preeti asking ‘I’m not sure what you mean’. But these reactions were also revealing and significant in their own way. We were in semi-rural Nepal: there was no desperate rush, no taxi waiting: most of the interviews took place in fields, sitting in the sunshine. There was no reason not to give my participants all the time that they needed.

But my questions were not as ‘open-ended’ as I had hoped. Asking sensitive questions was unavoidable, since the topic of corporal punishment is

inherently distressing for survivors. I knew that if my questions were too intrusive or embarrassing, they might clam up altogether. Mukunda and Preeti did react defensively at times: Preeti by occasionally becoming silent and distant and Mukunda by rationalising his teacher's violence ('I found out that his mental condition was not good at that time') rather than exploring the nature of his pain. In doing so, he maintained the persona of 'adult teacher in control of knowledge' rather than an overwhelmed, vulnerable pupil. I had planned to make the most delicate questions the most open, for example, asking 'What was the routine?' or 'How did the students react?' rather than 'Did the teacher do x/y/z' or 'Did you cry/feel humiliated/become angry'. In this way I had hoped firstly, to limit the saturation of my interview frame with my own values and views and secondly, to distance myself from any allegations being made against teachers using corporal punishment.

In practice, I found it very hard to simply allow somebody the freedom to speak without any intervention or guidance. Preeti dwelt along time, for example, on her father's illness and Mukunda talked about the joy he felt when his baby daughter smiled. Although these things were important to them, I became restless and eager to move on to what I was interested in. This may seem ruthless, but mainly it was due to my desire for my participants to think critically about their experiences. The weather, an illness or a sweet baby, as important as they may be, are neutral subjects which can be discussed at length by politically reactionary people without confronting the powerful, even in Nazi Germany. Although neutral subjects can help to build rapport and trust, I wanted my participants to move on swiftly to a more controversial topic, the damage that had been caused to them by corporal punishment. I was pleased once they did begin speaking about it; they did so at great length and in depth. Nevertheless, I was surprised how selfish and object-oriented I was in my decision about what was valuable and what was not.

My participants had different priorities. Their short-term freedom to talk about what mattered most to them – the health of their relatives or the sweetness of their children was under threat from my desire to emancipate Nepal from oppressive teaching methods – which were technically only a small part of their life experience. It reminded me of how people 'glaze over' when I talk about my son's achievements: they mean everything to us but nothing to strangers, especially to those without children. This tension between the participants' freedom to wander where they want and the interviewer's freedom to pursue their goals reflect a deeper tension in society. This is between media that is there to entertain by producing 'what the artists and

the consumers want' and media that deliberately fosters critical thinking. Talk-shows and magazines contain numerous examples of people wanting to discuss light, neutral subjects that will not bring about any significant political change. Cookery, natural history, consumer and fashion programmes for example, flourish freely in totalitarian regimes. The participants might be happy, the audience is happy – but power remains unchallenged, authority remains unquestioned. Adorno declares “triviality is evil – triviality that is, as the form of consciousness and mind which adapts to the world as it is, which obeys the principle of inertia” (Adorno, 2001, p. 115). The lives of children worldwide might be transformed if more time was spent discussing their rights and less on 'safe' subjects. On a narrow platform like my thesis, which has a strict word limit and time limit, how can there be room for both indulging in my participants' diversions and sticking to my point: that corporal punishment blights people's lives?

Although I had begun with a commitment to 'participant-led' research, I frequently found myself asking questions that were certainly not 'open-ended'. When Preeti had hinted that her anxiety affected her appetite I asked her 'Do you have a problem with eating' and again, 'So you never have a problem with eating itself?'. This was because in my head I had been eager to tag her with the label 'eating disorder' as evidence of the negative effects of corporal punishment. Preeti resisted me by saying 'I didn't mean that' and 'I mean its natural', although went on to give an interesting description of her stubbornness over the issue. On the one hand, I felt victorious because I had 'got out of her' a real sign of her reacting to oppression in the only way she felt able to. On the other hand, I had risked annoying and offending her by this persistent line of questioning, although not perhaps as much as I might have a Western woman exposed to constant news and media reports about eating disorders.

Sometimes a single word tagged on the end is sufficient to 'close' the question, such as when I asked Krishna: 'Remembering those incidents now, what are your feelings towards those teachers who abused you'. 'Abuse' is a strong word which Krishna had already used to describe the corporal punishment that he had received. Nevertheless, my use of this word described my opinion of all corporal punishment, as if I was forcing Krishna to agree with me. I knew he was angry with his teachers, but I should not have taken away his choice to give an answer such as 'Well actually I'm grateful to them as I believe that discipline really helped me'. My use of the word 'abuse' shut that door in advance.

Auto/biographical Research: Challenges and Limitations

Ethics and Cultural Contextualisation

It is difficult to discuss cultural contextualisation without the risk of essentialism, even if our essentialism is only limited to assumptions about people from a very small, specific region such as the Devchuli municipality. Nevertheless, there were important cultural issues which affected my methodology. As a Nepali, from the outset I was aware of the repressive socio-economic contexts within which my interviews were conducted. My participants knew that every word they said could be 'spread around the village' and end up hurting or offending somebody who knows somebody they are related to or economically linked to. I took this seriously and never dismissed it as 'backwardness' or 'inhibitions'. When I came across certain rumours about two of my participants, I made the decision to withhold them from my thesis. Although the details would have embellished my accounts, I knew the hurt that could be caused if these immediately recognisable details had been made public. They could also have compromised the anonymity of my participants.

I was also aware of the 'interviewer effect' (Schwarz & Bohner, 2003, p. 443), coming from me as an educated Brahmin who could be perceived by Nepalis to be successful, having migrated to the UK. In Nepal, financial concerns can dominate every interaction. As with my MSc research, I found that there was a tendency among poorer would-be interviewees to offer what they guessed to be desired answers in the hope of direct or indirect financial gain. This frightened me as I wondered what other lengths they would go to for money. There is also an assumption that educated people have some social and political power that could be turned against opponents, as well as a religious belief that it is 'sinful', to oppose Brahmins. I could not discount the possibility that my research could interact negatively with my research setting (Holliday, 2016) such as sudden – possibly negative - reactions to my research by local teachers, politicians or parents.

The threat to research from 'repressive contexts' can sometimes be reduced by strategies involving cultural contextualisation. This approach has been developed intricately by Luitel & Taylor (2007) in their work on culturally contextualised mathematics education as a critical pedagogy in Nepal. They

explore the transformation of learning through “embodied metaphorical conceptions” (p. 633), “culturally situated meaning-making” (p. 633) and, most colourfully:

a bricolage of visual images and literary genres—storytelling, fictive autobiography, poetry, ethnodrama, reflective dialogue, contemplative imagining, testimonio—to engage our readers in pedagogical thoughtfulness (Luitel & Taylor, 2007, p. 626).

Although I was engaged in research rather than teaching, many of these ideas around cultural contextualisation helped to make my research seem real, relevant and close to my participants, rather than abstract concepts imposed from an external, especially from the ‘superior’ position of a Western education. I had to bear in mind the difference between how corporal punishment was perceived in Nepal and how it is perceived in most of Europe. My ‘culturally-contextualised’ approach might begin by making respectful and tentative enquiries about former teachers, bearing in mind their ‘god-like’ status in Nepal. I wondered how the effects of corporal punishment might be culturally contextualised – perhaps by using metaphors that people can relate to, such as carrying heavy loads, climbing mountains or flying freely like a bird. When it came to my interviews however, I realised that it was not my place to suggest metaphors for my participants’ feelings, these had to come from my participants – and they did, as my participants described ‘a bear that will eat me’ (the teacher) and a ‘battlefield’ (exams). Cultural contextualisation was particularly valuable in my discussion of religious rituals – especially Saraswati worship - with all my participants, and how they had each used them in attempts to protect themselves from beatings and further their academic success. Cultural contextualisation also enabled me to fully appreciate the pressure of farm-work upon my participants and their sensitivity to the opinions of others and the village ‘gaze’.

I had to continually check and recheck my work for culturalism, an essentialism which can exist through even mere ‘association’ of a behaviour with a specific culture, thus threatening to remove the power of agency (Holliday, 2016, p. 174). In particular, I shared Holliday’s concern that I had made the population that I was studying appear infantile. I had frequently described Nepalese people, my people, as ‘child-like’ or ‘naive’ in conversations, for example, which is only a few steps away from Rudyard Kipling’s horrifyingly essentialist ‘Fluttered folk and wild.... Half-devil and half-child’ (Kipling, 2000, p. 82). Imperialist ideologies needed such stereotypes to justify its economic base of domination and exploitation as ‘discipline’.

Post colonialist-thinking, however, combines the seizure of power with the seizure of identity – hence a people can no longer be described as “childish and weak” when they throw off their chains and become “a free people living in dignity” (Fanon, 2001 [1963], p. 160). In doing so, history is rewritten. The Nepalese revolution involved a refusal to be identified as minors or slaves. Instead, those from even the ‘lowest’ castes became redefined as martyrs, immortalised in heart-breaking ballads and plays (Pakhrin, 2013). Changing identities can lead to changing lives and vice-versa. Radical feminism, similarly, empowered women by rejecting women’s identification by their oppressors:

He confirms his image of us – of what we have to be in order to be acceptable by him – but not our real selves; he confirms our womanhood -as he defines it, in relation to him - but cannot confirm our personhood, our own selves as absolutes. As long as we are dependent on the male culture for this definition we cannot be free (Radicalesbians, 1971).

The post-structuralist rejection of identity as essentialist has also been criticised by some radical feminists as “politically and legally paralyzing” (Hoff, 1996, p. 395). In particular, women’s resistance to male violence has been diluted by theories reducing their connected praxis to individual narratives.

Auto/biographical research may avoid both the appropriation and the fragmentation of identity by taking participants on a journey of self-reflection and self-discovery – and potentially, enabling them to share stories and strategies. According respect and space to powerful stories of anger 'as they come' without intellectually mutilating and sanitising them, carves out a political space for these voices. These could only be properly understood in their historical context. Despite my beliefs in non-violence, for example, I had to consider the meaning of Krishna’s fights. It would have been easy to dismiss this as ‘savage’ behaviour, but when my imagination goes back to the terrified boy tied up in the rice-hut, such an explosion of righteous anger seems long overdue, albeit misdirected.

Culture mattered when it came to understanding the full significance of their experiences, for example, appreciating the emotional impact of a humiliation (such as Krishna had experienced and Mukunda feared) in Nepalese village society. Details which may seem irrelevant to an ‘outsider’ might be signifiers of causal connections between an early experience and adult habits, such as flinching at sudden movements or keeping one’s head bowed in front of ‘superiors’. I sought to avoid essentialism by focusing not upon ‘typical’ behaviours but upon the way in which the context (whether social, historical, economic or religious) brings a deeper symbolic meaning to my data. Linden

West describes how a hamper of sausages, bacon and fruit given to him by his father at university were so much more than food, since the senior Mr West couldn't get them during World War Two. These items were "pregnant with historical, sociological, psychological and relational significance" (Merrill & West, 2009, p. 9). A Nepalese equivalent of those sausages might be for example, Preeti's new hair ribbon, clothes and flip-flops which had made her 'so excited' about her 'fresh start' at her new school. For me, the day she received them seemed to symbolise her hope and happiness at leaving the corporal punishment of her primary school behind, hopes that were to be cruelly dashed by a hitherto unimagined level of violent punishment at secondary school.

I had been afraid that my attempts to elicit information would be met with either silence or shoulder-shrugging, given the cultural practices in Nepal of waiting to be told what the 'correct' answer is (derived from rote-learning); a fear of controversy (exacerbated by the civil war) and a desire to end every statement with a smile. However, as with my MSc research on barriers to education, I found that my participants were ready to talk about corporal punishment at school whilst exhibiting a range of emotions, especially bitterness, anger, frustration, sadness and despair. They had a clear narrative connecting their past and present and were keen that the role of their traumas in their life story was honoured and understood.

Avoiding Psychoanalysis

I began my research with a commitment not to attempt to psycho-analyse my participants since I am not a trained psychotherapist or counsellor and could therefore do more harm than good, as Linden West notes -

Fragility is often disguised and justifiably defended...Taking time to reflect, at the wrong time and in the wrong place and in the wrong way can make matters worse (West, 1996, p. 214).

I did not have any professional support from any health organisation. It was not a sufficient safeguard for me to avoid using participants who have a known medical history of psychological disturbance since both poverty and Nepalese culture often prevent people with mental illness from receiving medical care (Brenman, et al., 2014, p. 2). Mental disturbances are often explained through superstitions about bad spells, an evil action in a past life, or a failure to follow religious rituals. Mental illness is moreover considered a low priority compared to the farm-work that must be done to prevent starvation so symptoms are

often minimalised, disguised or ignored, in stark contrast to countries like the US, where higher income levels allow time for self-reflection and can finance therapy and where having an ‘analyst’ is a cultural norm. Nor was it a sufficient protection to only interview those who seemed to be functioning ‘normally’: Nepalese subsistence farmers (which the vast majority of us are) simply must function, however we are feeling, as if we stop working and protecting our foodstuffs we will die.

Despite these concerns, I discovered that psycho-analysis was an inescapable part of my research. What else were we doing – when Krishna said, ‘To forget my past I drink a lot’, when Preeti described her marriage as ‘the saddest moment of my life’ and when Mukunda described how he would shout swear-words at the river? In my discussion, I also ended up recognising a whole host of psychological problems, in both myself and my participants, with the help of concepts drawn from both Freudian (Freud, 1973[1933]) and the Frankfurt School traditions (Held, 1980, p. 111), such as transference, projection, repression, denial, overdetermined dialectical reactions and anal rage. As I explore later in more detail, my participants recoiled as they projected the image of their teachers onto me, denied that those they admired had abused them, explained how they had over-reacted to phenomena triggering memories of violence and bottled up their anger in crippling neuroses. Despite my philosophical objections to such labelling of phenomena, my study would have been impoverished without it and these themes were the springboard for a deeper exploration of my participants’ experiences.

There were two factors, however, which prevented me drifting into the role of a therapist. The first was that I attempted to accompany psychoanalytic interpretations with self-reflexivity, in order to try to maintain an equality between myself and my participants and to persistently question my motives for linking their experiences to a specific interpretation. The second was that I was very careful to focus upon analysis rather than prescription. I did not feel that I was qualified to offer my participants any advice. Nevertheless, our human urge to offer help and suggest ideas can arise naturally and spontaneously, before we have had time to restrain it. There are also times when a researcher might inadvertently ‘stir up trouble’. When I re-read the transcripts, I realised the insensitivity of asking Preeti ‘Do you get fed up sometimes with that situation’, with regard to her financial dependency and unpaid labour. It was reckless of me to say ‘How do you react? Do you shout back?’ with regard to ‘shouting in the house’. It was also spiritually disruptive of me to ask, ‘Did you ever blame God or question why he allowed you to

suffer like that?'. Understandably, Preeti responded to some of these disturbing questions with a disapproving silence or a 'NO!'. I also looked in disbelief at where I had asked Mukunda 'Were you in love with anyone else before your marriage?'. I had done this because of my theories about the contribution of sexual repression to performativity terror but from a Nepalese perspective, it was incredibly intrusive.

Those of us seeking social transformation are caught in a difficult ethical dilemma. On the one hand, there is the researcher's need to be sensitive, delicate, cautious and to tread softly. On the other hand, there is a part of us that wants to upset the apple cart, challenge the status quo and shake up people's ingrained beliefs, whatever the fall-out, in the belief that this is the only way to stir up consciousness and inspire social change. I was gratified, therefore, when Mukunda changed his beliefs about corporal punishment as a result of our interviews. Secretly I liked the fact that I had planted a seed of discontent in Preeti's mind about whether it was fair that her labour was unpaid: I hoped that one day it might lead to her recognising the value of her contribution and asking for the support that she deserved. But in the short-term, would this make her any happier? Probably not. I also noted that it was a symptom of my own sexism and cowardice that I had not challenged my male participants about their family arrangements in the same way. My male participants were already very tense and might have ejected me if I had threatened to disrupt the order of their lives any further.

It is especially hard to avoid psychoanalysis when it relates directly to social change. Adorno's description of neuroses as "pillars of society" (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 298) illustrates well the entwining of the personal and the political, which climaxes in corporal punishment, combining the exercise of physical power with the domination of the mind. Thus, the internalisation of repression supports external oppression. Conversely, the overturning of physical oppression requires the removal of its internal support. bell hooks collapses the distinction between "theory and liberatory practice" (hooks, 1994, p. 59), recalling how -

Whenever I tried in childhood to compel folks around me to do things differently, to look at the world differently, using theory as intervention, as a way to challenge the status quo, I was punished (hooks, 1994, p. 60).

Tension protected the status quo. bell hooks was whipped for challenging the "patriarchal norm" upon which the economic structure of her society depended. In Nepal, the fear still remains that to do things differently, to

remove both internal and external repressive mechanisms, could lead to anarchy. Would my participants, especially Preeti, feel frozen by this pressure?

Controlling My Involvement

Reflexivity and comparisons with our own experiences (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 67) are not necessarily an indication of epistemological humility unless we also reflect critically upon the power exercised and unconscious projections in our methods of analysis. Hollway and Jefferson note how a 59-year-old man, 'Roger', reminisces about a patriarchal 'golden age' before teenage criminals terrorised the streets:

when I were a kid...daren'd do owt wrong...tha'd 'ave got pasted – got a right 'ammering'
(Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 17).

This is despite Roger hating and eventually beating up his father, in retaliation for the years of violence. Tony Jefferson tries to ensure that his feelings did not distort his analysis when the account of another participant, Tommy, being beaten in bed made him recall his own experiences of corporal punishment (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 66). Perhaps Jefferson found Tommy's defence of his father's beltings ("appreciated 'im for it", (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 66) and Roger's defence of the "golden age" as disturbing as I found one of my participant's initial defence of corporal punishment in schools. Hollway and Jefferson deal with the unpleasant feeling aroused by their participants by accusing Roger of "paranoid-schizoid splitting" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 20) and later Tommy also of 'splitting'. Whilst there is a fantasy element in their participants' accounts that might border on psychosis, Hollway and Jefferson do not consider the extent of violence which their participants may have witnessed in their adulthood and how this has managed to shrink their childhood experiences. Rather than accept that Roger and Tom have two contradictory truths in their heads 1) that their fathers were cruel and brutal and 2) that the old days were better than these days, Hollway and Jefferson accuse them of 'splitting'. This dissecting psycho-analytic term perhaps reveals Hollway's desire to 'cut up' something that is horrible to him: his participants glossing over the evil of corporal punishment. Of course, the writer means Roger and Tommy no actual harm, but with the weapon of the analytical intellect, he can cut them up. In analysing Hollway and Jefferson in this way, I too am guilty of the same fault. I also felt my own aggression as I wrote of participants 'anal rage'. Whose rage was I feeling then really, theirs or mine?

How easy it is to twist methodology into weaponry; to unleash anger from past hurts through critique.

To uproot the words of corporal punishment survivors from their messy context in order to explore multiple interpretations commits a further violence, alluded to by radical feminists warning against deconstructionist methodology that “dismembers and disconnects women from any material experiential base” (Hoff, 1996, p. 400). Roger and Tom are, in a sense, mugged by Hollway, Jefferson and myself, as we run off with their words and twist them for our analytical ends. Does this shrink our representation of real life experience, with all its intellectually inconvenient incoherence and contradictions?

There was a risk that the content of my questions and interviews could be ‘potentially reactive’ (Gray, 2013, p. 9), with biased, leading or ambiguous questions (Gray, 2013, p. 395) and prejudiced interpretations. I had to try to avoid subtle ‘interviewer effects’ such as a narrowed question structure; ‘putting words into the mouths’ of my participants or encouraging them by my reactions (including my silent body language and facial expressions) to emphasise one perspective more than another. At the same time, I was aware of the dishonesty involved in my feigning neutrality in a subject that I feel strongly about. I considered whether a more actively empathic reaction is more human and more ethical – often I wanted to say ‘He didn’t! What a bastard!’. Surely researchers listening to accounts of wife-battering for example, at least exhale their breath or shake their heads occasionally? Is it not cold and clinical to keep one’s face blank? Merrill & West argue that “emotional messiness” (Merrill & West, 2009, p. 180) is part of research and that it is “frankly impossible to transcend completely our humanity; and can in certain senses be deeply undesirable” (Merrill & West, 2009, p. 181). Surely auto/biographical research, unlike biographical research, would allow my voice to condemn the violence that was being described? Couldn’t my own story – along with my crusade against corporal punishment – qualify me to rant and rave? Couldn’t I join hands with my participants – just as bell hooks did with a black woman in the South who, she says, “wanted me to bear witness, to hear again both the naming of her pain and the hurt that emerged when she felt the hurt go away” (hooks, 1994, p. 74). In practice, when the worst details of violence came out, I felt almost frozen with horror. Emotional pain often affects my throat: on several occasions strangled croaks come out instead of words. Unlike in England, it is good manners in Nepal not to look into somebody’s eyes when they are saying something emotional. This was very

useful as I struggled to control and disguise my feelings. There was no mutual raising of revolutionary fists, no vows to fight the system that reproduces corporal punishment, just emotional exhaustion.

One unexpected consequence of my research into the sensitive subject of corporal punishment was my experience of transference during an interview with academic staff, in which I heard my voice become child-like and I became tearful. Whilst this can afflict many social science researchers (Giami, 2001), three insights arose from the experience. Firstly, an awareness of how my participants might feel and the possibility of them being suddenly deluged with vulnerable feelings that could make them either incoherent (as I became) or defensive or even hostile. Secondly, the experience helped me realise how my subject material could affect my study skills and that I might need some specific support, for example, some counselling, during my research. Thirdly, it was a reminder for me to be extra careful that my emotions did not distort my receptivity to others. Anger against participants defending corporal punishment, for example, could have prevented me from understanding their reasons for this. I suffered from a series of stress-related illnesses. Writing about corporal punishment was intensely draining and I employed a thousand avoidance tactics to put off the pain, which seemed to spread all over my body, but ultimately it was liberating. For every piece of work that I completed, I was ecstatic, as if I had made it through a fire.

My experiences as an 'insider' gave me a specialist knowledge and insight that enabled me to analyse those experiences of my participants which echo my own. If I had sought to study corporal punishment in Nepal in the abstract, without having been oppressed by it, my understanding of it would have been limited. My empathy with my participants, putting myself in the flip-flops of a Nepali child, was aided by moments of regression. Like other child standpoint perspectives, my study assumed that 'children's knowledge on their lives had status, validity and worth in its own right' (Fattore, et al., 2016, p. 19). My still-raw memories made this epistemological commitment to the child's voice feel real and convincing. Rather than seeing my participants as 'other' or subjects of my investigation, my autobiographical experience helped me to see participants as people like me, sharing many of my feelings. This helped me to present my participants' accounts with more respect and a greater sense of equality than I have found in some research involving children.

Both Hollway and Jefferson and Tamboukou and Ball (and countless others) use what I call a 'frog under the microscope' technique by juxtaposing the

language styles of researcher and participant, underscoring a grammar and accent-based inequality, especially dropped h's ((Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 60); (Tamboukou & Ball, 2002, p. 257) – the unnecessary recording of which keep the participant firmly in a place of subjugation to their middle-class dissector. By making their participants 'other' in terms of their grammar and accent, they become specimens. 'Tommy' is recorded as saying 'They still talk about 'im in the club where we go into na' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 63). This is not done to preserve linguistic authenticity: no upper-class participant would be quoted as saying 'orf' or 'nace' instead of 'off' and 'nice', nor would Chinese people be quoted as saying 'lice' instead of 'rice'. Even if Tommy's accent is described positively as fascinating or 'real', the researchers are still making him look vulnerable and different; a reified 'object' of interest.

Artistic works have a certain dispensation: they may speak *as* the writer imagines the subject, their prejudices openly on display, with no pretence of objectivity. The subject's vulnerabilities may also be used to make a deeper point about injustice, such as Rudyard Kipling's defence of 'Tommy' the maltreated soldier, who 'ain't a bloomin' fool' (Kipling, 2000, p. 18). Whereas 'tidying up' the language of interviews with grammar corrections is excessive interference, including dropped h's is unnecessary and would not be allowed in the recording of court proceedings, where the choice of words might be significant but accent is irrelevant. In auto/biographical research, which stands somewhere between the cold neutrality of the court and the licence and empathy of the artist, why should an intelligent answer be undermined and obscured by a 'faithful' (in fact, treacherous) display of faulty English?

The Nepalese language does not contain so many class nuances as the English language and my translation has deliberately not included my participants' grammar or accent 'mistakes': firstly, because they could not be translated authentically and secondly, because they add little to the meaning of my participants' accounts. Aesthetic value might be added by Mr Bojangles saying 'You see son, I drinks a bit' but if I had recorded a similar grammar mistake in Krishna's description of his drinking, this would only demean him. I chose therefore to only include grammar errors where they were significant, for example, when Krishna was talking about his past career failures, he said 'I cannot be successful in any job, sir' rather than 'I wasn't able to succeed in any job'. This revealed that he still felt just as stuck and hopeless as he did several years ago. The past tense would have matched the rest of the context, but the present tense was the most accurate portrayal of the situation for him.

I had to retain a clear idea about where my participants' accounts began and mine ended. I had hoped that my experiences would be restricted to my autobiography chapter and my discussion chapter so that I would not make the narcissistic error of finding my details especially healing or interesting, whilst others might find them boring or irrelevant (Searley, 2004, p. 9). Despite my egalitarian desire to present my participants' accounts in a similar manner to my own, I did not feel inclined to confide in my participants about my personal experiences of corporal punishment at the interview stage nor let them read my autobiography. In Nepalese culture this over-familiarity could lead to a lack of respect. Reflecting upon this fear, I detected within it a defensiveness due to my own sense of shame. This at least alerted me to possible feelings of shame or embarrassment in my participants. Instinctively I felt the need to maintain some minimal, formal boundaries, particularly at the start of the interviews, in order for my participants to take my research seriously and not just see it as a casual discussion that didn't really matter. At the same time, I wanted to maintain a continuous self-reflection to ensure that I remained open to the parallels between my participants' experiences and my own. In particular, I wanted to make sure that I did not appear as a feared 'authority figure' that could provoke transference as my participants remembered cruel teachers from the past.

The Poverty of Methodology

Does Analysis Poison Auto/biography?

Is there something about analysis itself that is at odds with auto/biography? What do I mean when I complain that analysis is 'cold and clinical' – is this an ethical or an emotional objection (if indeed, the two are separable)? Using my carefully themed questions, I cut my participants' experiences into segments then arranged them under categories, to present them neatly, just as I felt a thesis should be. I behaved like a hunter who already knows what prey he wants to catch most. I wanted those negative effects of corporal punishment and I was determined that my participants should supply them. What did I care about anything else they had to say? Everything had to fit my theoretical 'masterplan'. I was afraid to let them speak freely without my plan – what would happen with all that phenomena? Would it not be just one great methodological mess?

Feminist writers have succeeded in creating new forms of questioning that legitimise the free-flow of words and emotions in academic writing, assisted by Luce Irigaray's rejection of 'object-oriented' thought and preference for 'the simplicity' of chronology over themes (Irigaray, 2002, p. 5). Not all feelings can be named and categorised, neither in personal life histories, such as Jane Thompson's description of women with an intangible depression and anger (Thompson, 1983, p. 54), nor in analyses of education (Steinberg, 2007, p. ix). Was my impatience to get to 'the point' a symptom of a specifically masculine desire, which might be associated with a harsh and excluding singlemindedness? With this thought in mind, I tried to move at my participant's pace – falling silent when they wished to fall silent, having a break when they needed one and let spontaneous effusions flow from them without feeling overwhelmed by so much liquid emotion, without panicking about how I could contain it, or whether it might drown me.

At times, especially listening to the harrowing descriptions of beatings from Preeti and Krishna, I had the feeling I needed to 'come up for air'. It was an unbearable claustrophobia that made me long to go for a walk in some open space and cleanse myself in a bracing wind. But their load was my load. We had been through experiences so similar that I knew, however much I tried to run away, that I could never escape myself. When my participants struggled to speak, such as when Krishna described his public beating, I felt an overwhelming compassion which kept me frozen to the spot. I was afraid sometimes that if I moved at those moments, either they would collapse or I would crumble and lose my 'researcher' mask: somehow, we were leaning on each other mentally during the worst revelations. I also envisaged another metaphor, that of my participant and I on a long boat, steering through the dark waters of memory with all its multiple meanderings and hues, brightening or frightening in turn.

Auto/biographical research is a journey on which you never know what to expect. Who could believe that Krishna's father could tie him up in a rice-hut! Why was Mukunda trying to stone somebody while they were defecating! I had fancied myself at the helm, trying to steer my boat towards the destination of my PhD but my participants had their own instincts about where we should go. I had to be willing to let go of the wheel, to give them a turn, to simply shut up at times.

Mukunda and Preeti often spoke at great length about minutiae but more briefly about emotional pain; conversely, Krishna spent less time on facts and

figures but gave longer answers when he felt emotional, which I found far more interesting. But if I had been impatient and butted into Mukunda and Preeti's descriptions because they didn't fit my 'analysis', I might have missed a precious detail. Amidst Preeti's long description of her job-searching, for example, is her unexpected encounter with one of her old teachers which leaves her 'shaking with fear'. The will to analyse then, should only manifest itself after the 'data' is collected.

Linden West uses the concept of auto/biography to mean 'a dynamic cocreation of text or story' (Bainbridge & West, 2012, p. 142), emerging from the research 'relationship'. An auto/biographical approach enabled me to not only make sense of my own experiences through the stories of others (and vice versa) but also to create new syntheses of meaning, which include phenomena arising from our interview experiences themselves. An example of this is the way that Krishna transformed as he told his story. Whereas at first, I just saw a farmer who seemed to have a reputation for drinking and fighting, which I traced back to his tortured childhood, throughout the interview my view expanded and I began to see multiple Krishnas: the hard-worker blocked by government bureaucracy from getting his tractor licence, the devoted husband and father and the young man who experienced a brief period of pleasure at the Rodhi during his brief period of academic success. But which of these aspects was to overwhelm the others? In the virtual life created by the interview, it could have been any one of them. The interview highlighted so much of Krishna's potential as much as it did his difficulties.

Problems of Representation

I had hoped that the language of my interviews would reflect my post-positivist approach to causation by including 'hedging' and 'distancing' using verbs to express a cautiousness in judgement such as seem, appear, tend to and suggest (Holliday, 2016, p. 175). I also thought that this kind of language might also set an example for my participants, who could find it easier to talk about events that might have or seem to have had a certain effect, rather than having to state boldly that x caused y. As mentioned previously, Nepalese students often felt uncomfortable criticising 'god-like' teachers and were terrified of repercussions for 'bad-mouthing' anybody in their community, in addition to the resurgence of feelings of humiliation as they admitted and remembered being beaten. I had also planned used tricks from the English language to describe teachers who used corporal punishment such as the

double negative (*Were there times when your teacher was not so unwilling to use the stick?*); understatement (*Was he a bit impatient sometimes?*) and euphemisms (*Was he a bit too strict?*). Looking through my transcripts however, I saw that I had failed miserably to present my questions with this degree of sensitivity. There are plenty of 'Did's starting my sentences, but hardly any tentative verbs, apart from some 'Could you tell me...' and the odd 'Do you think...' From my participants, however, there were even less, apart from the occasional 'maybe'. They were absolutely convinced that corporal punishment had damaged them in some way. I tried to compensate for my forceful questions in my discussion, which tiptoes around causes and effects without daring to say, 'I accuse!'. I had intended to use the type of caution advocated by Adrian Holliday:

'similar' rather than 'the same', 'more' rather than stating exactly how much and 'may' rather than 'does' (Holliday, 2016, p. 178).

But this constraint became less possible as the interviews got underway, with an intensity that I had not expected. When faced with such definite statements as "We were beaten with nettles", there were some moments when words like "may" were insufficient. How could I say to Krishna "Do you think this may have affected your learning?" when we were both trembling with anger?

In a popular self-help book for female survivors of sexual abuse entitled 'Courage to Heal' (Bass & Davis, 1988) there is a section where the women who have been discussed tell their story in an extended narrative. I found the women's descriptions of recovering their spirituality especially moving since the researchers did not permit themselves to invade that sacred territory. I have also read accounts in a similar format from Holocaust survivors (Gilbert, 1989). These long descriptions, unbroken and undiluted by a researcher, enable the total immersion of the reader. By concentrating and actually imagining oneself there, a total empathy and understanding may be achieved. But I knew I could not do this with my transcripts. There were too many diversions from the emotional data, from Preeti discussing picnics to Mukunda's talk of 'maize and millet'. These details could have provided colour in the context of a longer emotional narrative but I felt that in my case, it would have been dishonest and chronologically inaccurate. A long stream of emotion was not the way that my participants' stories came out, therefore I had no right to condense and edit them to create that effect. None of my participants had written a poem about corporal punishment, and I was not about to commission one. My experiences of being upset by a wide variety of corporal punishment accounts led me to conclude that the style and

representation of auto/biographical material only has a limited effect upon its interpretation by the reader. As Reid and West note, a text may be shaped by both conscious and unconscious dynamics and 'open to diverse readings' (Reid & West, 2015, p. 178). This uncertainty is perhaps the price of the freedom provided by auto/biographical research.

Finding Participants: Obstacles and Obstruction

Practical Problems

I arrived in Nepal full of hope and enthusiasm. Being financially independent gave me a self-confidence that I had not experienced before: and I felt people listening to me with respect. I was aware of the material basis of this, in part, and it felt both disconcerting and pleasant. For the first ten days, I was overwhelmed with attention and invitations from family, friends and associates, particularly as it was the Deepawali festival (Diwali). Garlands were put around my neck at cultural programmes, at which I was a guest of honour. My early impression was that people were positive about my research and I received many offers, suggestions and promises to help me find participants. At this stage the lengthy nature of most discussion, due to an abundance of customary courtesies, did not concern me. Later I was to realise that in many cases, the enthusiasm with which my research was greeted was largely due to a lack of awareness about the kinds of details that I was focusing upon, some of which was to make my participants and their families extremely wary.

Coming from Nepal, I had always known that my research – like many things - might take longer than it would in countries with fewer socioeconomic challenges. I had not, however, anticipated such a wide range of annoying and boring practical and logistical problems. To begin with, the blockade of supplies from India initiated by the Indian government in protest against the Nepalese constitution had led to huge petrol shortages. Motorbike travel is essential in my region, much of which has no buses and few roads. My pilot interview had to be postponed after I was forced to queue for nine hours to purchase three litres of petrol. There were also communication problems involved in setting up the interviews, as there is no internet access in my immediate area. A surprising number of my potential participants could not give me a mobile phone number, although they rarely admitted not having a mobile, only that their mobiles were 'not working at the moment'. Some shared their mobiles

with their families and didn't want other family members to know what they were doing. Simple tasks such as printing out my participant information and consent forms were delayed as when I went to the internet cafe they said that there was no electricity. When I asked when it might be restored, they shrugged their shoulders. Few people cared, as few had any professional pressures that might make printing an urgent need.

Shyam - Cricket, Recording Machines and Fluctuating Narratives

My pilot interview went well in terms of showing me what to avoid. I had come across the participant, Shyam, whilst playing cards with my brother and his friends. I was intrigued by the way that Shyam boasted about cheating people and about having been a 'bad boy' who used to run into the fields when he saw the school bus coming. Initially he claimed to have had a lot of 'trouble at school', but said that he would be happy to be interviewed by me the following evening. Shyam stipulated however, that I should play a game of cricket with him during the day time in return.

Shyam arrived with a group of friends that he had brought along to see 'the guy who plays cricket in England' and when he came to bat, nodded at me enthusiastically. I bowled him out immediately and he was furious, throwing a huge tantrum then stomping off home. When I turned up at his house in the evening he was still angry and said that he thought we had an understanding that I would bowl slowly, given his help. He refused to talk to me that night and rearranged the interview for the following night, however this had to be postponed again by me, as I had been stuck queueing for petrol for nine hours.

When the interview eventually took place, Shyam changed his story continually. He contradicted himself within the same sentence, within seconds – passionately denying things that he had previously asserted, particularly regarding violent punishments, and constantly changing his opinion. Shyam denied that teachers at his school ever used corporal punishment which I found hard to believe, given its prevalence in Nepal. He also claimed that his teacher had locked him in the lavatory no less than three times, then suddenly denied that the teacher would ever do such a thing, saying that he only had a 'fear that the teacher might lock him in the lavatory'.

Annoyed as I was, I sought to understand rather than judge him, as he was clearly very frightened of any possible consequences of accusing anybody

(which itself could be interpreted as an indication of severe punishment). I noted that Shyam kept staring at my recording device, swallowing hard and wiping his hands on his trousers, as they seemed clammy. His fear seemed to increase throughout the interview to the point where his body almost seemed frozen and his voice became progressively hoarse. Even when I asked him his age, he gesticulated to the recorder mouthing 'I can't say in front of this'. The constant changes to his story, however, within seconds of each other, made his interview virtually unusable. In one part of the transcript Shyam states: 'I never got beaten...' then 'I got beaten once...' Shortly afterwards, he says 'we were never beaten...' followed by 'if we made a mistake we would get beaten'. Shyam also claimed that the pupils who were ranked first and second in the class had no fear of the teacher but later said that even they had been forced to imitate chickens: a punishment in Nepal that is so humiliating that it could only be imposed with the threat of violence for non-compliance. Whatever the cause of his constant contradictions, whether denial to the point of psychosis or a simultaneous desire to both confide in me and shield me from the truth, they gave Shyam the appearance of an unreliable witness. Since I had heard no consistent confirmation that he had experienced corporal punishment from his own lips, I was concerned that it was too much of a conceptual leap to link his practice of denial to an underlying reality. What I learnt from my pilot interview was that I could not expect people to commit to a stance like opposing corporal punishment, a norm in Nepal, especially when they are afraid. Our contradictions, denials and retractions may shield our abusers, perhaps through fear or sentiment, whilst at the same time our unconscious is deliberately leaking memories of abuse that need attention, no less than the symptoms of a physical illness.

I had to ask myself what kind of truth I was seeking, was I after a legal 'proof' that corporal punishment had occurred and was damaging, or was I interested in the multifarious truths of a discourse which can be illuminating, without necessarily being all-pervasive. The interview was a clear example of an inhibiting 'interviewer-effect' since Shyam's knowledge of my time as a teacher at his secondary school made him reluctant to admit how much corporal punishment was used there. I had to examine my own feelings honestly of annoyance and frustration in order to control them and take them away from Shyam, lest I compound his anxiety. How much had I been dominating, rather than receiving, in urging the interview to go 'my way' and allow me to seize 'the truth' that would confirm my preconceptions about corporal punishment? For the first time, I also considered whether it was a

good idea to socialise with my participants, in this case in the games of card and cricket. This had seemed to be a harmless way of gaining access to their lives but it had resulted in an expectation of favouritism and anger when it was denied.

Finally, I learnt about the complexity of my participants and the fluid space between their appearance and reality. How could this young man who had appeared so confident, brash and boastful be frozen into a state of nervous terror by the presence of a recording device? Following such a chaotic interview, I had to learn to remain optimistic and not assume that every interview would be as difficult as that.

Ram Bote: Farming, Fishing and Rhino Horn

My next major challenge came with a man who I had particularly wanted to engage as a participant: Ram Bote, who came from a caste named after 'rowers', who were sometimes marginalised as they were permitted to eat mice. I was interested in Ram since a mutual friend had told me that he was anti-schools and often talked angrily about the inadequacy of teachers. As Ram identified with one of the poorest castes, I also wondered if he had received any especially unjust treatment on account of his social background. When I first met him, Ram was harvesting rice and waited until he had finished the row before he came to talk to my friend and eventually, after a few suspicious glances, to me. I explained that the interview would be confidential and he agreed to take part but refused to give me a mobile number, claiming that his phone was broken and that he 'could not afford' another one. Ram told me that he would contact my friend when he was ready. A week passed without hearing anything, then I returned to the spot where he was again, harvesting his crops. He said 'Look, you can see that I'm busy today, but if you come back tomorrow, I will do your interview'. I left a participant information sheet with him then eagerly returned the following day, only to be told by his relatives that he had gone to work for another farmer.

I told myself that I had to be patient, as I was dealing with somebody from one of the most marginalised groups of people in Nepal, who quite naturally felt that he 'owed' me, a privileged Brahmin, nothing. I waited for three days, to give him a space and time to finish his farm-work, then returned. This time Ram seemed angry and said, 'I've met your kind before'. He explained that a few years ago a researcher had come to their village and interviewed his friend

about illegal rhino horn trading, promising that it would remain confidential. Instead, Ram's friend was arrested and imprisoned and their whole group came under suspicion. Ram looked at me furiously and asked how could he be sure that his interview with me wouldn't end up with him being connected to the rhino horn trade? He said that if he agreed to the interview, I would get 'everything' and he would end up with 'nothing'.

Firstly, I assured Ram that the interview was only about corporal punishment in schools, nothing else. I then responded clearly to his hint for reimbursement by explaining that I was not in a position to pay anybody, as I was only a student. Finally, I tried to show empathy with his anger by saying that my project was to give a voice to the voiceless and how it was not right that rich people and politicians dominate the media whilst many ordinary people are always marginalised and never given a chance to express their opinions. But this made him nervous and he said 'I don't want to get involved in politics'. I hastily reassured him and Ram finally agreed to talk to me the following day at 1pm, on condition that the interview would never get him 'into trouble'. This time I really felt that I had won him over and felt privileged to have gained the trust of somebody from such a different background. I arrived the next day at 12, to be on the safe side, in case he got 'cold feet' and ran away before I arrived. To my despair, Ram had already left to go fishing at a river quite far away. I stayed at his house until 4pm, drinking water with his relatives, who kept saying that he might be back soon or he might not. Finally, I gave up and vowed never to contact him again.

This experience provided me with several insights. Firstly, my research would never be as important to other people as it is to me. Many people do not share – or even understand - the intensity of my opposition to the corporal punishment of children. Survival in the present – whether avoiding prison or farming and fishing for food, will always take priority in my participants' lives. In the UK, participants might not have the same pressure: perhaps a shopping trip could be postponed, or they would be less likely to face community censure but in Nepal, life or death issues could prevent people from co-operating with my research. In both countries however, factors such as the intimidation and abuse of women, non-private spaces and potential legal ramifications could prove inhibiting.

Secondly, I learnt that however egalitarian I appeared to me, whatever statements I made about 'the voice of the voiceless', to many marginalised people these remain 'just words', empty political concepts which do nothing to

really combat inequality. Ram did not believe that he had anything to gain in real material terms from our interaction, neither through short-term payment nor long-term social change. To him, I was a mere pipsqueak, whose flowery speeches were at best meaningless; at worst, patronising and deceptive. Finally, I learnt that people's feelings can fluctuate. I do not believe that Ram intended to mess me about or deliberately trick me into wasting my time. In those moments when Ram promised to talk to me, he genuinely wanted to, but then these feelings were superseded by others so powerful that they overcame any notion that he had 'given me his word' that he would assist me. I remain unsure whether his disappearances were due to fear, apathy, resentment or socio-economic pressures hence this presents an opportunity to consider that there might always be multiple reasons for a participant's reluctance, even if these are widely different. Once again, I also had to be careful not to let myself rage about the experience using essentialist assumptions, such as notions that 'some castes are unreliable', or that 'Nepalese people can't keep appointments'. Fortunately, my subsequent experiences rendered any such presumptions false.

Rejections and Refusals

After so many disappointments, including many refusals too brief to mention, I was relieved to go through a period when people seemed to be more enthusiastic about my research. In some cases, they were too enthusiastic. I was approached by a former Maoist fighter who was eager to show the connection between the imperial regime and the oppression of children. I declined his offer on the grounds of him being slightly over my age limit. In fact, my bigger concern was that his account would obscure the fact that corporal punishment was carried out by teachers and parents of all political persuasions. I was also approached by would-be participants offering to be interviewed for money and inviting me to write whatever I wanted about them. When I asked one such woman how she had been affected by corporal punishment, she smiled charmingly and replied, 'However you want me to be affected', reminding me of the King's bride-to-be in the Eddie Murphy film *'Coming to America'*. I felt exasperated that people didn't care about the importance of providing authentic answers but I had to understand this in the socio-economic context of Nepal, where many people exist barely above the starvation-level. One villager had started to gossip about me in a hostile manner, saying that a PhD from England was 'sub-standard' and useless as it would never be accepted in Nepal.

I managed to successfully complete two interviews with my male participants, Krishna and Mukunda, over the next two weeks, despite the embargo worsening and the queue time reaching between 15 and 24 hours just to buy 3 litres of petrol, with eventually many people being turned away. One interview was interrupted by the death of one of my relatives and I had to suspend it while I went to the death procession and river cremation. The other interview went very smoothly, even though it involved a participant with a reputation for alcoholism, volatility and violence.

Women and walls

My next major challenge was to find a female participant. Having become accustomed to the autonomy and outspokenness of women in England, I had grossly underestimated the difficulty of finding a Nepalese woman who would take part in any recorded interview, regardless of the subject. As soon as they discovered that it was about corporal punishment, they would recoil completely, and say that they didn't know anything about this subject. They shared a misconception that they had to be an 'expert' or 'knowledgeable' rather than simply recount their experiences. My knowledge and experience of schools and families in my own area made it very hard to believe those who claimed that they were unaware of the use of corporal punishment in Devchuli. I could understand if the humiliation and distress that they had suffered made the subject impossible to discuss without the re-emergence of these painful feelings. What exasperated me, however, was the tendency of many of those I questioned to hide behind a mask of naivety, simply smiling and saying, 'I don't know' when I was sure that they knew what I was talking about. But most of all, I saw many women living in fear. Repeatedly they answered my request by saying that they were 'scared of getting into trouble'. This terror of possible punishment by either society, the law or their family members and spouses appeared to me to be strong evidence that they had been corporal punishment victims in the past and were highly trained in automatic compliance – but how could I justify this assertion without actually interviewing these women? I became so desperate to find a female participant that my Aunt actually took me knocking door-to-door, but everywhere, I found a similar fear and fake protestations of ignorance.

Eventually my Aunt found a Christian woman, Rita, a 19-year-old mother of a small child whose husband was working abroad. Using my aunt as a respectable go-between, I arranged a meeting at which she was very helpful. I explained my research in detail and she accepted the participant information

sheet and signed the consent form. We scheduled a meeting for three-days' time. I was absolutely confident that nothing would go wrong so took the opportunity to climb the largest mountain peak in Devchuli, which I hoped would clear my head, re-energise me and provide me with a fresh perspective. Whilst on my way down the mountain, however, my exhilaration was punctured by a phone call from Rita, during which she explained that she could no longer take part in my research as her mother-in-law had said that it would be 'inappropriate and unbecoming for a married lady whose husband is abroad'. On top of that, Rita claimed that she was afraid that she wouldn't be able to give the 'right' answers to my questions. I argued that there were no right answers, only people's experiences, but it was too late. In particular, she said that she 'Didn't want to stir up all that trouble again', as the fact that her husband was a Hindu and she was a Christian had already caused considerable distress and arguments over the years. Soon afterwards, my wife and son arrived in Nepal for a holiday. I hoped that my wife's presence might reassure would-be female participants and make it easier for me to find somebody. Together we approached Shanti, a Dalit friend of my wife, whom we found building a wall for her buffalo shed. She was very friendly, accepted my paperwork and scheduled a meeting for the day after next. To my horror, yet again I received a phone call cancelling me. On this occasion, Shanti had been intimidated by her father-in-law, who was furious with her for making promises to us without asking for anybody's permission. In a very quiet voice, Shanti explained that if she continued to have any contact with us, it would not only damage her marriage but her relationship with her entire family. I railed against a system that considered women strong enough to build walls and work from dawn to dusk but not to give their opinions. I had particularly wanted to include a woman from marginalised castes, such as Dalits or Janajatis, or from minority religions, such as Christians or Muslims, but it was proving impossible. Social hostility towards them meant that in some ways they were even more closely guarded than Brahmins.

Extremely despondent, I retreated to my wife's home, to be pampered and fed delicious curries by her adorable 75-year-old grandmother. It was there, to my astonishment, that I finally found my female participant, via one of my wife's sisters. Preeti was a Chhetri woman, rather than one of the marginalised castes that I had hoped to talk to, but I was relieved to finally get the third interview underway. It was far slower and more tortuous than my other interviews as Preeti would often suffer attacks of shyness. Sometimes there would be long delays and mumbled statements. Preeti disliked speaking ill of her teachers

and avoided making eye contact. Nevertheless, every time I nodded sympathetically she seemed to exhale with relief. Only this family-friend route had provided my participant with the level of trust that was needed to carry out the interview.

My problems finding a female participant illustrated the incredible extent to which women in Nepal are still dominated, with this domination justified as 'protection'. The fear of not giving the 'right' answers or not 'knowing' about the subject was a throwback to the rote-learning that Nepalese students endured in the classroom, which was, I knew, enforced by corporal punishment. Worse than that, the women's terror of upsetting their in-laws, spouses and other family members suggested that there was if not a fear of violence in the present, then a fear of something equally powerful, powerful enough to make these women retract undertakings that they had made themselves. On top of this, my experience with the women said a great deal about the cultural complexity of Nepal, with spheres of being which one can only access through particular class, caste or religious routes. It was also significant in socio-economic terms, since women dared not upset their providers (to whom they supplied unpaid labour). Others, however, felt confident enough to provide fake interviews for money, knowing that their appearance with a handful of notes would exempt them from any criticism, with 'blind eyes' suddenly being turned to how they managed to acquire this money, such is the level of financial desperation amongst many Nepalese families. In micro-Marxian terms, ideological views of my research seemed to fluctuate, according to my potential participants' particular economic base. Indeed, nearly all the obstacles that I encountered could be ultimately attributed to financial concerns, from Ram's fear of exploitation to Rita's terror of losing the support of her husband.

Auto/biographical narratives, for all their 'sensitivity' and anonymity were simply too dangerous for some participants: the unique details in these extended accounts would be like leaving their fingerprints all over a crime scene. They knew I knew that and believed that I didn't care how much they might suffer after the interview. I did not want to be like the tabloid journalist who doesn't care what devastation he leaves behind so long as he 'gets his story'. Preeti, Krishna and Mukunda were not objects to be used by my instrumental reason. They were valuable in themselves and as our interviews expanded, so did our vision of what we were, are, might have been and could yet become.

Chapter Six

'Analysing' 'My' 'Data'

My resistance to writing this section comes from three sources. Firstly, the term 'analyse', which immediately moves me from being a co-survivor, empathising with my participants to somebody with the power to withdraw and adopt a bird's-eye view over us all. Secondly, the word 'data', which reduces the breathing lives, tears, blood and feelings of my participants to objects to be considered along with the mass of 'data', 'stuff', which I will then brutally accept or reject in accordance with its use-value rather than any intrinsic worth. Finally, the word 'my' presumes that I own the information, that I am master of all I survey, when I feel more like a frightened spectator of overwhelming pain and distress. Nevertheless, aware of what was expected of me, I approached my participants wearing the mask of a researcher, feigning objectivity and the confidence of one who could tame and harness data like a wild buffalo. This mask would shatter whenever a participant told me a particularly painful detail: sometimes my emotions would leave me unable to move or speak, but I felt bound to remain analytical, in order to show respect for my participants and to maintain their feeling of safety. This moral justification helped my superego to control the swirling mass of my emotions but my fragility oozed out at every possible opportunity, especially I noticed, in physical symptoms of distress.

The Fluidity of Analysis

My analysis had begun as soon as I found my participants. Rarely do we wait to be led by spoken words. I began looking at the research settings, the imprint they had left on their physical environment; how others spoke to them; how they greeted me and their body language. I did not collect all the 'data', then analyse it but instead felt myself examining the significance in everything that surrounded my participants, from Mukunda's neat log-piles to Krishna's cruel nick-name. This receptivity to detail is not so much an ethnographic awareness as an ability to flit through minutiae and an openness to the possibility that significance may lie anywhere, in any part of the phenomena surrounding or emanating from the participant or myself. It is a way of thinking that can cover any place because it is not attached to any place; it is restless, fluid and everchanging. Hence a detail that might flash up only once, such as Preeti's bowed head as she brought me tea (a gesture Nepalese women are trained to

make in order to signify submission to men) is as valid as one that it is glaring or permanent. This fluidity of analysis, analysing from within the ebb and flow of 'data', enables a researcher to make quick adjustments, such as alerting me to avoid behaving like a stereotypical dominant Brahmin male to encourage Preeti to speak to me freely.

Before the interview even began, I was able to discern forces impacting upon my participants and see where they harmonised with these and where they did not. Krishna's rather tough verbal exchanges with his family, for example, contrasted considerably with the emotional vulnerability he revealed to me. I carefully took the notes on their appearances, surroundings, their family member's attitude towards me and the general atmosphere or what could be called the 'vibes', whilst bearing in mind previous research experiences in which my first impressions and intuitions about a situation turned out to be very different from my later insights. Auto/biographical research requires the fluidity to re-write assumptions and deconstruct associations, acknowledging our fallibility due to our own 'stuff' obscuring our viewpoint. My irritation with the superstition of rituals to appease the planets for example, made me begin my interview with Preeti with a sense of superiority, thinking how rational and fearless I was in comparison, until the awe I felt at her struggles put me back in my place. Likewise, my fear that my participants might use corporal punishment with their children (who occasionally appeared) made me extremely tense until I realised that they would not: this was my 'stuff' surfacing and colouring our interactions from the outset. I had to be fluid enough to let go of my own preoccupations, in order to receive new data in an 'empty' glass, or at least, one in which my participants had a designated and respected space for their unique story.

What Am I Getting At: Pre-conceived Themes

During the first interviews, I let my participants speak for themselves and tried to use mostly open-ended questions. But we are rarely shooting in the dark; no researcher is without their own agenda. I did not only use closed questions when requesting specific factual information but also found myself using them to clarify incidents which my participants had perhaps skimmed over or skirted around. My own experiences of the effects of corporal punishment, as well as my Masters' research, the accounts of numerous friends and my knowledge of Nepal, had already given me a clear idea about the kind of themes that I would be looking for: issues such as self-esteem, humiliation, stifled creativity, mind-body discord, social control. Nevertheless, my participants threw up many

ideas which had not occurred to me before, for example, the ‘masks’ worn by Mukunda and Preeti, economic defeat, remote hopes and spiritual turmoil.

From the cascade of emotions that my participants revealed, I selected those which I could reasonably trace back to their experiences of corporal punishment. I found myself ruthlessly excluding from my analysis any of my participants’ feelings that did not relate to my main theme, for example, Preeti’s concern for her father’s health, my participants’ joy in parenthood and Mukunda’s worry about the decline of Hinduism in Nepal. Whilst pursuing my themes, I had to nevertheless remain responsive and reflective. This meant softening my questions when I could see that my participants were upset, which itself constituted a type of analysis, whilst trying to get them to go more deeply into the issues which I felt really illuminated my study. I abandoned my planned time limits and asked everybody ‘Is there anything left about your life which we forgot to include during our interview?’ This did not always have the results I expected though, with Mukunda suddenly telling me a ghost story.

Themes mattered most to me where they enabled me to relate my participants’ experiences to wider social, economic and philosophical issues. Preeti’s docility for example, was not only a consequence of her suppression as a woman defined by men’s expectations (Radicalesbians, 1971, p. 8) but symbolised the docility of the Nepalese population who are often derided as low-skilled yet have had to sacrifice their potential due to more immediate human concerns. The theme of immediate compliance likewise, showed how subservience to an individual can lay a pattern for the subservience of whole societies to aggressive leaders. Where themes involve this move from the particular to general it is important to note that this is not predictive or historicist – only an indication of possible, associative connectedness. As Merrill and West note:

Generalisation, in the final resort, can derive from a superficial understanding of people, their subjectivity and what they do and think. (Merrill and West, 2009, p184).

The inadequacy of generalisation is part of what Adorno means when he describes how the concept “does not exhaust the thing conceived” (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 5), but it does not only apply to those concepts labelled as generalisations.

Lived history is full of exceptions, surprises and chaos which has its own reasons, such as the tortuous delays in drafting the Nepalese constitution showing a desire to protect multi-party democracy from rushed or brutal policy-making. My analysis of themes was therefore, mainly experimental,

testing how far they could go and seeing how much meaning I could unpack from a single phrase from my participants. My themes were not fixed labels, but evocative symbols to be played with, to create contrasts and to suggest connections.

Beachcombing: Making Sure That Nothing is Missed.

The practical side of analysis is tedious but essential. I had to take the following steps after my interview:

- Transfer my recordings onto my computer and mobile phone in case they got lost or were accidentally deleted. Listened to them carefully to make sure that they were clear.
 - Transcribe and translate my recordings by hand, lest any significant pauses or 'Mms' were lost. I had to accept that some words such as *tauwa* (straw rice-hut) and *kukhura bannu* (chicken posture) could only be translated with limited effectiveness.
 - Show my transcriptions to my participants, who did not wish to make any changes but all wanted me to ensure their anonymity. - Re-read my translations and transcriptions several times to make sure that my participants' stories were 'fully heard'.
- Check that my translation faithfully represented the words spoken in Nepali. This involved many areas of self-doubt and I realised that this could be an endless process of revision unless I 'settled on' the right word. My Adorno-inspired doubt at the adequacy of concepts was doubled as I struggled to find the right word in English to express my participants' feelings, even when intuitively I 'knew what they meant'.

Like sifting sand, the process of going through my interviews seemed endless and overwhelming. Large amounts of data were either irrelevant, too mundane or repetitive. Yet I was also aware of how every statement could be significant in its own way. Mukunda's polemic on the dangers of secularism could be interpreted as suppressed rage. The mundane subjects discussed by Preeti at the start of our interview were protective barriers which served to buy her some time whilst on another level, she was eyeing me warily and measuring how far she could trust me with more painful stories. Some of my own actions were no less condensed. My tangents in this thesis describing my

performativity fears represented a celebration of a safe space in which I could show weaknesses without being beaten. bell hooks describes theory as a “healing place” (hooks, 1994, p. 61), for a beaten child without a safe home. Auto/biographical research allowed me to express my fears and insecurities, to be emotionally expressive and break away from the myth of patriarchal perfection foisted upon me by my cultural traditions.

Like beachcombing, I discovered that sometimes a gold nugget may lie in the middle of the most ordinary looking data. Krishna’s long and depressing descriptions of jobs that he had applied for and failed included one bombshell: his admission that he wanted to join any military group, either the army or the rebels, regardless of their ideology, so that he could ‘take revenge on his teachers’. If I had ‘switched off’ or forced him to change the subject, this is something that I could have missed.

Gestalt – The Whole Story: My Name is Your Theme

It would have been easy to divide my participants into ‘themes’, with Krishna as the rebel, Mukunda as the dreamer, Preeti as the prisoner but this would have meant ignoring the contradictions in their lives, such as Krishna’s family responsibility, Mukunda’s academic success and Preeti’s career aspirations. A themed presentation, which was how my Masters’ dissertation was structured, would have enabled me to explore my themes in greater depth and to make precise comparisons and contrasts between my participants. But this would have been to subject them to another kind of violence, the violence of comparisons. I struggled constantly not to entangle my feelings with those of my participants but found myself selecting the experiences with which I empathised the most, the feelings which I had shared and the restrictions upon them which I had also felt around my own neck. I had to let my participants speak for themselves. I read the data several times and thought about the ‘emerging Gestalt’. What were their overriding feelings and experiences? Which had affected their lives the most profoundly? Which seemed to them, the most overwhelming? Which would seem the most poignant and surprising to a new reader and thus add to the knowledge in the world?

These questions helped me to decide on the heading and sub-headings to the participant’s stories, according to the Gestalt. My participants’ stories were therefore represented without being compared. Having written them up however, I was able to search for common elements and shared experiences,

which could be analysed in my discussion chapter and help me to formulate my conclusion. I realised that this commonality was based on data which I had already extracted as the 'essence' of what my participants' had to say, which had entailed a highly subjective hierarchical ranking on a scale of importance.

The hermeneutic restlessness of my participants' revelations, their constant reproduction of meanings upon meanings, helped me to understand *Gestalt* beyond the idea that the idea that 'the whole is greater than the sum of the parts' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 68). Adorno's insight that 'What is, is more than it is' (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 161) goes beyond individual negation:

This 'more' is not imposed upon it, but remains immanent to it, as that which has been pushed out of it (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 161).

My participants were not only what they were denied but also what they could become connected to in the future. My conception of their experiences could never "exhaust the thing conceived" (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 5). Moreover, the limitations upon my participants' lives were not essential but mediated by a beckoning "surplus" (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 205). Just as no historical Gestalt could adequately sum up 'the spirit of an age', so too, no gestalt could unfold that would encapture the 'spirit of a person'. This approach enabled me to enter into single moods, feelings, ideas, frustrations which were expressed at different times (and often juxtaposed with their opposites). I was free to analyse all these however, just so long as I never lost sight of their historical contingency, fluidity and dialectical dynamics. To freeze this 'data' in time, as academic work so often seeks to do, would be an appropriation of that which does not belong to me. Still less, is it mine to name.

Chapter Seven:

Mukunda's Story

I met Mukunda at the funeral procession of a villager whom we both knew. He was very friendly and offered me a lift home on the back of his motorbike. Mukunda was excited by the fact that I was a student in the UK and eager to tell me about his Master's degree. He was in fact the only person from his village with a Master's degree but immediately expressed his frustration that he had 'done nothing with it'. When I told him a little bit about my research he seemed fascinated and said that he had 'a lot to say' on this subject. I was rather hesitant, as Mukunda – with his academic success, happily smiling family and social graces didn't fit my stereotype of somebody 'damaged' by corporal punishment. We agreed to meet the following day and I came to his family home. Like most of us, Mukunda had manual chores to do every day so I was not surprised that his clothes were dusty. He was very hospitable, offering me food as well as tea and we sat comfortably outside. Occasionally his family interrupted with requests for help, which he instantly attended to. I surveyed their land and noted that it was both more organised and productive than many that I had visited, with an impressive variety of crops and neat stacks of supplies.

Early life – The Discipline of Poverty

Even by Nepalese standards, Mukunda's family had suffered an extraordinary level of poverty and hardship, despite his Brahmin caste. Faced with starvation in the hilly region, his parents had migrated to the Terai (flat region) and taken the only land that was affordable, which was covered in either trees or tree trunks. The task of converting this into farm-land was enormous and involved digging out and burning the old tree trunks and pulling out their deep roots. With no machinery or vehicles, just a grabbing mattock and two oxen, Mukunda's parents converted their area of 'jungle' into 36 rice terraces. Mukunda described how witnessing his parents' toil and suffering prevented him from having any thoughts of rebellion:

We had to do a lot of [domestic/farm] work at that time and we were scared of our parents without any reason. We lacked everything and my parents worked hard day and night. After seeing that, I always felt frightened. Because of that fear I either studied or worked.

Punishment was not necessary for me. I never did anything wrong at home and they [my parents] behaved quite well and did not use any physical punishment.

Mukunda went on to deny a further three times that his parents had ever hurt him:

I hadn't been punished at home. I never got any punishment at home. My parents did not beat me at all.

I was surprised by this, since corporal punishment is the norm in most families in Nepal and wondered what might be the origin of his fear 'without reason'. Rather than jumping to the conclusion that Mukunda was in denial, I tried to imagine how extreme poverty can lead to self-discipline. My own childhood was always clouded by the fear of starvation: this itself constituted a threat of corporal punishment from nature, in effect, if we did not keep working to produce food. Incompetent or lazy farming can lead to the crops failing or animals dying, resulting in the disease or death of those dependent upon them.

Mukunda explained:

I think I worked after seeing the difficulties of my parents rather than out of fear. My parents did not force me to work or threaten me if I didn't. After seeing the difficulties of my parents I thought I needed to support them. If we do some little job it could be a big help for them. They used to order us to do some kinds of jobs and I obeyed that. That's the way it was. I just obeyed my parents and did the work.

As in my childhood, there was no prohibition on child labour as far as subsistence farming was concerned and children under 7 still had to clear small rocks, do weeding, collecting water, watching goats and cattle. Mukunda said:

Children also had to work very hard at that time, we had to help our parents. That was a necessary condition of life.

Poverty had also driven three of Mukunda's older brothers to migrate to India for work, making him feel 'very sad' without their 'protection'. Mukunda was told that his parents could not afford to pay for them to go to school, hence he felt privileged to be the only one to complete his education in full. Mukunda did not start school until he was 7, but the family tried to teach him as much as possible beforehand and give him the best start. As a result of his prior knowledge of the alphabet and numbers, Mukunda was able to skip 'Shishu' (the Reception class) and go straight into Class One, saving the family money.

Submitting to School - Success Despite Injustice

Mukunda switched schools after the first few months due to a boy stealing his pencil every day. Mukunda was angry that the boy, who was deaf, was not punished for stealing his pencil and continued to do it every day, despite Mukunda's father turning up at the school and shouting at him - words which the boy couldn't actually hear. Eventually Mukunda's parents arranged for him to transfer schools. At his next school, Mukunda described himself as happy until he reached Class 3, when he was the victim of injustice from a teacher whom he described as having 'psychological problems':

I was punished because of his madness rather than my mistake. He punished me even though I had done all my homework and finished the homework completely. He made me 'do chicken' and after that beat me with a stick accusing me of not being a proper chicken and not staying still in the same position.

'The chicken' is an especially difficult and degrading position used in Nepalese schools where the student must bend over and hold their ears, with their arms looped under their legs. The same teacher also gave him a beating that was meant for one of his friends, whom he had been unable to reach. Mukunda experienced conflicting feelings, sometimes making excuses for the teacher:

when I found out that his mental state was not good at that time, it was less upsetting, as I thought that his brain wasn't really there. This calmed me down about it.... He was very ill. He used to faint in the classroom.

However, his feelings of injustice persisted throughout the interview, twenty-five years after the event:

I am still upset with my teacher. He has now passed away but I still do not feel good about him. I was deeply distressed and I still have some kind of pain inside me.

At this point in the interview, Mukunda was not condemning the use of corporal punishment, only the fact that it was used against him, when he felt that he did not deserve it:

If he had punished me for not doing homework or for doing some naughty things, that is understandable. But I was beaten without any reason. That made me very sad at that time. I still feel very upset about it. Students and teachers have a special relationship. If teachers beat students occasionally they could accept it easily. But if you are punished without any reason it makes you very upset.

After his parents protested about his treatment, Mukunda was promoted to class four and continued through the school system with ease, recalling 'I never failed in any class. I passed all the exams up to and including the SLC'. He claimed that most of the time, he escaped punishment himself and he justified the punishment of less scholarly pupils:

Anybody who did not study very well got more punishment. Anybody who studied or who was a bit cleverer did not get that much punishment because they studied all the required texts. The main aim of the punishment was to encourage students to study which ultimately leads to a good score in the exams and helps them acquire knowledge.

Mukunda reveals a certain disdain for those ‘other’ students:

There were a few groups of students who didn’t use to study. They used to sit on the last benches [at the back] of the class...cheated teachers; did not obey teachers; never followed the teachers’ instructions; did not do any homework; did not listen to teachers either. They were not studying properly – they were the rough type of students. Those students used to receive a lot of punishment.

I sensed that Mukunda preferred to focus on his positive memories of school, looking back with ‘rose-tinted spectacles’, despite the beatings:

I really enjoyed being a school pupil. I used to do my homework almost every day and so the teacher did not beat me that much. I was confident and relaxed after finishing my homework. We used to play and enjoy ourselves a lot at tiffin time [break-time]. I did not have any worries at all. I did not have any pressure except from studying. After that I only had one job at school and that was to play. I used to play a lot with friends

Most of the time, Mukunda remained a defender of his school’s punishment system. After a friend reported him, he was punished for playing marbles - outside of school time (during the Dashain holidays) and in the privacy of his own home. Shocking as it may seem, Mukunda found this acceptable:

We had to do ‘up and downs’ holding our ears 100 times. I could understand that punishment because he punished us for playing marbles which was my mistake. He punished us to encourage us to study.... That’s why I was not sad about it.

When Mukunda reflected upon the quality of the learning that he experienced however, he described corporal punishment as a hindrance rather than an asset:

the teachers used to beat us very hard with a stick. They used to beat us a lot. We used to read out of fear of punishment... I studied because of fear rather than to improve my future and I never studied for myself. I used to rote-learn all the word meanings. I used to recite [memorise and repeat] a lot and did all the homework on time.

Mukunda’s experience of rote-learning was similar to my own. I too had experienced the boredom of being instructed and the frustration of being unable to answer questions. Mukunda said:

The teacher used to give us the knowledge and the instructions, and students had to recite it [memorise and repeat it] exactly as the teacher had given. There was not any opportunity for group discussion with students nor any kind of creative involvement by students in the classroom.

Answers were seldom received as ‘interesting ideas’ or ‘possibilities’ but only Right or Wrong – and the latter could lead to corporal punishment. Mukunda recalled:

Students used to be really scared of the teachers. So, nobody dared to say anything different from what the teacher taught. Nobody dared to do anything like that.

Although Mukunda had previously called the teacher-pupil relationship as ‘special’, he described it as very formal:

The teachers always maintained a distance from the students. They were not friendly to us. Their office was quite separate from the classroom and students were also very afraid to make any contact with the teacher.

I wondered if Mukunda had longed for – and even attempted to form - a closer relationship with his teachers, as he explained how any approach would be rebuffed:

teachers never responded to the students. Students were too afraid of the teachers to say anything to them or to try to get close to them.

This barrier seemed to make it harder for teachers to provide the help that students needed. Mukunda especially resented the lack of imagination shown by teachers, who always seemed to blame rather than ask why a student didn’t understand something:

They made us follow them dogmatically. They always insisted that students must listen to them and follow exactly the same way as they instructed. If someone try to do different, then they would be beaten severely. They never asked or tried to understand the problems and difficulties faced by the students.

The effect upon Mukunda seemed to have been two-fold. On one level, corporal punishment seemed to have made him even more compliant and judgemental about the ‘group of delinquents’ on the back benches. He felt that discipline had been beneficial to him personally:

When the teacher used punishments, that forced me to study and I have to say that it did do some good for my education. We were just little children and at that age we didn’t have any instinct to tell us that education is good for us and that we must study. So because of that we might have been playing marbles or other games, which might have lowered our level of education.

On another level, he felt that his education was held back by fear:

We never asked anything about the things that we did not understand...The teacher used to say, ‘Ask me anything if you don’t understand any topic’. But I never asked out of fear of punishment.

In particular, Mukunda was aware how the use of corporal punishment restricted his creativity:

all the while the teacher was using punishment in the classroom, we didn't try anything new. In fact, I never thought about new ideas. I just studied what the teacher told us to and how could any new ideas come from there? I did not have any new ideas at all.

Despite these problems, Mukunda was successful at school and withstood the 'unbearable pressure', passing his SLC which he referred to as the 'iron-gate' and one of the 'deadliest' events of his life. I was used to the SLC being referred to as the 'iron-gate', but I found Mukunda's use of the word 'deadliest' quite unsettling, with its overtones of violence and possible death, although my experience of the same terror of the SLC (and the devastating consequences of not passing) allowed me to understand completely why he had used it. For decades, the newspapers have recorded the suicides of unsuccessful SLC candidates, aged between 14 and 16. Once Mukunda progressed to the 'Intermediate' (Sixth Form College) he found things very different. He complained about the lack of discipline:

Nobody got punished there. It looked like the teachers were the ones getting punishment! The students used to make a lot noise and made the environment very difficult for the teachers.

Mukunda believed that the absence of punishment had a negative effect upon his progress:

The system was very free. Teachers never questioned anyone in the classroom, there was no homework and no punishments.... Because of that my marks were not as good as the marks I got at SLC.

Mukunda described conditions as so overcrowded that his teacher hardly knew him, nor noticed whether or not he was there. It was the exact opposite of his school experience but he did not join other students in going from one extreme of control to another of license. Instead, he seemed to have internalised a self-discipline:

I used to think, I must not do anything wrong, I must not be undisciplined, I must complete my education at all cost.

This determination helped Mukunda to resist the temptation to leave school early and work in India, especially when former friends appeared, flaunting their new clothes and money. Mukunda's self-discipline was accompanied by the same fear that had held him back at school:

I used to be afraid of my tutors when I had to speak to them. I was afraid because I thought I will make some mistakes and they might say something to me. It was not as bad as it was in

secondary school but I still used to be afraid of them. I thought that our teacher is a very powerful person and we should respect them.

Mukunda's knowledge that his fears were unfounded could not eliminate them:

I knew there was no punishment there. Tutors never used any punishment or scolded anyone for anything at the colleges but I was still afraid of them.

This was the first indication that I received of the long-lasting effects of receiving and witnessing corporal punishment upon Mukunda. Although his fears were both irrational and destructive, he could not overcome them, despite his alleged academic confidence. Some confusion arose however, between Mukunda's awareness of the damage caused by corporal punishment and its ideological justifications within Nepalese culture, which continued to influence him.

Working for Others – Performativity Pressures

Mukunda's conflicting attitudes to discipline affected his career as a teacher. His first job was teaching computer studies to students who, he says, were 'in awe' of computers and therefore listened very attentively. The groups were very small, only five or six students and Mukunda believed that teaching computer studies made it necessary to 'get close to the students and concentrate on each one individually', a style of teaching that he really enjoyed. Mukunda believed that the fact that they were 'totally dependent' upon him for knowledge improved their behaviour:

If I hadn't explained something to them properly or if I had hidden some information from them, they would not have noticed. We did not have to beat anyone in the class. Because of that I had a really good relationship with my students.

Significantly, Mukunda found their passivity and ignorance of computing endearing: would therefore, students who were more challenging or perhaps even arrogant be unsettling? At the computer institute, Mukunda had no performance anxieties:

I was confident about my work. That's why I never thought I would make any mistakes at work. I think I taught well. All the students were satisfied with my teaching and so was the boss.

Teaching in a school, however, was very different. Mukunda's first teaching job, was at a school with similar problems to the one that he was educated in: overcrowding (in terms of pupil numbers and physical space), constant tension

and poor student motivation. He described corporal punishment as 'normal' and necessary to 'get students back on the right track'. Mukunda made a distinction however, between the 'moderate' corporal punishment that he used and the 'harsh' corporal punishment used in his childhood:

I did not use the kind of harsh punishment which might affect them mentally and physically. I punished students only to give them a psychological 'treat' and make them more focused on the education. I did not thrash them like [teachers used to] in our day. I tried to reason with students before beating them.

When I asked if he had any regrets, Mukunda was certain that his use of corporal punishment had not damaged his students at all:

Ummm... I did not beat kids in a way that I had any reason to regret. Students accepted the punishments. It would be considered normal for someone to be beaten for not doing their reading. Because of that students did not feel hurt and at the same time, I did not punish them severely. I only beat students to make them scared but I didn't use it in a way that could affect them.

He also denied that he used this method because of pressure from the school, saying that 'nobody had told me to do it'. As he remembered that period, however, he recalled the tension caused by the expectations of the school and parents and appeared to be more stressed:

In Nepal we have problems which pass from policy-makers to ministers, then to schools and then to teachers. They don't think about the volume that a teacher can teach in a year. The course for a year was very lengthy and we must finish it whatever happens. Plus, there are so many festivals, exams and strikes. We had a huge pressure on us to make sure that all the students passed. The school authorities demanded quantity rather than quality. Because of those things teachers were forced to use teacher-centric teaching methods and corporal punishment.

I had also experienced a similar performativity anxiety. I had also despaired of reaching my targets, if I were ever perceived as 'weak' by students, parents and school staff. Mukunda's experience with the computing students demonstrated that he preferred not to use corporal punishment – there was no suggestion that he was sadistic. But he had clearly been intimidated by a sense of 'necessity'. Mukunda traced this back to social and political factors influencing the maintenance of corporal punishment, with unrealistic targets being set by education policy-makers, often to satisfy public and media demands.

As soon as I suggested, in our second interview, that corporal punishment might be damaging, Mukunda appeared to reflect upon the issue deeply. By the second interview, his position had completely changed and in a bold move away from traditional culture, he denounced even 'moderate' corporal

punishment as 'totally wrong'. Mukunda also began to question its effectiveness, despite initially saying that it had 'worked':

During my teaching career, I have seen many brutal beatings of pupils. The beatings would keep them quiet for a while but then they would repeat their old behaviour again and again. So, I think instead of using corporal punishment at classroom we should make our teaching learning activity more stimulating and more engaging. That would make them interested in the classroom. I used to think in this way in my heart but after the interview I felt able to stand firm against the use of corporal punishment.

Aside from teaching, Mukunda seemed to have had only one other significant job, which was as a record-keeper in a hospital pharmacy. Here, he declared, he had a good relationship with his immediate manager, but not with the 'boss', who he claims hardly noticed him. Mukunda claimed that he was not intimidated by this and used the company's complaints system, reporting problems with his job at a 'higher level'. With his mind focused on that time, he said:

After becoming mature I stopped being afraid. I could tell somebody something without any fear, so long as I knew that what I was saying was right.

Mukunda's confidence was perhaps boosted by the support of his manager, the fact that there was an accepted system for complaints in place and maybe even his educational achievements. His state of mind during this period, however, contrasted with his lack of confidence with regard to complaining about problems in the school, such as overcrowding and exam pressure.

In our second interview, Mukunda trusted me sufficiently to tell me about the unique way in which he used to deal with pressure upon him, as a young teacher.

In the rainy season, standing in the middle of the brook we used to shout rude words in loud voice.... cursing the stream itself...our principal, his wife or a member of the management committee...We felt very relieved...free.

Unlike at the hospital, where he could manage confrontation positively, in the school environment Mukunda felt unable to protest about anything so resorted to shouting at an inanimate object: the stream. Here there would be no critical gaze nor redress. Mukunda tried to censor his account by saying that he only used 'moderately' rude words: showing a concern about me being shocked which amused me, given my rich experiences of rude language in England, which went far beyond Nepalese insults like 'potato-head'! Mukunda had dealt with performativity pressure in the safest way that he could find, by fleeing to a natural space where he felt safe from any reporting, judging or punishing human beings.

Mukunda's sense of being observed also extended to his personal life.

I was even scared to walk to school with any of my female friends. If I met any female friend on the way to school I was always scared that the villagers or someone would accuse me of doing something immoral. Because of that I tried to avoid female friends.

Mukunda claimed that he had never been interested in 'that sort of thing' and that love and romance might 'trap' him and 'disrupt' his education. This view was so common in Nepal, that it was not necessarily an indication of repression. I did however, sense a contradiction when Mukunda said:

I didn't like anyone that much, nor did I express my feelings.

I wondered how, in the absence of feeling, there could be still something that could not be expressed, unless Mukunda meant that his feelings were minimal. Perhaps his repressive mechanism was so refined that it was able to extinguish any romantic urges at the first spark. I recognised in myself the sense of feeling 'wooden' while surrounded by the castrating gaze of moral critics. Trained at school to regard romantic love and sex as something shameful, I would feel a profoundly limiting automatic shutdown when confronted with erotic discourse. Many of us feared that sexual liberation would lead to violent punishment, having witnessed our teachers humiliating pupils over pathetic love letters and villagers banishing people for extra-marital liaisons. I learned later that Mukunda had also experienced the fury of a judgemental mob, when a close relative was attacked by an angry crowd following a sexual indiscretion.

Like my other participants, Mukunda found joy in the far safer space of his culturally-sanctioned arranged marriage and his children, saying of his toddler:

All the sadness and tiredness caused in the work place can be forgotten by a smile of a daughter.

Marriage and bearing children were deeply connected to Mukunda's sense of pride and self-worth, and respectability in the community.

Dreams of Business and Leadership – 'If only I had done it'

Despite Mukunda's successful education, family life and relative career success, he was still tormented by dissatisfaction and feelings of failure. On the day of our first interview, Mukunda had just been to enter the American 'green card' lottery.

After completing his computer training, Mukunda regretted not pursuing his plan to open a computer institute.

I didn't go ahead with it, thinking that I don't really have sufficient knowledge of computer hardware. At the same time as I was thinking about starting this business, some friends of mine went ahead and opened a computer institute. They are very successful now. When I see that I feel full of regret. I think if only I had done it.

Insufficient knowledge seemed an understandable reason for self-doubt. But Mukunda went on to provide several other examples of where his progress seemed to be restricted by a lack of confidence.

At one point I was going to open a boarding school but I did not have enough courage to do that. The main reasons were the lack of money and lack of knowledge about that business. I feared about that it would make a big loss and I also thought that I would not be able to collect enough students.

Yet again, he looked back with a mixture of self-reproach and fantasy:

When I think back to that now, it was one of the biggest mistakes of my life. If I had opened a private school I would have been very successful.

Mukunda went so far as blaming himself for missing out on cheap land – an economic change which he could not possibly have anticipated:

At that time land was so cheap. Even if I had made a loss with the boarding school it would have been covered by the price of the land, which has shot up now. I even went and viewed many possible sites in Kawasoti but did not have enough courage to follow it through...I regret it very much.

Business was not the only area where Mukunda felt restricted by his lack of confidence. In the villages of Devchuli, it would be quite normal for somebody with Mukunda's level of education to take on the role of a community leader. He was indeed, the first person in his village to gain a Master's degree. This time he could not cite fear of financial outlay. Instead, his fear of failure was even more pronounced:

I worried I might not be able to fulfil people's expectations. I feel that if I fail to fulfil my promises to the people, they will have negative feelings towards me. I am always afraid of that. Up till now society thinks I'm a good person but if I ever become a leader, then become unsuccessful, their opinion of me might change.

On this occasion he had begun by citing the most convincing reason why he had not taken action: his fear. But other explanations followed – a lack of time, his part-time job, in addition to the enormous demands of framework. He also claimed that 'To do some social work you need to have enough economic resources'. This made sense to me, but again he stressed 'I cannot risk my prestige' and 'society might have negative feelings towards me'. Mukunda did not rule out doing something for his community however, maybe 'a bit later, if I have time' or 'one day', showing that he still desired to give something back.

In the context of his education, I could understand Mukunda's fear of failure and its mental association with punishment, but wasn't sure why he was so concerned about society's opinion of him. Then I heard about his cousin's history. His cousin had been a political activist whose unit had been infiltrated with spies. Numerous arrests of suspected insurgents followed and Mukunda's cousin was only saved by immediately 'converting' to a different political party. At the time, he said 'It is better to go mad than to die' – a phrase revealing both the intensity of his desire to be an activist and the ferocity of the consequences. Did this create a link in Mukunda's mind between public works and punitive violence? For whatever reason, Mukunda's reputation was of vital importance to him.

Resources of Hope

Mukunda's careful reasoning seemed to do a lot to protect him, but seemed less effective at inspiring him. I was curious to know what emotional and spiritual resources he had relied upon throughout his childhood and career. In response, I received a lecture on the history of Hinduism, which was as fact-filled as any Nepalese school text book. He didn't express any strong passions about God, but talked about why the Hindu religion is 'the best' and why it should be the dominant religion of Nepal. I found this discourse somewhat authoritarian and wondered if it was caused by insecurity or the flux of globalisation, with mass migration and development happening 'too fast' for some people to cope with. By talking about religion in the abstract, Mukunda had also avoided discussing his personal beliefs.

I later discovered that Mukunda neither blamed God for his difficulties, nor expected any divine help as an automatic right. But he had allowed himself to beg for mercy:

The Hindu religion also promotes the protection of nature. Because of that I think of nature as a God.... When the planets have positive effect on you, you will get a positive result. So, when I said 'Hey, God!' that meant I was pleading with nature.

Mukunda seemed to perceive religion as a force of harmony rather than critique. For him, religion was about working with 'what is' rather than reaching for 'what could be'. This had implications for both political and personal change since Mukunda did not view spirituality as a vehicle for social transformation, but rather inner adjustment. Was this a result of corporal punishment suppressing a spirit of resistance?

Yet Mukunda was far from giving up. His ambitions were intact, even though endlessly deferred. Even on the day of our interview he had been trying to win a visa for America. He still dreamt of success, which was not entirely defined by materialism and included 'service to the community'. At the same time, his conscience made him unwilling to desert his elderly mother, especially following the death of his father. Mukunda had previously experienced greater academic success and comparatively less corporal punishment than my other participants: perhaps this had made it harder for his ambitions to be extinguished with despair. The fact that he had obtained a good education despite his physical punishment might have meant that the latter was somewhat side-lined in his mind, rather than being his main, devastating memory.

Chapter Eight:

Krishna's Story

Krishna is a 23-year-old man from the Magar caste who grew up in a house of 12-15 family members. He left school at class 8, at the age of 17. He lives with his parents and the family survive as subsistence farmers. The year before our interview he got married to a girl from the same caste.

I met Krishna through a mutual friend, Gopal, who had recently returned from Malaysia. We met in a context of suffering: we were both at Gopal's bedside where he lay half paralysed, after his flatmates had allegedly tried to murder him with an orchestrated gas explosion in his flat, forcing him to jump from the window of the third floor. Krishna and I discussed this cruelty and the general vulnerability of Nepalese migrant workers. Krishna revealed that he had also gone abroad and returned within nine months due to conflicts with his colleagues. We left Gopal's house chatting and I told him little bit about my research. He asked me if I was only interviewing educated people. I replied: 'Not at all, I would like to talk to anybody who could tell me their life story'. After this, he smiled and seemed very keen to participate.

When I went to Krishna's house at the weekend, as arranged, I noticed that his family and friends all called him by a degrading nick-name. I found Krishna in his neighbour's house, at his aunt's suggestion. I made a point of taking him out of the house into an open space, the ginger field, so that he could tell his story without inhibition or obstruction from others. He placed three bamboo stools in the field, two for us to sit on and one for the recording machine. Chickens wandered around us, looking for grains or bugs and the pigs were grunting nearby and produced a strong smell that I was unused to. I asked Krishna if he had any questions about the participant information sheet and warned him that the interview might be quite tiring, on account of its length, and that the subject matter could be psychologically problematic for some people. Krishna wanted an assurance of anonymity but was keen for the interview to start and did not mind it being recorded.

My very first question turned out to be insensitive. I asked him 'What are you doing at the moment?'. 'Nothing' he said, just one word, then there was an awkward silence. I had expected him to say that he was studying at college, or was running a small business like so many Nepalis of his age but he just said 'I'm not working anywhere. I'm not doing anything'. Of course, it wasn't true that he

wasn't doing anything, he was helping his parents on the family farm – which involves heavy labour - and he had an active social life. Krishna's sense of failure, however, made him view his work and socialising as 'nothing' because his activities were neither 'high status' nor what he wanted. Although Krishna had worked abroad, he had returned with nothing. He looked bitter, as he explained how he had made 'no progress' because of his lack of qualifications. Krishna told me that he had dropped out of school and looked so upset, that I thought I should change the subject to make him feel more comfortable. I was worried about him experiencing this level of distress so early in the interview. I also feared that the enormity of it all would overwhelm and make him abandon the idea before we had got going. But Krishna persisted and started talking at length, frequently moving on to new subjects rather than waiting for any more questions.

He described his first memories of school and how the teacher was shouting in a language that he didn't understand. Raised in a Magar family, in a remote area, he had little knowledge of Nepali. 'I even failed my Reception class', Krishna said. In Nepal, children from as young as 6 are tested and made to repeat any years that they 'fail', which leads to classes of mixed ages. Many children are left behind, instead of moving 'up', with their friends. Krishna said:

At first, I failed in my Reception Class, then in Class Four. So, it took seven years to complete Class Five. At secondary school, I failed to get beyond Class Seven. I felt awful when all my friends were upgraded to the upper class and I had to stay with the juniors.

There was no one in Krishna's family who could teach him to read and write at home, as his father was away in the army and his mother was illiterate – like over 65% of females at that time - and always busy with farm-work. Apparently, the school provided no extra support to help him catch up. Krishna said: 'By the age of seven, I was being beaten every day for not being able to understand my lessons'. Krishna wore a simple t-shirt, shorts and flip-flops with his muscles clearly visible, like many farm-workers. He was grimacing and it was hard to imagine that this strong man was once a vulnerable, frightened infant.

Krishna's story was very depressing and conveyed the monotony as well as the terror of his school years. He gave more than 33 references to being beaten during the interview: by his teachers, his parents, his employers and more recently, during disputes with neighbours. I felt so sickened by his descriptions that I tried to delay writing up his interview for a long time. What can I say that will not disrespect his memories? In trying to 'cut up' and analyse his experiences, am I not subjecting Krishna to a further violence? Surely these

memories are, in any case, not mine to dissect, they are his. Yet he has chosen to share them with me – with an urgency and intensity in his delivery. Krishna’s conclusion also indicated that he wanted to change the system that made so much abuse possible. I also shrank from this task because of the hideous familiarity of much of what he wrote, even if my experiences had taken a milder form.

After complaining about his language barrier, Krishna went straight into a description of his school suffering:

They used to thrash us, hang us upside down, make us do chicken and do squatting exercises holding our ears. Sometimes we were required to walk through the playground on our knees; there would be blood while doing that. They used to torture us a lot...They beat us with nettles and with a long, bamboo stick. I was beaten in every class, nearly every day.

I had heard of these punishments many times and witnessed and experienced some of them. I sensed that Krishna’s rage was very close to the surface. He particularly objected to the violence taking place at the age of six.

How would I know everything at that age? That was the age to play. That was the age to play with friends, walk with them and enjoy being with them. At the same time, I had to go to school and focus on education. It was quite a difficult situation because of my age and the language.

Krishna initially blames his family situation for his experiences.

If our guardians had studied a little bit in school they would have understood how punishment affects you. But my family members hadn’t gone to school and experienced it. So, they did not say anything. My dad had studied a little bit but he was not at home to complain.

Here Krishna reveals a wish that his father might have protected him from violence at school if he had been at home. His father’s actions later on, which Krishna describes as ‘torture’, as well as his parents’ ‘betrayal’ of him to the school, suggest that such hopes were largely fantasy. He also realised the futility of any protest, remarking ‘How can anybody say anything to teachers?’ This showed his lack of social confidence, in contrast to some Brahmin students and parents, who were frequently complaining.

Krishna attributes many of his educational problems to his father’s absence.

I became bit free because my mum used to work all the time and my dad was away from home. Maybe that made me weaker in study and I got beaten.

Although Krishna recognised that his language difficulty made it hard for him to study from the very beginning, he also blamed himself for his poor progress.

I rarely did my homework and wasn't very good at studying. Our teachers asked questions aggressively. If I did not know the answer the first day, they would strike me once, then double the amount the next day, then four and like that it could increase up to 42 times or even 50/60 times. On top of this we had to learn to recite very difficult English texts. I tried to hide on the back benches and keep my head down.

In a different, progressive educational context, the impossibility of Krishna 'catching up' with the other children in such circumstances would have been recognised and he would have been given appropriate support. Instead, Krishna was trapped in an endless cycle of punishment for his entire school life:

I got used to punishment and I thought that the teacher would beat me anyway even if I had done the homework. I just gave up. I never knew the answers to all of the questions. So, if I had done the homework and made a mistake I would be beaten and if I had not done the homework I would be beaten anyway. So, I opted for second option and did not do homework at all.

This sense of futility was echoed in several of Krishna's adult life experiences, particularly his failure to succeed in his washing up job abroad and his failure to even gain a tractor licence in Nepal: these led him to the same conclusion – what is the point of trying to improve yourself when you will fail anyway? Krishna then took what you might call his 'argument from futility' a stage further and decided that there was no point going to school if he would have beaten. As he was certain to be beaten anyway, he attempted to at least reduce his beatings – and his homework - by fifty percent:

I was getting an excessive amount of punishment so I stopped going to school. I was sure that if I did not do the homework or did not know the answers to questions, I would be beaten. So, I only went to school every other day. Then on the days I did go I could say to them that I was absent yesterday if they asked about homework.

Like many Nepali children, Krishna was also under pressure to help on the family farm:

In the Summer vacation, teachers used to give us a lot of homework and the same time I had to work in the field.... I must help my family for rice planting at that time. The farming used to take more than a month. Then in the remaining 15/16 days I had to finish all the homework. How can I do that much homework when working long hours in the field? You can't imagine how much homework there was. I had to write so much but it was impossible to finish the homework. If I do not finish it, then I would be beaten.

I noticed how Krishna slipped into present tense when he said 'I must help' and 'If I do not finish it', this suggested to me that he still felt the pressure of farm-work upon him as a young boy as if it was a current experience. The rice planting and the harvest were intense periods of work on top of the daily chores:

I had to do a lot work both before and after schools. I had to fetch logs from the jungle and cut the grass and bring it home for the buffaloes and oxen.

Education as a Battlefield

When Krishna was around 13, his dad left the army and returned home. This was due to another violent context: the civil war.

The Maoists came to our home and told my gran to make my dad to resign from his army job. They talked to my dad as well and gave him so much pressure to leave. In the end, my dad left the job out of fear. They told my dad that he could be killed in the fight between the Maoists and the army. So, they wanted him to leave the job before anything happened. They made some threats to us [his family] as well. So, he left the job.

Although the civil war was a terrifying time for children, Krishna's reaction was distorted by his terror of his teachers:

Sometimes the army used to come to the school and arrest people. Sometimes the Maoists would use us to block the roads and participating in *bandas* (*strikes/blockades*) ...I was always just happy that I wouldn't be beaten by my teacher that day. I fantasised about being in the Maoist army and did some physical training.

In later life, Krishna also tried to follow the family tradition of getting into the army or police but could not because of his lack of school qualifications. He describes his mixed feelings: on the one hand, he remembered his teachers trying to save him from failure. On the other hand, he still felt so much anger towards them:

[When] I couldn't get into the army or police, I thought about my teachers and their efforts to make me study. But at that time, I wanted to beat them. I thought they beat me a lot and I have to take revenge. I wanted to behave like an enemy with my teachers. When I saw them, I used to become very angry.

His political outlook seems to have been coloured by his experiences of corporal punishment. Krishna wanted to identify with the powerful male

figures who were soldiers – on either the Maoist or the army side – in order to feel stronger than his teachers and perhaps, stronger than his father. This mattered more to him than whatever issues they were fighting for. He poignantly described going into exams as ‘going into a battlefield’, especially since he knew his performance would result in actual physical injury from both his teachers and family members:

Exams felt like going into a battlefield. I thought that everything was attacking me and I was hopeless and did not know what to do or what to write

Whilst the return of Krishna’s father meant more help with the farm chores, Krishna feared his return:

My parents used to beat me at home if I failed my exams...They used to torture me a lot. Sometimes my dad tied me up in the *tauwa* (hut for storing rice straw). They would beat me without showing any understanding or listening to anything I said.

Krishna also claims his parents did nothing to protect him from school beatings.

I didn’t tell them but sometimes they knew from just looking at my hand and legs. On several occasions, I had sore hands, bleeding knees. I had to walk on the gravel with my bare knees. That used to hurt a lot. My parents noticed that it had caused me to have difficulty walking. It was very painful.

Krishna often used my questions as a way of returning to his most traumatic experiences – such as the walking on the gravel. I felt that he had a need to repeat and expand on these events. He had never experienced any official therapy and our interviews seemed to give him a rare opportunity to talk. His voice sounded guarded but with a rhythmic, persistent tone which indicated how important it was for him to express himself. Krishna often used repetition for emphasis:

Just before the last exams there would so many extra classes, cramming classes. We used to have a lot pressure in our brain. I used to get up four o’clock in the morning and study until ten in the evening, then attend evening classes also. There was so much pressure for my brain in the end.

Krishna describes his devastation at failing the class 8, district level exam. His family had told him that they expected to him pass, but he did not. After this, Krishna says, ‘my desire to study broke into pieces’. He was forced to remain in the lower class with 14-year olds, even though he was 17. Although his parents

scolded him at first and he says, 'started to hate me', Krishna recalled how, to his surprise, they encouraged him to take the exam again:

I thought I am worthless because I failed the exam and do not know anything...I considered dropping out. Then my family urged me to try one more time. They said what has happened, has happened, there is no point worrying.

With this unexpected encouragement, Krishna returned to school and repeated class eight. He was pleased to do far better than before in the end of term exams, only failing in one subject:

That was very good compared to other times where I used to fail in 6/7 subjects. That was quite good. Everyone in family thought I am doing very well. I also felt optimistic and wanted to do even better in the next exams.

The Ultimate Betrayal

Krishna smoked and drank a moderate amount of *raksi* (an alcoholic drink), to help him stay calm at school. He justified this by saying that this was part of his Magar culture: his grandmother smoked and alcohol was always given to honoured guests. Sometimes he would also go to *Rodhi* (a singing and dancing ceremony in the evenings, getting home quite late on occasions. As with many 17-year olds, Krishna felt that the pressure of school could be eased by some social life outside it. But this led to a crisis.

My parents noticed that I was coming home bit late in the night and became suspicious. Then they told a teacher from our village. Maybe they wanted to see me doing better, but the next day, this teacher dragged me onto the stage in front of 800 students. Loudly he asked me 'Where do you go at nights? Which girl are you spending the nights with'. Then he beat me in front of everybody.

It was especially humiliating as Krishna was one of the older pupils in his class and because of the sexual innuendo, which is normally taboo in Nepalese culture. Krishna says

It was very embarrassing for me, wasn't it? It made difficult for me to even show my face in front of my class mates. I also have some prestige, haven't I? The torture continued every day and everybody at school and in the village started to humiliate me and put me down. After that I felt very embarrassed and did not go to school. I started drinking heavily.

Krishna found it particularly difficult to accept that it was his own parents who had brought about his humiliation.

When I asked my parents why they had spoken to the teacher in this way, they said they had done it for my own good and scolded me for challenging them. They said that I still had to go to school, whatever had happened.

No longer feeling safe either at home or at school, Krishna spent over a fortnight hiding in the countryside.

I used to leave home saying I am going to school but spent the whole day somewhere in the field. I left home but never reached the school. I hid in the hills.

This plan was not sustainable. After fifteen days one of his teachers from the village visited his home and told his father that he had not been to school for a long time and asked what he was up to. Rather than simply demand that he return to school, the teacher also asked about his 'future plans' which was perhaps the exit that Krishna had been waiting for. He recalls:

My dad was arguing with the teacher, saying that he had seen me going to school with his own eyes. Then he called me downstairs and started interrogating me...Finally I said to my teacher 'I do not have any interest on education and cannot carry on studying. I did what my brain could do but now my brain cannot cope with more than this. I have had enough of school and I cannot go back there. I am sorry if I hurt you but now you can go, please forgive me.'

After the teacher had left, Krishna describes his parents' anger and their attempts to beat him, but instead of using the word 'scolded', he used language which made him appear as more of an equal:

I had a massive argument with my parents. We fought each other. The worst thing is that I pushed my dad and I felt that I had reached a point where I could no longer control my rage.... I did not notice exactly when and why I used my hand against my dad but it happened.

Striking a parent is so unusual and shocking in Nepali culture that Krishna described it as 'the saddest moment of my life'.

I used my hands against my dad. At that time, I thought why was I born on this earth? It was very sad that I did such an unimaginable thing.

Krishna dropped out of school and resisted further attempts by teachers to make him return. He said that he had to remain polite to them rather than tell them the truth, that the violent and humiliating punishments had driven him away. His father finally accepted that he didn't want to return to school and suggested he go abroad. This idea was attractive to Krishna, because of the shame that he and his family were experiencing:

After two months of leaving school I went to India. I did not want to stay at home. I felt embarrassed after I had to leave the school because of that incident. All the villagers were back-biting about me...saying I had to leave the school because the teacher found me drinking and that is why I was publicly beaten. Then I was not very happy staying at home and embarrassed. Then I went to India.

It is easy to see how villagers in a Brahmin-dominated society, saturated with caste prejudice, would willingly believe that a Magar student had disgraced himself by drinking alcohol. Before this incident, Krishna had been significantly more sociable and described jokes, play-fights and bribing scholarly children into sharing their homework answers by offering to protect them from bullies. His few remaining friends had also dropped out of school, like Krishna, and together they went to India.

Emigration: Looking for a Way Out

Emigration was a great disappointment. In a restaurant in Mumbai, Krishna experienced even more abuse:

I cried at the beginning as we had to wash up so fast and work such long hours compared to my life in Nepal. If we made any mistake, our bosses would beat us. They would swear at us with terrible words insulting our parents, saying that we worked too slowly. It was boring work but India was full of unemployed young men waiting to fill our job and I had no qualifications to get anything better.

Despite his economic vulnerability, after two years Krishna could no longer endure the abuse from his bosses.

Senior colleagues would humiliate me and put me down but I couldn't take it. I would argue with them and often get injured. They gave me so much pressure. When they beat me for making mistakes it made me so angry. I couldn't stop myself from saying something nasty back to them or even hitting them. Then they would beat me again.

Krishna experienced conflicting feelings, which were a recurrent theme in his life:

When I went abroad I learnt some hard lessons. It was difficult to work others as a slave. I thought if I had studied bit more and had a qualification, I should not have to work like this. Maybe teachers were doing all that [punishing] for my own good.

At the same time, Krishna had fled his country because of the teachers' oppression:

I used to think how much better my life would be if I had not had to leave school... I saw many Nepalese boys going there seeking a job because of nasty school experiences. There were so many...They didn't care about us. I only earned 1000/1200 rupees a month (£7-8) ... and on top of that I had to bear all that abuse. I came home.

We were silent for a while, watching a bee, and I understood how returning to our village seemed like a more peaceful, attractive option than staying in India, despite the trauma and gossip that Krishna had previously endured. I had also experienced a similarly disheartening journey when I worked in a factory in India, so didn't doubt his story for a second. Unlike me, however, Krishna really struggled to control his anger, as if his cup of anger was just 'full up'.

Somehow however, Krishna's journey improved his relationship with his father. Perhaps he felt safer in the knowledge that he could physically leave the village if he wanted to. Krishna said:

I was quite grown up by that time. I think my dad and mum had forgiven me. At the end of the day I was their child. So, they love me in some ways.

Krishna did not however, feel able to say 'the love me in all ways'. His father now became his ally, taking him to interviews for the police and the army. When Krishna was rejected, on account of his poor schooling (a class ten pass certificate is a minimum requirement), his father helped him raise the money to pay an agent to take him to Qatar.

I wanted to go to a nicer country for a nicer job. We trusted an agent and gave him 150,000 Nepalese rupees. But he had lied and ran away with our money. That was really big money for family poor like us. Everybody was so tense.

Despite this setback, his father helped him again, to find a job as a labourer in Qatar. Krishna said, 'My dad wanted to see me settled'. After a year however, again Krishna returned to Nepal and viewed his emigration as a failure. Krishna said:

The job was quite difficult brain-wise. My brain could not catch up all the things they said and the money also was not very good. So, I returned home after a year.

The low salary and mentally demanding nature of the work however were his official reasons for leaving. But there was also another problem with Krishna's life in Qatar that he admitted to me as soon as I asked him about his relationship with his co-workers there:

I had a habit of fighting. Maybe those things at school affected me mentally or something. I used to get angry a lot. I do not want to be with people. If someone says something against me or tries to boss me about over something I get very angry and wanted to fight with them. It became my habit.

I have not edited the way that Krishna changed tenses throughout this paragraph as I thought it might provide some insight into his current state of mind. It is either an admission of how quickly he can get angry today or he was remembering his experience as if it were yesterday, or perhaps both. Krishna described how in this job, the Indian workers from Kerala would stick together, often reporting him to the boss for misdemeanours, but the Nepalese workers would support him. Again, he blamed his inferior position abroad on his poor education:

If I'd had a good qualification and a good position my salary also would have been better. But what can I do? So, they used to put me down all the time and I had to stay like that because of my lack of knowledge.

Finally, Krishna returned home again, saying that it was 'not a good job anyway'. At no point did he blame himself for his failures abroad, perhaps sensing that the problems he encountered lay in factors beyond his control: the socio-economic vulnerability of uneducated migrants and the past that he could not shake off.

Back Home for Good: 'At the end of the day, everything is the same for me'.

The reaction of Krishna's parents to his return was, he says, 'alright'. He describes the family as functioning, as everyone simply works together:

Things are working out OK so far. We are farmers. I am doing farming and helping my mum. We depend on agriculture.

However, Krishna still retains a reputation for volatility and was the subject of gossip while I was in the village. He referred to his 'habit' of anger, which he blames on his 'past':

It happens quite frequently. There are so many incidents. Sometimes I get beaten and sometimes I beat others. I drink sometimes and want to drink as well. In festivals I drink bit more than the normal time. I think a lot about my past and get frustrated and angry. So, to forget my past I drink a lot. So, I feel very sad and demoralised if I see other people and I do not like people talking a lot. It became like my habit. When I remember my past then I want to argue and then fight with others.

Krishna almost seemed to enjoy the fact that his parents have to endure his bouts of wild behaviour because of his increasing power over them as they get older. He laughed as he said –

My parents say, 'stop fighting', but what has happened, happened [*laughs*], what can I do now? They need me in their old age, 'sons are the crutches of the elderly'...My parents can't scold me much as I am grown up now...When they ask me why I've had a fight, I just say I was drunk and didn't know what was happening.

Both Krishna's drinking and fighting and his periods of melancholy seemed to be unconscious expressions of the anger that he is able to rationalise at times when he 'cools down'.

I can understand things better now. Maybe my teachers did it all for my own good... Having got a bit older, I feel a responsibility towards my family and my dad also started to understand me. That made me cool down... I see my old teachers and try to tell myself that they meant well, they just should have used different methods.

It is hard for Krishna to maintain his 'cool' however, when his painful emotions rise to the surface. I wondered if his feelings of being 'sad and demoralised' by others was due to a degree of jealousy and disappointment at his missed opportunities. Even when he tried to empower himself, for example, by learning to drive a tractor, he came up against a wall:

Nowadays to be a driver, even for small tractor driver, you need an SLC. I learnt to drive tractor but could not get the licence. I am a poor guy so cannot give money to the officer and make a licence. I have a poor economic condition and do not have the required qualification... That's why I cannot get licence. I cannot be successful in any job, sir.

Krishna's repetition of the word 'licence' seemed to echo the recurring blockades that he encountered. Krishna described how he often felt 'other' or alienated to others:

Wherever I go all the people talk to each other, enjoy themselves and adjust to situations but I can't do that. I don't have that [ability]. I don't have enough education. I don't have the education needed to talk to others. That's why I can't talk to anyone freely. When I see them, I get very angry.

His anger was something intangible, perhaps some jealousy, perhaps some frustration, an alienation that he couldn't exactly put his finger on – and nor could I, even though I felt it. I felt so terribly sad at this point that I had to stop talking for a while. Then Krishna became the one to try to cheer me up, describing how everything had changed since his marriage, which he described as 'the happiest day of my life'.

After so many setbacks; at school, at work, at everywhere; I have found someone who is actually made for me. With whom I could actually share my problems. I felt that I am important again. So that made me so happy.

His marriage also gave him a sense of ethical responsibility for an 'other':

Well when I marry someone else's daughter I need to be responsible. I have to behave well and make her happy after promising her parents that I will make her happy. I have to make sure that she has settled well into the family also.

I was reluctant to ask him about the long-term effects of his experiences, as I didn't want to impose on him neither the idea that events necessarily have any discernible effects nor the idea that his life should be dissected and analysed in such a remote way by a spectator such as myself. He knew I was a teacher and he admitted 'hating' teachers so I tried to word my question as casually as possible, asking him 'How does the old stuff affect your life today?'. Maybe I should have said 'Do you think any of the old stuff affects your life today' instead, but Krishna was the one who had consistently made connections between the old and the new, without any prompting. He replied by using the continuous tense form – 'it is affecting...' in order to stress that the effects are going on right now:

It is affecting me in different ways.... If I talk to someone they ask about my qualifications. When I do not have any qualification, I can't talk to them on their level. I have to be under

them all the time. Every day I have to listen to things like 'So and so's son has got this degree, that kind of job or so much money' and people think that he is intellectual and wise. But when I look at myself I do not have anything like that.

Krishna's experience has made him very critical of the society in which he lives, which he feels looks at 'face value' criteria such as education and money rather than the inner self, indicating that he feels that he has not been properly appreciated or valued as a person:

They do not care if the person who studied a lot and made money has really bad habits...They worship money in this society. If someone does not have any qualification they see him as a minor. It does not matter what he is doing now, they only judge from past incidents.

This feeling of being a 'minor' on account of 'past incidents' stirred memories of Krishna's humiliating experience at school. He seems to be saying that he could never shake off the stigma attached to him.

Krishna has also experienced a gradually diminishing faith.

I had a faith in God. I went to many places worshipping god, asking Him to help me study and pass my exams. I even did sacrificing worship (sacrificing live animals) after a priest advised me that it would transform my results. I used to pray hard that my teachers wouldn't ask me any questions, as I knew I would be beaten for not knowing the answers.

Nowadays however, Krishna has gradually become more cynical, believing himself to have been, in a sense, abandoned by God.

My faith in God is gradually breaking down. Faith will certainly break after so much that has happened in my life. We have to make it on our own. There is no one to help you when needed. To stand on your feet, you have to work hard on your own. With no qualifications, I need to work hard on my own to survive however I can. Now I think – if God did not see me when I was in such a trouble, how will He help me now or later? So, it is quite hard to say but I am thinking that way.

Krishna had felt able to share with me a view that would normally be quite shocking in Nepalese society. His loss of faith in God mirrored the total collapse of his trust for his parents when they betrayed him to the school and were instrumental in his public humiliation:

I have a question for my family, why did they tell tales to my teacher without communicating with me first? If they had said: 'We're a bit worried about your evening trips and this is the last chance for you to pass the exam', I would have understood. But they went to the

teacher behind my back, who dragged me out and beat me in front of everyone. That made me so upset. If only they had not done all that, I would not feel so betrayed now.

Krishna's experiences have also made him highly critical of the Nepalese education system. He describes teachers who favoured the 'bright boys' in the front benches, but only came near him to humiliate and beat him. He described an atmosphere of 'terror' –

Even if I did think I knew an answer, I was too scared to voice it, just in case it was wrong. I didn't dare to ask questions, as I might be ridiculed. They concentrated on the top students as they boosted their pride and helped them keep their jobs. But it did nothing to help students like me.

By seeking the opposite of his experience, 'not-oppression', Krishna articulated an alternative vision - of how things might have been and how things could be:

If only they had used different methods, such as speaking to me in a nicer way, in private or offering me some counselling, I wouldn't have had to leave school. Teachers should not beat kids. They should treat them as friends, not animals. They don't need to put children down and humiliate them all the time. Weaker students just need extra help, perhaps even from the top students and that would help to protect future victims.

The word that Krishna used here was *pidit* (victims), but the context suggested that he had meant to refer to future *pidhi* (generations). I wondered if this was another example of his strong unconscious emotions breaking out.

Krishna did not seem to have any more career ambitions. At the age of 23, he appeared to have 'given up'. He said he had tried to go abroad, had tried to find a good job but never would because of his lack of education. He sighed as he said:

At the end, everything is the same for me.

I took this to mean that wherever he goes, he will experience closed doors. The burden of this perceived 'fate' is in addition to the burden of his unresolved anger. Contrary to his reputation, Krishna bid me goodbye with courtesy and tenderness and added 'Thank you for giving me the time to express my feelings'. I was left with the impression that he still had a great deal more to say.

Chapter Eight:

Preeti's Story

My meeting with Preeti was influenced in the beginning by two factors – firstly, my relief at finally finding a woman who would agree to be interviewed and secondly, the fact that she was introduced via my sister-in-law. As a result of this, I was probably warmer and more friendly than with my other participants but at the same time, because of the difficulties I had encountered with other women, I was very worried about saying something that might frighten or alienate her or her family. Her husband worked as a chef in Dubai and it was important for her to guard her reputation whilst he was away.

We began with a neutral subject, what she had been doing today. Preeti described her work as ‘nothing important’ yet she had been preparing for a *Puja* (ceremonial worship) ‘to calm down the effects of bad planets’. She had been to the jungle to collect some Sal leaves and finished *lipni* (painting the house floor with *gobarmato*, a mixture of clay and buffalo faeces) ready for the rituals associated with *Satyanarayana Bhagawan*, the worship of Vishnu.

As we talked about her life, Preeti often hesitated, avoiding my eyes, mumbling some answers and occasionally pausing before answering. When emotional, however, and especially when angry, she would become animated and give very long answers. Once Preeti felt assured that she could speak freely about some of her most painful memories, they seemed to tumble out thick and fast. Her responses also included a great deal of minutiae that was sometimes irrelevant to my particular study but at other times, deeply revealing. Preeti was aware that I had been a Maths teacher in Nepal which may have contributed to her expression of discomfort when describing teachers. Our social connection, albeit indirect, may have made her slightly more inhibited when it came to discussing her interactions with the opposite sex and her relationship with her in-laws. Understandably, Preeti began with the ‘safe’ subjects of religious worship and her father’s illness, before eventually opening up about her school experiences.

School-life: Fear and Forgetting

Preeti’s earliest memory of school was one of fear. On her way to school she encountered a fierce dog so ran home. Her mum took her to school and placed her on the lap of a teacher who, she said, felt like ‘a bear who was going to eat

me' and forced her to say that she would never avoid school again. This same teacher was the 'most strict', forcing students to stay in a straight line in direct sunlight, with temperatures of up to 41 degrees. Preeti recalled 'if we moved an inch out of line we would be beaten with a stick'. She frequently felt ill and dizzy, which led to disorientation:

I did exercise number 3 instead of number 2 or number 4. I just got confused. Then I got beaten. Sometimes I used to ask my friends...When the teachers saw that they used to bang our heads together.

Preeti also got confused by the numerical class register and received several beatings for forgetting that she was number 8 in the roll call and failing to say 'yes sir' immediately when her number was called. She seemed to accept the labels dividing students by their ability, whilst disliking discrimination against 'weaker' students:

Well, not all the students were at the same level. Some of them were talented and some of them were educationally weaker. Teachers used to encourage the talented students to study but the weaker students would be beaten ...or made to kneel...or made to stand for ages in direct sunlight.

Preeti seemed to have accepted, therefore, that the corporal punishment she received for forgetting information was in some sense inevitable. Students were told to raise their hands if they had not learnt required texts for homework. Preeti often had not:

I had to go in front of the classroom and stand on one leg whilst holding another leg in the air and holding my ears...in front of my friends. I felt embarrassed and scared.

But failure to do homework, remember times tables or forgetting answers to 'questions' was worse: 'we had to be a 'chicken' outside of the classroom on a very hot sunny day'. Like my other participants (and myself) Preeti had to balance in this extraordinarily degrading position, which involved bending over and holding our ears - after passing our arms through our legs so that we could hardly move.

The punishment for pretending to have done learning homework was, Preeti says 'double beatings'. In Preeti's case, she often genuinely believed that she had memorised the required information, only to forget it under pressure:

I got beaten because some days I thought I knew everything I needed to. But when the teacher asked me - maybe out of fear or whatever, I don't know, I used to forget the answer at the last minute. Then I would get beaten double for lying.... After the beatings, I again used to remember the answer. This happened many times.

Preeti found that her memory would come and go:

There were few moments when I thought I knew the answer but I could not tell it to the teachers when they asked the question...some days, during the 'chicken' posture I would suddenly remember that I knew the answer and I told my teachers that I knew the answer. Then if I managed to get it right, the teacher used to send me back into the classroom.

Preeti's slow description accurately reflected this tortuous procedure. Whilst she never mentioned any harsh punishments at home, she was 'afraid' to tell her parents about her discipline at school, even when beatings on her hand had damaged her so much that she was unable to do her homework. Although Preeti's mother had once complained to the school when Preeti came home with a severely hurt ear, when she was 9 (in Class 3), her father had undermined this solidarity by giving his full support to the teacher who had beaten her:

At parents' meetings my dad used to grass me up to the teachers saying that I did not study at home properly...The teachers would haul me out the front in assembly...I felt awkward, embarrassed and scared. The teachers used to call out our names and say 'These are the pupils who do not study at home at all and do not listen to their parents' in front of everyone. I used to feel very bad that time... Mum didn't say anything but my dad did it all the time.

Preeti's problems were exacerbated by the physical condition of her school. My own experiences backed her complaints. She studied in an open hut with a grass roof until she was nine, after which the children were allowed into a building with a zinc roof but it leaked water when it rained. Every child had to help with *lipni* to stop the floor from getting too dusty. The few benches for the class of 50 were allocated on a first come, first serve basis and the subject of frequent fights between pupils so like most children, Preeti lugged a mattress with her from home every day to sit on. There was one drinking tap for 500 students and no lavatory – pupils were expected to go to the loo in the open field but Preeti said 'I was embarrassed' so would 'hold on till tiffin time then run home to go to the toilet'.

When eventually the time came to transfer to a new school, R-, Preeti described herself as 'very excited' with a 'new school uniform, new ribbon, new flip-flops, new school bag, new text books and new notebooks' and she was delighted that the school was said to have very good toilet and water facilities. A particularly enlightened and effective science teacher – PRP - showed the children that good teaching did not need to rely upon corporal punishment. Others however, especially the Maths teacher, continued to use beatings, especially as Preeti struggled to remember her times tables. Preeti blamed herself however, for her failure in maths:

It was a difficult subject and I also used to spend a lot of time playing with my friends. Maybe that made me fail. I wasn't paying that much attention in maths...

Her experiences of maths classes continued to be frightening.

Sometimes I couldn't write the correct formulas on the board even though I knew it. My body would shake with fear and I would forget everything. I even wrote different numbers with a chalk when I tried to write one. My handwriting on the blackboard used to be unreadable because of the fear.... When I made mistake, the teacher used to beat me.

Preeti also suffered because of her success. When she passed one end of term maths exam, her teacher talked about 'the standard we now know you are capable of'. She was made to sit on the front bench, enduring constant questions. She said -

In the second terminal exam I got a lower mark than in the first term and he beat me for not doing as well ...I was put down to the second bench.... I was doing what I could do but couldn't do better than the first terminal exam.

Preeti struggled to remember geometry theorem by heart and demonstrate proofs on the board.

I did not know the theory and he sent me out of the class. Then he beat me and my other friends who were also outside for not knowing the theory four times on my thigh with a stick. After the beatings he said, 'If you do not know it by tomorrow I will expel you from the school'. We were terrified.

In class 8, at the age of 14, Preeti was tormented further by an English teacher who used to beat pupils with thorny branches from the Sisau tree, doubling the number of strokes for every wrong answer

He used to use maximum force to beat us on our hand with that stick. Our hands used to be very red, on the verge of bleeding. Really red and painful...If we forgot to say, 'thank you for punishing me' after the beatings we would get more punishment

Preeti seriously considered dropping out of school and did not believe that she was really learning. She was fully aware of the inadequacy of the teaching methods.

I would spend hours memorising the answers without understanding any meaning. I think there is a difference between trying to memorize a text you understand and trying to memorize the text you don't understand at all.

Her memory problems made her efforts seem futile. At no point was a connection made between her fear and her difficulty with memorisation.

when the teacher entered in the classroom I used to forget everything that I had memorised...my heart used to beat faster and shake. When he asked questions, my face used to become very red, I would shake out of fear and forget answers to questions, even those I knew had known a few minutes ago. I used to be very scared.

To Preeti's horror, this teacher also visited her home and told her father that she had not studied hard enough and might not pass the forthcoming exam. Again, her father felt it necessary to support the teacher:

My dad said to him 'Anyway, you have to make her study and pass the exam. If necessary, by using beatings, frightening her or using any technique you have to make her study because it's a district level exam and she must pass'.

Preeti looked extremely sad at this point in the interview and I fell silent, as I wasn't sure how to respond. The teacher also hit her, lightly but to her great humiliation, in front of her neighbours and family. Preeti tried to hide her shame through not reacting:

I wanted to cry but didn't, as I knew that would make it worse.

Without a sense of her father's protection, she was even more afraid:

I was so scared of that teacher. I was scared of him even if I saw him in the street or somewhere outside of school...He was a real tyrant.

Unable to voice her fears to her parents, Preeti developed signs of mental and physical illness

Sometimes the beatings used to be quite a lot and my body could not bear it. I would have a fever and hotness in my body. I didn't want any food on that day.... I used to dream that the teacher beating me after not memorizing the text and other very fearful dreams...Some nights I used to wake up suddenly, shouting.

Preeti's mother appeared to be oblivious to the cause of her daughter's nightmares, although she used to soothe her and say 'Ah, have you had a nasty dream?'. A change of English teacher brought no improvement in her results, since Preeti felt that the new teacher was abusive in a different way:

He didn't hit us but used to ask questions in the classroom and if we made any mistake he would call us 'makuri' ['spider' - slang for a girl who could be seduced easily] He would use uncivilised language in the class like that.

Preeti had reason to fear this inappropriate discourse, having experienced her teacher of Nepali suddenly 'massaging' pupils' backs and undoing their bras under the pretext of either corporal punishment or praise. She described this to me with great difficulty. It went unreported:

We didn't think that other teachers would believe us... We thought our teacher would just say he put his hand there by accident when saying 'well done' to the students. So, we only discussed it amongst pupils and got angry about it. We...didn't report it to the office. We were too embarrassed.

Preeti's father sent her to the 'boardus' (school boarding hostel) telling her 'You are weak at studying and do not read at home'. This boarding hostel forced students to rise at 5 and study until the 'sleep bell' at 11pm. Up until 11pm, Preeti remembers, 'There would be a book in front of our eyes all the time just to survive the teachers' inspection'. She was extremely tired as students had to share a very thin and overcrowded mattress.

Our teachers used to guard us...and would creep slowly from room to room. If they found someone without a book or not reading they would scold or beat them. We had to make it to 11pm. We had to keep going till 11pm just to put on a show for the teachers, even though we desperately needed to sleep.

Preeti recalled how one boy was so desperate to sleep that he dragged his mattress on top of the lavatory building to try and hide from the inspection. A classmate threw icy water over him then told the teacher hoping for praise but instead, both were beaten. Preeti remembered fondly however, how her group of friends would take turns to go on 'look-out' whilst others slept: a tapping pencil would wake them up when the teacher was approaching.

Despite her efforts, Preeti still failed the crucial SLC exam. Her performance exam had also been affected by the civil war. In the middle of her exams, the buses stopped running due to a Banda (strike) organised by Maoist rebels:

I had to cycle for an hour and a half. We had to travel 8 kilometres by bicycle from our school to the exam centre...pressing our bicycle hard...The slope en route to Lokaha from Kawasoti, near Lokaha jungle, was very steep.... A girl from Keureni died.

The civil war was at its height and like many families in our area, Preeti's family had been obliged to feed and house rebel factions sometimes. Preeti recalled:

The Maoist used to hide bombs in our house. If we talked to the Maoists it meant we had to be scared of the army and if we talked to the army we had to be scared of the Maoists. It was a very scary time.

One of her classmates had become deeply involved:

He was in trouble because if he had continued to support the Maoists then the police would kill him but if he had left the Maoist party they could do something to him. He used to support the Maoists and then decided to go underground. He started to hide from everyone. If the police caught him he would be taken to jail. One day he got arrested and stayed a month in a jail. Then he returned for a while to school. Again, he decided to drop out of the school and joined the Maoists.

Preeti described other classmates who left school eagerly to join the Maoists, some being as young as 15.

Eventually she passed her SLC retake (known as the 'Chance' exam) but deliberately chose a college some distance away in Rajahar to study the HSEB (A level equivalent), far from old friends who, she said, 'would tease me' for having had to retake her SLC exam.

College Days and Career Ambitions – A Taste of Freedom

At college level, there was no physical punishment and Preeti described how students reacted to their newly found freedom:

Some of my friends used to show quite rude, rough type, behaviour thinking they are grown-ups and used to bunk off the classes.... tease the girls... and say bad words

Preeti enjoyed the fact that students at the college were cooperative and mutually supportive with none of the 'grassing up' that had taken place at school but huge barriers remained between students and teachers which impacted upon learning -

I don't know why but I was still too scared to ask the teachers any questions. At school, I used to have some kind of fear that the teachers might ask a question which I couldn't answer. I had a similar feeling at the college even though there wasn't any punishment for not knowing the answer. I was reluctant to ask questions. I feared my teacher might think badly of me or say something (negative) if I ask a question.

Her school experience of corporal punishment seriously impeded her critical capacity although she did not connect the two, saying 'I don't know why'. When I asked her directly however, if there was any similarity between her experience of learning English at school in Class 8 and her experience at college she replied 'Yes, definitely' and nodded vigorously:

[At school] we just tried to memorize blindly without understanding any meaning. We studied for the teachers, not for us. At that time my main aim would be just to survive the teacher's beatings. If we somehow managed to trick the teacher and avoided the teacher's question I would be very happy that I had escaped punishment that day.

At College, likewise, this attitude of seeing learning as a means to an end, rather than of value in itself, continued, despite the absence of punishment:

I carried on the habit of disliking the subject of English. I just wanted to pass the exam rather than learning something. I studied for the certificate rather than for knowledge.

Eventually Preeti passed her Class 12 exams and became keen to start work, especially as her father had begun introducing possible marriage suitors. She

started work as a door-to-door data collector, for which she was paid 3p per interview, but was told that she couldn't continue without computer training. After that she applied for a teaching job and managed to succeed, from a list of 25 applicants. She was interviewed by a teacher from her old school but did not view this as a happy coincidence:

When I saw the teacher, who taught us in the school there I was really scared. My body was shaking because of the fear.

Despite her fear, Preeti got the post and described this as 'the happiest moment of my life'. When I asked her why this was, she replied -

Because, if I hadn't have got the job they would have forced me to get married. There were three or four marriage proposals at that time. I used to be scared thinking about marriage. When I got the job, firstly that would support my parents financially, at least enough so that they didn't need to pay for me any longer. Secondly, I could continue my studies without having to hold my hand out to others for money.

Preeti's job was not without its challenges however. Corporal punishment was an everyday occurrence and Preeti was expected to use it with her pupils also. Although she disliked it, the distress she felt over corporal punishment was never enough for her to leave the school, firstly because she viewed it as a 'norm' that she would encounter everywhere and secondly, because her job – and financial independence - was so precious to her and had been so difficult to obtain.

Preeti's parents, however, her had no intention of suspending their plans for her marriage:

I was expecting that when I got the job my parents might not think about the marriage for at least a few years. They might have said, 'my daughter is making money for herself and we should let her finish her studies.' But I had to get married after a few days of getting the job.

Marriage as Punishment and Powerlessness

Preeti's introduction to the family of her potential spouse involved a degree of subterfuge. She was relaxing after work, chatting to some other girls from the neighbourhood, unaware that at her home the boy's family were waiting for her and asking her parents when she would arrive home. Preeti's sister was sent to fetch her, but unaware of the real reason, Preeti ignored the request. Then her mother arrived:

My mum called me over and said 'Can you come home and make a cup of tea for your dad. I can't make tea because I'm untouchable [menstruating] and your dad wants to have a cup of tea now'.

Her mum refused to let her sister make the tea, saying 'You know how your dad prefers your tea, let's go!' In Nepal, men are seldom allowed to make tea for themselves. Reluctantly Preeti agreed and went home, did the washing up (that her mother's period had also prevented her from doing) and made tea. She did not realise the significance of the guests at the family home.

When I went home I saw few strange people and said Namaskar to them. I gave them water and tea, washed up and went back to work. I returned at five. Nobody told me that they had come to our home to see me, nor asked me how I felt about the proposal.

Preeti's agreement was taken for granted:

The families had arranged it behind my back. I came back later to find decorations up and everybody congratulating me on my engagement. It was a terrible shock.

The next day at school, Preeti said, she kept asking herself 'what did I do wrong for my family to want me to get married?'. Although she had told her parents that she still didn't want to get married, they had already given their agreement. In the end, she complied but only out of pride:

My family had a very poor economic status. The neighbours used to put us down saying 'They can't even pay the school fees, how could they manage a wedding for their daughter'. So, I got married.

Despite assurances from her new family that she could continue working, in practice her in-laws made her feel uncomfortable.

my father in law and mother in law indirectly said they weren't very happy me teaching there. But I carried on teaching there for 8/9 months [after the marriage]. After that it felt increasingly difficult to say no to the elders.... I had to do the all domestic chores in the morning, then teach at school and when I returned home I again had to do the domestic chores. So, I left the job.

Her husband had younger siblings at home and there were animals and crops which had to be cared for. Preeti left the job as it was too difficult to 'carry on doing everything' but was devastated by the loss of her independence:

I was very upset to leave the job. That was saddest moment of my life. I had only got the job after a hard struggle. I felt very sad about leaving the job. When I said to the principal, 'Sir, I have to resign', I felt very sad. My parents had been very happy when I got the job. But after marriage I had to listen to so many bad things. So, I decided to leave the job rather than argue in the family. I felt very bad...

Preeti described communication problems but it was difficult to know how far they were due to the culture of female subservience in Nepal and how far they were due to the corporal punishment during her childhood – or perhaps the latter reinforced the former. But interestingly Preeti herself linked the two:

Because of the incidents that happened at school, I find it is a bit difficult to talk to my elders....I don't have enough confidence to stand and talk to them. At home I think I might get punished if I do something without asking my father in law and mother in law. I can't make my own decisions and just follow instructions.

However, this domination had as much to do with ageism as sexism, with her husband also being dominated by his parents:

We don't make any decision on our own because we follow the instructions of my father in law and mother in law. I just follow instructions even though I do not agree with many things they say. I forget what I believe and think, and just follow their instructions.

Significantly, Preeti repeated the word 'instructions'. Once her husband migrated, she was left even more vulnerable and dependent upon her in-laws. I asked if her husband was able to provide her with an income, but I had already anticipated her answer -

It isn't our culture for him to send me any money directly, it goes to my in-laws, then they will pay all the household expenses and for the food. They manage the money. Well to be honest, sometimes he sends me a little money, but we don't tell the others as it might make trouble.

Although Preeti was treated as a minor financially, she was expected to work full-time – on the farm and in her father in law's shop, a 'fancy store', as well as caring for her son. She described her typical day, which involved working from dawn to dusk and which was no more than the majority of women in Nepal. Preeti insisted that she was happy with her husband, whom she referred to as her 'life partner' and confidante, but made it clear that the way in which her marriage was instigated still hurt her.

Preeti's options for expressing her resistance to situations that distress her were limited, with cultural taboos preventing Nepalese women from arguing, shouting or defending themselves in any way that might be interpreted as pride or egoism. In an echo of her childhood reaction to being beaten, Preeti expressed her anger through abstinence from food:

When I am really upset I can't eat. If I am upset it tends to affect my appetite. I can't eat anything, however much people try to persuade me. I also don't feel much like talking.

The reaction of Preeti's in-laws to her not eating was 'different' to that of Preeti's grandmother, when Preeti was a child. I sensed that Preeti wished that her new family were as indulgent and inclined to fuss over her as her beloved grandmother, who used to keep offering her alternative foods. I didn't like to suggest this however, as it seemed emotionally intrusive and Preeti frequently defended her husband's parents and emphasised their kindness to her. I was

also familiar with the use of silence as a weapon (*'don't feel much like talking'*) by women in Nepal who feel unable to be directly assertive. I tried to view this as something positive, a withdrawal of their verbal presence in order to demand respect, rather than using potentially misogynistic labels such as 'sulking'. It seemed that Preeti had very few alternatives. She could not withhold financial support (since she had no income) and could not withdraw her labour (without threatening the survival of the family and the animals), therefore using her body – her only possession - as means of communication was one route left, albeit through self-harm. I contrasted Preeti's repressed adult self with a different aspect of Preeti as a child: the boisterous tomboy who put up a lively defence when schoolboys stole her snacks and enjoyed play-fighting with her friends, even when one was a monitor: *'The monitor used to beat me and I used to beat him back'*. Throughout the interviews, Preeti consistently appeared confident among trusted friends whom she did not fear.

Rewards? - 'Not in this life'

In terms of her everyday functioning, Preeti's experiences of violence did not seem to have harmed her psychological or indeed her spiritual peace. She remained positive (saying 'I'm very lucky compared to others') and maintained the religious faith that had always been important to her, regularly performing acts of worship and refusing to blame God for her suffering. She no longer expected instant results though and contrasted this with when she was young and desperately endured fasting, cold showers and long queues at the temple to try and get a better 'result' from her worship, such as good exam scores or protection from teachers. Preeti now talked about rituals to try and 'calm down the effects of bad planets' in a tone which seemed to say, 'it might work or it might not, but it's worth a try'.

However, it was clear that Preeti's inner anger, attached to painful experiences from the past, remained unresolved. She admits that she still feels 'disturbed' by the teacher who would beat pupils with the *Sisau* branches and 'very angry' remembering some other teachers. She asked the question WHY – 'I still don't understand why the teachers had to be so sadistic'. On two significant occasions, her father had let her down also, once when he had betrayed her to the teacher and once when he trapped her into marriage but Preeti did not seem to regard her father as target for blame. Perhaps this was because she believed that he

had been well-intentioned and because she was worried about his current health. Her experiences left her with a sense of injustice and some bitterness. She believed in God still, a faith that would 'NEVER' (to use her word) be dissolved by resentment at her lot. Yet she no longer expected any kind of justice or reward on earth, saying very seriously:

I believe that one day they good will be rewarded, but it doesn't seem to be in this life.

This phrase seemed to indicate that Preeti believed that she had in a sense, 'had' her life and seen all that it was ever likely to offer her – a shocking nihilism that is common amongst Nepalese young people, especially poor people and women. I interpreted this as a consequence of the utter despair she had felt when being beaten, with no divine intervention preventing it – yet Preeti believed that God had helped her to 'survive' the beatings.

Preeti had told me about her feelings of powerlessness and inability to make decisions but whilst unique to her, there was nothing particularly extraordinary about her experiences, from a Nepalese perspective. I felt depressed as I realised that although Preeti's experiences of violence and abuse and current vulnerability seem so shocking by European standards, in Nepal they are so much the 'norm' that they are almost considered trivial. To overcome this sense, I focused on the extremely non-trivial issue of Preeti's feelings of emotional pain and humiliation, which had not lessened with age. The intensity of her expressions when describing her memories – particularly, her anger, her frustration and her despair – stood as justifications in themselves for my study. I was also interested to learn that Preeti was totally opposed to corporal punishment and claimed that she never hit her child, which seemed to be a significant and courageous break with tradition. Preeti seemed exhausted after the interview and returned to her duties with an emotional heaviness rather than a sense of release, but when she said, 'Thank you for giving me this opportunity to talk about my life' I realised that she wasn't just using the phrase made popular by a Nepali radio show but meant it sincerely, since such an experience – of being really listened to - was a rarity in a culture which considers it unseemly for women to complain.

Chapter Ten:

Discussion

Auto/biographical research into corporal punishment can present a number of ethical and emotional challenges to data analysis. The sadness of my participants had left me exhausted and drained. To analyse the feelings and experiences of Krishna, Preeti and Mukunda, labelling them as ‘findings’, seemed cold and clinical given my overwhelming empathy for them as fellow corporal punishment survivors (to the extent that I was often compelled to refer to my participants as ‘us’ and ‘we’). To sever and then categorise this ‘data’ under themes from my theoretical framework felt violent and artificial, since it might imperil the ‘whole’ impact of their individual stories and lose sight of a Gestalt approach (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 68). A participant might be transformed under different themes, for example, whereas Preeti seems passive in our discussion of ‘docile bodies’, we should remember that elsewhere, as mentioned previously, she is vigorously fighting the class monitor who planned to report her for non-compliance and attacked her with a broom. The ‘whole’ of Preeti is her every aspect plus what she has not yet become.

Nevertheless, certain similarities between my participants screamed out for recognition and are part of their shared story and the living history of the Devchuli municipality. How to trace patterns and resounding themes without myself becoming the monstrous disciplinarian of ‘identitarian’ thought which seeks to label and contain? As Adorno put it, “The more relentlessly our identitarian thinking besets its object, the farther will it take us from the identity of that object” (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 149). Potential participants seemed frightened by my pursuit of them, perhaps intuitively knowing that my interview could never adequately ‘sum up’ their lives. To identify is to capture, asphyxiate and pin down like butterflies. The concepts of my thesis will never be able to “exhaust” (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 5), encompass or even taste my participants’ real lives when they were flying freely, outside of my gaze and control. This is not simply a distinction between the ideal and the real but a sign of the freedom that exists between myself and others and their political right not to be subjected to disciplinarian analysis.

Instead of dissecting and labelling my ‘data’, I tried to view it through the ‘unreifying or liquifying gaze’ (Finalyson, 2012, p. 23) present in Adorno’s notion of ‘constellations’, which illuminate the elusive ‘more’ (Adorno,

1990[1973], p. 162) of the concept. This is perhaps also the ‘subjective surplus’ of the concept: the part which defies definition (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 206). My participants likewise, will never neatly fit my categories and labels. They have every right to turn round after the interviews and say, ‘*You don’t really know me!*’. Analysing the effects of corporal punishment, like all studies of abuse, requires an especial methodological sensitivity, lest participants feel that their ill-treatment is repeated in their research experience. My initial rejections – from Ram Bote, who said ‘You will get everything and I will get nothing’ and from Shanti, on the grounds of possible ‘damage’, demonstrated such fears, not least since Ram’s friend had already been ‘stitched up’ by a previous researcher of rhino horn trading. As much sensitivity must be applied to the discussion as to the interview process, since it is the ‘final word’ with which the participants are saddled, albeit anonymously. My participants may say ‘No I am *not* this’ and ‘no I am *not* that’ – a multiple negation that is voiced not as a chastisement from without (“you are not clever”/“you have not made enough money”) but as an expression of their own desires. These choices however and the constellations which they could potentially contribute to, are also affected by social and economic circumstances. Cultural obligations and economic limitations may suppress my participants’ ‘becoming’ (Hall, 1993, p. 394) and frustrate their attempts to escape being prisoners of the past.

The question arises: what is behind my need to make ‘causal connections’? Is this a symptom of oppression, or as Nietzsche puts it: “something of constraint, need, compulsion to obey, pressure, and unfreedom” (Nietzsche, 1966[1885-86], p. 29)? Is the ‘will to causation’ tainted by a corporal-punishment induced obligation to justify, explain ourselves and make excuses? Is my linking of causes and effects merely a “capricious division and fragmentation” (Nietzsche, 1974[1881-82], p. 112), with no external validity? The spurious nature of causation is difficult for us to imagine unless we take a strictly non-academic or anti-academic view. To give an example, the average farmer from Nepal, not yet familiar with the works of Freud, might not accept that his hoarding of coins in a hole in the wall is due to “anal rage”, his resentment of his father due to an “Oedipus complex” or his wife’s fainting due to “sexual repression” (Freud, 1973[1933]). However, he is likely to accept empirical causes (flooding causes crop failure) or causes arising from his belief-system (offending the gods by sex during menstruation causes family illness). Does this mean that causation is relative or arbitrary? Must every effect have a cause? I could not reject causation without going against my core belief that hitting children is

damaging. In particular, I have totally rejected the assertion by defenders of corporal punishment that beaten children just 'happen to be' aggressive.

For Nietzsche, causation is as 'mythological' (Nietzsche, 1966[1885-86], p. 29), and as expedient, as 'free'-will, which we have already discussed in relation to the inappropriateness of punishment. Nevertheless, for critique to challenge "epistemological reductionism and superficiality" (Merrill & West, 2009, p. 165) – it must enter into arguments over causation and include critique of attributed, limited causes using an exploration of multiple or alternative causes.

The solution to this dilemma lies in the democracy of auto/biographical research. Who better to challenge causal assumptions than my participants, as they struggle to make their voices heard beyond cruel labels (such as 'just a farmer') that they have been given by a performativity-obsessed, globally competitive school and society (Carney, 2009, p. 72 & p. 77). My participants have not only permitted me to make causal connections but insisted upon them, repeatedly attributing their current obstacles to past experiences of corporal punishment, amongst other social and economic factors. Krishna attributed the vulnerability of migrants to 'nasty school experiences', as well as his poor education and poverty.

Mukunda referred to the 'sadness caused by punishment in my life' and Preeti said

I have had to struggle with so many things socially because of punishment: it killed all my confidence to talk to others.

Is blaming the past for the present a symptom of weakness or inertia? Nietzsche both despises 'cowardly' victimhood as a threat to freedom (Nietzsche, 1961, p. 209) yet exempts the oppressed also, by denouncing the concept of free-will as an 'invention of the 'ruling classes' (Nietzsche, 1996[1887], p. 9) in Marxian fashion.

My participants and I are trapped, saturated and incapacitated by the past – but a small voice arises – an 'And yet'... which is both open to possibilities for changing oneself (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 298) and refuses to let our abusers have the final word on who we will be. Still our agency resurfaces from swirling memories of abuse, albeit struggling and choking. Still possibilities arise for life-changes, however faint on the horizon. Krishna wants a tractor licence, Mukunda wants to go to America and Preeti says 'One day I might try and apply for the ANM'. All of them also referred to 'significant others' who helped them. This discussion, therefore, seeks to acknowledge my participants'

persistent survival; their 'keeping on in the battle for self and story' (West, 1996, p. 218) and their struggle for autonomy no less than their vulnerability to others.

Why should the way people are identified and defined matter? Because in labelling somebody we are limiting, stifling and condemning them to fit our categorisation of the world. If a child, or a woman, or a member of a vulnerable group, does not 'fit in' with their role as defined by their oppressors they can be subject to corporal punishment or its ultimate form, 'capital punishment': the euphemism for murder by the state. Under Nazism, those deemed unable to 'integrate', by virtue of their race, sexuality, politics, age or physical weakness faced genocide, as Adorno wrote:

Genocide is the absolute integration. It is on its way wherever men are levelled off - 'polished off', as the German military called it - until one exterminates them literally as deviations from the concept of their total nullity (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 362).

It is not a denial of the uniqueness of the Holocaust to recognise its conditions of possibility in the way that human beings are identified. The same cold-hearted rigidity of thought that labels children 'wicked' and adults 'failures', also promotes stereotypes of 'other' people that admit no contradiction or complexity. Adorno likens 'identity-thinking' to the permanent silencing achieved by genocide:

If thought is not to be measured by the extremity that eludes the concept it is from the outset in the nature of the musical accompaniment with which the SS liked to drown out the screams of its victims (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 365).

This has everything to do with corporal punishment; the thin end of the wedge of genocide: the constant slapping to make somebody shut up until their different voice is silenced, until they are permanently integrated into the will of their master and their bodies "fungible" (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 362). Every week, children, women and vulnerable individuals are murdered, often by authoritarian personalities whose blows began as punishments, meted out on those *defined* as enemies.

'I didn't dare to ask questions' - Immediate Compliance, Creativity and Innovation

Each of my participants described how they were silenced at school through the threat of beatings, in particular how they were 'scared to ask questions' if there was something that they didn't understand. This atmosphere in itself, is violence, as Freire notes: 'any situation in which some men prevent others

from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence' (Freire, 1972, p. 58). In a more tolerant environment, or a 'question-centred pedagogy' (Bowker, 2010), a teacher's instructions could be met with a request for more information, a query about the way a task should be done or even an open admission from a student that they didn't understand the topic sufficiently at this stage to perform a given task. None of my participants however, felt able to spontaneously engage in a dialogue with teachers. Was this because they had witnessed the brutal fate of those who did? Or had they internalised a fear, creating an indefinable and thus impenetrable barrier, which compounded with Nepal's near-mystical reverence for 'god-like' teachers. Even when Preeti's friends were sexually abused, she recalls that 'nobody said anything'. As Krishna said, 'How can you say anything to teachers?'

I didn't understand Nepali language...By the age of six, I was being beaten every day for not being able to understand my lessons...They used to thrash us, hang us upside down... we had to walk through the playground on our knees; there would be blood while doing that...Nobody said a word, how can you say anything to teachers?

Compliance with the teachers' demands would be immediate, with no opportunity for independent thought. All of my participants could confirm the claim of both opponents (Gershoff, 2002) and advocates of corporal punishment (Baumrind, et al., 2002) that 'immediate compliance' is a predictable outcome, at least in the short term. The danger of this assertion is that it encourages supporters to construct the simple and prosaic defence of just saying 'It works' (Straus, 1994, p. 149) without acknowledging its damaging effects. In Nepal, mere hesitation in following orders, let alone disobedience, can be met with such an escalation of violent punishment that immediate compliance is virtually guaranteed.

But whilst such punishment might be 'effective' at achieving outward obedience in the short term, this can be at the expense of other goals, such as the retention of knowledge and ultimately, creativity and innovation, before we even begin to consider the emotional well-being of students. Preeti said -

If we hadn't memorised the answer to a question we would be struck...[with] a branch with little thorns... ...We just tried to memorise blindly without understanding any meaning.

Not one of my participants could be accused of never trying. Krishna, Preeti and Mukunda would all, at times, 'get up at 4 in the morning' and study until late at night. Krishna and Preeti were not reckless or disruptive pupils but rather ones that struggled to process the vast amount of information that the Nepali curriculum demanded. They all said in various ways that their 'brains could not cope', rather than criticising the education system. Like so many

Nepalese students, they were also forced to combine their studies with an overwhelming amount of domestic and farm work.

Mental effort that should have been spent creatively, was instead expended upon avoidance of punishment. Preeti describes how she would bow her head 'down to the earth' as she pretended to read a book – rather than actually reading it. Instead of rejoicing over knowledge, Preeti said:

My main aim would be just to survive the teacher's beatings. If we somehow managed to trick the teacher and evade the teacher's question I would be very happy that I hadn't been punished that day.

Krishna also devised various clever survival strategies, including offering to protect the school boffins from bullies in exchange for homework copying and only attending school every other day to reduce his inevitable beatings by fifty percent. If Krishna could only have used such imaginative thinking in a project which could have earned him credit!

With so much pressure at school and so little time and space for thought, confusion was inevitable. Preeti described the level of concentration needed for compliance in the morning exercise drill:

...I did exercise number 3 instead of number 2 or number 4. I just got confused. Then I got beaten. Sometimes I used to ask my friends...When the teachers saw that they used to bang our heads together.

As an adult, she has continued the habit of instant obedience, at the expense of her own creativity and spontaneity:

At home, I think I might get punished if I do something without asking my father in law and mother in law. I can't make my own decisions.... I just follow instructions even though I don't agree with many things they say. I forget what I believe and think and just follow their instructions.

Preeti admitted lacking confidence to make decisions; suppressing and 'forgetting' her own ideas and feelings. Mukunda was unable to take the final decision on his business investments or community leadership. His 'frozenness' brought to mind Adorno's 'pillars' again:

Neuroses are pillars of society: they thwart the better potential of men and thus the objectively better condition that men might bring about. There are instincts spurring men beyond the false condition; but the neuroses tend to dam up those instincts (Adorno, 1996, p298)

Tragically still unable to challenge those in power as an adult, Mukunda resorted to shouting at a stream:

In the rainy season, standing in the middle of the brook we used to shout rude words in loud voice.... cursing the stream itself...our principal, his wife or a member of the management committee...We felt very relieved...free.

In this brief moment, in the safe space of nature, unobserved by punishing human beings, my participant had become 'himself'. Even as an educated teacher, he was unable to express his feelings anywhere else.

Krishna however, never seemed to be blocked by indecisiveness, but instead far more concrete barriers, such as the rules preventing him obtaining a tractor licence or joining the army without an education. Ironically, Krishna seemed to have the most initiative, by actually breaking away to work abroad, perhaps because he had faced so much pain and humiliation that he never expected that things might get worse. But in India they did and Krishna said that this 'taught him a lesson' about slavery and he spent many days in tears of regret, as if he was being punished for his audacity and ingratitude in seeking a change from Nepal. Krishna's fear that change and innovation might bring bad luck was not helped by a fake agent disappearing with his 150,000 rupees.

One of the dangers of enforced compliance observed by opponents of corporal punishment is that it can result in outcomes which are the opposite of those intended (Gershoff, 2002); (Gámez-Guadix, et al., 2010, p. 530). For Krishna, it resulted in a perpetual attitude of disobedience which had been self-destructive:

Maybe those things in school affected me mentally... If someone says something against me or tries to boss me about over something I get very angry and wanted to fight with them. It became my habit.

This overdetermined resistance to authority led Krishna to equate any instruction with oppression and react with hostility to criticism. The downside of this oversensitivity meant that Krishna was blocked from self-reflection as he associated any criticism with degradation. Neither Preeti nor Krishna felt able to ask the question 'Why?'. In contexts where any risk-taking might be punishable, students carefully avoid 'wrong' answers and stick to pre-approved formulae. The critical questioning needed for creativity and innovation, any 'thinking against itself' (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 365), was forbidden. Krishna said:

I didn't dare to ask questions as I might be ridiculed...Our teacher used to say 'Be able to read this text by tomorrow or you will be punished' but he did not ask or care about our understanding...he would torture us...beat us with nettles.

Any hint of negation, experimentation and curiosity was extirpated by terror. Subject matter was strictly limited to the data needed to pass tests. A typical social studies question in Nepalese schools was 'What are the benefits of television?' – but we had to rote-learn answers provided by the teacher. Preeti recalled her agony when she could not remember the 'correct' answers supplied by the teacher and knew that she would be beaten for this. Thinking up her own answers was inconceivable.

Krishna told me that nowadays he is just doing 'nothing' and has 'no hope'. Preeti meanwhile, has spent years longing for a career but dismisses any change as 'too risky at the moment'. Although their lack of confidence is greatly affected by their economic vulnerability, their fear of taking any chances has been exacerbated by experiences of punishment. Mukunda said 'If I were to fail, I would lose everything' - as if aspiration could end in an Icarus-like punishment.

Nevertheless, all of my participants had gained an increased awareness from their experiences of both corporal punishment and being interviewed about corporal punishment. Krishna said, 'Students should be taught with love, care and encouragement'. Preeti denounced the corporal punishment that she had been told to use as a teacher and Mukunda changed his views, from saying that children needed 'some' corporal punishment at the beginning of our interview, to condemning it as 'totally wrong'. The corporal punishment experiences of my participants had not prevented them from thinking critically and compassionately about its application to others.

Severing dichotomies: Reason vs Desire

Centuries of poverty, toil and struggle have made generations of Nepalis reject pleasure for the sake of a Reality Principle which has seldom been exposed as a socio-historical construct, rather than a metaphysical necessity (Marcuse, 1987[1956], p. 12). Even during the Maoist uprising, calls were for equality, never luxury: with Nepal's geography to begin with (especially hills which few vehicles can tackle) making heavy agricultural work unavoidable. It is hard for Nepalis to aspire to Western notions of flourishing such as this one:

Thriving means enjoying a feeling of wholeness, satisfaction in your life and work, genuine love and trust in your relationships, pleasure in your body (Bass & Davis, 1988, p. 20).

Each of my participants, like so many Nepalese people, accepted that their lives would be filled with obligations, hardships and duties towards others, rather

than themselves. Krishna indulged in alcohol, but still faced his responsibilities, saying 'my parents need me'. Only spouses and children in particular, were seen as socially acceptable sources of happiness by Krishna, Mukunda and Preeti. The phrase 'me time' does not exist in Nepal and seldom do individuals reflect upon their need for pampering, fulfilment or ecstasy. The battle for survival has always been a priority and it has depended upon a remarkable level of self-control, especially with regard to subsistence farm-work and other vital domestic tasks. The suppression of desire has also been felt as a collective duty. Preeti talks about how 'shameful' it would be if she left her mother-in-law to do her work and is furtive about her occasional treat of tea on the terrace. This collective spirit is understood on a national scale, as children in schools have been forced to chant 'Discipline makes the nation great' (Caddell, 2005, p. 1), whilst being struck on the legs if they fail to chant with the requisite enthusiasm (Caddell, 2005, p. 1). It could be compared to the English 'wartime spirit', in which personal sacrifices were considered essential to the war effort. Unlike England, however, in Nepal the pressure has never eased.

Little has changed since Prime Minister Rana's adoption of Victorian education methods, with order and discipline still considered superior to the free expression of natural instincts. The idea was ingrained in my participants that children were not allowed to cry or play nor express their desires and emotions, even in the privacy of their own homes, as Mukunda recalled:

Our head-teacher punished us for playing marbles [at home] ...I could understand because he punished us for playing marbles which was my mistake. He punished us to encourage us to study.

This harsh treatment was excused by my participant, who seemed to subscribe to the myth of his oppressor as a caring patriarch (Adorno, et al., 1959, p. 386). Mukunda turned the blame upon himself, even though the 'offence' was outside of school time. The natural movements of children are often repressed in Nepal, children must keep still, or stand in tortuous and humiliating positions such as the bent over 'chicken' posture or hold their heavy satchel on their fingertips. Krishna described being beaten then tied up in a tauwa (rice hut) and I was also tied up at school, due to an incident involving biscuits. The idea of children running freely was frowned upon except during official sports. Emotions were repressed by threats such as 'If you cry, you'll get another stroke'. The desire to repress emotion has remained with Preeti in adulthood:

When our head-teacher shouted at me and slapped my face in front of my neighbours I wanted to cry but I didn't, as I knew that would make it worse...My face was red and I wanted to hide but everyone was staring at me... I never cry...I hate people crying.

Preeti feared not only further suffering but the loss of her power and dignity if she showed emotion. The inhibition internalised by Mukunda and Preeti continued to affect their lives, preventing them from resisting authority and expressing their feelings effectively. Preeti describes her powerlessness to create the life she desired:

The saddest moment of my life was when I had to get married. I was only 19 and had told everybody I wasn't ready. The families had arranged it behind my back. I came home to find decorations up and everybody congratulating me on my engagement. It was a terrible shock...but I didn't want the neighbours saying my family were too poor to get their daughter married.

Preeti was forbidden to choose her romantic/sexual partner, her place of residence nor eventually, her occupation. Her personal wishes were ignored and she submitted finally due to fear of the social consequences of refusal, leaving her with an enduring pain. She had kept the idea of her marriage as 'the saddest moment of my life', a feeling which no subsequent joy had overcome.

The manner in which Preeti was brought home to be viewed by her prospective father-in-law involved subterfuge and gender oppression. Preeti's mother fetched her home to make tea for her father who was 'not allowed' to make tea by virtue of his gender, with the excuse that her mother was 'not allowed' to make tea because she was 'untouchable', the Nepalese euphemism for menstruating (which is, interestingly, the same word root used to describe 'untouchable' castes). This tradition can include menstruating women being prevented from touching food or drink for their husbands; looking at the sun, mirrors or male family members or eating protein or fruits and vegetables in case she 'contaminates' the whole stock (The Independent, 27/05/2016), although their segregation in another house or buffalo shed is losing popularity due to reports of sexual assaults and attacks from snakes and wild animals. From the moment that Preeti started her periods, she would therefore internalise the 'stigma' (Johnston-Robledo & Chrisler, 2013) that women are inferior to men with the implication that women are naturally dirty creatures who are lucky to get a husband. The fact that her experiences is shared by many Nepalese women does not make it any less damaging for her self-esteem (Kadariya & Aro, 2015). Moreover, as with so many cultural restrictions, they are often supported by a fear of punishment. When I handed my wife a cup of tea during her period, my father became terrified that calamity would befall our family unless I immediately showered, prayed for forgiveness and gave 100 rupees to the temple.

Unlike Britain in the 1960s, young people in Nepal have never experienced a market flooded with jobs that could bring them independence. In Nepal, socio-economic dependency makes a rebellion of young people against their parents impossible. Most of us must either obey our elders or starve. Corporal punishment has reinforced this dependency psychologically. Our attachment does not reduce once we do actually gain jobs, as then we feel a moral obligation to become the providers. But there is another dimension to this need to survive which Mukunda outlined and which I referred to as 'the discipline of poverty'. He describes how he obeyed his parents without question as 'my parents worked day and night'. Nearly every struggling Nepalese farm-worker knows that, as Preeti said 'Every hour has its task or things go wrong'. Like me, my participants no doubt had to join in the dreary chant at school: 'Just as we must constantly tend our crops, we learn by reciting': we were to tackle schoolwork as energetically as we did our farm-work, regardless of its monotony.

John Holt describes three types of discipline: 'Discipline of Nature or Reality', 'Discipline of Culture, of Society' and the 'Discipline of Superior Force' (Holt, 1972, p. 106). He argues that the effectiveness of the first two make the last, corporal punishment, as inferior as it is damaging. In particular, the Discipline of Superior Force should not be defended as a preparation for the Discipline of Nature (Holt, 1972, p. 109). Nature alone, bringing starvation, disease and death to Nepal, has been a sufficient incentive to keep us 'on our toes'. As Mukunda said, a real fear of not surviving made obedience to child labour a 'necessary condition of life'. Our schools did not need to replicate its miseries with corporal punishment upon our often already exhausted and emaciated bodies. Moreover, education does not need to be like farm-work: there are ways of learning which are not tedious, back-breaking or soul-destroying. We also knew the truth that unlike subsistence farm-work, education was not a matter of life and death, but corporal punishment was brought in to try and make it appear so.

For another of my participants, Krishna, the crushing of his desires was so traumatic that he had to emigrate. At the age of 16, he had been happy about finally getting good exam results and had started to go out and enjoy a social life like many Magar young men following their natural desires -

I had developed a habit of drinking and smoking...I used to go to Rodhi [dancing and singing] in the night sometimes...My parents also noticed that I was coming home a bit late...Then they told a teacher from our village...he dragged me onto the stage in front of 800 students. Loudly he asked me...'Which girl are you spending nights with?' then he beat me in front of everybody'.

The experience was devastating for Krishna. From a Nepali perspective, the accusation of sexual behaviour was the most humiliating part of all and the beating almost represented a public castration. Krishna said:

I couldn't face going to school.... Within two months of leaving school I left home for India...I was embarrassed...I also have some dignity, don't I?

His family were especially ashamed since his sister had eloped to get married a few years earlier, yet they had deliberately betrayed him by reporting his outings to his teacher.

Krishna did not reveal any subsequent interest in women until he got married, several years later. Having had his healthy instincts to have fun suppressed by those who professed a superior reason, Krishna internalised a great deal of rage which would sometimes explode into violence. He admitted striking his own father, during an argument about going back to school. He reacted violently when he was bullied in India and admits 'getting into fights' repeatedly up until this day. Krishna claimed that only the presence of his wife has managed to calm him down, but too late to prevent him gaining a reputation as a 'troublemaker'. Krishna would later struggle to reconcile his mind and body and to harmonise his desires with his reality, lamenting the fact that he could not do anything that he wanted to ('I can't do anything Sir').

The Politics of 'Docile Bodies'

My powerless participants demonstrated the profound political and economic consequences of the taming and training of the body through punishment, producing what Foucault calls 'docile bodies'. Foucault says:

Discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience) (Foucault, 1979, p. 138).

The body's 'capacity' for exploitation is enhanced, yet this involves a rechanneling and appropriation of power:

It reverses the course of energy, the power that might result from it, and turns it into a relation of strict subjection (Foucault, 1979).

Just as the rebel child is told 'if only you would channel this energy into your studies', in later life the revolutionary might be told 'if only you would channel the energy you use protesting into work and making money'. Mass control is thus achieved through individual discipline, robbing society of its transformative potential. My participants' 'how can you say anything to

teachers' becomes 'how can you say anything to governments' or 'how can you say anything to employers'.

For Preeti, this acquiescence became 'how can you say anything to in-laws', supported by the same ideologies of respect and near-deification as that of other authority figures. In Nepal a daughter-in-law should wash her mother in law's feet, should eat last of all and obey her in-laws in all matters. Although initially eager to develop a career, Preeti found herself brow-beaten into leaving her hard-won job:

After getting married I had to juggle work, domestic tasks, study...I decided to leave the job...but I had got the job only after a hard struggle...I felt very upset.... I decided to leave the job rather than argue within the family.

Preeti feared arguments, which she associated with punishments and decided to sacrifice her career rather than family harmony, to which she accorded a higher value. Nobody supported her desire for a career and hence she had to return to being financially dependent upon others. Her body and the work it produced remained the property of her in-laws.

Mukunda, likewise, was held back from fulfilling his potential and remained 'docile' and powerless. Despite coming from a family of political activists and having a level of education beyond that expected of community leaders, he was reluctant to take up any such role, saying –

If I fail to fulfil my promises to the people, they will have negative feelings towards me. I'm always afraid of that. Up until now society thinks I am a good person but if I ever became a leader their opinion of me might change if I become unsuccessful.

Terrified of being punished with disrespect for any failure, he shied away from the risk of leadership. His self-esteem relied upon the approval of others' and this approval, in turn, he believed to be conditional upon his personal success. Like Preeti, Mukunda was prevented from having a flourishing career by fears which could have been planted by corporal punishment. Mukunda spoke bitterly of other examples of opportunities he could have taken up in business and education, if he had not been blocked by a fear of failure.

But the forging of docile bodies has political and economic consequences that go beyond the development of individuals. Corporal punishment may be a contributory factor in migration, exploitation and genocide (Bauman, 1995, p. 135) and act upon groups of people. The humiliating public beating of Krishna, at the age of 16, managed to horrify and thus subjugate his entire school. As Foucault said:

Torture must mark the victim: it is intended, either by the scar it leaves on the body, or by the spectacle that accompanies it, to brand the victim with infamy (Foucault, 1979, p. 34).

To compare the corporal punishment that Krishna suffered to state torture is not an exaggeration – especially being hanged upside down and forced to cut his knees on sharp stones. Yet he claimed this pain could not compare to his experience of becoming a public ‘spectacle’ when he was beaten in main assembly. After days hiding in the fields from mocking villagers and a physical fight with his father, Krishna migrated to India – and a situation of even greater oppression:

I had to take a washing up. I used to cry at the beginning because we had to wash up so fast and work such long hours...if we made any mistake, our boss would beat us. They would swear at us with terrible words insulting our parents. But India was full of unemployed young men waiting to fill our job and I had no qualifications to get anything better...There were many Nepalese boys there who had had nasty school experiences.

Corporal punishment does not just affect the odd, single youth that leaves home after an argument. Together they amount to great mass movements of people, such as the Afghans and Iranians who fled ‘religious’ beatings. They can also create a mental tension that is ripe for war, as Krishna admitted:

I fantasised about being in the rebel army and did some physical training...I felt happy thinking the teacher won’t beat me.

Krishna was not interested in the competing ideologies of the civil war, remaining equally keen on the royalist army:

I tried many times to get into the (regular) army...I thought they [my teachers] beat me a lot and I have to take revenge. I wanted to behave like an enemy with my teachers

How many other young people like Krishna experienced a similar ‘fight or flight’ response to extreme fear, instead of seeking peaceful and constructive social transformation. As we discussed earlier, corporal punishment has contributed to the acceptability of conflict (Pherali, 2011, p. 145) and the likelihood of homicides (Arcus, 2002, p. 180). My participants talked about their experiences in the civil war – including issues like hiding arms and hosting rebels, with a calmness which English readers might find bizarre. But their experiences of corporal punishment, coupled with the killings and injuries going on around them during the civil war, had left them in no doubt about the real possibility of violence as a consequence of non-compliance. Preeti feared both the army and the Maoists and described how each would exact punishments for collusion with the other, either unofficially or in their own

military 'courts': this fear clouded her initial interest in the alternative visions of society being presented.

In the personal sphere, the frustration of being a 'docile body' can lead to pent-up rage being taken out on those nearby. Holt says

it makes us resentful and vengeful. We can hardly wait to make someone pay for our humiliation, yield to us as we were once made to yield (Holt, 1972, p. 108).

I remembered one of the villagers, the youngest of several brothers who everybody used to call stupid and beat. He was deemed 'only good for' ploughing the field with the ox. There was nobody below him on whom he could take out his wrath, so he used to torture the poor ox. I did not detect signs of such sadism in my participants, but there were hints of what Adorno called the 'authoritarian personality' (Adorno, et al., 1959), which as we have discussed, combines a reverence for and subservience to authority-figures with an inner rage at the violent punishments they have administered. Instead of directing anger at the parents or teachers who engendered it, the rage is displaced onto groups of 'outsiders'.

Mukunda felt able to condemn the 'rough kind of students' and those threatening Nepal's Hinduism but never his parents, whom he praised meticulously, nor his teachers (whose violence he attributed to illness or good intentions). Outside of our interview, Preeti could not criticise her teachers, mother in law, nor the father who repeatedly betrayed her, yet expressed a surprising intolerance for 'people crying', lazy teenagers and 'changes in routine'. Ironically, the least authoritarian was Krishna, who had actually punched his father, run away and was constantly getting into fights. It is possible that the authoritarian behaviour of my participants' parents (especially the violence of Krishna's ex-army father and Preeti's father's support for her harshest teachers) might have arisen, in its turn, from similar origins: Krishna revealed that his grandfather had also endured a tough life in the army.

My participants had not exhibited signs of severe mental illnesses linked to corporal punishment (Greven, 1992, pp. 148-174), nor admitted to any of the sado-masochistic impulses described by (Rousseau, 1953(1765)). It was culturally impossible for us to discuss such issues. I could not know if these tendencies were not still there under the surface of our society however, just as Victorian sexual repression masked flagellation obsessions, shown in literature such as Algernon Swinburne's *The Flogging Block* (Praz, 1970, p. 225) induced by formal rituals of corporal punishment at Eton public school. Had

this repressed sadism motivated some of the ritual floggings that I had witnessed in Nepalese schools, especially when teachers removed children's clothes? Yet in Nepal, in stark contrast to England, most people have never even heard of algolagnia, leaving them all the more vulnerable to its non-consensual use in abusive contexts.

I was able to discern clearer links between my participants' behaviour and Freud's association of corporal punishment with anal rage. This was unlikely to relate to potty-training (Freud, 2010 [1923]) which is traditionally relaxed in Nepal, but corporal punishment near the anal region could conceivably provoke a physical and mental 'tightening', developed by Freud's concept of 'anal-retention'. The humiliating 'chicken' punishment (which all my participants and I experienced) could equally lead to rage against the appropriation of our body parts and a retention of content. I am always, both pathetically and fiercely, 'holding on' to my work rather than giving it up or 'exposing' it for possible ridicule or rejection. Mukunda was unable to part with the money required for his investments. Preeti was psychologically unable to 'give' the correct answers to her violent teacher, even when she really knew them and Krishna's anal humiliation was so great, after being beaten in front of the whole school, that he fled the country.

The 'chicken' position, so widely used in Nepalese schools, echoes the sailor's punishment which had haunted the imagination of Freud's *Ratman*. Bent over and tied down (as Krishna and I had been), the victim has a large pot of rats placed on his buttocks which then '*bored their way in*'... - Into his anus' (Freud, 1979 [1955], p. 47). Freud's client admitted that his father had sometimes 'not known when to stop' when beating him (*Ibid*, p90). Whilst my participants had not demonstrated pathological obsessional neurosis or fixations, the *Ratman* case history served as a warning for the type of extreme confusion and 'murderous and suicidal impulses' (Greven, 1992, p. 139) that corporal punishment and the 'chicken position' might ultimately incur.

Spatio-temporal Appropriation and Spirituality

With corporal punishment having made fear a chief motivator in so many aspects of my participants' lives, it was no surprise to me how this also dominated their inner consciousness. Both at the start and end of our interviews, Preeti was referring to 'angry planets' which had to be assuaged

with rituals. Krishna had gone so far as to carry out animal sacrifices to improve his results and even the most scientifically educated of my participants, Mukunda, told a story about how his friends and himself had fled in terror from a 'ghost' offended by their attempt to stone somebody defecating on the riverbank.

But Krishna was disillusioned by his painful experiences to the extent of losing his faith. He expressed the problem of evil or suffering (Hick, 2010) starkly and without theodicy -

The faith certainly will break after so much has happened in my life.... God did not see me when I was in such trouble so how can he help me now and later?

Again and again Krishna had prayed not to be singled out for punishment, but he was seldom spared, even when bleeding. The question 'what kind of God allows such violence to innocent children' cannot easily be answered, yet Preeti somehow maintained her faith that God will 'protect her'. She remained thankful, saying that her years of punishment 'could have been a lot worse'. My participants' experiences of corporal punishment presented them with poor role models through which to imagine God. Notions of a benign, all-loving father-figure or spiritual teacher cannot be reconciled with the monster who is beating us. Gerard Hughes notes:

If our experience of parents and teachers has been one of dominating people who show little affection or respect for us as persons, but value us only insofar as we conform to their expectations, then this is bound to affect our notion of god and will influence the way we relate to him (Hughes, 1985, p. 35).

Mukunda and Preeti, who were attached to their families, still feared punishment from 'above', whereas Krishna's relationship with God mirrored the breakdown of his relationship with his father, despite their later 'reconciliation'. How different Krishna's perception of God might have been if he had experienced a father such as the famous evangelist Reverend Dwight Moody (1837-1899), who felt guilty after sending his son, Paul, to bed. Philip Greven (1992) includes this beautiful, fifty-year-old memory from Paul Moody:

I retreated immediately and in tears, for it was an almost unheard-of thing that he should speak with such directness or give an order unaccompanied with a smile. But I had barely gotten into my little bed before he was kneeling beside it in tears and seeking my forgiveness.... I can still see that room in the twilight and that large bearded figure with the great shoulders bowed above me, and hear the broken voice and the tenderness in it (Quoted in (Greven, 1992, p. 15)

Krishna had received no such love and did not expect it. In conformity with neo-liberal capitalist ideology, Krishna suggested that he had more chance of

success with 'hard work' then divine intervention. After so many failures and refusals, Krishna had reached a state of utter despair, at merely 23. He said, 'I cannot be successful in any job sir' and was almost ready to resign himself to full-time drinking ('to forget my past') were it not for his family and an impressively honourable reason, that he had promised his wife's parents that he would make her happy.

My participants also described how corporal punishment affected the space and time that they needed for contemplation. Preeti says:

I used to memorise everything.... but when the teacher entered my heart beat fast and shook with fear...I would forget all the answers even though I had known them a few minutes beforehand... I was very scared...and got beaten.

Preeti's extreme stress was an 'affective filter' hampering her memory, an effect of corporal punishment that I have also experienced. She expected only punishment rather than praise from her expected performance and therefore viewed being questioned negatively. Rote-learning occupied the head-space that could have nurtured Preeti's development, her 'becoming' what she wanted to be and the 'transformation' of her world (Freire, 1972, p. 71).

Krishna would flee to a natural setting to find peace and safety:

I used to leave home pretending I was going to school then spend the whole day somewhere in the field...I hid in the hills...When the teacher came round. I said 'I did what I could do, but now my brain cannot cope with any more than this. I have had enough of school and cannot go back.

He experienced 'burn-out' from studying difficulties, punishments and humiliation, a mental exhaustion that made any 'progress' impossible. His rejection of such a school could be seen in one way as an act of trying to claim back his spirit. Sadly, in adult life, this feeling of being overloaded or 'shut down' continued to prevent my participants gaining sufficient mental space, with the excuse that this 'busyness' was a 'necessity' of life, rather than it being constructed and therefore changeable. Crushed at school, Preeti appeared to have gained little freedom as an adult. I asked her if she ever got any time for reflection, which confused her:

'Time for myself'? I'm not sure what you mean. I can't study. Once I wake up at 5, I am so worried about getting all my chores done in time. Every hour has its task or things go wrong. I can't even think about study now. Everyone tells me they need this or that or they get upset. I've got a lot of responsibilities.

Performativity pressure – especially the need to feel that he had a real career, also led Mukunda to place less importance on his personal aspirations and spiritual side:

Educated people in Nepal think: why should we follow religion? Why is spirituality necessary? What do we get out of it? One day I might do something for society but I just don't have time at the moment.

It could be argued that the punishments experienced by Preeti and Mukunda have been internalised into a strict superego that makes them put obedience to others before anything else. They both worked to a timetable which was as rigid as if it was still enforced by punitive violence.

The idea of transcending their current lives through either contemplation (interpreted by Preeti as 'study') or spirituality seemed an impossible luxury. Their space and time, no less than their bodies, had been appropriated by a 'reality' principle (Marcuse, 1987[1956], p. 15) which did not allow them to break deadlines. Preeti only found it possible to fight back using periods of silence or self-starvation but did not recognise this as resistance (which was culturally taboo), only as reactions that she had 'when I'm upset'. My participants could not find a place of sanctuary when they needed it, or as Reid and West put it, a 'space to be creative without fear of rejection or never being good enough' (Reid & West, 2016, p. 6), leaving them with a stilted sense of selfhood. There was so much 'more' that they wanted to do and be.

Despite, their personal struggles, all of my participants had gained an increased awareness from their experiences of both corporal punishment and being interviewed about corporal punishment. Krishna said, 'Students should be taught with love, care and encouragement'. Preeti denounced the corporal punishment that she had been told to use as a teacher and Mukunda changed his views, from saying that children needed 'some' corporal punishment at the beginning of our interview, to condemning it as 'totally wrong'. Our stunted lives had not prevented us having a deeper level of consciousness on this particular issue than many successful' people that I knew.

Chapter Ten:

Refusal to Conclude

The impact of corporal punishment upon people's lives cannot be summed up with a 'conclusion': our lives are still unfolding, becoming and open to change. We cannot be 'written off' on account of our psychological damage: our stories are far from over. I have no right to terminate them and place them within the coffin of an academic text. This would be a violence exceeding that of our teachers, who may have declared us dunces 'only fit for ploughing' in front of the class, but never advertised our limitations to the whole academic world.

My study involved only five Nepalis, including my pilot interview and my autobiography. To generalise about a whole nation on this basis might seem fantastical or absurd. But our history is one that thousands of Nepalis will recognise; our torment is one that victims of corporal punishment worldwide can empathise with. Auto/biographical research does not seek 'proof' in empirical or rational terms, but an understanding of those voices which have been suppressed. As Merrill and West suggest, validity here lies in intensity, detail and critique - the latter since these narratives are challenging what is known about this subject in the world and seeking to overturn the hegemonic ideologies which have been used to justify corporal punishment. The more I listened to my participants, the more I felt that contradictions between the 'told life' and the 'lived life' (Merrill & West, 2009, p. 142) (for example, my participants' minimisation of their problems and dismissal of their potential) were of less importance to me than the urgent need for suppressed voices to be heard. I am happy for my participants to be defined by what they have not yet become, if that is how they wish to be defined. To remain preoccupied with the objectivity of the lived life is as repressive as saying to Ann Oakley's participants 'But really you are just a housewife' or to Sojourner Truth, 'But really you are just a slave'. On these safe pages, nobody will beat them for telling 'lies', they have been simply invited to talk.

The lives of Krishna, Preeti and Mukunda were affected in ways that I had not anticipated: socially, politically, economically and spiritually. But a holistic approach prevents us from separating the impact of corporal punishment into these categories without re-conjuring the mind/body dichotomy that has been used to justify corporal punishment. Such categorisation also evokes other rupturing dichotomies, such as self/society, subject/object, power/weakness

and divine/earthly. These are violently severing, constructing create a barrier between aspects of being which could be merged and ignore the multiple contradictions, exceptions and surprises in people's real lives. Richardson's 'crystal' metaphor with all its 'transmutations' (Richardson, 1997, p. 92) may describe the *multi-faceted* self, whose essence has many hues, changing according to the perspective from which it is viewed.

Crystals reflect, refract, change, and grow...Like a crystal, "Louisa May" has multiple facets; I keep discovering more. What we see, I keep learning anew, depends on the angle of repose (Richardson, 1997, p. 136).

The categories below, therefore, represent merely perspectives, approaches, and inner illuminations, rather than reductions or underlying structures. From my interpretation of Adorno, however, emerges two necessary restraints upon this post-modern way of seeing. Firstly, the warning that corporal punishment is absolutely morally wrong, from whatever perspective, and secondly, that crystals (whether used as a metaphor for writing, people or concepts) are part of constellations, whose connections and combinations are socially and economically mediated. This does not restrict the dreams and potential of my participants. On the contrary, it seeks to free them from hidden, insidious conditions.

Corporal Punishment and Society: Masks and Dances

Corporal punishment severely limited my participants' roles in society. Krishna's initial shame following his public beating was so great that he had to flee his immediate society completely, first by absences from school and then by migration. In adulthood, Krishna's reputation as a fighter and a drinker served as a wall around him: he was avoided by those most likely to judge him. Preeti and Mukunda, however, both wore masks of compliance, appearing to conform with the expectations of their families and societies. They both expressed the fear that if they stepped outside of this role, Preeti through presenting different ideas from her in-laws and Mukunda through taking on challenging roles, then they might receive social disapproval. This recalls the displeasure of teachers, expressed in corporal punishment, that would follow any non-conformist word or deed at school.

Preeti's social world has gradually shrunk since her marriage, she no longer chats with friends in the marketplace, no longer takes part in women's groups, no longer studies or works away from her in-laws. There is no time for anything

apart from domestic chores and family duties. Only religious festivals provide a brief break and a chance to socialise with family members from further afield. Although these social restrictions have more to do with Nepalese culture than corporal punishment, it would be reasonable to suppose that Preeti's history of repression has made her less likely to challenge it. Similar effects follow from the upbringing and education of other 'good girls' in Nepal, whose virtue is measured according to their level of compliance. Although both sexes are exposed to corporal punishment, a gendered difference lies in the type of behaviour that it is encouraged to produce: in men, success and responsibility; in women, quiet obedience, modesty and toil: to "always be busy with household chores" (Korzenevica, 2016, p. 39).

Mukunda was perhaps the most socially controlled of all, precisely because of his own self-consciousness, and contacted me several times after the interview, wanting me to confirm that his identity really would remain anonymous. By Nepalese standards of social prestige, Mukunda had the most to lose if his reputation was damaged, as a Masters' graduate and a teacher from a politically active and widely respected family. Whenever Preeti and Mukunda danced away from their expected social roles, they did so secretly, Mukunda with his swearing at the stream and Preeti with her secret ambitions. Most of the time, they felt it necessary to satisfy the needs of others, however much these contradicted with their inner needs. Krishna however, had gained a certain freedom from surviving public disgrace, making him seem, in some ways, 'past caring' what others thought of him, but despite this, he maintained a sense of responsibility towards his immediate family.

Corporal punishment appears to have affected my participants' social interactions in terms of their inhibitions, risk-taking, fear of what others thought of them, deprivation of desired social activities and recourse to masks, their anonymous identity in my interviews being one of them, in order to express their true selves. I also had the sense that they were not necessarily with people that they felt an affinity with. Aside from the emotional ties of family, Mukunda seemed somehow 'out of place' (hence his desire to emigrate), Preeti had still not shaken off the feeling of being kidnapped by her arranged marriage, much as she appreciated her new family, and Krishna was working on the family farm from a sense of duty and through having no other choice, after numerous failed attempts to escape this conventional destiny. All of them made the best of their situation, but they were not necessarily in the social situations in which they might thrive.

Economic improvements in Nepal have impacted upon personal development. As families begin to realise the financial advantages of women working and bringing home an extra income, women are gradually becoming more financially independent and therefore able to become more educated and politically active. Young women who were once crushed, segregated and scolded for disobedience (Korzenevica, 2016, p. 37) may sometimes find themselves to be the main breadwinners in a family, with all the power and prestige that brings. Those Nepalis who manage to study abroad, such as myself, are also able to achieve a considerable amount of psychological healing just by leaving memories of corporal punishment behind and attempting to reinvent ourselves in strange places where nobody will look at us and know us as 'the beaten child'. Migration can facilitate a reinvention of self which can bring some healing. In my own case, corporal punishment has not been able to destroy me completely due to the support of "significant others". 'Paul', an adult learner interviewed by Linden West, recalled a teacher (aptly named Mrs Worth) who said "There's nothing wrong with Paul. He can do it" (West, 1996, p. 66). Paul's teacher refused to accept the label, the limited identity that he had been given and instead, shared a vision of what he might become. The words and actions of my university staff, friends and family members have been as powerful as if they had lain their bodies in front of mine to protect me from blows. My anger is no less than Krishna's, my family entanglements no less than Preeti's, my fear of risk-taking no less than Mukunda's, but the love, solidarity and respect that I have received have been critical. Dark tunnels in my mind echo with the cries of beaten children. I have tinnitus. 'Individual will' is seldom enough. This is acknowledged in Dickens' novels, as each victim fleeing violence discovers kindness elsewhere, although not always in time to save their life, as in the case of 'Smyke', the beaten youth, "worn and wasted to the last degree" (Dickens, 1958, p. 391) who dies in the arms of his avenger, Nicholas Nickleby.

Corporal Punishment and Politics: The Impasse of Fear

Corporal punishment had a negative effect upon the political activities of my participants, but not necessarily their awareness. For bell hooks, consciousness of oppression through 'theory' provided a refuge from her memories of being whipped as a child (hooks, 1994). Are we 'running away' to the impersonality of abstraction? Or can we confront our pain most effectively by hounding its origin in structures and systems? Studying corporal punishment experiences so similar to my own has been both liberating and stifling.

Mukunda had every opportunity to become involved in politics, being highly educated compared to the rest of his community and coming from a politically active family, but he had a fear of power and the criticism it might bring. He felt unable to bargain with his bosses for higher wages or longer hours and rather than protest at existing schools about their use of corporal punishment, which he had come to oppose, he proposed instead the less confrontational option of opening his own non-violent school. Although this idea was still admirable, it represented only a small part of Mukunda's political potential. He complained frequently of feeling 'held back' in his pursuit of power, even when to do good. Mukunda felt more comfortable speaking about politics: such as his extended defence of Hindu nationalism. But this diversion involved little risk-taking, as condemnations of secularism and multi-culturalism are popular in today's Nepal. Here was a safe place to express anger, through somewhat authoritarian political tones and intolerance of 'others', rather than challenging the power-relations behind his childhood suffering.

Preeti's political consciousness had been stirred at school, but fear of the punishments meted out by both sides during the violent conflict had stopped her short of becoming more involved. Like many ordinary Nepali citizens, she had made a minor contribution to the People's War in terms of practical support for combatants, but passively, couched in terms of having 'no choice' but to assist, rather than risking direct actions for which she might have been held culpable. Preeti's belief in 'fate' and the 'planets' was greater than her belief in revolution as a means of change. To be politically active was a dangerous business that could lead to physical harm. Even in the face of huge injustice, for example, sexual abuse by their teacher, Preeti and her companions felt unable to organise any kind of protest – they did not dare even to tell anybody that it had happened. Krishna was more contradictory politically, with a potential for extremism (*'I just wanted to take revenge'*) but an almost existentialist ambivalence to the outside world, expecting nothing from a political system that had given him nothing, regardless of who was in power. None of my participants had an expectation that power relations could be changed without devastating conflict. In a Nepalese school, to 'speak truth to power' would lead to beating, as it did for my friend who 'stood up' to our English teacher (and was abandoned by his cowardly comrades, myself included.) In adult life, the total absence of hope that change could ever occur by peaceful means such as debate or petitioning drove people to anticipate violence and arm themselves.

Corporal Punishment and Economic Life: 'I don't deserve it'

The impact of corporal punishment on my participants' economic lives must be understood in the context of Nepal, a country in which financial success is a rarity and everyday survival a challenge. Wealthier countries in which corporal punishment is widespread, such as the United States and Saudi Arabia, might offer more protection from the life-threatening aspects of financial disaster and offer a greater variety of routes to success. My participants all believed that corporal punishment had affected them financially. Krishna attributed his poverty to his poor education, clouded by a futile cycle of struggle, failure and punishment, and his eventually dropping out after a public beating. Without the basic SLC, he was not even allowed to join the army or drive a tractor. Krishna also believed that corporal punishment had made it harder for him to settle in those jobs that he had managed to get, such as his work in India and Dubai. Although he had complained of exploitation, he still conceded that he had been oversensitive to criticism and unable to bear pressure or 'bossiness' as it reminded him of corporal punishment situations. This may have damaged his ability to stay in jobs for the long haul and show the humility necessary for career advancement.

Preeti's considerable efforts to find work suggest that corporal punishment had not dented her will to improve her economic circumstances. Preeti's economic disadvantage was bound up with her marriage - she described both her wedding day and being forced to leave her job as 'the worst moment of her life'. Marriage meant giving up her independence, her freedom of movement and the limited but significant power of decision making that her income had given her. Although her in-laws had not beaten her, they were the authority figures in her new family home and as such, she felt duty-bound to obey them without question, which included working in the family shop on an unpaid basis. Preeti had clearly been deeply disturbed by 'arguments' that had already occurred, perhaps because her background of corporal punishment had made her fear the escalation of shouting into violence. In this sense, corporal punishment memories could be said to play a role in her economic restrictions.

Overwhelmingly, however, Preeti was affected by gender discrimination and the social hierarchy of Nepalese culture, coupled with her inescapable moral obligation to help her ageing in-laws with a back-breaking workload, upon which the family survival depended. Preeti's past experience of punishments may have affected how she responded to these pressures, whether with total submission, manipulation/negotiation or frank assertiveness but ultimately the Nepalese

poverty trap - of endless mundane tasks preventing training for economic development - acted as the most powerful disciplinary and repressive force. The neo-liberal emphasis upon performativity has not liberated people like my participants nor impoverished people of Nepal nor made them more efficient. Instead, it has provided those in power with more excuses to demean, harass, bully and humiliate their frightened workers, thereby damaging their emotional well-being, peace of mind and creativity. For those with a history of corporal punishment, such as my participants, it has made them even more terrified of failure and even more certain that they won't 'make the grade'. Performativity concerns have also motivated teachers and parents to beat children with SLC failure seen as a measure of the competence of schools and families. Changes to exams are continuing, but it is attitudes to assessment, rather than assessment itself, which is chiefly to blame. As we explored earlier, these, in turn, have social and economic anxieties at their heart.

Corporal Punishment and Spiritual Life: 'Please God, don't let him choose me'

Perhaps the most devastating effect of corporal punishment on the spiritual life of my participants. This prevented them gaining any deep comfort or consolation from their inner beliefs which might have eased their other burdens. Each of them carried out religious rituals – sometimes even animal sacrifices – in the hope that this would improve their grades and protect them from corporal punishment. Each of them felt disappointed when this did not 'work': Mukunda moving to a kind of pantheism, Preeti saying that it 'could have been worse' and Krishna finally getting totally stuck by the problem of suffering, finding it impossible to believe that a loving God could have given him such an unhappy life. None of them expressed any joy in worship and Preeti's rituals to appease the planets seemed driven by fear and to help her husband get a job rather than any deep religious passion. However, religious festivals remained joyous occasions, with memories of dancing, laughter and sweetmeats.

Religion was introduced to my participants from an untrustworthy source: the very authority figures who were carrying out beatings. Hindu ideas such as the love and playfulness of Krishna were obscured by the list of ritual dos and don'ts, such as elaborate cleaning and mantras that had to be rote-learned like everything else, rather than enjoyed. As my participants' corporal punishment continued and increased, a loss of faith in father-figures seemed to occur, whether teachers, parents, village elders or God. The participant who had

experienced the harshest treatment, Krishna, who described his parents and teachers as ‘torturing’ him, was the one with the least faith in God, saying his faith had ‘broken down’. Krishna described how in this process, his ‘will’ seems to have broken down. Unfortunately, it was to the extent where he cannot ‘do anything’.

‘Breaking the will’ is often the stated aim of pro-beating evangelists (Dobson, 1992) without considering how one might freely and willingly have a religious faith in such a climate of fear. The comedian Trevor Noah described how indigenous people responded to colonialist settlers trying to convert them by force, saying ‘Jesus loves you’ until they screamed ‘OW! OK...I get it...I can feel the love of Jesus now’ (Trevor Noah, 13/06/2015). This association between Christianity and corporal punishment may permanently affect its perception amongst the very non-Christians that they wish to convert, no less than the floggings and amputations carried out by a small minority of Muslims have alienated people from Islam. Hindu nationalists in Nepal seeking to protect religious traditions from modern apathy must also consider how corporal punishment carried out by the faithful has made a mockery of exhortations to *ahimsa* (non-violence).

Krishna was the most fearless of my participants, having been the most openly rebellious against his family, bosses and society and discovered that he hadn’t been struck down on the spot. Mukunda and Preeti however, still seemed to experience some intangible feelings of rebellion yet voiced concerns that God or ‘the planets’ might be punitive if not appeased. Whilst condemning belief ‘in-itself’ as irrational, atheists have also denounced the instrumental reasoning present when God is invoked through fear or to get a better deal in the afterlife (Dawkins, 2016). Nepalese people have grown up with the threat of punishment if we don’t do x, y or z. If our buffalo became sick, it was our fault for not respecting the wind god; if my wife touched food when she was menstruating, our family might lose money. There were so many rules and threats, rather than gentle explanations explaining how certain actions might be good in themselves. For Krishna, his instrumental reasoning and careful prayers had yielded nothing. Yet despite or perhaps, in spite of Krishna’s protest, he seemed to have an intimate relationship with the God who he believed had betrayed him, daring to challenge Him in a similar way to the Biblical Job.

Finally, my participants’ spiritual lives were affected by corporal punishment through their dialectical reactions against it. The extreme cruelty that they had witnessed or experienced seemed to serve as a polarisation of evil, to be

contrasted with its opposite. My participants had a raised consciousness of the horror of corporal punishment against children and denounced it, especially with regard to their own children. My participants were also hyper-aware of associations with corporal punishment and war. The extremity of the Holocaust made Adorno recognise intimations of genocide wherever thought was not 'against itself' (Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 365). Similarly, Krishna's experiences - including being hung upside down and beaten until he bled – sharpened his sensitivity to any hint of punitive violence and the ideologies and thinking patterns upon which it depends.

When religion is polluted by corporal punishment, it is unsurprising that people across the globe have become alienated and sought spiritual refuge in anti-bourgeois, sub-cultural alternatives such as punk, New Age and Rastafarianism (Hall & Jefferson, 1993). Today refuges also include 'liturgies of consumption' (Smith, 2009, p. 100) or forms of worship and recognition on Facebook. These alternatives have been seen to offer safer and more loving spaces than schools and in some cases, families, due to corporal punishment. Nearly every town has its particularly broken victims of corporal punishment who only feel safe with their drinking companions, on a public bench in an open space. Others, like Sinead O'Connor, have been able to use their experiences of corporal punishment to campaign against it. Although O'Connor had accused the Catholic church of ignoring child abuse, she was able to reclaim her spirituality by becoming a priest in an alternative church and explaining in numerous interviews that she wanted to 'rescue God from religion', despite her struggle with suicidal feelings.

Whilst our reactions can sometimes be excessive, overdetermined or aggressive, as with rescue dogs who automatically wince or growl at footsteps reminding them of a previous abuser, ultimately, they represent an emotional commitment to a world that is the antithesis of corporal punishment, marked by tender, loving equality rather than 'Might is Right' violence. Despite Marx's condemnation of religion as an instrument of oppression and deception, he calls it nevertheless the '*heart* of a heartless world and the *soul* of soulless conditions' (Marx, 1970 [1844]), and in the *Manifesto* laments that under modernity, 'All that is sold melts into air, All that is sacred is profaned' and that the 'icy waters of egotistical calculation' have drowned the most 'heavenly ecstasies...chivalrous enthusiasm...philistine sentimentalism' (Marx, 1991[1872], pp. 37-38). Elsewhere he seeks the separation of the 'flower' of belief from the chain, that we might reach for the 'living flower' (Marx, 1970 [1844]) – which could be interpreted as a present eschatology; a 'heaven on

earth' sought through social justice and equality. Corporal punishment survivors in Nepal, who share many similarities with Marx's beaten and oppressed proletariat, may likewise, throw off the chains of memories of beatings, discard the distorted metaphysical ideologies used to justify them, but yet reach for their own living spirituality. Although my participants all revealed a degree of suppressed anger, which was occasionally displaced, I sensed that this was outweighed by their revulsion for tyranny. My participants had attempted to reclaim their own spirituality in their own ways, with Mukunda's pantheism, Preeti's rituals and Krishna's challenges to God.

The 'splitting' of their bodies and minds by corporal punishment remained, paralleling the gulf between their practices and their desires. Sadly, I did not feel that any of my participants were necessarily 'at home' in their bodies: corporal punishment had made it feel so often like a place of shame, reflected in an awkwardness in their gait, shyness in discussing relationships and a frequent lowering of the head. These mannerisms are so common in Nepal that it is difficult to discern whether they originate from cultural habits or corporal punishment but they represent a defensive attempt to disarm one's enemy through passivity. They are the mannerisms of a people that have endured centuries of beatings.

The Dionysian excess which fascinated Nietzsche, with its happiness, sensuality, self-indulgence, 'yes' to life and eternal recurrence (*"Sing and bubble over, O Zarathustra..."*, (Nietzsche, 1997 [1885], p. 213) was the exact opposite of the corporal punishment and 'Nos' from his mother and sister, whose treatment of him was an "inexpressible horror" (Nietzsche, 2004, p. 13). Similarly, decadent periods have followed periods of strict discipline and militarism in British history (especially the 1890's 'fin de siecle' and the 1950s/60s). Nepal is far from becoming decadent: the poverty level and social monitoring remain stifling. For children of my generation who were beaten every day, half-starved and terrified by a civil war, watching a Hindi movie with a bowl of popcorn is an unspeakable luxury. As corporal punishment declines, slowly human beings may start to reclaim their bodies as safe and happy places. I touch my hand, thinking about the pain it endured, and caress it carefully.

Auto/biography as Revolutionary Praxis

How can a few stories make a difference? Concrete political and legal changes must be made to protect children worldwide from corporal punishment in every setting: could autobiography, with its focus upon emotion, sensitivity and

minute details, bring about government action to ban and enforce a ban upon corporal punishment? Yet our consciousness of every evil in history has been aided through the experiences of individuals, whether recounted as fact or in literary form: for example, the Holocaust through Anne Frank (Frank, 1974), apartheid through Donald Woods (Briley, et al., 1999) or Victorian inequality through Charles Dickens. Corporal punishment is described in several novels by Dickens, especially *Nicholas Nickleby* which I mentioned previously and *David Copperfield*, which demonstrates how gender discrimination can impact upon children. David's widowed mother is forced to hand over all her property and control of her household to her new husband, who proves to be violent and cruel (Dickens, 1849). The harrowing accounts of individuals can ultimately prove more persuasive than 'rights-talk', since they can capture the public imagination. The emptiness and irony of rights talk without imagination is demonstrated well by one memory that many of us share: children in Nepal being beaten because they couldn't remember the points of the 'children's rights' charter.

Narratives about children by adults are as inadequate as narratives about women by men, or imperialist accounts of 'natives'. Charities often describe children in terms of their victimhood, without taking into account the strength, resistance, sense of responsibility and occasionally, the cheering mischievousness which I found in the accounts of my participants as they looked back on their childhood years. Adults often write about children in terms which both reify and degrade, calling them 'monsters', 'feral' and making them into figures of fear, such as Enoch Powell's narrative about 'wide-grinning piccaninnies' harassing a 'poor widow' (Barker, 1981, p. 38). This reification and monsterification could then be used as an excuse for violence, with corporal punishment being presented as 'the only language they understand'. Under this logic of hatred, a scale may develop from 'corporal punishment', to more serious violence and ultimately, genocide.

A brief search of 'Yahoo comments' and Twitter shows that these extremes are now far from taboo. Pages of comments, many thought to come from ideologically programmed robots, call for the persecution of newly constructed enemies such as "libtards", "snowflakes" (Olson & LaPoe, 2017) (derisory names for people who are liberal and sensitive respectively). A key influence upon this discourse has been 'alt-right troll' Milo Yiannopoulos (Olson & LaPoe, 2017), whose intense anger following experiences of corporal punishment and sexual abuse has been discussed earlier. Adorno and his colleagues'

Authoritarian Personality (Adorno, et al., 1959) is again relevant, as corporal punishment survivors hurl their repressed rage at designated 'out-groups' rather than those who caused it. In his recent study on the origins of extremism, Linden West describes the process whereby -

the outer world then gets divided into inferior others via processes of splitting and projection, while power and toughness become attractive as a way of shielding vulnerabilities (West, 2016, p. 16).

Still too terrified to confront his parents or teachers, the adult's furious inner child preys upon weak minorities, portrays them as a threat and seeks safety in physical protection (for example, minders, crowds of supporters, guns). Instead of killing their childhood abusers, a demagogue may incite others to kill. Alice Miller shows that the unleashing of rage in war and dictatorship can occur among leaders of all political and religious persuasions, and includes Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Ceausescu and Saddam Hussein in her analyses (Miller, 1997). As Adorno points out, pedagogies extolling "hardness" as a virtue lead to displaced revenge (Adorno, 1998, pp. 197-8), especially by political extremists using inadequate consequentialist reasoning to claim that 'the end justifies the means'.

Still desperately seeking approval, the damaged adult as dictator replicates the hardness and coldness ingrained in their bodies by their punitive parents /teachers and flaunt their lack of mercy. Underneath the persona, a child's voice is pleading - *If I am as brutal as you, might you love me then and not reject me?* This could explain Yiannopoulos' boasting of microwaving a cat and saying that it was good that Syrian children were gassed or they would have grown up to be Muslims (VICE News, 2017). He told a lone woman protestor "Fuck your feelings" and "this isn't the silver-haired snowflake show, this is the Milo show". His supporters jeered, cheered and chanted "USA, USA" to prevent the protestor's voice being heard until she was removed by security. This incident and its video was then flaunted on Breitbart (Breitbart, 19/09/2016). Perhaps childhood fantasies are being re-enacted dialectically as Milo makes a 'provocative' statement, then retreats from those who want to punish him (critics representing his parents) to the safety of an intimidating mob (his chanting audiences) taunting his accusers by saying 'You can't get me now'. Symbolically, Yiannopoulos refers to President Donald Trump, in whose fame he first sought shelter, as "Daddy" (Guardian, 21/02/2017). Others might respond to corporal punishment through secret betrayal: how many ISIS

supporters and defectors to the former Soviet Union were unconsciously enraged by corporal punishment? This theme is explored in the film *Another Country* in which Guy Bennett (modelled on Guy Burgess) is severely caned for his homosexuality then vows to take “revenge on the system which has oppressed and rejected him” (Girelli, 2011).

‘Childhood-standpoint theory’ is vital to explain the perspectives of children experiencing violence and conflict and to defend their innocence. As a form of “participatory research”, it focuses upon specific experiences rather than generalisation (Kanyal, 2014, p. 117) but ethical problems may arise due to the power imbalances between adults and children (Kanyal, 2014, p. 118). Collecting auto/biographical accounts from children about corporal punishment could risk traumatising them further. Corporal punishment should be removed entirely from the world of children. Children could also be damaged by literary and television representations of corporal punishment (including in Enid Blyton, Beatrix Potter, Jennings and even certain episodes of Popeye and Donald Duck) which are not a therapeutic confrontation of the issue, but contribute to its perpetuation by attempting to normalise it and force children to witness it. Although an adult, unafraid of being attacked, studying corporal punishment made me feel sullied and depressed, and as if I was in a poisoned world: feelings that children should not have.

The auto/biographical accounts of adults can never be as authentic as those from children themselves, but they may sometimes contain more detail and reflection that children are able to provide. My study revealed how easy it can be to cast our minds back and become children again, listening to our ‘child within’ and remembering details that we would prefer to forget. Narratives about corporal punishment, like the stories of sexual abuse survivors, require an autobiographical methodology which might allow the safe, slow and detailed expression of complex emotions with minute yet symbolic details. The autobiographical researcher is not cross-examining a witness, nor screaming for proof, nor making counter-accusations but instead listening or using minimal interventions and interruptions to encourage the speaker to go deeper into unique points of collective interest.

My participants seemed to be strengthened by the opportunity to at last tell their story, despite my concerns that I had disrupted their everyday functioning, the denials we all live by; and caused the resurgence of painful flashbacks to corporal punishment. But they expressed a gratitude and positive attitude to the

interviews which I found convincing. Like me, they probably felt emotionally drained by the experience, their body language often suggested this, but also like me, they took strength from the idea that this project could be transformative and somehow contribute to the ending of corporal punishment. All of them were committed to the abolition of corporal punishment following the interviews, but whether that personal commitment could be disseminated across their community is a more challenging question, given the restrictions upon them. In the meantime, they remain in the tortuous position – of being conscious of what changes are needed in one's society yet being unable to activate them. This is especially painful for those whose location forces them to witness corporal punishment against children in schools yet who remain paralysed from intervening, an agony similar to that experienced by many grandparents, seeing their grandchildren beaten. The inability to mobilise the changes that the heart screams for can leave a festering sense of injustice. The knowledge that children are still being assaulted in Nepalese schools, just metres from my family home, poisons every trip that I make there and makes me recoil from the schools that I wanted to go back and help. In this stifling, toxic paradigm, soiled by the sound of children's tears, I welcome autobiographical research as practical action, that can 'disintegrate, and come to disrupt and revolutionise 'normality'' (Reid & West, 2015, p. 179).

Future Research: Children's Voices?

Where progress has been made in creating 'child-friendly' zones, this has not been supported by children themselves, in that they are still too scared to report the numerous incidents of violence which occur, thus inadvertently colluding with their oppressors. Autobiographical research is therefore vital to giving a 'voice to the voiceless' and letting the children of Nepal know that some people out there are listening and that some people are out there who care. This study is limited by its use of adults – although my participants had travelled back in time, to recall children's perspectives, these were sometimes spoilt by adult attempts to rationalise their experiences, for example - 'Maybe our teacher beat us to help us really' or 'He was under a lot of pressure'. These excuses have sometimes serve to diffuse my participants' anger, but is this anger dissipated or sublimated? Only the voices of children themselves could express exasperation authentically and therefore halt its damage. Adult survivors of corporal punishment are too far gone, with a 'petrification' and scars showing where 'hope petered out' (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997 [1944], p. 258). Future studies should aim to gather more stories from children themselves, not just

looking back from the relatively safer space of adulthood, as my participants have been. To try and change situations during childhood is preferable to waiting until a whole life path has been damaged by corporal punishment.

Autobiographical accounts of damage caused by corporal punishment in schools cannot easily bring down the walls of authoritarian ideologies that remain impervious to the personal suffering of individuals. But they may start by revealing the flux, complexity and specificity of childhood experience, beyond identarian labels such as 'non-compliant', 'misbehaving' and 'deviant': conceptual tattoos which doom children to violence. This subversion of authoritarian labelling is one of the ways in which Adorno's 'Negative Dialectics' may free children from corporal punishment. The rod mentality is suddenly disorientated by Negative Dialectics as "the constant reminder of the non-identity between concept and reality, particular and universal, through a back and forth oscillation that refuses closure" (Lewis, 2006, p. 16; Adorno, 1990[1973], p. 406). It may be a multiplicity of children's voices, and their restless *Chi*, that cause the walls of hardness, coldness and conceptual rigidity to crumble. As children become less afraid to speak out, with stories that shake up adult assumptions (especially myths about what is 'for their own good'), their standpoint will be less easy to ignore. My participants were permanently damaged by the corporal punishment that they experienced at school – leading them to waste years of their lives trying to recover; wasted years which are their communities' and Nepal's loss as much as their own.

Who Cares?

Who cares about corporal punishment in Nepal? In a world in which three quarters of children are still being struck, popular concern about it remains ambivalent and the contribution of academics is lacklustre, with corporal punishment only being mentioned as an aside in studies of Nepal, if it is mentioned at all. Are topics such as decentralisation, globalisation and the various forms of discrimination between adults really more urgent than the constant violence to children that occurs every day? How is the role of government defined in Nepal if the state appears too weak and inefficient to enforce laws protecting its most vulnerable citizens? What is the government doing to educate teachers and parents about the damaging effects of corporal punishment? Charities, especially INGOs from countries in which corporal punishment is banned, need to ask if the money they are giving to schools in Nepal supports children being beaten. How many sticks come out the cupboards

again once the inspectors and photographers have left the scene? Gershoff has provided evidence of some positive interventions by INGOs in Uganda (The Good Schools Toolkit) and Mozambique (through ActionAid's programme *Stop Violence Against Girls in School*). In Mozambique, Gershoff reports, the caning of girls reduced from 52% to 29% (Gershoff, 2017, p. 235) (with the caning of boys disregarded by this particular programme!). Western interventions in the education systems of other countries have not always been benign (as discussed previously, representatives of the British Empire introduced formalised caning to several parts of Asia during the Victorian era). Nevertheless, the opposite extreme, the adoption of a relativistic position to corporal punishment as if it were now a 'native culture to be respected' is equally damaging. What bourgeois squeamishness prevents charities such as ActionAid from immediately condemning the 29% of canings that still occur and threatening to withhold funds from any schools that continue to beat children? Alienating schools could reduce access, but children are directly victimised by INGO's tolerance of the intolerable. Faith groups seeking to evangelise through example should also take care that the disciplinary methods recommended in their schools follow progressive models based upon 'heart-centred' pedagogies (Bandstra, 2016; Bandstra, 2017) rather than disciplinary methods which depend upon violence and disseminate the 'hardness and coldness' which may facilitate fascist values (Lewis, 2006, p. 14).

Media interest in the effects of corporal punishment is usually only stirred by extreme and visible signs, with articles showing shocking injuries like burst eardrums or broken legs (see Appendix) or extreme reactions (such as retaliation, addictions, or suicide). Populist politicians only wish to mirror the pro-spanking views of the majority even if it is against their socialist principles, as indicated by the New Labour's rush to prove how much they beat their children, see Appendix (The Guardian, 13/12/2000). As this study has demonstrated, considerable damage is also caused by less visible injuries, with beatings that do not necessarily leave marks but still cause physical pain, humiliation, degradation, emotional hurt, learning difficulties and economic failure. Visibilism might also lead to a narrow focus upon minimising physical injury and increasing effectiveness, whether corporal punishment 'works'. This might lead to alternative forms of corporal punishment being suggested that are 'user-friendly' such as the 'gentle' slaps suggested by Archbishop George Carey (The Guardian, 13/12/2000), just so long as they 'work'. Auto/biographical research is vital to overturn such flawed consequentialist reasoning. Only from a place of extreme pain, like that experienced by my participants and myself, can

one say with passionate certainty that corporal punishment is both damaging and wrong. Andrea Dworkin, similarly, as a rape survivor, is far more qualified to judge rape than those who debate it in the abstract with no idea about how it feels. The denunciation of corporal punishment is still seen by many as an 'extremist' view or a 'utopian' view that is not 'realistic'. Corporal punishment has specialised in the crushing of dreams, from teachers throwing blackboard rubbers at the 'daydreamer' to destroying children's hope that they will ever escape beatings. A "culture of pessimism" (Halpin, 2003, p. 32) has been a preparation for their passive acceptance of a lifetime of alienation and economic inequality. Schools actively suppress "subversive potential" (Sarup, 1978, p. 137). Corporal punishment has aided the internalisation of submission and despair. For Freire, the confidence to challenge our 'fate' is vital to social transformation. Freire makes a crucial distinction between accepting that we are "conditioned" and accepting that we are "determined" (Freire, 2004, p. 99). Corporal punishment may have conditioned our past, but it need not determine our future.

Adorno and Nietzsche link corporal punishment to 'stupidity' (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1997 [1944], p. 257; Nietzsche, 1996[1887], p. 64) but my participants articulated the complex origins of their problems with ease. An auto/biographical methodology enabled my participants to explain the effects of their experience and to attempt to link their past and present, using their unique voices. My participants have described unexpected outcomes, unusual byways and shapes of resistance which are colourful and innovative, and as diverse as Krishna's violence and Preeti's silence. Although these particular accounts could not be standardised without causal assumptions which might not 'fit all' (Merrill & West, 2009, p. 183), they include referents to shared experiences. As I listened to Preeti, my own hands started to sting with empathy (and are now!): I did not feel any further need of 'proof'. These flashbacks can be temporarily incapacitating and are experienced by auto/biographical researchers into other forms of abuse (Bass & Davis, 1988, p. 17). My participants, like myself, have donned many masks in their struggle to prevent their past impinging upon their present – with their failures costing no less effort than their victories. These dialectically restless effects of corporal punishment can both shroud and illuminate.

Although each of my participants linked their current difficulties to the corporal punishment they had experienced as children, I wondered if this was only inspired by my questions? To what extent were their struggles due to punishment in early life? Could it really affect them more powerfully than their

social and economic experiences, which they readily described in Marxian terms of 'Misery, agony of toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation' (Marx, 1954[1887], p. 644). If Krishna, Preeti and Mukunda were wealthy and not experiencing social and economic humiliation, might their experiences of corporal punishment have been easier to forget? Can anybody buy their way out of their shadows? My own experiences of relative success have not prevented memories of corporal punishment from regurgitating in the present, shooting a terrible light back through the past.

In such moments, my intuitive awareness of causation has a piercing clarity. I feel my legs knocked from underneath me, preventing my progress. My participants' memories of corporal punishment, likewise, retained an icy grip on their shoulders, holding them back from so much that they wanted to become. Yet the fragmentation of their dreams had not extended to their spirits, which, in the quiet space of our interviews, still whispered 'And yet...'.

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Appendixes

Appendix A – News Articles

 República
Nepal Republic Media | January 16, 2016

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Teacher accused of thrashing student with pipe

12 Feb 2016 | 2:51:58pm | | ARJUN OLI | 0 Comments

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NEPALGUNJ, Feb 12: While the government has been emphasizing child-friendly teaching methods and outlawing corporal punishment, a teacher of a private school in Banke district has reportedly thrashed a six-year-old student. Ramkishan Tharu, the teacher and owner of Bright Sky English Medium School, has been accused of thrashing a first grader Resham Khatri. According to Khatri, his teacher hit him with a pipe while he was going to the restroom.

Khatri became sick for three days following the incident. His parents noticed the bruises on his back only after they took him for a medical checkup. The boy's mother, Tek Kumari, said that she came to know about the physical abuse during the checkup. Meanwhile, Ramkishan, the teacher, has refuted the allegations. "I beat him only with my bare hands. I did not use a stick to punish him," he said.

The school, founded eight years ago, runs classes from nursery to grade five. Guardians have complained about corporal punishment at the school even in the past. Bindu Kunwar, focal person at Women and Children Development Office of Banke, has demanded legal action against the accused teacher. District Education Officer Bhim Bahadur Saud said the DEO is considering a legal action against the teacher.

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Teacher held for caning students

— Post Report, Lalitpur

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Mar 6, 2016- A school teacher has been held on charge of meting out corporal punishment to students. According to police, Kulchandra Ghimire, a teacher of Social Studies at Shree Baghbhairab Higher Secondary School, Kaleshwor, had severely caned six children. They have swollen calves and hands.

Police said irate parents had lodged a complaint against the teacher of the community school which is around 50km from Kathmandu. He was arrested on Saturday.

"We are investigating the case. The teacher is in custody. X-ray reports of the children show there were not broken bones, but all of them have either swollen calf or hand," said Deputy Superintendent of Police Ganesh Prasad Acharya. "Even two days after the incident, the children have marks of beating on their calves and hands."

The teacher had called the six students, all boys, after finding out they had played truant a day ago (Thursday) and beaten them.

The parents have said they will not tolerate beating as punishment no matter what the offence is. "It is not just physical injury; corporal punishment has a psychological effect on children. My son is worried since the day he was punished. He looks frightened and has forgotten to smile since Friday," said Amritnath Gautam, one of the parents. He added that he would seek legal remedies as an attempt to end corporal punishment in schools.

Admitting that both parents and teachers have the responsibility to discipline the children, the parents, however, said using sticks to make children fall in a line is an obsolete method. Police denied the Post's request to talk to the teacher in custody.

Published: 06-03-2016 09:49



NATIONAL



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Student sustains eye injury from punishment

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Jul 15, 2014—A female student at a private school in the district has sustained a severe eye injury after being hit by a stick as a punishment by the teacher.

A seventh grader at Manakamana English Boarding School at Chaudhara, Ghorahi-4 Rasiyali Budha required seven stitches on her pupils at the Bhairahawa Eye Hospital.

“The doctors say she might not be able to regain her sight,” said Budha’s mother, Ramleela. The extremely concerned mother condemned the act and demanded punishment for the teacher Som Poudel.

According to Rasiyali, she was hit straight on her eye after the teacher was furious over her handwriting. “I fell unconscious after the incident and the next thing I remember is waking up on a hospital bed,” Rasiyali said. She claimed that Poudel’s act of punishment by beating students with a stick was a regular routine at the school.

Poudel, however, had a different side to the incident. According to him, the stick he used to silence the noisy class apparently broke and ricocheted towards Rasyali, injuring her eye. Deeming it an accident, Poudel said he had no intentions of injuring her.

Rasyali was rushed to Rapti Sub-Regional Hospital following the incident, but was eventually taken to Bhairahawa for surgery on the doctors’ recommendation, said school principal Basanta Sharma. “Poudel is an experienced teacher working with us for the past 18 months, but the incident has now shook the reputation of the school,” Sharma said. Concerned over the restoration of the victim’s eyesight and her treatment, Sharma said that they will decide on necessary actions after a meeting of the school management committee.

Meanwhile, Deputy Superintendent of Police at the District Police Office Om Rana said the incident was very sensitive, stressing on the need to focus on the girl’s treatment. Rana seemed determined to proceed with the case and punishment the guilty accordingly.

Published: 15-07-2014 08:55

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NATIONAL

Palpa student hospitalised after corporal punishment

- Post Report, PALPA

Jan 26, 2017- Manisha Thapa of Bharrabsthan in Palpa district has been admitted to a local health facility after she was allegedly tortured by her school teacher. She is a sixth grader at Bhairab Janata Secondary School in the locality.

She was reportedly administered Murga punishment, a painful posture used as a corporal punishment, for four hours for her failure to do schoolwork.

She felt sick following the incident and was taken to the health institution, Thapa's family members said. They said the health facility has referred her to Kathmandu for further treatment.

Likewise earlier, 12-year-old Sushmita Ruchal, a sixth grader at the same school, had to stay in United Mission Hospital for four days after she was reportedly given murga punishment for her failure to do homework. "Ruchal went unconscious following her punishment and was admitted to the hospital," said her family.

In case of Ruchal, the victim's family is yet to file a case with police. "The school administration in question is pressing us not to file a case," her family said.

A student leader Bishal Oli accused the school of trying to protest the guilty teachers.

While the meeting between the District Education Office, chiefs of various students' unions, the school principal and the teacher in question called by the DEO following the incident agreed to take action against the guilty, the school principal Narayan Kunwar could not be reached by the phone for comment.

RSS

Published: 26-01-2017 11:38

Pope Francis

Pope Francis says it is OK to smack children if their 'dignity is maintained'

Vatican defends comments about 'disciplining with justice' after facing previous criticism from UN over attitude to corporal punishment



Pope Francis told parents it is OK to spank their children to discipline them - as long as their dignity is maintained.

Francis made the remarks this week during his weekly general audience, which was devoted to the role of fathers in the family.

Francis outlined the traits of a good father: one who forgives but is able to "correct with firmness" while not discouraging the child.

"One time, I heard a father in a meeting with married couples say 'I sometimes have to smack my children a bit, but never in the face so as to not humiliate them,'" Francis said.

"How beautiful," he added. "He knows the sense of dignity! He has to punish them but does it justly and moves on."

The Rev Thomas Rosica, who collaborates with the Vatican press office, said the pope was obviously not speaking about committing violence or cruelty against a child but rather about "helping someone to grow and mature".

"Who has not disciplined their child or been disciplined by parents when we are growing up?" Rosica said in an email. "Simply watch Pope Francis when he is with children and let the images and gestures speak for themselves. To infer or distort anything else ... reveals a greater problem for those who don't seem to understand a pope who has ushered in a revolution of normalcy of simple speech and plain gesture."

The Catholic church's position on corporal punishment came under sharp criticism last year during a grilling by members of a UN human rights committee monitoring implementation of the UN treaty on the rights of the child.

In its final report, the committee members reminded the Holy See that the treaty explicitly requires signatories to take all measures, including legislative and educational, to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence - including while in the care of parents.

It recommended that the Holy See amend its own laws to specifically prohibit corporal punishment of children, including within the family, and to create ways to enforce that ban in Catholic schools and institutions around the globe.

The recommendations were prompted by reports to the committee of widespread physical abuse and use of corporal punishment in Catholic-run schools and institutions, particularly in Ireland, that committee members said had reached "endemic levels."

The Vatican had argued that it in no way promoted corporal punishment, but that it also had no way to enforce any kind of ban on its use in Catholic schools, over which it has no jurisdiction. It noted that it was only responsible for implementing the child rights treaty inside the Vatican City State.

That said, it stressed that the term "punishment" is not even used in the section of church teaching that refers to parents' duties to "educate, guide, correct, instruct and discipline" their children.

In its written response to the committee, the Vatican said that according to church teaching, parents "should be able to rectify their child's inappropriate action by imposing certain reasonable consequences for such behaviour, taking into consideration the child's ability to understand the same as corrective".

The head of the Vatican delegation told the committee that he would take the UN proposal to ban corporal punishment in all settings back to Rome for consideration.

The Holy See isn't the only signatory to the convention that has been singled out on the issue. Britain received a similar recommendation to repeal its law allowing parents to spank their children when it came before the UN committee in 2002.

Some 39 countries prohibit corporal punishment in all settings, including at home, where most abuse occurs. Those nations range from Sweden and Germany to South Sudan and Turkmenistan.

In the United States, parents can legally hit their child as long as the force is "reasonable". In 19 US states, it's still legal for personnel in schools to practice "paddling".

Associated Press | Fri 6 Feb 2015 01:22 GMT | This article is 2 years old



Banning corporal punishment in Nepal

Govt to ban corporal punishment in schools

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SHREEJANA SHRESTHA

KATHMANDU, Dec 23: Prakriti Sunar, a kindergarten student at Himalaya Vidya Niketan, Kohalpur, has been left with a broken leg after her teacher punished on November 9 her for not submitting homework. She is only five years old.

Prakriti has been left with a fractured leg and doctors have said they need complete rest for six months.

The victim's parents, who have been demanding severe punishment for the teacher, have found that their daughter was repeatedly beaten earlier as well.

Likewise, Merina Chipalu, 12, of Ilam also died after setting herself on fire in bathroom in 2005 after her school teacher scolded her for going out of the classroom without seeking permission.

These are just representative cases of corporal punishments that take place in schools. The child help line run by CWIN, an NGO working for child rights, registers more than 100 cases of corporal punishment in schools annually.

At a time when corporal punishment is rampant in schools, the government has begun the process of enacting a law that would completely ban corporal punishment in schools. The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW) is working to enact a law banning corporal punishment.

MoWCSW has already held preliminary discussions on amending the existing act.

"We don't know whether we can implement the ban as practiced in developed countries but we will ensure that the schools do not encourage corporal punishment," said Dr Kiran Rupakhetee, under secretary at MoWCSW.

MoWCSW plans to finalize this bill within two months and table it in the next session of parliament. Earlier, the government had launched a nationwide campaign 'Learn without Fear' to discourage corporal punishment in schools.

No law bans corporal punishment in Nepal. Child Rights advocate Sumnima Tuladhar opines that such a ban is very important in a country like Nepal.

"Corporal punishment should be banned not only in schools but homes, child care centers and hostels," she said, adding, "This kind of punishment can directly affect psycho-social development of a child."

The amendments to the Children's Act will also introduce new laws for the disabled and conflict-affected children. "The ministry is developing an alternative care guide which will specify adaptation as a form of alternative care," informed Dr Rupakhetee.

Published on 2014-12-23 03:18:30

Social care

Francis Wheen

Wed 13 Dec 2000 08.49 GMT



English see smacking as a moral duty

Advertisement

Punishing children isn't wallop, it's codswallop, says Francis Wheen

The English, on the whole, do not like children. As the size of the prison population demonstrates, we are also a nation of punishment freaks. Put the two together and you have a society where hitting tiny tots is not only acceptable but a moral duty.

When John and Elizabeth Newson of Nottingham University interviewed a random sample of 700 parents, they found that 62% had hit their child before its second birthday. By the age of seven, more than 8% of children were being beaten every day, and another 33% at least once a week. "The majority of parents we have interviewed," the Newsons noted, "seem to believe that physical punishment is an inevitable and probably necessary aspect of ordinary child upbringing."

New Labour thinks so too. I don't know if the prime minister has chastised his new baby yet, but he has admitted to beating Euan, Nicholas and Kathryn "when they were little". Not to be outdone, David Blunkett boasted to the Sunday Telegraph last weekend that "I smacked my children and it worked". Meanwhile, one of his junior ministers, Margaret Hodge, confirmed to the Independent on Sunday that she and Mr Blunkett want childminders to have the right to hit children "with parents' consent".

Britain was the last country in Europe to ban corporal punishment in schools - and then only because the European court of human rights gave us no choice. The present government now seems determined to be the last in Europe to outlaw the beating of children by parents and nannies. Mr Blunkett says that physical violence was "the only way of getting the message across" to his three sons. The message being, presumably, that it's OK to hit people who can't fight back.

Why should parents and childminders enjoy the unique privilege of being able to lash out with impunity? Here's the answer given by George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, a few years ago: "You say 'Don't do this', 'You mustn't do that', and you gently slap them if they transgress, and there is nothing wrong with that as long as it is done with love and firm discipline within the family set-up." Mr Blunkett, who endorsed Mr Carey's "perfectly reasonable" remarks, has said that it is "important to distinguish between smacking and physical violence". Mr Blair, too, insists that "there is a clear dividing line between administering discipline on the one hand and violence on the other".

This isn't wallop, it's codswallop. Smacking is indeed physical and violent: its purpose is to inflict pain. No doubt many an 18th century squire believed that he was demonstrating love and firm discipline within the family set-up when he whacked his wife or housemaid. If he tried it today, he'd be up on a charge. It is amazing but true that the only British citizens who still have no legal redress against domestic violence are those who are most vulnerable.

Perhaps someone should slap Mr Blunkett about a bit, firmly but lovingly, until he sees sense. After all, as he is so eager to assure us, it works.

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लागेको थियो, छोरीले दिशापिसाव गर्न, हिँडडुल गर्न कठिन मानेपछि एक्सरे गराउँदा खुट्टा भाँचिएको रहेछ।' प्रकृतिको अहिले खुट्टामा प्लास्टर गरिएको छ। 'गुहकार्य नगरको भन्दै सुरुमा शिक्षिकाले कुट्टा छोरी बेस्सरी रोइछ,' विकले भनिन्, 'सुप लाग्दा भन्दै झन्-झन् कुट्टा खुट्टा भाँचियो।' उनले छोरीलाई कुट्टा क्रममा नास्ता बोकेको टिफिन बाकससमेत फुटेको बताइन्। उनले कुटपिट गर्ने शिक्षिकालाई कारवाही हुनुपर्ने माग राखिन्। प्रकृतिका हजुरबुबा कृष्णबहादुर सुनारले विद्यालयका संस्थापक श्याम कुँवरले शिक्षिकालाई कारवाही गर्ने र उपचार खर्च सबै बेहोर्न बताएपनि शिक्षिकालाई कारवाही नभएको र क्षतिपूर्ति दिने कुरा अगाडी नबढेको बताए। 'हाम्रो माग नाबालिका कुट्टालाई हदैसम्मको कारवाही र क्षतिपूर्ति पाउनुपर्छ भन्ने हो,' उनले भने। जिल्ला शिक्षा कार्यालयका निमित्त जिशिअ रामसुरेश यादवले विद्यालयमा दण्डरहित र बालमैत्री शिक्षाको अवधारणा लागू भएको बेला विद्यार्थीमाथि कुटपिट गर्नु दण्डनीय भएको बताए। 'यो विषयमा हामी विद्यालय श्रोतकेन्द्रमार्फत वास्तविक के हो बुझौं, शिक्षिका दोषी भेटिए कारवाही र क्षतिपूर्ति भराउँछौं,' उनले भने, 'त्यसबाहेक विद्यालयका प्रअलाई समेत स्पष्टीकरण लिन्छौं।' उनले विद्यार्थीको चोटको अवस्था हेरेर आवश्यक कारवाही हुने जनाए।

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Neighbours thrash Dalit boy for entering kitchen

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Nine-year-old Bhim Bahadur BK was beaten black and blue after he touched utensils in the kitchen of his neighbours in Kunathari of Surkhet district.

POST PHOTO

AdChoices Kitchen Boy A Food Kitchen India Kitchen

Apr 1, 2017- A nine-year-old boy was beaten black and blue by a neighbouring family on Wednesday in Kunathari of Surkhet district.

The crime: He is a Dalit boy and he had touched utensils in the kitchen of the so-called upper caste family.

The incident while comes as a shock, it also shows how caste-based discrimination is entrenched in society despite the constitution guaranteeing every citizen's right to equality and laws recognising untouchability as a crime.

Bhim Bahadur BK, son of Jayasara, had entered the kitchen of Batu Shahi after Batu's son Chakra Bahadur asked him to fetch some utensils. "That enraged Batu's elder son Bharat, who beat up my son as Batu threw verbal abuse at him," said Jayasara. "My son has swellings and black and blue marks all over his body."

Jayasara on Friday filed a complaint at District Police Office. Police have registered a case under Caste-based Discrimination and Untouchability Act (Offence and Punishment) 2011.

Jayasara's husband works in India.

"We are subjected to humiliation almost every day, as we are poor and we belong to 'low caste'," said Jayasara. When the incident happened, according to Jayasara, she had gone to collect fodder. "Our neighbour Batu's son Chakra Bahadur asked my son to fetch some goods from their kitchen. When Batu saw this, she got furious and started abusing my son. Batu's elder son Bharat then thrashed my boy with a stick," she said.

She took her son to Mid Western Regional Hospital in Birendranagar, the district headquarters—30 kilometres from her village—on Thursday. "I could not file the complaint on Thursday as I was busy tending my child," said Jayasara.

The country criminalised caste-based discrimination and untouchability in 2011.

Article 24 (Right against untouchability and discrimination) of the Constitution of Nepal says: "No person shall be subjected to any form of untouchability or discrimination in any private and public places on grounds of his or her origin, caste, tribe, community, profession, occupation or physical condition."

However, caste-based discrimination is still rife in the country, for the lack of awareness as well as failure on the part of authorities to effectively implement the law.

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2017

- 19 December 2017, A teacher and school are prosecuted by the guardian of the severely beaten student. <http://thahakhabar.com/news/28467>
- 04/08/2017, Teacher Arrested for Beating Students
<http://www.imagekhabar.com/news/latest/school/25427>
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- 12/09/2009 – Stop Corporal Punishment in Schools – SC
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- 09/02/2007 – Schools Urged to Shun Corporal Punishment
<https://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/schools-urged-to-shuncorporal-punishment/>
- 27/01/2007 – SC Notices to Gov on Corporal Punishment Rule
<https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/sc-notices-to-govt-oncorporal-punishment-rule/>
- 05/12/2006 – Headmaster Accused of Corporal Punishment
<https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/headmaster-accused-ofcorporal-punishment/>

Appendix C - Legislation

The Constitution of Nepal

Part 3

Fundamental Rights and Duties

22. Right against torture:

(1) No person who is arrested or detained shall be subjected to physical or mental torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

(2) Any act mentioned in clause (1) shall be punishable by law, and any person who is the victim of such treatment shall have the right to obtain compensation in accordance with law.

29. Right against exploitation:

(1) Every person shall have the right against exploitation.

(2) No person shall be exploited in any manner on the grounds of religion, custom, tradition, usage, practice or on any other grounds. (3) No one shall be subjected to trafficking nor shall one be held in slavery or servitude.

(4) No one shall be forced to work against his or her will. Provided that nothing shall be deemed to prevent the making of law empowering the State to require citizens to perform compulsory service for public purposes.

31. Right relating to education:

(1) Every citizen shall have the right of access to basic education.

(2) Every citizen shall have the right to get compulsory and free education up to the basic level and free education up to the secondary level from the State.

(3) The citizens with disabilities and the economically indigent citizens shall have the right to get free higher education in accordance with law.

(4) The visually impaired citizens shall have the right to get free education through brail script and the citizens with hearing or speaking impairment, to get free education through sign language, in accordance with law.

(5) Every Nepalese community residing in Nepal shall have the right

to get education in its mother tongue and, for that purpose, to open and operate schools and educational institutes, in accordance with law.

Children's Act 2048 (1992)

Chapter Two

Rights and Interests of Children

7. Prohibition on torture or cruel treatment: No Child shall be subjected to torture or cruel treatment. Provided that, the act of scolding and minor beating to Child by father, mother, member of the family, guardian or teacher for the interests of the Child himself/herself shall not be deemed to be violation of this Section.

Convention on the rights of the Child

Article 19

'(1) States parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.'

'(2) Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective producers for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as of rother forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.'

Article 28 (2)

'States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present convention.'

Article 37 (a)

'states parties shall ensure that:

No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment....'

Appendix D – Photos

Pupils lined up for the morning physical training session



- A teacher in Kathmandu



Source – Karen Valentin

APPENDIX E– Organisations Opposed to the Corporal Punishment of Children

(Source: Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, www.endcorporalpunishment.org)

ActionAid International

Africa Network Campaign on Education for All

Alliance for Parenting Education in Africa (APEA)

Amnesty International

Association for Childhood Education International

Association for the Prevention of Torture

Attachment Parenting International

Better Care Network

Campana Latinamericana por el Derecho a la Educacion (Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education)

Child Helpline International

Child Rights Connect

ChildFund International

Consortium for Street Children

CRIN Child Rights International Network

Defence for Children International

Disability Council International

Disability Rights International

Disabled Peoples International

ECPAT International

EDU (Intergovernmental Organization for Higher Education Accreditation)

Eurochild

European Child Safety Alliance

EveryChild

Franciscans International

Global Campaign for Education

Global Child Development Group

Harm Reduction International

HealthRight International

Home-Start Worldwide

Human Rights Education Associates (HREA)

Human Rights Watch

Inclusion International

International Association for Adolescent Health

International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates

International Coalition for the Decade

International Council of Nurses

International Disability Alliance (IDA)

International Federation for Parenting Education

International Federation of Medical Students

International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)

International Federation Terre des Hommes

International Foster Care Organisation

International Pediatric Association

International Society for Social Pediatrics and Child Health

International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN)

International Step by Step Association (ISSA)

International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific

OMCT - World Organisation Against Torture

Penal Reform International

PLAN International

Rehabilitation International

Right to Education Project

Rights International

Saferworld

Save the Children

Sightsavers

Simon International

SOS Children's Villages International

Universal Education Foundation

WAVE (Worldwide Alternatives to Violence)

World Congress on Family Law and the Rights of Children and Youth, 2001

World Medical Association

World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

National:

A Bleeding Heart, Trinidad and Tobago

Academy of Asian Parenting & Hypnotherapy, Malaysia

Accessure Educational, Nigeria

Action for Children & Youth Aotearoa, New Zealand

Activating Bridgebuilders, Finland

Active Parenting Publishers Inc, USA

Afghanistan Capacity Development & Educational Organisation

Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission

African Child Policy Forum

African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), Liberia

Against Child Abuse, Hong Kong

Alamal Charitable Association For Orphans Care

Albanian Children's Rights Network

Allied Care for Human Development Initiative, Nigeria

Americans for Constitutional Protection of Children

AMIC, Association des Amis de l

Annai Trust, India

Anuvrat Global Organization (Anuvibha), India

APsaA - American Psychoanalytic Association

Arizona PTA, USA

Asociacion Chilena Pro Naciones Unidas, ACHNU, Chile

Asociacion Doses/Agencia La Nana, Guatemala

ASPI: Child Aid, Support and Protection Foundation of the Italian Part of Switzerland

Associação de Mulheres Contra a Violência (Association of Women Against Violence), Portugal

Association Burkinabè pour la Survie de l'Enfance (ABSE)

Association de Lutte Centre le Travail des Enfants, Niger

Association for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Nigeria (AONN)

Association for the Protection of Women's and Children's Rights (APWCR), Cameroon

Association Kakaoka, Central African Republic

Association of Adolescent and Child Care in India (AACCI)

Association of Network for Community Empowerment (ANCE), Pakistan

Association of Women's Organizations in Jamaica

Association solidarité san frontiaire, Burkina Faso

ATUDE, Tunisian Association of Child

Australian Human Rights Commission formerly Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

Austrian Child Protection Society

Bahamas Crisis Centre

Bangladesh Buddhist Federation

Bega Valley Sanctuary Refugee Group, Australia

Behavioural Insights Inc, St. Lucia

Belize Family Life Association (BFLA)

Bhavani Security Consulting, USA

Børnerådet - National Council for Children in Denmark

Brainwave Trust, New Zealand

Buzzy Bees Daycare Centre, St Eustatius

C-Sema, Tanzania

Cameroon Association for the Protection of Children and Education of Children

CAMPE (Campaign for Popular Education), Bangladesh

Canadian Children's Rights Council

Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children

Caretakers of the Environment and Children Tanzania

Caribbean Centre for Human Rights, Trinidad & Tobago

Caribbean College of Paediatricians

Catholic Workers Movement, Uganda

CECODAP, CRC Coalition, Venezuela

Cedar Woods Consulting Group, India

Center for Child Rights, Somaliland

Center for Effective Discipline, USA

Center for Non-Violent Education and Parenting, USA

Center for the study of Adolescence, Kenya

Central Union for Child Welfare, Finland

Centre D'Education et D'Action Aux Droits De L'Enfant et de la Femme – CEADEF, Tanzania

Centre for Abused Children, Croatia

Centre for Girls and Interaction, Malawi

Centre for Human Rights "AMOS", Republic of Macedonia

Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention, South Africa

Centre for the Protection of Children, Kyrghyzstan

Centre for Youth and Children's Affairs (CEYCA), Malawi

Challenging Heights, Ghana

Child Diagnostic and Therapy Services, USA

Child Helpline Aruba

Child Helpline of Suriname

Child Line Lithuania

Child Nepal

Child Protection Alliance, The Gambia

Child Protection Network, Nigeria

Child Rescue Ministries, Uganda

Child Right Protection Cell, India

Child Rights Coalition Asia, Philippines

Child Rights Institute/Sudan

Child Rights Network (CHIRN), Nigeria

Child Safe Horizons, Hong Kong

Child Welfare League of Canada

Child Workers in Asia, Thailand

Child Workers in Nepal

Child's Rights Centre, Office of the Public Defender of Georgia

ChildFund Caribbean

Childhood Without Tears Association, Bulgaria

ChildHope UK

Childline India Foundation

Childline of Trinidad & Tobago

ChildLine South Africa

Childline Thailand Foundation

Children Advocacy Network - CAN Pakistan

Children Against Corporal Punishment (C.A.C.P)

Children of the Andes, United Kingdom

Children Welfare Association Fund - Kenya (CWAFF-K)

Children's Coalition of Jamaica (including Child Helpline)

Children's Fund of the Slovak Republic - Defence for Children International, Slovak Section

Children's Human Rights Centre of Albania (CRCA)

Children's Rights Alliance for England

Children's Rights Department, Office of the Chancellor of Justice, Estonia

Children's Rights Project, Community Law Centre, University of Western Cape, South Africa

Club des amis du lycée de mballa2, Cameroon

Coalition Against Child Labour (CACL), Pakistan

Coalition au Burkina Faso pour les Droits de l'Enfant (COBUFADE)

Coalition Camerounaise des ONG pour les Droits de l'Enfant, Cameroon

Coalition for Justice in Liberia, USA

Col.legi Oficial de Metges de Barcelona, Spain

Colectivo Mexicano de Apoyo a la Ninez, Mexico

College of Medicine, Pennsylvania State University

Comisi

Comisión Andina de Juristas, Peru

Comit National d'Orientation de la Campagne "Apprendre Sans Peur", Senegal

Comite de Liaison des Organizations Sociales pour la Defence des Droits de l'Enfant (formerly Enfants Solidaire d

Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation, National Council of Churches in India

Commissioner for Human Rights Ukraine

Communities Rising, USA

Consumer Welfare Council, Tamil Nadu, India

Coordinadora de Instituciones Privadas Pro los Ninos Ninas y sus Derechos (COIPRODEN), Honduras

CORE (Care for Orphans Rehabilitation and Educational Society), India

Cornerstone Foundation, Belize

Cradle of Practical Solutions (COPS) Uganda

CRAF - Child Rights Advocacy Foundation, India

Credo Foundation for Justice, Trinidad and Tobago

CRY - Coalition on Rights and Responsibilities of Youth, Pakistan

CURE-Nigeria

Czech Society for Child Protection, Czech Republic

Damauli UNESCO Club, Nepal

Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE)

DDR Public Relations Inc, USA

Deakin University, Australia

Defence for Children International - Angola

Defence for Children International - Sierra Leone (DCI - SL)

Defence for Children International – Zimbabwe

Défense des Enfants International - Section Suisse, Switzerland

Defensores PROCDN, Puerto Rico

Dfense des Enfants International - Section Suisse, Switzerland

Ditshwanelo - The Botswana Centre for Human Rights

DIYCLUB, China

Droits de l'Homme sans Frontieres, Chad

Early Childhood Professional Association of Alberta, Canada

Ecole Instrument de paix-şngal, Şngal

Education Rights Project/Education Policy Unit, Witwatersrand University, South Africa

El Centro de Desarrollo e Investigaci

End Physical Punishment of Children (EPOCH) - New Zealand

End Physical Punishment of Children (EPOCH) - Tasmania

End Physical Punishment of Children (EPOCH) - USA

End Violence Against the Next Generation, Ghana

Enfance du Globe, Guinea

Equality Rights Group GGR, Gibraltar

Families are Nations, Zambia

Family & Law Institute, Suriname

Family Services Network, USA

Fđration Française de Psychothrapie et Psychanalyse (FF2P)

Firelight Foundation, USA

First Children

First Children's Embassy in the World-Megjashi, Macedonia

Fondation des Oeuvres pour la Solidarité et le Bien Etre Social (FOSBES ONG), DR Congo

Fondation les Enfants d'Abord, Central African Republic

Fondation pour le Développement Communautaire (FDC), Burkina Faso

Forum against corporal punishment of children in the family, Slovenia

Forum for Child Rights Initiatives, Kenya

Forward Guyana

Foundation for Human Development (BKO), Suriname

Free the Kids!, USA

Fundaci

Fundacion FRINE, Colombia

Fundación PIDEE, Chile

Ghana Child Welfare Association

Ghana Media Advocacy Programme

Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition - GNECC

Global Action Nepal

Global Infancia, Paraguay

Grenada Human Rights Association Inc

Grupo de Iniciativa National por los Derechos del Nino (GIN), Peru

Guyana Human Rights Association

Guyana Red Cross

Halley Movement, Mauritius

Hallmark Media (Commonwealth Africa Journal), Nigeria

Hand in Hand Parenting

Hands for Hope, Uganda

HEAL

Healthy Living Society, India

Heartspeak, Canada

Help & Shelter, Guyana

Help for Progress Ltd, Belize

Help to Heal, United Kingdom

Hmong Women Council of America

Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights

Hope for Children, Cyprus

Human Rights Commission of Belize (NGO)

Human Rights Defender Institution of the Republic of Armenia

Human Rights First Rwanda Association

Human Rights Without Borders, Chad

Human Rights-First the Child, Bangladesh

Humanistic Education Foundation, Taiwan

Humanitarian Organization of Mercy (HOM), Benin

IDAY – Cameroun

Imamuddin Ahmad Democracy Learning Trust, Bangladesh

Independent Board of Advisors of the Parliament of Georgia

Indian Child Abuse, Neglect & Child Labour Group (ICANCL)

INFOCAPP (Integrated Network for Optimum Civic Awareness, Participation and Protection), Uganda

Information and Research Centre for Children's Rights in Albania

INGO "Ponimanie"/ TVS "Razumenne"

Initiative for Ending Violence against Children, Japan

Innate Wholeness, USA

Institut Català de la Salut, Spain

Institute of Education and Awareness, Pakistan

Institute of Human Rights Education, Tamil Nadu, India

Institute of Humanistic Science, USA

Institute of Support of the Child, Portugal

Instituto da Infancia (IFAN), Brazil

Instituto Interamericano del Niño, la Niña y Adolescentes

International Children's Centre and Ankara Child Rights Platform, Turkey

International Juvenile Justice Observatory, Belgique

IPPA, The Early Childhood Organisation, Ireland

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC), Ireland

J INITIATIVE (JI), Ghana

Jamaicans for Justice

Jumchab Metta Foundation, Bangladesh

Justice Institute Guyana

Kids Play Community, Uganda

Korea Welfare Foundation

LACRI - Laboratory of Child Studies, Brazil

Law Office of Erin Farley, USA

Le Comité africain d'experts sur les droits et le bien être de l'enfant (CAEDBE)

Legal-informational Centre for NGOs, Slovenia

Leo & Karin Foundation, Ghana

Lions Club of Chittgong Bengal City, India

Lives in the Balance

Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights, Austria

Macedonian National Child Rights Coalition

MAESTRADE, Cyprus

MANITHAM

Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, Finland

Mariama Children's Museum and Teen Turf, Trinidad & Tobago

Massachusetts Citizens for Children, USA

Men's Development Network, Ireland

Mental Health Programme, Belize

MIO, National advocacy for childrens rights, Greenland

Mkombozi, Tanzania

Molo Songololo, South Africa

Monduli Pastoralist Development Initiative, Tanzania

Morogoro Saving the Poor Organization, UR Tanzania

Mouvement des Jeunes pour le Developpement Rural, Togo

Muslim Council of Scotland

Nagpur Childline, India

National Association of School Psychologists, USA

National Bureau of Human Rights and Legal Research

National Children's and Youth Law Centre, Australia

National Children's Rights Committee, South Africa

National Coalition for Children, Jordan (formerly National Task Force for Children, Jordan)

National Coalition of Lesotho (formerly NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child, Lesotho)

National Coalition to Abolish Corporal Punishment in Schools, USA

National Committee for Families and Children, Belize

National Council for Family Affairs, Jordan

National Council for the Child, Israel

National Education Association, USA

National Youth Council of the Gambia

Natural Child Project, Canada

NCCR (NGOs Coalition on Child Rights), Pakistan

Neaniko Pediko Panepistimio Elladas (Youth and Children's University of Greece)

Neaniko Pediko Panepistimio Elladas (Youth and Children's University of Greece)

Network of NGO's Working with Children, Kyrgyzstan

Network of Rural Women Producers, Trinidad and Tobago

New Zealand Human Rights Commission

NGO Coalition on the CRC, The Gambia

Nobody's Children Foundation, Poland

NOPCAN (National Organization for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect), Belize

Observatorio de Violencia Hacia los Animales, Spain

Office of the Commissioner for Children, Tasmania

Olive Leaf Foundation, South Africa

Ombudsman for Children of the Republic of Srpska/B&H

On the Road Youth Ministry, USA

Ong Autre Vie: Organisation pour la Promotion et la Protection des Droits de l

Organisation de Développement et des Droits de l'Homme au Cameroun GICAR-CAM

Organization for Justice and Peace, Suriname

Pakistan Council on Family Relations

Pakistan Labour Federation

Pangkat Foundation, Philippines

Parbattya Bhikkhu Council, Bangladesh

Paredos

Parenting Beyond Punishment

Parenting in Africa Network, Kenya

Parenting Partners Caribbean, Jamaica

Parents and Teachers Against Violence in Education (PTAVE), USA

Parents Forum, USA

Peace Crusade

People Opposed to Paddling Students (POPS), USA

Personality Disorder Awareness Network, USA

Pescarolo Daycare, USA

Plan International Benin

Plan International Kenya

Plan International Zambia

Plattelandse Ontwikkeling Iniasitief, South Africa

Policy Research (PR), Nigeria

Polish Forum for Child

Presbyterian Children

Presbyterian Children's Services, USA

Presidential Task Force on Integrated Child and Adolescent Policy, Suriname

Programme for the Well-being of Children, South Africa

Projeto Proteger - Saúde e Comportamento Violento - Universidade Federal do RGS/Brasil

Promundo Institute, Brazil

Psychosocial Support and Children

Public Health Solutions, Ltd

Punjab Education Foundation, Pakistan

Rainbow Pre-school, Jwaneng

Raising Voices, Uganda

Random Acts of Good Deeds, Trinidad and Tobago

RAPCAN - Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, South Africa

Red por los Derechos de la Infancia en Mexico

Red Thread, Guyana

REDLAMYC (Red latinoamericana y caribeña por la defensa de los derechos de los niños, niñas y adolescentes), Uruguay

Relationship Center of Bethesda

Repeal 43 Committee, Canada

Reseau National des Organisations de Jeunesse en Droits de l'Homme, Central African Republic

Rezo Aba Sistem Restavek Haiti (ASR Haiti)

Rich India Foundation, India

RISE (St. Lucia)

Reseau Nigrien pour l'Enfance (RENE), Niger

Rural Women's Network Nepal

Russian United Democratic Party "Yabloko"

RVR College of Education, India

Saba Health Care Foundation

Sarangbang Group for Human Rights, Korea

Seek and Save Mission Ministries, Ghana

Sent-S, Macedonia

Service For Peace Sierra Leone

Servicios y Acciones por la Infancia (SAI) Programa ARCOIRIS, Uruguay

Shawthab Foundation, Yemen

SIFMA (Training and resource centre for early childhood care and education), Curaçao

Simon national

Sindh Human Rights Organization, Pakistan

SMC Research Foundation, Aruba

Social Action for Legal Awareness Advice & Help, India

Society for Empowering Human Resources - SEHER, Pakistan

Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC), Pakistan

SOS Telephone - City of Rijeka, Croatia

Sri Saddhattissa International Buddhist Centre, United Kingdom

St Stephens Anglican Primary School, Belize

Stichting Fundacion Respeta Mi (Foundation against child abuse), Aruba

Stichting Kinderbescherming (Child Protection Foundation; including Child Helpline), Curaçao

Sunshine Early Stimulation Centre, Barbados

Survivors Speakout, Canada

Sweet Water Foundation, Grenada

Terre des hommes - Programmes Suisse

The Aldet Centre

The Child Development and Guidance Centre, St Lucia

The Child Rights Society at the Lyceum School, Pakistan

The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus

The Hitting Stops Here!, USA

The Lebanese Federation of the Rights of Children

The Life Skills Development Foundation, Thailand

The Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Guyana

The Mothers' Union in the Province of the West Indies

The Promota Africa, United Kingdom

The Social Centre, Commonwealth of Dominica

Tipa Tipa, Haiti

Together

Trinidad and Tobago Coalition Against Domestic and Gender Based Violence

Trinidad and Tobago Coalition for the Rights of the Child

U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children

Udayan Care, India

Uganda Child Rights NGO Network

Uganda Girl Guides Association, Uganda

Umtata Child Abuse Resource Centre, South Africa

Uruyange Cultural Group, Rwanda

Violence Prevention Alliance of Jamaica

Voice of Community Organization, Rwanda

Volunteers Initiative Nepal

War Child Holland

Wild Child Counseling

Women Initiative for Prosperity, Uganda

Women's Rights Center, Suriname

World Asian Workers Organisation, Pakistan

World Hope Foundation, USA

World Peace Movement Trust (India)

YES (Youth Enhancement Services), Belize

YMCA of Trinidad and Tobago

Young Humanists Network for Secularism, Leadership and Neglected Rights, Nigeria

Young Ones Outreach Development Initiative, Nigeria

Youth Association for Development, Pakistan

Youth Human Rights Group, Kyrgyzstan

Youth Law - Tino Rangatiratanga Taitamariki, New Zealand

Youth Net and Counselling (YONECO), Malawi

Youth Service Center Orissa, India

Youths for Equality, Cameroon

Yugoslav Child Rights Centre

Zambia Civic Education Association

Zambian Human Rights Commission