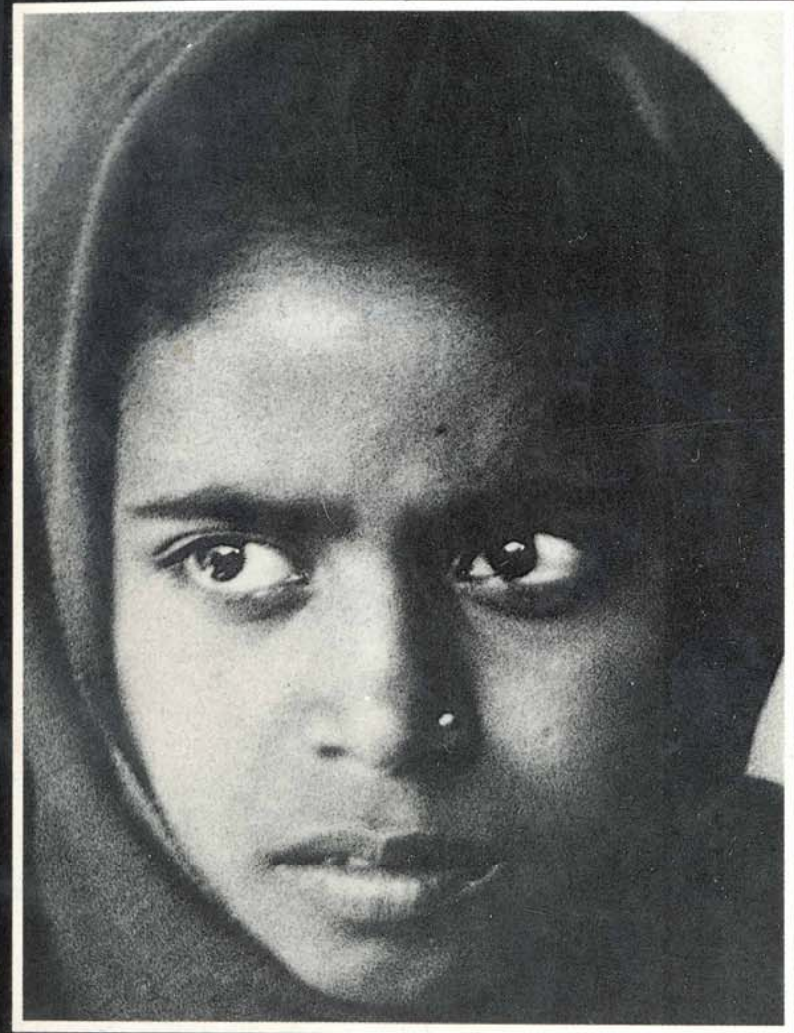


Coping With Crisis :

A Review of Experience in Family Counselling



Shobha Jaishankar

Institute of Social Studies Trust

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March 1997

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Foreword

In the dawn hours of 5th November 1996, Shobha Jaishankar breathed her last in a Tokyo hospital after months of painful illness borne with rare courage and equanimity. Before she left with her two children to join her husband in Tokyo in January 1996, she had struggled with courage and commitment against increasingly failing health to finalize the report on a decade of functioning of ISST's Family Counselling Centre --- a project she had co-ordinated and supervised since the time it got off the ground in late 1994. Under her caring supervision, a number of young researchers and surveyors, as well as the counsellors in the FCC had come together as a close-knit group, intensely involved in debating, dissecting and analyzing the complexities of the case histories of clients that had sought counselling assistance at our Family Counselling Centre since 1985.

The dreaded disease of cancer had not been detected yet. Throughout the latter part of 1995, Shobha had repeated bouts of illness and went through a series of diagnostic tests. Clearly, Shobha was endowed with an enormous reservoir of will-power : matched , perhaps, only by the genuine sweetness and integrity of her quiet and unassuming nature. She carried on , finished the report in the middle of all her other responsibilities and left for Tokyo. Within days of reaching Tokyo, Shobha had to be hospitalized for several weeks to start with. Then followed months of uncertainty, anguish and pain borne with rare fortitude. Writes her mother Lalita Krishnan :

'During the last months of her short life, she conquered mental anguish and fear of the unknown in the most dignified manner. She accepted the Reality confronting her, unwound the attachments she had created

around her personality through the different phases of her life, and abdicated the varied roles she had undertaken with rare commitment, with equanimity..... Thus it was that a great composure settled upon her mind and body and the Breath of Life left her silently as if on her command'.

Before she left, Shobha had told me that she would like to work more on the manuscript : that she felt that there are themes in it that she would like to develop in greater detail, hypotheses that she would like to explore in greater depth. I was to send her all the material and the raw data files to Tokyo so that she could do a more complete assessment of the information that she had helped collect and analyze. But that was not to be.

We are publishing this report as Shobha left it with us --- with minimal editing. Raj Viridi, Seema Sharma, Aditi Nandy, Shalini Vasistha and Ruchi Kukreti had worked on the project. T.V. Padma copy-edited the manuscript and Pallavi Ghosh had contributed to the final production. ISST would like to thank the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India for originally sponsoring the project and UNICEF, New Delhi for permission to use the cover photograph.

Swapna Mukhopadhyay
Director
12 March, 1997

1 INTRODUCTION

Project Idea

1994 was the Year of the Family.

The pros and cons of the family as an institution were discussed in detail in different fora. The Family Counselling Centre at the Institute of Social Studies Trust, which had been functioning for almost ten years by then, realised that their records could form the basis for research on families in crisis. The main drawback was that these records were not in an easily retrievable format.

The idea to create a project that would document these records for research purposes was thus formed by the present Director of the Institute of Social Studies Trust, Professor Swapna Mukhopadhyay. The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) was initially interested in funding this idea of documentation and felt that all the institutions covered by its scheme for counselling in the Delhi area could be studied by the project. However, this project could not take off because of inadequacy of funds. Eventually, the project could be taken up only for the Family Counselling Centre at the Institute of Social Studies Trust.

It has been a year of exploration, experimentation and learning for the staff involved in this programme of documentation and research at the Family Counselling Centre. Delving into the lives of more than 400 individuals and their families, and trying to understand the reasons behind their personal crisis was itself a difficult task. But to put it in some kind of order so that it could be accessible to

others interested in this subject seemed quite daunting in the initial stages of the study.

The task before the project staff was to document ten years' records in such a way that information could be retrieved on clients in different groups of social and economic background as well as with different categories of problems that they brought to the Centre. The grouping and coding of these variables, therefore, became an important part of this project.

Background of the Family Counselling Centre

The early part of the 1980s saw women's organisations protesting over some of the more obvious horrors being perpetrated on women. The organisations based in Delhi were particularly agitated over the issue of dowry and its adverse impact on the treatment of women. The voluntary, non-governmental organisations alongwith the autonomous as well as government organisations dealing with women's issues had felt the need to set up Centres where women in distress could seek redressal of different kinds. The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) was looking for volunteers from different organisations who could be trained in counselling these women and their families.

The Institute of Social Studies Trust had been functioning for awhile as a research institution with special interest in issues related to women.

It was, therefore, felt that a component of the institution should be involved in active intervention in the area of women's problems. Mrs Virdi, who had never worked in an office before, was persuaded by Mrs Devaki Jain, the-then Director of the Institute to join the organisation at the age of 55 as an assistant at the Documentation Unit, to keep daily records of newspaper reports on different aspects of the struggle for women's emancipation. When the Institute

was requested alongwith other NGOs to send in volunteers for training in counselling at the CSWB, Mrs Virdi was selected alongwith Ms. Manju Misra to go for this programme.

The selected counsellors from different organisations attended a two-week programme on counselling, and later had to volunteer time at the CSWB every week to assist in handling cases. This was how family counselling was initiated between 1982 and 1984. In 1984, the CSWB decided to fund voluntary organisations in different parts of Delhi to run Family Counselling Centres. Thus, the Centre at ISST came into existence with these counsellors and CSWB funds.

The first year was a difficult one as there was little publicity about the Centre and the concept of counselling itself was unknown. The cases handled by the Centre were those that were referred to them by the CSWB. These were few and far between. But, by 1986, with a little advertisement, the Centre at ISST was working overtime.

Research and the Counselling Centre

The material available at the Family Counselling Centre had been recorded to meet the requirements of the CSWB which sought to monitor the running of these Centres.

A face-sheet was filled up on each client who came to the Centre. This included basic information on the socio-economic background of the client, as well as information on the problem that the client brought to the Centre and the kind of help received from the counsellors.

A register was maintained on the clients in order of their visit to the Centre. This gave the name of the client, their address and telephone number. The problem brought by the client, the counsellor's assessment of the client's problem

and the kind of counselling that was provided to them were noted here.

Six-monthly reports based on records in the register were submitted to the CSWB.

The Counselling Centre at ISST had one great advantage over other Centres that have been operational in Delhi. The counsellors at the Centre have been with the Institute from the inception of this idea. While Raj Virdi had been with the Centre from the time of its inception, the second counsellor, Seema, a Masters in Social Work as required by the CSWB - has spent two long stretches with the Centre. Therefore, their recollection of cases became an important source of information and direct interaction with the counsellors proved invaluable for this programme.

With this kind of information at our disposal, the project staff then identified two distinct areas of research needs. One set of research was directly related to the functioning of the Counselling Centre. For example, what was counselling? What was family counselling in particular? How did the concept operate in practice? What was the response to it in the Indian context? The expectations from the counsellors by the clients, the counsellors' abilities in handling situations, and their access to referral services were some of the areas that needed to be looked into.

The second area for investigation was on the clients who came to the Centre. The clients with varied backgrounds provided information on the type of problems that cropped up most often among families settled in the urban areas of Delhi. Their socio-economic background and family histories could provide useful information on the brewing up of crisis in families of different kinds.

A conceptual framework was required for effective analysis of the information available at the Centre. The information base had two important ideas to support this framework.

One was the idea of conflict and the other was that of its resolution - more often the lack of it - which created the crisis in the family. Conflict itself was a product of the environment that a client grew up in and individual personality. The subsequent clash with another member of the family or the rest of the family could be traced to this origin of the conflict, on the one hand, and to the inability of a client to resolve this conflict. Outside intervention was necessary in such a situation, creating the need for institutions like the Counselling Centre.

The counsellors, therefore, needed to understand the environment that the clients came from, their role in the family hierarchy and dynamics, as well as the socialization that moulded their attitudes towards living.

In terms of research, this meant that information could be gathered on the clients, covering aspects of their placement in family and society, their growth through major incidents in life in terms of space and time, their conflicts and the possibilities of resolution of the conflict, given their strengths and weaknesses as a person.

With these ideas in mind, the aim of the project became three-fold. One was to systematically document the material at the Counselling Centre which could be accessible for research. The second was to understand the working of the Counselling Centre, and the third to understand the working of the families that visited the Centre.

Women's Studies and the Present Project

A fourth dimension of this project was the possibility of understanding women's situation in families that face crisis. Although we are addressing information from a Family Counselling Centre, as our statistics will indicate later, the bulk of the clients at the Centre are women. Even where

men come as the client, very often, it is the women of the family who are found to be in a situation of distress.

Women's studies have, very often, pointed fingers at the family as one of the main culprits for the subjugation of women. Here was an opportunity to understand this process of subjugation through the lives and voices of many of the clients who came to the Centre. Although the sample was restricted in every way, it could give us some leads for further research.

These were some of the ideas with which this project was launched in early 1995. The result of the explorations that were initiated through the year are in the following pages.

2 METHODOLOGY

The Preliminary Documentation

As has been stated earlier, this project started as an experiment, with the knowledge that there was a lot of written material at the Counselling Centre. The information was not in any organised form as no records were kept for scrutiny at a later date.

In the first stage, a questionnaire was prepared that would capture the minimum amount of information that could be gathered on each client entered in the register. This questionnaire covered the basic information on the socio-economic background of the clients (sex, age, marital status, education and occupation), the problem that they brought to the Centre, the cause of this problem, counsellor's assessment of the crisis, and the help they provided.

Besides, it tried to assess the mental and physical health of the clients at the time of crisis. Some details about the family that the client lived with were also noted. As the bulk of the cases were marriage-related, some questions were also framed to cover dowry-related issues and the conflict with in-laws in a household (See Annexure I, for the questionnaire).

Once the task of putting this information together started in January 1995, it was realised that all the face-sheets were not available. Besides, those that were available often had gaps in information, especially on education, occupation and income of the client and on their family. The main reason for this was apparent to the project staff once they started attending the counselling sessions.

Clients usually come to the Centre in a state of distress, and it is difficult for the counsellors to take down all the relevant details that are required of the client. Most often, the details are noted down after the client leaves. When clients make only one visit, it becomes difficult to get all the details. But when clients come for several sessions then all the details can be gathered. Therefore, over time, the project staff discovered that available information was not uniform. There are some cases that have detailed files, while in other cases only the name and the problem discussed by the client are indicated.

In such a situation, it became very important for the project staff to depend on the counsellor's recall. Fortunately, starting from 1984, when the first case was registered, Mrs Viridi has been around and with a very good memory, could recall most of the cases vividly. With the help of Ms. Seema Sharma for additional information, the records could be updated for almost all the years. However, between 1990 and 1992, Ms. Seema was not with this Counselling Centre, and these years have been very difficult to re-record. The face-sheets for these years have also been lost in most cases. Because of this lacuna, the documentation for these years are in a simple format. Please refer to Table IV.1 and IV.2 for details. They give us an idea of the number of people who came to the Centre, and the kinds of problems they brought.

The Coding of Information

The next task before the project staff was to organise the information collected in categories that could be accessed. A method of coding was devised for the qualitative information on problems dealt with at the Centre.

Coding was done in such a way that the finer nuances of this information were not lost. Broad groupings were made of the issues concerned, and within these smaller categories

were made to get all the details (See Annexure 3). This way, retrieval could be on the basis of the larger categories, as well as, in detail.

The qualitative information on the problems brought to the Centre was also not uni-dimensional. Very often, the client came with multiple problems. Or, they came many times, over a period of time with several different problems. A system was devised to note down the problem that was addressed first, and then to give a list of all the other issues that were also raised by the client in the process of counselling.

This information has been computerized for all the cases except those that were recorded between April 1990 and March 1992. These have been covered in the listing in Annexure 3. The rest of the computerized information can be retrieved, if required, on the basis of age group, marital status, occupation and gender of client, as well as the income of the family that the client came from. Besides, problems in the categories of harassment, disagreement, physical action (as related to death or suicide), referral requirements, and career requirements have been organised for retrieval (code list given in Annexure 3). Information on cause of the problem, counsellor's perception of the problem, kind of counselling provided etc, are also categorized and coded for retrieval. The details of this will be discussed in the next section.

The In-depth Study

Part of the project idea was to do an in-depth study of a sample of ten percent of the cases registered at the Centre. The explorations for this started in February 1995, when an Advisory Committee was formed for the project. This included Prof. Leela Dube (Sociologist), Dr. Ashok Nagpal (Psychologist), and Ms Vatsala Sivasubramanian (Counsellor and Director of Sanjeevini). The group

concluded that the project should undertake case studies of some of the clients to get a feel of the issues that needed to be addressed.

Five case studies were prepared. This alongwith information provided by each of the advisors helped to create a conceptual framework for the in-depth questionnaire. The two dimensions of the study i.e. one from the counsellor's point of view, and the other from the researcher's point of view were always kept in mind.

The process of preparing the case studies, understanding the model of counselling used by Sanjeevini, discussions of the case studies with Dr. Nagpal and the questionnaire with Prof. Dube, all led to constant critical assessment of the working of the Counselling Centre. This constant exchange of information was a valuable experience for the counsellors as well as the research staff on the project. It also provided the framework within which the researcher had the opportunity to observe and appreciate the problem of counselling.

The difficulties faced by the counsellors in their daily work became apparent to the researchers as they sat through counselling sessions. At the same time, the urgent need to systematise, advertise and professionalize the services provided at the Counselling Centre became clear to the counsellors.

While the immediate purpose of this process was to form a questionnaire for in-depth study, the questions that were raised earlier on the concept of counselling, and the method of its functioning were clear to some extent. These will be discussed later in this report.

The biggest drawback of the preliminary questionnaire was inadequate information on the background of a client. There were cases handled by the counsellors where quite a lot of information could be organised on a client. But these were

scattered over the years. Five such cases were selected for the initial case studies. Superficially, they could all be categorized as cases of marital maladjustment. But a careful study indicated that there were issues like childlessness, demand for money from in-laws, migration to a new environment, domestic violence, drug addiction, incest, cheating in marriage alliance and marriage as a necessity even when not suitable.

Could one trace these problems to the client's past? In many of the cases, this was so. The location of a person in the family hierarchy, physical and mental attributes, circumstances of the family in their childhood, change in these circumstances over time, the way a family worked as a group, i.e., the dynamics of the family and the process of socialization in the family, were all factors that contributed to the situation in which an individual found herself later in life.

For getting more information on issues such as those mentioned above, the in-depth questionnaire (See Annexure 2) was prepared in sections. While most of these covered straightforward questions and answers on the background of the client and their family, there were two sections that required qualitative answers and were experimental in nature. One was on perceptions on socialization of gender-related attitudes and the other on marriage. The canvassing of these sections brought out some interesting insights and these will be discussed in detail alongwith the case studies later.

The first section of the questionnaire dealt with the socio-economic background of the clients. Besides, this tried to get information on the migratory status of the clients and their family, as well as to assess the possibility of economic mobility of the family.

The second section covered the same information but for the opponent of the clients. Here, the word opponent

indicates the person that the clients perceived as the principal instigator of crisis in their lives.

The third section of the questionnaire dealt with the issue of crisis. The problems that the clients faced, when did it occur, how was the realisation of crisis handled by the clients, who did they hold responsible for it, who did they turn to for advice, what was their expectation in terms of solution were some of the questions covered here.

In the fourth section, questions were raised on the interaction between the clients and the counsellors.

The fifth section of the questionnaire tried to assess the perceptions of the clients on socialization in their families. This included their perception of importance given to them by their parents as compared to their brothers and sisters, treatment of boys and girls in the family, family values on self-esteem, education, marriage for boys and girls and the role of school in their growth of self-esteem.

This section of the questionnaire was an attempt to assess the attitude of the client vis-à-vis the other sex, marriage, education, and the general level of self-worth of a person.

Study of socialization process as the moulding of a person to perform an assigned role in society has already been attempted, particularly for women, in some recent studies. The present exercise was not so much to understand a process as to see its impact on an individual being questioned.

These questions were graded into three levels of high, average and low with the help of additional questions in each category. Since this section was mostly on perception of the individuals involved, it was highly subjective. Besides, as the questionnaires were canvassed, it became apparent that the perceptions themselves were at three levels i.e. the questions were framed with a particular bias -

that of the researcher. They were canvassed by the investigator with a slightly different bias and perception, and finally understood by the client in a different way.

This shift in perception is best illustrated by the question "How much responsibility was given to the client for everyday tasks (comparison being between the girls and boys of the household)?" The graded answers were A) lot of responsibility B) little responsibility, and C) no responsibility. The word 'responsibility' was loaded to begin with. While as a person from upper middle class background, I framed this question with the idea that responsibility would mean a positive trait for the development of an individual, especially for the development of their self-esteem, the connotations of this word changed when clients were questioned. The class and gender of the client mattered a great deal for this question.

For the poor, this responsibility at an early age was a burden of supporting the family. For a well-to-do woman who grew up in an environment of many household help, the idea of responsibility was strange. But for many men the weight of early responsibility of the family seemed too difficult to handle. Besides this, the tasks involved in the distribution of responsibility also varied a lot. Some clients talked about financial responsibility, whereas others talked about responsibility for siblings.

In such a situation, the project staff decided to take into account only an overall assessment of the personality of a client in terms of their self-worth and their attitude towards the issues under consideration.

The sixth section of the questionnaire was a matrix of support from the family members of the client in times of crisis. The positive and negative roles of support were noted against each of their relatives.

The seventh section dealt with the level of self-confidence displayed by the client and their spouses at the time of being questioned.

The next section, on marriage, asked direct questions on expectations of the clients and their spouses from the institution of marriage. There ensued a lot of confusion. First of all, both the investigators as well as the clients tended to mix the two concepts as one. For most people, it seemed, the expectations from the spouse were very much interlinked with the expectations from marriage. But most often, the answer to these questions were not given adequately because the clients felt that they had not thought very much on the subject.

The idea of forming expectations from an institution which is taken so much for granted as a part of life seemed either funny or preposterous to many of the clients questioned for the in-depth study. Quite a few felt that they went into marriage without thinking too much of its consequences and requirements. The analysis of this section, therefore, has to keep these points in mind.

The last section of the questionnaire was on belief in religion. This was included to assess the need for clients in distress to seek solace from religion, religious leaders or even black magic.

The purpose of the in-depth questionnaire was two-fold. One was to get more information on the background of the client so that the relationship between problems and socio-economic backgrounds could be assessed in detail, and the second was to collect enough information on the client to write a comprehensive case history on each of them.

The sample for this study was worked out alongwith the compilation of the preliminary questionnaires which had a column on whether further information could be gathered on a particular client. A list was prepared on the basis of this.

Letters of request were sent to clients on this list to help us with the questionnaire.

To begin with, the clients who come to the Centre are self-selective. But for the in-depth study, the private nature of the crisis in a family became very evident. Not everybody who was contacted was willing to come forth for further questioning. That is aside from the fact that many of those who were sent the initial letters had shifted residence and could not be located. About twenty clients came forward in the initial phase of the in-depth study and were very cooperative in giving the answers to the questions posed to them. Many of these people are also willing to help other clients in distress if they can.

The rest of the sample for the study came from clients who were still visiting the Centre for follow-up of their cases. The purpose of the study was explained to them and if they were willing, their answers to the questions were taken down.

Unfortunately, because of the nature of the sample, generalisations will not be possible on the basis of this study. But the case studies provide us with many insights into the working of families in distress or crisis in the urban areas of Delhi.

3 COUNSELLING AND THE FAMILY COUNSELLING CENTRE

Counselling, in formal terms, is an area reserved for clinical psychologists. Psycho-therapy is the main tool of a counsellor who tries to help an individual in personal crisis or distress. The main idea in this process is to help clients help themselves to solve the crisis in their lives.

There are certain rules that the counsellor is expected to follow. The first is to work out a contract with the client. This contract is really an understanding between the counsellor and the client as to what should be changed in the client's lifestyle or behaviour to achieve a result. Therefore, mutual consent of the counsellor and the client is an important aspect of this contract. Besides, the goal for change should be achievable.

Once a desirable result is identified, the counsellor and the client have to work towards it through a strategy that is worked out by the client with little guidance from the counsellor. This has to be done through a meaningful set of sessions.

Family counselling, however, has an element of social work involved in its requirements. Although each individual who comes as a client is treated as an individual, the conflict with other members of the family requires that a client introduce his opponents to the counsellors. This needs persuasion as very often the opponent is not interested in solving the conflict or does not want to admit that there is a conflict.

While psychological factors play a very important role in these family conflicts, there is an element of dispute and disagreement involved which can flare up to mental or

physical abuse. The counsellors also have to get involved in organising referral help like police or legal assistance. These also make the task of setting goals and contracts more difficult in a Family Counselling Centre. Very often, their role is more like that of an arbitrator who gets battered by both the sides unless they are vigilant themselves.

As our statistics in the next section will indicate, the Family Counselling Centre at the Institute of Social Studies Trust has built up a base for marriage-related counselling. It provides counselling to women and their families in crisis or distress, free of charge. The counsellors' work is considered to be voluntary, compensated to some extent by the CSWB. Their work involves not only counselling but home visits where necessary, visit with client for referral help where the client cannot manage it, and persuading the opponents of the client through correspondence and visit the Centre for counselling. Very often, the clients place very high expectations from the counsellors and are not satisfied with the results that they get. As one of our case studies illustrates, the expectations from a paid counsellor are much less. It is also easier for a paid counsellor to set goals and contracts. This aspect of counselling has to be understood well before correctives can be applied here. These will be taken up again in the policy implication section later in the report.

4 PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRES

As stated earlier, the information at the Centre was noted in a questionnaire covering basic information on the clients who came to the Centre. This was coded and Tables were prepared to see the dispersal of the clients over the various socio-economic variables as well as their relation to the problems brought to the Centre. There was also an attempt to understand the relationships between the multitude of problems faced by the clients and their causes.

While studying these Tables we have to keep the following facts about the sample in mind :

1. The sample is a self-selective one, marriage counselling being a major attraction of the Centre.
2. The information collected over ten years is somewhat uneven and because of this information for the year April 1990 to March 1992 could not be incorporated in the main set of data. It has been dealt with in a different format of simple listing of clients against their problems.
3. The clients at the Centre are mostly from Delhi. There are a few clients who have migrated to Delhi because of their job or have come because they are married to a resident of Delhi. Information on migration is unfortunately not available in the preliminary questionnaire because it was not collected. The in-depth questionnaire tries to fill this gap.

I Socio-Economic Profile of Clients

Most of the clients who come to the Family Counselling Centre are women. Of the 387 clients who have been registered in the preliminary questionnaire, 300 were

female and 87 were male clients. The age structure, marital status, educational level, occupation and family income of these clients are given below.

Table I.1
Distribution of Clients by Year and Gender

Year	Gender		Total		
	Female	%	Male	%	
1984	1	(100)	-	-	1 (100)
1985	10	(83.3)	2	(16.7)	12 (100)
1986	30	(73.2)	11	(26.8)	41 (100)
1987	28	(84.8)	5	(15.2)	33 (100)
1988	25	(71.4)	10	(28.6)	35 (100)
1989	45	(73.7)	16	(26.2)	61 (100)
1990	10	(71.4)	4	(28.6)	14 (100)
1992	31	(79.5)	8	(20.5)	39 (100)
1993	57	(83.8)	11	(16.2)	68 (100)
1994	41	(77.3)	12	(22.6)	53 (100)
1995	22	(73.3)	8	(26.7)	30 (100)
Total	300	(77.5)	87	(22.5)	387 (100)

Over the ten year period of this study, the distribution of clients taken for preliminary questionnaire is very uneven as is evident from this Table. First of all, the clients who contacted the Centre by letters or telephone alone were not included in this study. Secondly, the clients who came for a single session and gave very little information were also eliminated. Thirdly, wherever recall was uncertain, the information was not taken down. Lastly, for 1990 and

1992, the entire year is not covered. 1995 also has information on clients until March of that year.

Keeping these in mind, the clients at the Counselling Centre increased in number over the years and have averaged at about 45 every year. Of these, women have formed 70 to 80 percent of the clients and men 20 to 30 percent. The years, 1988, 1989 and 1990 have had more male clients than other years. This could have been because of some amount of publicity by CSWB on the radio and television. The overall number of clients had also started increasing in these years.

Table 1.2
Distribution of Clients by Age and Gender

Age Group	Gender				Total	
	Female	%	Male	%	(F + M)	%
< - 15	9	(3.0)	2	(2.3)	11	(2.8)
16 - 20	17	(5.6)	5	(5.7)	22	(5.7)
21 - 25	66	(22.2)	13	(14.9)	79	(20.4)
26 - 30	73	(24.3)	15	(17.2)	88	(22.7)
31 - 35	46	(15.3)	10	(11.5)	56	(14.5)
36 - 40	31	(10.3)	10	(11.5)	41	(10.6)
41 - 45	12	(4.0)	5	(5.7)	17	(4.4)
46 - >	27	(9.0)	23	(26.4)	50	(12.9)
NA	19	(6.3)	4	(4.6)	23	(5.9)
Total	300	(100)	87	(100)	387	(100)

Most of the clients who came to the Centre in the past years fall in the age group of 21 to 40, i.e. 72 percent of the women registered in the preliminary questionnaire and 55.1 percent of men. 24.3 percent of women were found in

the age group of 26 to 30. On the other hand, 26.4 percent of male clients were found in the age group of 46 and above. This slight difference in the concentration of female and male clients in different age groups reflects the fact that women come with difficulties related to marriage or employment soon after they enter these stages in their life. Men actually come to the Centre with the problem of their daughters or sisters or their own concern with dispute in the family.

Table 1.3
Distribution of Clients by Marital Status & Gender

Marital Status	Gender				Total (F + M)
	Female	%	Male	%	
Married	208	(69.3)	70	(80.5)	278 (71.8)
Unmarried	46	(15.3)	13	(14.9)	59 (15.2)
Divorced	10	(3.3)	-	-	10 (2.6)
Separated	15	(5.0)	4	(4.6)	19 (4.9)
Widowed	18	(6.0)	-	-	18 (4.6)
NA	3	(1.0)	-	-	3 (0.8)
Total	300	(100)	87	(100)	387 (100)

The clients at the Centre are mostly married. However, these figures hide the fact of temporary separation. 69.3 percent of women and 80.5 percent of men in this group were married, and 15.3 percent of women as against 14.9 percent of the men were in the unmarried category. The unmarried clients come to the Centre for solving issues related to employment, dispute with parents or adolescent-related problems. Some divorced or separated women come to get referral help in terms of legal

assistance in getting custody of children or maintenance for themselves and their children. There are 18 women who are widowed in this sample. Their major concerns are disputes with children or over property.

Table I.4
Distribution of Clients by Family Size and Gender

Family Size	Gender				Total	
	Female	%	Male	%	(F + M)	%
< - 4	107	(35.7)	38	(43.7)	145	(37.5)
5 - 8	103	(34.3)	32	(36.8)	135	(34.9)
9 - 12	18	(6.0)	4	(4.6)	22	(5.7)
> - 13	5	(1.7)	2	(2.3)	7	(1.8)
NA	69	(23.0)	11	(12.6)	78	(20.1)
Total	300	(100)	87	(100)	387	(100)

The clients at the Centre come from small to medium-sized families i.e. four to eight people in a house. However, this information is a little uncertain. Although 37.5 percent of the families had four or fewer members, when it comes to influence in a crisis from other members of the extended family, the number of people involved increases a great deal, i.e. for this particular study, the actual size of the family has little relevance to the actual functioning of the family. Besides the family, the community also plays an important role in family disputes. Unfortunately, we have little information on these aspects of relationships.

Table I.5
Distribution of Clients by Educational Level and Gender

Educational Level	Gender				Total	
	F	%	M	%	(F + M)	%
Non-literate	52	(17.3)	4	(4.6)	56	(14.5)
Semi-literate	7	(2.3)	4	(4.6)	11	(2.8)
Primary	17	(5.7)	8	(9.2)	25	(6.5)
Middle	32	(10.7)	10	(11.5)	42	(10.9)
Sr. Secondary	40	(13.3)	19	(21.9)	59	(15.2)
Graduate	81	(27.0)	26	(29.9)	107	(27.6)
Post Graduate	31	(10.3)	4	(4.6)	35	(9.0)
Ph.D.	9	(3.0)	3	(3.4)	12	(3.1)
Diploma	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
NA	29	(9.7)	9	(10.3)	38	(9.8)
Total	300	(100)	87	(100)	387	(100)

27.0 percent of women among the clients registered were graduates whereas, 17.3 percent were non-literates. The wide spectrum of people who come to the Centre is best illustrated by this variable. 29.9 percent of the men in this sample were graduates as compared to 4.6 percent non-literate. The different set of problems brought up by these disparate groups is discussed later.

Table I.6
Distribution of Clients by Family Income & Gender

Income	Gender		Total		
	Female %	Male %	(F + M)	%	
< - 1000	36	(12.0)	6	(6.9)	42 (10.8)
1001 - 3000	46	(15.3)	14	(16.1)	60 (15.5)
3001 - 5000	53	(17.6)	17	(19.5)	70 (18.1)
5001 - 10000	80	(26.7)	26	(29.9)	106 (27.4)
10001 - 15000	33	(11.0)	13	(14.9)	46 (11.9)
>15000	21	(7.0)	3	(3.5)	24 (6.2)
NA	31	(10.3)	8	(9.2)	39 (10.1)
Total	300	(100)	87	(100)	387 (100)

Family income has been taken as a variable for this study instead of individual income levels. This is partly because the income levels of the clients were mostly worked out as an estimate of their standard of living. The clients were thus categorised as from very low income group, low income group, low middle income group, middle middle income group, upper middle income group, and high income group.

On the basis of this categorisation, middle middle income group took the largest share of the clients under study - 26.7 percent of women and 29.9 percent of men. 44.9 percent of women were below this level as compared to 32.5 percent of men. The major difference is in the very poor category which has more women than men. 18.0 percent of women were in the categories above the middle middle income group and 18.4 percent of men. There were more poor women who came as clients than poor men, about 12.0 percent of women clients falling under this category compared to 6.9 percent of men.

Table I.7
Distribution of Clients by Occupation & Gender

Occupation	Gender		Total		
	Female %	Male %	(F + M)	%	
Home Maker (House Wife)	103	(34.3)	-	-	103 (26.6)
Student	17	(5.7)	4	(4.6)	21 (5.4)
Domestic Help	14	(4.7)	-	-	14 (3.6)
Retired/ Unemployed	18	(6.0)	8	(9.2)	26 (6.7)
Class IV Govt employee / Petty Trader	27	(9.0)	20	(23.0)	47 (12.2)
Clerical Worker	47	(15.7)	29	(33.4)	76 (19.6)
Professional in middle level Services	38	(12.7)	8	(9.2)	46 (11.9)
Sr. Govt Service & Other Profession	7	(2.3)	4	(4.6)	11 (2.8)
Large Business	3	(1.0)	7	(8.0)	10 (2.6)
Others	3	(1.0)	-	-	3 (0.8)
NA	23	(7.6)	7	(8.0)	30 (7.8)
Total	300	(100)	87	(100)	387 (100)

34.3 percent of the women who were registered in the preliminary questionnaires, were primarily housewives, i.e. they were not employed outside the house. 37.4 percent of the women clients were employed in occupations that can be categorised broadly as clerical, lower government-related jobs and teaching or research-related jobs. As against this, 65.6 percent of men were found in the same category. Besides these, some of the clients were students, some retired or unemployed, some in senior government or professional posts and some involved with large business. There were 14 women clients who worked mainly as domestic help.

II The Primary Problem Brought to the Centre (counselling-related information)

Table II.1
Problem by Gender

Code No.	Problems	Gender				Total	
		F	%	M	%	F+M	%
01	Harassment by husband	30	(10.1)	3	(3.4)	33	(8.6)
02	Harassment by in-laws	8	(2.7)	3	(3.4)	11	(2.9)
03	Harassment by children	6	(2.0)	1	(1.1)	7	(1.8)
04	Harassment by brother	1	(0.3)	-	-	1	(0.3)
05	Harassment by parents	-	-	-	-	-	-
06	Harassment by any other member of the family	3	(1.0)	-	-	3	(0.8)
07	Harassment by community	3	(1.0)	-	-	3	(0.8)
08	Harassment by authorities (Police)	5	(1.7)	-	-	5	(1.3)
09	Harassment by Wife	1	(0.3)	4	(4.5)	5	(1.3)
10	Death of daughter by burning	2	(0.7)	1	(1.1)	3	(0.8)
11	Suicide	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
12	Cheating / Blackmailing	3	(1.0)	1	(1.1)	4	(1.0)
13	Husband / Spouse involved in illegal activities	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	Disagreement with Husband/Wife	14	(4.7)	4	(4.5)	18	(4.7)
15	Disagreement with in-laws	7	(2.4)	1	(1.1)	8	(2.1)
16	Disagreement with family / Children	10	(3.4)	8	(9.09)	18	(4.7)
17	Disagreement with community	1	(0.3)	-	-	1	(0.3)
18	Forced out of house	9	(3.0)	1	(1.1)	10	(2.6)
19	Wants to move out of home (parental)	1	(0.3)	-	-	1	(0.3)
20	Wants to move out of home (Marital)	9	(3.0)	-	-	9	(2.3)
21	Deserted	14	(4.7)	12	(13.6)	26	(6.8)
22	Broken engagement	1	(0.3)	-	-	1	(0.3)
23	Reconciliation	8	(2.7)	4	(4.5)	12	(3.1)
24	Accommodation problem	5	(1.7)	-	-	5	(1.3)
25	Uncertainty over marriage	5	(1.7)	1	(1.1)	6	(1.6)
26	Emotional disturbances	14	(4.7)	5	(5.7)	19	(4.9)
27	Loss of self-confidence	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
28	Anxiety over high family expectations	2	(0.7)	1	(1.1)	3	(0.8)
29	Lack of family support during personal crisis	-	-	2	(2.3)	2	(0.5)
30	Lack of communication with family members	3	(1.0)	-	-	3	(0.8)
31	Family pressures for marriage	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
32	Homosexuality	-	-	-	-	-	-
33	Alcoholism	4	(1.4)	1	(1.1)	5	(1.3)

cont...

Code No.	Problems	Gender				Total	
		F	%	M	%	F+M	%
34	Wants to marry	3	(1.0)	3	(3.4)	6	(1.6)
35	Adultery within the family	1	(0.3)	1	(1.1)	2	(0.5)
36	Adultery outside the family (Extra Marital Affair)	5	(1.7)	3	(3.4)	8	(2.1)
37	Drug Addiction ?	-	-	2	(2.3)	2	(0.5)
38	Financial problems	9	(3.0)	3	(3.4)	12	(3.1)
39	Medical problems	1	(0.3)	2	(2.3)	3	(0.8)
40	Career/ Employment related problems	22	(7.4)	5	(5.7)	27	(7.0)
41	Adoption related help	3	(1.0)	2	(2.3)	5	(1.3)
42	Police assistance	3	(1.0)	-	-	3	(0.8)
43	Psychiatric help	1	(0.3)	1	(1.1)	2	(0.5)
44	Family Planning related assistance	-	-	4	(4.5)	4	(1.0)
45	Sexual harassment	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
46	Property dispute	2	(0.7)	4	(4.5)	6	(1.6)
47	Education related problem (admissions)	2	(0.7)	1	(1.1)	3	(0.8)
48	Legal support for divorce	28	(9.5)	1	(1.1)	29	(7.5)
49	Legal support for maintenance	13	(4.4)	1	(1.1)	14	(3.6)
50	Legal support for property dispute	8	(2.7)	-	-	8	(2.0)
51	Legal support for will	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
52	Legal assistance on case for attempt to murder/assault	-	-	-	-	-	-
53	Legal support for separation	10	(3.4)	1	(1.1)	11	(2.9)
54	Legal support for the custody of child	4	(1.4)	1	(1.1)	5	(1.3)
55	Need for domestic help /help from outside	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
TOTAL		296	(100)	88	(100)	384	(100)

Note: Cf. Annexure 3 for sub-categories within each group

1. Referral help for legal services and harassment by different members of the family are two main problems brought to the Centre by the clients.
2. Harassment is mainly found to be by the husband of the client (33 cases). There are a few cases of harassment by wives as well (5). In-laws form the next set of relations who are blamed for harassment (11). There are cases of harassment by children as well (7).
3. Desertion, forced out of home or need to move away from marital home are the next set of important problems brought to the Centre. 46 clients out of a total of 387 cases fall into this category. Of these, there are 26 cases of desertion and 10 cases of clients forced out

of home. There are 12 cases of clients who want reconciliation.

4. Disagreements with husband or children are another set of problems brought by the clients (18 cases each).
5. Emotional disturbance in general and marriage-related uncertainties were brought by 25 clients.
6. There were only 5 cases of alcoholism and 2 cases of drug abuse-related problems registered at the Centre in the years covered by the preliminary questionnaire as the primary problem. However, there were 15 other cases which had alcoholism as one of the problems faced by the client.
7. Extra-marital affairs surfaced as a problem in 10 cases.
8. A large number of cases brought to the Centre were those that required help from other agencies. 16.5 percent of the cases brought to the Centre (64) were related to these issues. Of these, 42 percent of the cases (27) were related to employment issues (23 out of these 27 were brought by women). Financial and property-related problems were the other issues bothering some of the clients.
9. Need for legal assistance formed a very important need of the clients who came to the Centre. 72 clients in the list registered here needed this help. Of these, 67 were women. The assistance required was mainly for divorce, maintenance and custody of children. Property disputes and separation were other areas where legal help was sought.

Tables II.2 and II.3 Problem Relation to Other Problems & Causes

Table II.2
Problem Relation to Other Problems

Problem	-	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Harassment	12	12	1	7	15	24	1	13	10
Burning/Suicide/ Cheating	3	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	2
Disagreement	6	3	1	5	4	28	2	5	7
Forced separation	9	17	-	10	8	20	2	8	12
Emotional Disturbances & Anxiety	6	5	-	6	3	24	3	8	1
Adultery	4	2	-	2	-	12	1	1	1
Employment & Referral need	17	5	-	9	4	20	2	16	4
Legal help	1	21	-	4	12	7	1	6	14

Note: Cf. Annexure 3 for sub-categories within each group

Table II.3
Problem Relation to Causes

Problem	Marriage Related	Expectation from marriage	Health	Employment	Strain in family Relationship	External Causes
Harassment	22	24	16	9	48	9
Burning/Suicide/ Cheating	4	1	-	1	5	2
Disagreement	10	40	3	9	32	3
Forced separation	16	32	10	17	30	7
Emotional Disturbances & Anxiety	4	13	10	21	24	10
Adultery	8	13	3	1	12	2
Employment & Referral need	4	10	13	44	14	11
Legal help	26	23	13	15	46	7

Note: Cf. Annexure 3 for sub-categories within each group

The problems faced by the clients, as stated by them, were normally more than one. While the problem registered in the records, which was stated first, has been categorized for this study as the first problem of the client, all other stated problems were recorded and coded. This Table tries to see whether there is any relationship between the first problem stated and the other problems brought to the notice of the counsellors by the client.

There is a link between legal action sought by the client and harassment of the client by any of the family members, legal action being the first stated problem of the client. There were 22 cases of legal action sought on its own without indicating any other problem, i.e. the clients had made up their minds that they did not need intervention in the form of counselling, but needed referral help.

There were 21 cases registered, however, where harassment was addressed as a problem along with the need for legal action. For 14 cases, a combination of legal action, e.g. divorce maintenance and custody of children, were addressed together.

Requirement of other referral help like employment or adoption were again sought without the need for addressing any other problem by the Centre. However, there were 20 cases where emotional disturbance or anxiety of some kind had to be addressed.

Emotional disturbance and anxieties of various kinds had to be addressed along with almost all the stated first problems for many of the cases. As is evident from column five, these surfaced along with disagreements in a family, harassment, other emotional crisis as well as in cases of desertion or rejection by the family. This has formed the bulk of the counsellors' work as the Table on the kind of counselling provided will indicate later, i.e., to help the client get over the fears and anxieties within them through catharsis, moral and advisory support.

Table II.4
All Stated Problems by Gender

Code No.	Problems	Gender				Total	
		F	%	M	%	F+M	%
01	Harassment by Husband/Wife	66	(22.3)	4	(4.6)	70	(18.2)
02	Harassment by in-laws	39	(13.2)	4	(4.6)	43	(11.2)
03	Harassment by children	7	(2.4)	4	(4.6)	11	(2.9)
04	Harassment by brother	1	(0.3)	-	-	1	(0.3)
05	Harassment by parents	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
06	Harassment by any other member of the family	2	(0.7)	2	(2.3)	4	(1.0)
07	Harassment by Community	4	(1.3)	1	(1.1)	5	(1.3)
08	Harassment by authorities (Police)	6	(2.0)	2	(2.3)	8	(2.1)
09	Harassment by Wife	2	(0.7)	9	(10.2)	11	(2.9)
10	Death of daughter by burning	2	(0.7)	1	(1.1)	3	(0.8)
11	Suicide	3	(1.0)	1	(1.1)	4	(1.0)
12	Cheating / Blackmailing	5	(1.7)	1	(1.1)	6	(1.6)
13	Husband / Spouse involved in illegal activities	1	(0.3)	-	-	1	(0.3)
14	Disagreement with Husband/Wife	34	(11.5)	7	(8.0)	41	(10.7)
15	Disagreement with in-laws	21	(7.1)	2	(2.3)	23	(6.0)
16	Disagreement with family / Children	22	(7.4)	12	(13.8)	34	(8.8)
17	Disagreement with community	3	(1.0)	-	-	3	(0.8)
18	Forced out of House	19	(6.4)	1	(1.1)	20	(5.2)
19	Wants to move out of home (parental)	3	(1.0)	-	-	3	(0.8)
20	Wants to move out of home (Marital)	20	(6.7)	2	(2.3)	22	(5.7)
21	Deserted.	30	(10.1)	18	(20.7)	48	(12.5)
22	Broken engagement	3	(1.0)	-	-	3	(0.8)
23	Reconciliation?	13	(4.4)	9	(10.3)	22	(5.7)
24	Accommodation Problem	8	(2.7)	-	-	8	(2.1)
25	Uncertainty over marriage	11	(3.7)	4	(4.6)	15	(3.9)
26	Emotional Disturbances	55	(18.6)	22	(25.3)	77	(20.0)
27	Loss of self-confidence	17	(5.7)	3	(3.4)	20	(5.2)
28	Anxiety over high family expectations	14	(4.7)	2	(2.3)	16	(4.1)
29	Lack of family support during personal crisis	19	(6.4)	7	(8.0)	26	(6.7)
30	Lack of communication with family members	11	(3.7)	6	(6.9)	17	(4.4)
31	Family pressures for marriage	4	(1.3)	-	-	4	(1.0)
32	Homosexuality	-	-	-	-	-	-
33	Alcoholism	21	(7.1)	3	(3.4)	24	(6.2)
34	Wants to marry	7	(2.4)	5	(5.7)	12	(3.1)
35	Adultery within the family	3	(1.0)	1	(1.1)	4	(1.0)
36	Adultery outside the family (Extra Marital Affair)	10	(3.4)	4	(4.6)	14	(3.6)
37	Drug Addiction	2	(0.7)	2	(2.3)	4	(1.0)
38	Financial problems	31	(10.5)	4	(4.6)	35	(9.1)
39	Medical problems	10	(3.4)	3	(3.4)	13	(3.4)
40	Career/ Employment related problems	38	(12.8)	7	(8.0)	45	(11.7)
41	Adoption related help	4	(1.3)	1	(1.1)	5	(1.3)
42	Police Assistance	9	(3.0)	2	(2.3)	11	(2.8)
43	Psychiatric Help	4	(1.3)	1	(1.1)	5	(1.3)
44	Family Planning related assistance	2	(0.7)	4	(4.6)	6	(1.6)

cont...

Code No.	Problems	Gender				Total	
		F	%	M	%	F+M	%
45	Sexual Harassment	4	(1.3)	-	-	4	(1.0)
46	Property Dispute	5	(1.6)	4	(4.6)	9	(2.3)
47	Education related problem (admissions)	3	(1.0)	1	(1.1)	4	(1.0)
48	Legal support for Divorce	38	(12.8)	5	(5.7)	43	(11.2)
49	Legal support for Maintenance	38	(12.8)	1	(1.1)	39	(10.1)
50	Legal support for property dispute	16	(5.4)	1	(1.1)	17	(4.4)
51	Legal support for will	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
52	Legal assistance on case for attempt to murder/assault	1	(0.3)	-	-	1	(0.3)
53	Legal support for separation	12	(4.0)	2	(2.3)	14	(3.6)
54	Legal support for the custody of child	10	(3.4)	2	(2.3)	12	(3.1)
55	Need for Domestic Help /Help from outside	2	(0.7)	-	-	2	(0.5)
TOTAL		296	(100)	88	(100)	384	(100)

This Table indicates that while the major issues remain the same, the percentage frequency of occurrence of these issues increases differentially, i.e. some problems occur more often than the first stated problem.

In the case of women clients, one of these problems is harassment by in-laws. While most other issues double in number when all the problems are included, this issue increases in number by five times, i.e. behind the complaint of harassment by husband there is often the feeling that other members of husband's family are also involved in the harassment or are the chief instigators in creating the problem.

The other issue that emerges is one of emotional disturbance. This increases in number for both men and women, i.e., the problems stated by the clients are very often accompanied by a state of mental inability to cope with the problem. This is indicated by the previous Table as well. Loss of self-confidence, anxieties of different kinds and a feeling of not being supported by the family are other problems that accompany primary problems stated by the client. Among the legal problems, the need for maintenance comes up as an additional problem, perhaps along with separation and divorce.

Table II.5
All Stated Causes of the Problem by Gender

Code No.	Causes of the Problem	Gender		Total F+M
		F	M	
01	Dowry.	28	4	32
02	Suspicious Husband (within family liaison)	7	-	7
03	Suspicious Husband (outside family liaison)	2	-	2
04	Suspicious wife (within family liaison)	1	-	1
05	Suspicious wife (outside family liaison)	2	2	4
06	Unfulfilled sexual desire.	1	2	3
07	Extra Marital affair (Within the family)	8	2	10
08	Extra Marital affair (Outside the family)	16	7	23
09	Abusive spouse (Physical and Mental).	47	4	51
<u>Expectations from Marriage Related</u>				
10	Uncertain about marriage.	8	5	13
11	Spouse not upto Expectation (personality)	13	3	16
12	Spouse not upto expectation (Socio-cultural)	8	1	9
13	Spouse not upto expectation (Financial)	5	-	5
14	Apprehension of adjustment in a marriage.	20	11	31
15	Lack of communication between husband and wife.	41	20	61
16	Lack of communication between parental and marital families	4	2	6
17	Interference in marriage by parents	8	6	14
18	Interference by in-laws	40	11	51
19	Interference by children.	5	1	6
<u>Health Related.</u>				
20	Alcoholic (self)	5	2	7
21	Alcoholic (spouse)	31	1	32
22	Drug addiction (self)	-	3	3
23	Drug addiction (spouse)	5	1	6
24	Malnutrition	2	-	2
25	Family Planning related.	2	4	6
26	Lethargy in spouse.	3	2	5
27	Infertility (Childlessness)	10	3	13
28	Want of a male child	3	-	3
29	Health Problem.	11	4	15
<u>Employment and economy of family related</u>				
30	Financial problems.	32	5	37
31	Employment problems.	33	5	38
32	Dissatisfaction with Job.	14	2	16
33	Property dispute (with parents /brother/sister.)	10	2	12
34	Property dispute (with in-laws)	7	2	9
35	Special education (Handicapped)	2	1	3
36	Deserted.	24	7	31
37	Custody (legal) of Children	1	1	2

cont..

Code No.	Causes of the Problem	Gender		Total F+M
		F	M	
<u>Strains in Family relationships</u>				
38	Harassment by Husband	62	4	66
39	Harassment by in-laws	35	4	39
40	Harassment by brother/sister	4	1	5
41	Harassment by parents	5	-	5
42	Harassment by children	9	4	13
43	Lack of support from the family	51	10	61
44	High expectations from the family	18	4	22
45	Spouse not interested in family responsibilities	34	15	49
46	Incest.	3	-	3
47	Aggressive Behaviour.	9	4	13
<u>External causes (external to the family)</u>				
48	Social disturbances.	12	3	15
49	Harassment by authorities/ Employer	14	3	17
50	Uncooperative community.	6	2	8
51	Sexual exploitation at Work-place	2	-	2
52	Loopholes in legal system.	3	-	3
53	Religious factors.	-	-	-
54	Second Marriage	13	4	17
55	Problem of old age.	1	2	3
56	Cheated	2	1	3
57	Inter-religion marriage	2	1	3
TOTAL		744	188	932

When clients bring their problems to the Counselling Centre, they are not able to distinguish between the problem that bothers them and the possible cause of the problem. The counsellors have to try and distinguish between these two issues. The reason why harassment and disagreement are listed as problems is that, to a client they seem to be the most obvious reasons for their unhappiness or distress.

When we categorise the cause of this distress, the actual issues that the counsellors have to handle become clearer. This is brought out in this Table.

Dowry, abusive spouse, lack of communication between partners, interference by in-laws, lack of support from the family and alcoholism come up as cause of uncertainties in most families. Desertion, harassment etc. crop up again as a cause where legal action has been sought. This is when the

uncertainties are over and action is required. Employment and financial reasons are important issues that cause uncertainties in relationships.

Table II.6
Counsellors' Perception of the Problem by Gender

Code No.	Problems	Gender		Total F+M
		F	M	
01	Confrontation due to growing self-esteem.	12	1	13
02	Problem due to low self-esteem	40	5	45
03	Physically abused.	28	3	31
04	Mentally abused	18	3	21
05	Subjected to verbal abuse.	1	-	1
06	Emotional disturbance caused by Harassment of daughter	3	4	7
07	Emotional disturbance due to broken engagement	1	-	1
08	Cheated by in-laws in marriage (Boy)	4	1	5
09	Cheated by in-laws in marriage (Girl)	2	1	3
10	Marriage without parents' Consent	5	3	8
11	Maladjustment with in-laws	46	6	52
12	Conflict due to personality differences.	31	15	46
13	Adjustment problems in marriage because of relocation in place of stay. (Migration).	8	1	9
14	Dowry.	20	2	22
15	Reconciliation with spouse.	9	-	9
16	Demanding & Unsupportive husband towards wife's family	3	1	4
17	Family interference.	19	10	29
18	Over protective parent.	8	4	12
19	Adolescent behavioural problem	10	4	14
20	Disagreement between parents & adolescent child.	17	6	23
21	Conflict between Parents and children	18	7	25
22	Unsupportive Children towards old parents	2	1	3
23	Unfulfilled sexual desire.	2	4	6
24	Aggressive sexual drive.	1	-	1
25	Sexual harassment.	9	-	9
26	Homosexuality.	1	-	1
27	Sexual apprehensiveness / anxieties/ enquiries.	1	-	1
28	Alcoholism	32	9	41
29	Drug addiction	5	3	8
30	Health Condition.	29	5	34
31	Infertile.	8	2	10
32	Want of male offspring	3	1	4
33	Child's death / abortion.	3	2	5
<u>(Marriage Related)</u>				
34	Complication caused by a second marriage.	13	4	17

cont...

Code No.	Problems	Gender		Total F+M
		F	M	
35	Distressed by Marital status.	9	5	14
36	Mistrust between Husband and Wife /Lack of communication between spouse.	34	13	47
37	Extra marital affair.	15	5	20
38	Pre-Marital affair.	4	-	4
39	Desertion.	27	8	35
40	Thrown out of home.	5	-	5
41	Unwanted Pregnancy Before Marriage	1	-	1
42	Unwanted pregnancy after Marriage	1	-	1
(Referral needs)				
43	Financial Problems	32	5	37
44	Medical Problems	2	-	2
45	Career/Employment related problems	32	6	38
46	Adoption related problems	4	1	5
47	Police /Legal assistance.	25	-	25
48	Psychiatric Help	10	6	16
49	Family planning related.	1	4	5
50	Property Dispute.	17	2	19
51	Landlord and tenant dispute.	4	-	4
52	Problems related to education.	4	1	5
53	Need domestic help	2	-	2
54	Harassment by police.	-	1	1
55	Harassment by employee	4	-	4
56	Accommodation problem	2	1	3
57	Socio-economic difference with community	3	-	3
TOTAL		650	167	817

The problems and their causes, as stated by the clients, are perceived by the counsellors in a different way and this is brought out in our Table of the counsellor's perception of the problem.

Self-esteem of a client becomes a very important issue that the counsellors need to handle. When we talk about harassment as a major problem, the counsellors' concern becomes one of understanding whether the feeling of harassment is in the mind of the client or whether there is an actual incident of harassment. Very often the level of self-esteem of the client becomes an indicator of this understanding. Low self-esteem of clients, especially of women, has to be addressed by the counsellors in many cases. The other emerging issue is that of confrontation because of a client's growing self-esteem. The suppression of women who want to prove their worth is indicated in this.

Aside from this, the counsellors have to contend with concrete issues like physical and mental abuse of clients, their differences with in-laws, dowry, alcoholism, indifferent health, mistrust or lack of communication between husband and wife, desertion, financial and employment-related problems and other referral related help.

Table II.7
Nature of Counselling Provided by Year and Gender

Code	1984		1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992		1993		1994		1995		TOTAL	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
01 Supportive	1	-	1	6	-	12	1	13	5	12	4	24	-	4	1	10	3	34	4	22	5	6	25	143		
11 Informational	-	-	6	13	4	13	3	10	3	9	5	14	1	3	5	15	4	26	2	19	3	11	32	126		
21 Catharsis	1	-	-	4	7	16	1	13	3	5	6	16	3	5	3	5	7	26	4	12	5	18	40	125		
31 Suggested Behaviour Modification	-	-	-	1	4	3	3	10	2	5	6	10	-	3	-	6	2	9	3	8	1	2	21	56		
41 Confrontational	-	-	-	4	3	1	1	1	1	1	3	4	1	-	-	2	-	7	1	5	2	-	12	-		
51 Legally Supportive	-	-	-	4	-	7	1	7	1	7	-	10	-	3	2	9	2	4	3	12	2	5	11	5		
61 Reconciliatory	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	3	2	5	1	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	5	14		
71 Analytical	-	-	-	2	1	-	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	-	6	1	6	2	3	11	25		
81 Investigative	-	-	-	2	1	10	-	2	2	1	4	5	1	1	-	3	1	3	-	1	1	2	10	30		
91 Confidence Building	-	-	-	1	3	12	1	7	1	4	1	6	-	1	2	5	3	8	2	8	-	6	13	57		
TOTAL	3	-	3	24	25	78	111	66	118	49	33	96	9	22	14	59	22	123	21	94	21	53				

This gives us an idea of the nature of counselling provided at the Centre. In the case of women clients, it is mostly supportive counselling, i.e. the clients come not only with their problems, but also with an idea of the action that they want, and the counsellors provide support for that action. More men seem to come to unburden themselves of the problem that they feel they have as indicated by their numbers for cathartic counselling. Both men and women clients also come because they require information on how to handle their affairs. This is reflected in their numbers under informational counselling. One of these three kinds of counselling is provided for almost all the cases handled by the counsellors.

Aside from these, in cases where it is necessary, behaviour modification is suggested to the clients to improve their situation. Confrontational counselling is used where the client is unable to see his or her role in a dispute. Analytical and investigative counselling is used where the cause of the problem is not located easily. Confidence building is required in cases of low self-esteem of the client. Reconciliatory methods are used where the disputing parties show inclination to reconcile and legally supporting action is taken when the client indicates a need for this. Since each client requires more than one kind of counselling to meet the requirement of the multiple problems that they bring to the Centre, the counsellors use a combination of methods to address their situation which is reflected in the data in the Table.

Although this Table is given with the distribution on the basis of years, there does not seem to be any kind of time trend.

Table II.8
Nature of Help Rendered by Year and Gender

Code	1984		1985		1986		1987		1988		1989		1990		1992		1993		1994		1995			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
01	1	5	1	5	11	27	5	25	8	18	16	18	16	39	5	8	8	30	10	51	11	34	8	22
11	-	-	-	2	-	5	1	7	1	6	2	13	1	1	-	6	2	8	3	11	2	-	-	-
21	-	-	-	2	-	7	-	4	-	2	-	2	1	-	-	4	1	4	1	4	1	5	-	3
31	-	-	-	3	-	4	1	2	1	2	2	7	1	2	-	2	4	-	1	-	6	-	-	-
41	-	-	-	1	1	3	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	1	1	1
51	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	1	-	3	-	1	-	1	-
61	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
71	-	-	-	1	3	-	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	6	-	-	-	1
81	-	-	-	1	3	2	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	3	1	3	1	4	-	-	-
91	1	1	2	-	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	7	-	-	2	2	-	5	-	3	-	2	-
TOTAL	2	3	19	16	58	9	47	13	33	24	72	8	14	15	52	14	85	16	65	11	30	-	-	-

This section indicates the nature of help, aside from counselling, that is provided by the Centre. The social work aspect of the Centre is highlighted here. About half to two-third of the clients come to the Centre for counselling. But the rest require referral help either along with counselling or by itself. More men use the counselling facility as compared to women. The referral assistance required is mostly related to legal help and police assistance. The other help is related to medical, psychiatric and employment issues. Besides, referrals like temporary homes are required by women who are homeless. In cases where the Counselling Centre feels that another NGO would be able to help the client, they are referred to it.

III Relationship Between Socio-Economic Variables and Problem

A third set of Tables were prepared as part of this study to see the relationship between socio-economic variables that were recorded and the first stated problem brought to the Centre by the clients.

Tables III.1 and III.2 attempt to see the relationship between age and marital status to the first stated problem. Since marriage-related problems dominate this sample of clients, it is difficult to make any generalisations on the basis of these two Tables. The feeling of harassment is more pronounced with increase in age groups. Desertions and being sent out of home seem to be more common among the age group of 21-35. Emotional disturbance is more in the age group of 16-20 and above the age of 31. Legal help is sought by all age groups but more so in the age group of 21-35 and above 46. All these, ofcourse, are applicable only for the clients in the sample under study. Emotional disturbance and anxiety are high among unmarried clients. Among the married clients, problems of harassment and need for legal action are more common.

Table III.1
First Problem Brought to the Centre by Age Group

Age Group	Sex	01-09 %	11-14 %	21-24 %	31-37 %	41-49 %	50-53 %	61-69 %	70-77 %	81 %	Total %
< - 15	F	0	1 (14.3)	3 (42.9)	0	1 (14.3)	0	0	2 (28.8)	0	7 (100)
	M	0	0	0	0	1 (50.0)	0	1 (50.0)	0	0	2 (100)
16 - 20	F	2 (11.1)	0	2 (11.1)	2 (11.1)	5 (27.8)	2 (11.1)	3 (16.7)	2 (11.1)	0	18 (100)
	M	0	0	1 (20.0)	0	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	0	5 (100)
21 - 25	F	8 (12.1)	2 (3.0)	8 (12.1)	13 (19.7)	6 (9.1)	2 (3.0)	11 (16.7)	16 (24.2)	0	66 (100)
	M	3 (25.0)	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)	3 (25.0)	0	3 (25.0)	1 (8.3)	0	0	12 (100)
26 - 30	F	13 (18.3)	1 (1.4)	7 (9.9)	13 (28.8)	4 (5.6)	4 (5.6)	11 (15.5)	18 (25.4)	0	71 (100)
	M	2 (14.3)	0	0	4 (11.4)	2 (4.3)	1 (7.1)	5 (35.7)	0	0	14 (100)
31 - 35	F	9 (20.5)	1 (2.3)	2 (4.5)	5 (50.0)	6 (13.6)	0	12 (27.3)	9 (20.5)	0	44 (100)
	M	1 (10.0)	0	0	5 (20.7)	1 (10.0)	0	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)	0	10 (100)
36 - 40	F	7 (24.1)	2 (6.9)	1 (3.4)	6 (20.7)	3 (10.3)	1 (3.4)	3 (10.3)	5 (17.2)	1 (3.4)	29 (100)
	M	2 (22.2)	0	2 (22.2)	1 (11.1)	1 (11.1)	1 (11.1)	1 (11.1)	1 (11.1)	0	9 (100)
41 - 45	F	3 (25.0)	0	3 (25.0)	0	3 (25.0)	0	0	2 (16.7)	1 (8.3)	12 (100)
	M	1 (20.0)	0	1 (20.0)	2 (40.0)	0	1 (20.0)	0	0	0	5 (100)
46 - >	F	5 (18.5)	0	5 (18.5)	1 (3.7)	3 (11.1)	0	5 (18.5)	8 (27.6)	0	27 (100)
	M	2 (4.8)	1 (4.8)	6 (28.6)	2 (9.5)	2 (9.5)	1 (4.8)	6 (28.6)	2 (9.5)	0	21 (100)
NA	F	6 (31.6)	0	1 (5.3)	4 (21.1)	2 (10.5)	0	0	6 (31.6)	0	19 (100)
	M	1 (50.0)	0	0	0	1 (25.0)	0	0	0	0	4 (100)
Total	F	53 (18.1)	7 (2.4)	32 (10.9)	44 (15.0)	33 (11.3)	9 (3.1)	45 (15.4)	68 (23.2)	2 (0.7)	293 (100)
	M	12 (14.6)	2 (2.4)	11 (13.4)	17 (20.7)	9 (11.0)	9 (11.0)	17 (20.7)	5 (6.1)	0	82 (100)

Note: Cf. Annexure 3 for sub-categories within each group

Table III.2
First Problem Brought to the Centre by Marital Status

M Status	Sex	01-09 %	11-14 %	21-24 %	31-37 %	41-49 %	50-53 %	61-69 %	70-77 %	81 %	Total %
Married	F	39 (19.3)	3 (1.5)	24 (11.9)	35 (17.8)	16 (7.9)	4 (2.0)	28 (13.9)	51 (25.2)	2 (1.0)	202 (100)
	M	11 (16.7)	2 (3.0)	9 (13.6)	16 (24.2)	7 (10.6)	4 (6.1)	13 (19.6)	4 (6.1)	0	66 (100)
Unmarried	F	5 (11.1)	2 (4.3)	6 (13.0)	5 (11.1)	12 (26.1)	4 (8.7)	10 (21.7)	2 (4.3)	0	46 (100)
	M	1 (8.3)	0	2 (16.6)	0	2 (16.6)	3 (25.0)	3 (25.0)	1 (8.3)	0	12 (100)
Divorced	F	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)	0	0	3 (30.0)	0	1 (10.0)	3 (30.0)	0	10 (100)
	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (100)
Separated	F	2 (14.3)	0	0	3 (21.4)	1 (7.1)	1 (7.1)	3 (21.4)	4 (28.8)	0	14 (100)
	M	0	0	0	1 (25.0)	0	2 (50.0)	1 (25.0)	0	0	4 (100)
Widowed	F	4 (21.1)	1 (5.3)	2 (10.5)	1 (5.3)	0	0	3 (15.8)	8 (42.1)	0	19 (100)
	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (100)
NA	F	2 (100.0)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2 (100)
	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (100)
Total	F	54 (18.4)	7 (2.4)	32 (10.9)	44 (15.0)	32 (10.9)	9 (3.1)	45 (15.4)	68 (23.2)	2 (0.7)	293 (100)
	M	12 (14.6)	2 (2.4)	11 (13.4)	17 (20.7)	9 (11.0)	9 (11.0)	17 (20.7)	5 (6.1)	0	82 (100)

Note : Cf. Annexure 3 for sub-categories within each group

Tables III.3 and III.4 relate to the frequency of occurrence of a problem as related to the educational level and income levels of the client.

1. Harassment : For female clients, 29.4 percent of the non-literate clients faced some sort of harassment from the family or community. 12.3 percent of graduates, 13.8 percent of the post graduates and 26.6 percent of women clients who had a doctorate also faced harassment.
2. Legal Assistance : Among women clients, 13.7 percent of non-literates asked for legal assistance as compared to 29.6 percent of graduates.
3. Employment-related Assistance : 19.6 percent of the non-literate female clients asked for help related to referral needs like employment as against 22.2 percent of graduates. However, among male clients 26.1 percent of the graduates asked for assistance in this area.
4. Emotional Disturbance : 12.3 percent of the women clients who were graduates experienced emotional disturbance or other psychological problems as compared to 5.9 percent of non-literate women. This percentage seems to increase with educational level.
5. Desertion and Related Problem : 13.7 percent of the non-literate and 9.9 percent of graduate women clients were in this group.

Level of harassment is high among the income group below the Rs. 5,000 categories, whereas disagreement in families is more evident in the income categories over this. Proportion of desertion is high in the income group of Rs 1,001 and 3,000. The percentage of clients in the income group of Rs. 10001-15000 is quite high for both men and women in the problem group of emotional disturbance and anxieties. Referral help is required by almost all income

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Table III.3
First Problem Brought to the Centre by Educational Levels

Educational Level	Sex	Harassment %	Suicide / Cheating %	Disagree-ment %	Desertion %	Emotional Disturbance %	Adultery %	Referral Help %	Legal Help %	Domestic Help %	Total %
Non-literate	F	15 (29.4)	1 (2.0)	6 (11.8)	7 (13.7)	3 (5.9)	2 (3.9)	10 (19.6)	7 (13.7)	0	51 (100)
	M	0	0	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	0	0	0	4 (100)
Semi-literate	F	1 (14.3)	1 (14.3)	0	0	0	1 (14.3)	1 (14.3)	3 (42.9)	0	7 (100)
	M	1 (50.0)	0	0	1 (50.0)	0	0	0	0	0	2 (100)
Primary	F	3 (17.6)	0	3 (17.6)	5 (29.4)	1 (5.9)	0	2 (11.8)	3 (17.6)	0	17 (100)
	M	1 (11.1)	0	1 (11.1)	2 (22.2)	2 (22.2)	0	2 (22.2)	1 (11.1)	0	9 (100)
Middle	F	4 (12.5)	1 (3.1)	4 (12.5)	9 (28.1)	4 (12.5)	2 (6.3)	3 (9.8)	5 (15.6)	0	32 (100)
	M	1 (10.0)	1 (10.0)	1 (10.0)	2 (20.0)	1 (10.0)	0	4 (40.0)	0	0	10 (100)
Sr. Secondary	F	6 (16.7)	1 (2.8)	4 (11.1)	5 (13.9)	4 (11.1)	2 (5.6)	5 (13.9)	9 (25.0)	0	36 (100)
	M	3 (15.8)	1 (5.3)	3 (15.8)	3 (15.8)	3 (15.8)	2 (10.5)	3 (15.8)	1 (5.3)	0	19 (100)
Graduate	F	10 (12.3)	2 (2.5)	7 (8.6)	8 (9.9)	11 (13.4)	0	18 (22.2)	24 (29.6)	2 (2.5)	82 (100)
	M	2 (8.7)	0	3 (13.0)	5 (21.7)	1 (4.3)	4 (17.4)	6 (26.1)	2 (8.7)	0	23 (100)
Post Graduate	F	4 (13.8)	1 (3.4)	6 (20.7)	3 (10.3)	5 (17.2)	1 (3.4)	4 (13.8)	5 (17.2)	0	29 (100)
	M	1 (33.3)	0	0	0	0	0	1 (33.3)	1 (33.3)	0	3 (100)
Ph.D	F	2 (26.6)	0	1 (14.3)	0	2 (28.6)	0	1 (14.3)	1 (14.3)	0	7 (100)
	M	0	0	1 (25.0)	2 (50.0)	0	1 (25.0)	0	0	0	4 (100)
Diploma	F	0	0	0	2 (66.7)	0	0	1 (33.4)	0	0	3 (100)
	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (100)
NA	F	9 (32.1)	0	1 (3.6)	5 (17.9)	4 (14.9)	0	0	3 (10.7)	0	28 (100)
	M	3 (37.5)	0	1 (12.5)	1 (12.5)	1 (12.5)	1 (12.5)	1 (12.5)	0	0	8 (100)
TOTAL	F	54 (18.4)	7 (2.4)	32 (11.0)	44 (15.0)	33 (11.3)	8 (2.7)	45 (15.4)	66 (22.5)	2 (0.7)	283 (100)
	M	12 (14.6)	2 (2.4)	11 (13.4)	17 (20.7)	9 (11.0)	9 (11.0)	17 (20.7)	5 (6.1)	0	82 (100)

Note: Cf. Annexure 3 for sub-categories within each group

Table III.4
First Problem Brought to the Centre by Income Levels

Income Level	Sex	Harassment %	Suicide / Cheating %	Disagree-ment %	Desertion %	Emotional Disturbance %	Adultery %	Referral Help %	Legal Help %	Domestic Help %	Total %
< - 1000	F	8 (22.2)	3 (8.8)	2 (5.5)	5 (14.7)	2 (5.8)	1 (2.9)	9 (26.5)	5 (14.7)	1 (2.9)	36 (100)
	M	1 (16.6)	0	1 (16.6)	2 (33.3)	0	0	2 (33.3)	0	0	6 (100)
1001 - 3000	F	13 (28.3)	1 (2.3)	4 (9.1)	10 (22.7)	3 (6.8)	4 (9.1)	5 (13.6)	5 (11.4)	0	46 (100)
	M	3 (21.4)	0	0	1 (7.1)	2 (14.3)	2 (14.3)	5 (35.7)	1 (7.1)	0	14 (100)
3001 - 5000	F	12 (22.6)	0	8 (15.0)	7 (13.2)	4 (8.2)	1 (2.0)	8 (16.3)	13 (26.5)	0	53 (100)
	M	3 (18.8)	1 (6.3)	3 (17.6)	3 (18.8)	2 (12.3)	0	4 (25.0)	1 (6.3)	0	17 (100)
5001 - 10000	F	9 (12.1)	1 (1.5)	7 (9.4)	12 (16.2)	9 (12.1)	3 (4.0)	11 (16.2)	21 (30.9)	1 (1.5)	74 (100)
	M	3 (14.2)	1 (5.0)	3 (15.0)	7 (35.0)	1 (5.0)	2 (10.0)	3 (15.0)	1 (5.0)	0	21 (100)
10001 - 15000	F	3 (9.0)	1 (3.1)	7 (21.9)	3 (9.4)	9 (28.1)	0	2 (6.3)	2 (6.3)	0	21 (100)
	M	0	0	3 (23.0)	0	3 (25.0)	3 (25.0)	2 (16.7)	2 (16.7)	0	13 (100)
15001 - >	F	4 (20.0)	0	5 (23.8)	2 (10.0)	4 (20.0)	0	1 (5.0)	5 (25.0)	0	21 (100)
	M	0	0	2 (66.7)	0	0	1 (33.4)	0	0	0	3 (100)
NA	F	8 (27.6)	0	1 (3.4)	5 (17.2)	2 (6.9)	0	3 (10.3)	11 (36.7)	0	30 (100)
	M	3 (37.5)	0	1 (12.5)	2 (25.0)	1 (12.5)	1 (12.5)	0	0	0	8 (100)
TOTAL	F	57 (19.5)	6 (2.0)	34 (11.6)	44 (15.0)	33 (11.3)	9 (3.1)	40 (13.6)	68 (23.2)	2 (0.7)	293 (100)
	M	13 (15.9)	2 (2.4)	13 (15.9)	15 (18.3)	9 (11.0)	9 (11.0)	16 (19.5)	5 (6.1)	0	82 (100)

Note: Cf. Annexure 3 for sub-categories within each group

Table III.5 relates the occupational category with respect to the first problem as stated by the client.

1. Harassment was faced by 25 percent of the homemakers (housewife) who were all women clients. An additional 25 percent came to seek legal help from the Centre. 16 percent faced desertion or were thrown out of their homes while 12 percent had a disagreement with their families.
2. Of the 116 working women among our clients who are to be found in the occupational groups 5,6 and 7, the main problem faced by them was a little different from those of women clients in the Housewives category. There is less harassment and disagreement within the family here. There are more cases of emotional disturbance and anxiety as well as need for help related to employment requirements as well as legal assistance.

Table III.5
First Problem Brought to the Centre by Occupational Group

Occupation	Sex	Harassment %	Suicide / Cheating %	Disagree -ment %	Desertion %	Emotional Disturbance %	Adultery %	Referral Help %	Legal Help %	Domestic Help %	Total %
Home Maker (House Wife)	F	26 (26.1)	2 (2.1)	12 (12.5)	16 (16.5)	3 (3.1)	12 (12.5)	-	26 (26.1)	-	97 (100)
	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Student	F	-	2 (12.5)	2 (12.5)	2 (12.5)	5 (31.2)	4 (25.0)	-	1 (6.3)	-	16 (100)
	M	-	-	1 (25.0)	-	-	3 (75.0)	-	-	-	4 (100)
Domestic Help	F	3 (20)	-	2 (13.3)	6 (40.0)	1 (6.7)	3 (20.0)	-	-	-	15 (100)
	M	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Retired/ Unemployed	F	1 (5.6)	-	1 (5.6)	3 (16.7)	1 (5.6)	12 (66.7)	-	-	-	18 (100)
	M	1 (12.5)	-	2 (25.0)	1 (12.5)	2 (25.0)	2 (25.0)	-	-	-	8 (100)
Class IV Govt employee / Petty Trader	F	6 (22.2)	1 (3.7)	1 (3.7)	6 (22.2)	4 (14.8)	6 (22.2)	-	3 (11.1)	-	27 (100)
	M	4 (22.2)	-	1 (5.6)	8 (44.4)	1 (5.6)	4 (22.4)	-	-	-	18 (100)
Clerical Worker	F	5 (9.6)	1 (1.9)	6 (11.5)	5 (9.6)	8 (15.4)	11 (21.1)	-	16 (30.7)	-	52 (100)
	M	5 (18.5)	1 (3.7)	4 (14.8)	4 (14.8)	3 (11.1)	8 (29.6)	-	2 (7.4)	-	27 (100)
Professional in middle level Services	F	8 (21.6)	-	3 (8.1)	4 (10.8)	8 (21.6)	8 (21.6)	-	5 (13.5)	-	37 (100)
	M	2 (28.6)	-	-	2 (28.6)	-	3 (42.8)	-	-	-	7 (100)
Sr. Govt Services/ Other Profession	F	-	-	2 (33.3)	-	1 (16.6)	-	-	3 (50.0)	-	6 (100)
	M	-	-	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	-	-	1 (25.0)	-	4 (100)
Large Business	F	-	-	-	-	-	1 (100.0)	-	-	-	1 (100)
	M	-	1 (16.6)	2 (33.3)	1 (16.6)	1 (16.6)	1 (16.6)	-	-	-	6 (100)
Others	F	-	1 (33.4)	1 (33.3)	-	-	-	-	1 (33.3)	-	3 (100)
	M	-	-	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	-	-	1 (20.0)	1 (20.0)	5 (100)
NA	F	8 (28.6)	1 (3.6)	2 (7.1)	3 (10.7)	3 (10.7)	1 (3.6)	-	10 (35.7)	-	28 (100)
	M	-	-	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	1 (25.0)	-	-	-	4 (100)

Note: Cf. Annexure 3 for sub-categories within each group

IV Preliminary Questionnaire

Some information on the clients who visited the Centre between April 1990 and March 1992 are given from Tables IV. 1 and IV.2.

Table IV.1
Number of Cases Brought to the Centre Starting from April, '90 to March, '92, by Stated Problems

Code No.		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
01	Harassment	8	9	17
02	Suicide / Cheating	-	1	1
03	Disagreement	-	5	5
04	Desertion	2	12	14
05	Emotional Disturbance	1	9	10
06	Adultery	-	1	1
07	Referral Help	4	20	24
08	Legal Help	1	12	13
09	Domestic Help	-	-	-
TOTAL		16	59	75

Note: Cf. Annexure 3 for sub-categories within each group

Table IV.2
Help Rendered to Cases Brought to the Centre Starting from April, '90 to March, '92

Code No.		Male	Female	Total
01	Counselling	5	21	26
02	Referred for Legal assistance	4	15	19
03	Asked to get legal assistance	(Included in 11)		
04	Referred for police assistance	-	5	5
05	Referred for psychiatric assistance	1	2	3
06	Referred to short stay home/ alternative accommodation	-	5	5
07	Asked to seek employment	2	4	6
08	Asked to seek medical treatment / referred to medical assistance	-	5	5
09	Referred to the National Commission or any other NGO	1	6	7
10	Employment related assistance and help.	(Included in 61)		
TOTAL		13	63	76

There were 76 cases in these years where some information was available. There were 16 men and 59 women in this listing. Of these, there were eight cases of harassment among men and nine among women. There were 20 female clients who wanted referral help, mostly related to employment and 12 cases of women clients who wanted legal assistance. There were nine cases of women who came with anxieties and emotional disturbance. Of these, four had alcoholic spouses. There were 12 cases of women who were either deserted or thrown out of their home.

Counselling was provided for 26 cases, 21 of whom were women clients. Legal assistance was suggested or provided for another 19 cases. 15 of these were women clients.

We have tried to understand the profile of the clients who come to the Centre and the type of issues that they raise in the process of counselling in the preceding paragraphs.

The Counselling Centre at the Institute of Social Studies Trust gets mostly women clients who face problems related to marriage. They are in the age group which has got married recently i.e in their twenties. They are mostly from the middle income group. Some of these women are mostly housewives while an equal number of them are employed in some capacity. A large number of these women are graduates. While harassment and disagreements form the bulk of the problem that these women bring to the Centre, quite a few of them want action in the form of referral or legal help. The counselling provided at the Centre is mostly supportive and cathartic. But help is also provided in the form of contacts with experts in different fields to solve the problems faced by the clients.

5 THE IN-DEPTH QUESTIONNAIRE : PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE

The 39 cases taken for the in-depth study (ten percent of the samples dealt with in the preliminary questionnaire) reflect the socio-economic background of the clients coming to the Centre.

For purposes of easy analysis, this sample has been divided into three groups. The first includes women clients who are in the middle to higher income groups, numbering 16. The second set is that of poor to lower middle income group of women, that has 14 women. The last group is that of the men in our sample, totalling 9.

Age group : Most of the women in the first category fall in the age group of 26 to 35 (11) followed by 4 women in the age group of 36 to 40. Besides, there is one 60 year old client in this category. In the second category there is a shift in the age structure. 4 women are in the age group of 46 and above, whereas, 7 are found in the age group of 31 to 40 and 3 below 30. Among male clients, most, i.e., 6 are found to be in their 30s, 2 are below 30 and one client is over 50.

Marital status : Most of the clients are married. The first group of women has 1 unmarried, 3 separated and 2 divorced women. There are 2 women in this category who have married a second time.

Among the second group of clients, are 6 separated women, 3 widowed, 4 married and one unmarried woman.

Among men clients, there are 2 separated men and 1 unmarried man besides 6 married men.

Educational levels : The first group of women has 7 graduates, 4 post graduates, one with a doctorate and four with school-level education. There are no non-literates in this group. The second set of women has 7 non-literates, 2 graduates, and 4 with school-level education. Among men, there are 6 graduates, 1 with a doctorate and 2 with school-level education.

Occupation : There are 6 clients in the first category who are primarily housewives, 2 are unemployed, and 8 work in clerical to professional jobs.

In the next group of women, 3 are housewives, 2 unemployed and the others in employment like domestic help, lower division clerks, craft persons, sales persons, packers, and fruit vendors (9).

Among men, 1 is unemployed, the rest dispersed over jobs like salesmen, engineers and computer operators, shop owners, research assistants and businessmen.

Income levels of the clients : Income in most cases are the individual earnings of the clients either through their occupation or as an assured source from their parents or spouse. Where a client has not given information it is because of uncertain source of income.

Among the first group of women, 3 were uncertain about income. But the rest earned salaries ranging from Rs 1000 to 3000 (5), from Rs.3000-5000 (4), and above (4).

The second group of women were all earning below Rs 3000, except for four who had uncertain incomes.

Among men, most of the clients in this sample earned between Rs1000 and 5000.

Caste and community of the clients : 8 clients in the first group of women were Brahmins, 5 were Khattris, 2 Sikhs and Kayasthas.

Among the second group of women, there were 3 Scheduled Caste and 1 Scheduled Tribe woman, besides 5 Rajputs, 2 Brahmins, 1 Sikh, and 1 Khatri.

Among the men in the sample there were 4 Khattris, 2 Brahmins, 1 Sikh, 1 kayastha and 1 bania.

Language spoken by the clients (As an indicator for migration) : Hindi was the language of 8 women in the first group of clients, Punjabi for 4 and for the other 4, it was one each of Telugu, Marathi, Oriya and Malayalam.

Among the second category of women, 10 spoke Hindi, 2 Punjabi and 1 Kannada and 1 Garhwali.

Of the men clients, 6 spoke Punjabi, 2 Hindi and 1 Oriya.

Migration among clients : Most of the clients had moved within Delhi. Some of the women in the sample had moved into Delhi because of marriage while a few had moved in because of their father's employment or because of their own study and employment requirement.

Economic mobility : Most of the clients in our first category of women come from families which are economically upwardly mobile. However, the clients in the second category of women have either been in the same situation as their parents or have actually seen a fall in the standard of living. Among men, there does not seem to be much change in the economic situation over time.

The Opponent and the Client : Who is Seen as the Perpetrator of a Problem ?

Given the fact that we are studying the information from a Counselling Centre that is identified mainly as one that provides marriage-related counselling, it is not surprising that the spouse is generally regarded as the opponent by most of the clients in the sample. Ten women in the first category, 7 in the second category and 6 men considered their primary opponent to be their spouse.

In addition, mother / grandmother, maternal uncle, and sister form other opponents in the first category of women; employer, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother and son for second category of women and father or parents, and uncle-in-law for the men in the sample.

Genesis and Development of Crisis or Conflict and its Resolution

(The following is on the basis of in-depth questionnaire and case studies in Annexure II)

I. Women clients in middle income group and above in the sample

1. 12 of the women in this category of 16 can be said to have marital maladjustment as their primary problem. That is, the genesis of the problem can be located only at the time of marriage or after marriage. All these women are strong and self-reliant having good family support for their activities and in their decision-making.

Childlessness has played a key role in the problems faced by three women. The pressures on women who are not able to bear children are enormous. The role of the husband in child bearing seems to be forgotten and the woman has to take the blame for childlessness.

The resolution of this kind of problem is complicated because for the husband the solution seems to be to take on another wife. In one case, a younger sister was pressurised to serve as the surrogate who would provide a child. (Both the sisters are clients interviewed by the Centre) (see CS-1*). In the second case, the only option was to walk out of the marriage and file for divorce and compensation while the husband had already committed bigamy (CS-2).

Incompatibility with husband or in-laws is another problem faced by women. The case of incompatibility with husband was a marriage arranged through newspaper advertisement (CS-3). The woman in this case had reached marriageable age, and the whole family felt that marriage was part of growing up although the girl had a good job and was quite independent. The couple in this case did not get along from the beginning. The client was confident enough to decide quite early that she wanted to opt out of the marriage. She had the courage to go in for an abortion because of this decision and with the help of her parents to get a divorce and continue her life independently. This is a new trend and atypical by the experience of the Counselling Centre. The bulk of women who come to the Centre find it very difficult to decide on a course like this.

The case of incompatibility with mother-in-law involved personality clashes on how the household should be run. Over time, the two individuals involved in this case have come to an understanding. Difference of opinion will crop up in any marriage but its resolution depends a great deal on the individuals involved and their willingness to bargain for their individual space (CS - 3).

The cases of dowry-related harassment, alcoholic spouse and physical violence are difficult to anticipate in a marriage (CS-4 and 5). When the marriage is arranged, only a superficial knowledge of the spouse-to-be and his family is gathered. In the same way, two other cases where

the character of the spouse created problems in the marriage were unanticipated (CS-6 and 7). The four women in question handled these issues differently. Three of them got divorced from their husbands and two have remarried. Two of them are economically independent. But the fourth client is still uncertain about her future. Financially, her situation is weak and she has incomplete family support. When either of these two factors are strong, women seem more likely to take a quick decision on the action they want to take. When both are missing then their chances of continuing in the cycle of marital uncertainties continue. This same reasoning applies to a case of sexual harassment of a client by her father-in-law. Because of unconditional support from her parents, she could walk away from this marriage and get a divorce and some maintenance (CS-8).

The two cases of extra-marital affairs as the main problem in marriage are more difficult in terms of their resolution (CS-9 and 10). One of this case involves an affair by the husband and the other by the client herself. Both have resulted in separation. In the first case, there is a lot of mental agony involved because the woman cannot decide whether she should forgive her husband or not, especially as one of her relatives is involved in the affair. The other client, who was herself involved in an extra-marital affair, has with clear conscience decided to separate from her husband and set herself up independently. Both the women are financially better-off than their husbands and can manage very well on their own.

What can we learn from these experiences on preventing marriage-related conflicts? Of these 12 cases, 3 women selected their spouse on their own without assistance from their parents. The two cases of remarriage also involved self-selection for the second marriage. But whether the marriages were arranged by their family or whether they selected their partners on their own, very little thought went into their decision to get married or on the institution of

marriage and their expectations from the spouse or his family. The answers to the questions on the clients' expectations from spouse and the institution of marriage were mostly retrospective and were based on their experience.

Most of these clients wanted their husbands to be economically sound, self-confident (in decision-making), supportive and caring. A few mentioned qualities like honesty, maturity and understanding. Marriage as an institution meant dealing with in-laws to most of the clients. Caring in-laws and good family were the general expectation. A couple of clients mentioned security in marriage. Only one client talked about sharing in marriage. She was the only client who had direct exposure to western ideas.

Most of these women were not satisfied with the situation in their marriage, and therefore, the answers to questions on fulfilment of expectations were mostly negative.

Given a level of uncertainty over what marriage as an institution and the relationship with the spouse could mean to a client, one way of preventing marriage-related conflicts can be preparing young men and women to face the realities of this relationship before committing themselves to marriage. Unfortunately, society takes this institution so much for granted that the pitfalls of creating an environment for nesting is never apparent until a couple is well into it.

2. Two other sets of problems occur among this group of women. One is related to some sort of trauma in childhood, i.e. the genesis of their problem lies very early in their life, and the second is related to differences with family in adolescence. There are four cases in these categories. While the adolescence-related problems could be said to be a passing stage, childhood trauma seems to remain until later and is much more difficult for a Counselling Centre to handle.

Since these cases were quite different from each other in character, they will be taken up individually to highlight certain points. The adolescence-related problem concerned the growing sexuality of the girl involved. Traditions and rituals were used in the household to restrict daily activity. This problem could be resolved to a large extent through reasonable dialogue (CS-11). Childhood trauma in one client's case was caused by her parents' broken marriage and her own sense of responsibility from a very young age (5 years old) towards her physically handicapped brother and younger sister (CS-12). In another case the client was kidnapped by her uncle at the age of 5 and brought to Delhi. She was sexually taken advantage of from a very early stage by her uncle. She realised the difficulty of her position very late in life. When she tried to break away from this relationship, her troubles started in the form of blackmail (CS-14).

The second of these cases was resolved partly due to the clients' good fortune of marrying a young man who was willing to regard her past as an accident. The Counselling Centre played a very crucial role in clearing up the misunderstanding in this situation and in making the clients face the present reality in a positive manner.

But the first case is complicated as it required psychotherapy for a young person who is bent on moving from one disaster to another in her life. Here is a cycle of distress very difficult to break at least in an environment of a Family Counselling Centre.

The last case in this category of women is again rooted in the past (CS-13). It has to do with a little girl of six who had a lot of attention diverted from her with the birth of her little sister. Unfortunately, her parents took her jealousy negatively, and after more than fifty years, this is still troubling the client. She has not been able to build any positive relationship in her life and has desperately looked

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for sympathy without ever getting enough of it. Another case for psychotherapy, this has been difficult for the Counselling Centre to handle.

We have covered three stages in the cycle of life where later conflicts could be rooted, i.e. childhood, adolescence and marriage of a woman. Prevention of these conflicts are practised in everyday life by people in similar situations. Since cases that are resolved at home cannot be studied by us, one can only make a few surmises. Where parents and schools are vigilant about slight trauma in a child's or an adolescent's life and apply correctives instantaneously, later conflicts can be avoided. Marriage-related conflicts require more thought on who should prepare young people for this stage in their lives. Our casual attitudes towards it need to be assessed. A few thoughts on this subject will be discussed in the policy implication section of this report.

There were five other areas of possible cause of conflict that this research was interested in exploring. This included the effect of migration, changing economic condition, socialization, family hierarchies and family dynamics.

Seven of the 17 women who have been studied in this section had moved either with their family to Delhi or moved out of Delhi because of marriage. Using language as a yardstick of migration into Delhi, we find that four of our clients are from other parts of India (i.e. other than Delhi). One came to Delhi because of her father's employment in this city, another because she was brought without her parents' consent to Delhi at a very early stage in her life, the third because she herself came to study and work in this city, and the fourth as a second generation migrant who has spent all her life in Delhi but is never at ease here.

How did migration affect these women in relation to the conflict they face? In the case of rebellion against tradition, it may have been a direct result of living in a new

environment where such traditions were not openly practised. If this family had continued to live in their home environment, perhaps the young girl would have conformed to a tradition practised by the rest of her community. In the case of kidnapping, the root of the problem was the removal of a young girl from her home environment to exploit her sexually. This, perhaps, would not have happened if the girl had lived on with her parents. In the case of extra-marital affair, the conflict definitely lay in the fact of this migration from a small town to a conurbation. Here was a couple exposed to totally new ideas of living who confused the idea of liberation with a way of living which was not acceptable to both the parties involved. In the last case being discussed here, although the problem lies to a large extent in the jealousies of a child, the non-acceptance of the culture of the city adopted as hometown has led to a lot of uncertainties in the client's life. For example, the inability to speak in the local language is always a source of hindrance and isolation.

The other three cases of migration are those of women who married and left Delhi for awhile. All three are now divorced and have returned to Delhi. This is not to say that all marriages involving migration out of this town are bound to fail, but to point out that these girls did carry certain convictions based on their learning in this city which led to their non-acceptance of situations they considered oppressive.

In terms of economic change, it has already been stated that this group of women belong to the upwardly mobile sections of our middle class. These are women exposed to the idea of their rights and are able to vocalise their grievances. They are able to find places like the Counselling Centre to take their troubles to and are willing to take hard decisions. Eight of these clients are professionally qualified and have secure jobs. The six who are noted here as housewives have some income of their own. Their ability to ask for their rights is itself a source of conflict in a society which would

like them to keep to their traditional roles as wives and mothers. But the security of knowing that they can manage on their own gives them strength.

Coming to socialization, family hierarchies and dynamics affect these women, as their attitudes indicate. Most of these women were brought up to be self-sufficient except for the cases of childhood trauma. These are women who grew up in an environment where two sources of income in a family was getting to be a necessity. Eight of these women were the elder sister or the eldest child in the family and were generally given a responsible role by their parents. They were encouraged to study as far as they could as the information on education indicates. In times of conflict, the parental families came forward and supported these women to a large extent. That is, aside from the cases where the conflict was with the parental family itself.

Low self-worth and self-esteem, partially as a result of differences with parents from a young age in the two cases of childhood trauma, has led to a personality which finds the handling of day-to-day problems quite difficult. These women, on the surface, can look very self-confident, but when it comes to action to solve their problem, they hesitate and are not able to handle the situation. Also, they get very little support from their families.

II. Women clients in the low income group and the lower middle income group

The problem

Seven of the 14 women in this category can be said to be in the lower-middle income group. Some of them had seen better days and circumstances have made them come down in their economic condition. There are three widows in this group and their prime concern has been to hold on to property that they feel should belong to them. One has

this conflict with her children (CS-15), one with her husband's family (CS-16) and the third with her son-in-law (CS-17). One of the older women in this group is separated from her husband because she does not get along with her daughter-in-law. She is trying to fight for some maintenance. The other three women are younger, two of them deserted by their husbands and one with an alcoholic husband who cannot support her and her children (CS-18, 19 and 20).

The focus of conflict with this group has shifted from mainly marital maladjustment to issues like property and desertion. The root of the problem in many of these cases is still marriage. Most of the women talk about a happy childhood, with little worries and cares because they were well looked after. They can trace their problems to the time of marriage. There is one case where the problem is related to her daughter's marriage and the conflict in her daughter's life caused by her mental state.

Living in the margins of poverty, these women had to struggle to make ends meet. How have they tried to resolve the conflict in their lives? In the case of property dispute, one is in the midst of a legal proceeding where her children have challenged the will of their father giving the house to the client. The other is still undecided about taking legal action. She would prefer to come to a settlement out of courts with her brothers-in-law for a piece of the property which she thinks is rightfully hers. Not having a child has made her hold in her husband's house very tenuous. In the third case of property dispute, the claim of the son-in-law who is separated from her daughter, to her property, has been difficult because the case also involves harassment by local political activists. The daughter in this case is schizophrenic, which further complicates the issue.

Coming to the cases of separation and desertion, in one case of desertion, the husband brought his wife to her parents' house and left her. In the other case, the husband is on the run from the police for petty crimes and does not want

to be found in his home. In the first case the client managed to prevent an ex-parte divorce attempted by her husband and has been fighting a case for maintenance for some years (CS-18). In the second case, there is still hope that the husband will return home one day although the children are grown up now and the client has been working to maintain herself and the two children (CS-19).

The client in the case of separation would like the FCC to intervene actively and take her fight to her husband (CS-15a). She is very vocal and wants support in her criticism of her family. Resolution is not easy here as the client is not willing to see any other side to the story other than her own. On the other hand, the last case in this group is one of a woman who is very uncertain about decision-making. Having had all her decisions made by others all her life, she finds it very difficult to break away from a situation of oppression. She spends most of the time with her parents while she works for a living. When it comes to coping with her husband, she fails singularly (CS-6a).

Migration has played an important role in two of these cases where marriage brought the clients to Delhi from rural areas at a very early age. Both these women found life in the city quite difficult, and still think of their rural life as an idyll. The case of desertion where legal action was taken also involved migration of the girl to a small town in U.P. and her being sent back on the grounds of inadequate dowry.

There is very little economic mobility in the families involved in these cases. In terms of socialization, there is a mixed response from the clients. Some felt that they were encouraged to take up work of their interest, the others gave indifferent answers to the questions put to them. Four of them were the eldest sibling and had responsibilities thrust on them at an early stage, two were the youngest and remember being pampered by their family. In terms of family support during crisis, none of them could turn to

their parental family because of financial and space constraints.

As for the poorest of the women clients, the problem that seemed more important to these women changed a great deal compared to the other groups. Issues like orphaned and homelessness, indebtedness, harassment by employer, desertion, alcoholism and uncertain morality crop up. We have seen desertion and alcoholism in the other groups as well but these take on a different meaning here because options for change are very different for this category than the earlier one.

Life is a challenge for all these women at all times. They have to depend on their wit to survive. Only two of these seven cases can be said to be helpless. The others have some means of supporting themselves and their families even if it means working very hard. Since they have to do this whether they have male support or not, their main concerns become employment-related. All these women have problems related to their marriage, but their option is not to make this into a legal issue but to separate from their husband and continue as before. There is only one case of a woman who would like her husband to come back to her (CS-24).

Resolving problems faced by these women is not easy because the problems of survival continue in different forms. In the case of the homeless orphan, finding shelter and training for a job had become the FCC's responsibility (CS-21). In the case of harassment by employer, in spite of FCC intervention there was no justice for the poor. In the case of indebtedness, temporary help was found in FCC intervention when the debts were partially paid back (CS-22). Since then other problems have cropped up and their solutions suggested by the counsellors. In the case of desertions, the clients need to be educated on their rights as they are confused about the action that can be taken. The last three cases involve clients with a host of problems

related to poverty, such as seasonal employment, alcoholism, attitudinal confusion on issues of morality and physical abuse (CS-25). These are cases where the clients come to the Centre for some moral support and know that very little action can be taken. They ask for employment that will improve their economic situation and move them out of the circle of poverty.

Three of these cases are first generation migrants to Delhi and have spent the better part of their stay here finding a foothold in the city. The other four grew up in the slums and chawls of Delhi. All of them are without formal schooling or skill of any kind and can only work as cleaners or domestic help. Two of them have been involved in *lifafa* making (making paper envelopes in the old Delhi area).

With these 30 cases, we have covered the women in the sample of study. We have seen the slight variations in the problems that they face but a marked difference in the way they try to resolve these problems. With the change in socio-economic circumstances of the clients, there is a change in their attitude towards their problem.

What kind of action should be taken and how this should proceed are the major concerns of a client in trying to resolve an issue. In that the poor clients seem to take separation as part of life while it becomes a major issue with the middle class. With age, the concerns change to keeping a hold on to spaces to live in.

III The men in the sample

There are nine men in our sample of study with varying backgrounds. Six of these came to the Counselling Centre with problems related to marriage. Although three of these came as spouse of women clients dealt with in our earlier analysis, only one came after the wife had already been to the Centre. The other two brought the problem to

the Centre. Three other male clients in this category, were the first to bring their marital problems to the notice of the Centre.

These marriage-related problems varied from initial adjustment problem to personality-related differences, cheating in marriage, need to investigate wife's past because of anonymous letters against her and extra-marital affair.

Taking up the three cases where the wives were also included in the sample, it is interesting to see the differences in the way the men handled the resolution of the conflict as compared to the wife. The case of blackmail and anonymous letter is an interesting one (CS-14). This case was resolved with the active participation of the FCC. This involved some amount of investigation and the counsellors had to meet almost all the participants in this case. The husband in this case instituted the inquiries but wanted to be discreet because he did not want to lose his wife. His family was very supportive in this process. It took some time for the counsellors to make the wife come clean with the story of her past. It could not have been easy for her but it was brought into the open by her in the presence of her family and the person who was the source of the conflict, i.e., the uncle who had sexually exploited her throughout her childhood and until she got married to her present husband. Once the facts were out, both the husband and wife took the counselling offered to them very positively and resolved to get over the past. One reason for this could have been the fact that both the people involved in this case had suffered some sort of deprivation and knew the value of the positive aspects of each other's personality. The husband had polio and was very slightly disabled. He had done well in terms of finding a good career for himself and with the support of his family, had a very stable outlook towards life. The wife is a survivor in spite of her early experience of exploitation. She is a hardworking person with progressive ideas.

In the case of the extra-marital affair on the part of the husband (CS-9), the husband feels that saying that he is sorry and that it will not happen again, has atoned for what is considered wrong. But the wife wants more concrete proof of his repentance. That is, if they do reconcile. But the matter of reconciliation itself is in doubt because there is a question in the mind of the wife whether she should forgive her husband's wrong-doing at all. This whole exercise creates an air of confusion that cannot be resolved, further complicated by the third party involved in the case.

The third case may be considered under the category of cheating in marriage as the unemployed status of the husband was hidden from the wife for quite a long while (CS-6). It took a long time for the wife to realise that not only was the husband not earning, he was not interested in taking up employment. His family had hoped that she would earn for him in the long run and perhaps bring about a change in the attitude of the husband. These people even suggested that having a child may change the husband's sense of economic responsibility. This couple has a child now but there is no change in the living habits of the husband to the despair of the more active wife. While the wife has tried several avenues of correcting this situation and even threatened the husband with divorce, the husband's attitude is one of indifference.

Here are three men who have a middle-class background with education. The first of these has a lot of family support and a very stable childhood. The second came from a rural area, was considered bright in school and college, and had parents who expected a lot from him including economic support in their old age as he was the only son. He acquired a lot of new ideas on living with the change in his environment. But he found the process of putting these ideas into practice a little more difficult. The third seems to have found in his growing years that in a large family with

many hardworking members, he could get along with very little physical work. His wants are limited and he cannot understand why so much of fuss is made over the fact that he lives a life of little action.

The first of these men has control over his life to a large extent because of his own self-assurance and the additional support provided by his family. The second thought he had control over his life until he over-extended himself as far as middle-class mores are concerned. Since then, he has found that nothing seems to be in his control anymore. The third client does not seem to be aware of the consequences of his action.

The other three cases of marital maladjustment were handled upto a point by the men themselves. The first of these was of initial adjustment problems. The differences in this case were resolved once the client had a session with the counsellors and saw the situation from his wife's point of view (CS-26). The second case came at a stage where the husband was quite decided that he wanted separation and divorce. This was the case of a young man who was getting married so that his ageing parents could have help in the house. In the process, he was to acquire a wife. But when it was discovered that this pretty wife was actually very short-sighted and would lose her eyesight entirely in time, he felt cheated and wanted a dissolution of the marriage (CS-26a). The girl was sent back to her parents. At one level, the conflict was resolved but the girl's plight was very apparent to the Centre, especially as her mother was not willing to accept any responsibility. In the third case, the husband has not expressed any wish to separate but feels that his wife is very short-tempered and influenced by her mother and wants her to change and be loving and accepting. It is only recently that the Centre has been able to see this case from the wife's point of view which is in sharp contrast to the husband's. Their differences of personality and acceptance of this fact can be brought about

if they are positive about each other in any way. This has yet to be explored (CS-26b).

Here are three men who got married and expected wives to be good but found them wanting. While one accepted the differences and made an effort to change their relationship, the other two have not been able to do so.

The last three cases in this group are those of mental disturbance with differing manifestations. The first of these was of a growing boy who did not get along with his parents and found them wanting as parents (CS-27). It was to a large extent an adolescent problem that wore out over time. But it took a long time and many sessions before there was any change in this client's attitude towards his family and living in general. The second case is of another young man who has a conflict with his father, but this conflict manifests itself in delusion of love for a girl (CS-28). This was a case for psychotherapy and the Centre passed it on to one of its panel of advisors. The last case also requires psychiatric help. While the case was brought as one of rejection by the family and a need for alternative accommodation, the rejection by the family itself was due to a sexual aberration, namely a tendency to disrobe a few times in front of girls (CS-28a). This client has gone through therapy and there is some improvement in his understanding of his situation. But his family is still angry with him.

This section has covered the 39 cases of clients who were in our sample of in-depth study. The conflicts and their resolutions described are as varied as the background of the clients themselves which makes it difficult to give a summary of this section. But largely the men and women in the sample are people who have come up against unexpected problems in their lives, mostly related to marriage. They have tried to solve these problems with the assistance of the Counselling Centre. Of these cases, 19 of the clients could be said to have resolved their problems to their satisfaction,

but the others are still uncertain. Their uncertainties are due to many reasons including lack of self-confidence in solving the problem. But the main reason lies in the lack of good support structures to help them overcome these problems. These include tedious legal systems, shortage of short-stay homes, not enough access by the Counselling Centre to psychiatric help and most importantly, the lack of support from the families involved. These issues need to be addressed to improve resolution of conflict in the families concerned.

6 REFERRAL SERVICES AND THE COUNSELLING CENTRE

As our survey of the preliminary questionnaires and the in-depth study has indicated, referral services play a very important role in helping resolve the conflict brought to the Counselling Centre. How does a Counselling Centre interact with these services? How accessible and effective are these services? These questions needed to be explored.

A two-week survey of referral services was incorporated as part of this study. Two investigators, Anjali and Shumana, visited some of the referral services used by the Counselling Centre and gave their assessment of the accessibility and effectiveness of these services.

The most important referral help that the Counselling Centre uses is the help of its panel of legal advisors. Shompa Bhattacharya who is an advocate at the Supreme Court has been advising the clients at the Centre as a volunteer since the Centre was set-up. She has helped resolve many of the cases of divorce based on mutual consent. Besides, the Counselling Centre also uses advocates assigned by CSWB for helping the Centre.

The Centre also refers cases to the Crime Against Women Cell of the Delhi Police. They have a Counselling Centre of their own to help prevent crisis. There is a mixed opinion on the functioning of this cell. There have been periods of intense activity and periods of dissatisfaction with this unit. In two case studies, their intervention was sought. These cases were, however, referred to the local area police station and little action was taken thereafter.

The other referrals used by the Centre are for employment-related queries. Here there is no system at present. The

counsellors do try to get information from industry-related commercial organisations that train and equip individuals to start their own schemes. Aside from this, there is no directory of information to help the clients except for the personal resources of the counsellors in recommending them to institutions that interact with the ISST.

Family planning related and short-stay homes are the other concerns of the counsellors. Between Marie Stopes and Family Planning Association of India, the first requirement is met quite adequately. Short-stay homes like Shaheed Bhawan and Bapnu Ghar are very helpful but inadequate to cover the demand for the second need.

Psychiatric assistance is another area that the Counselling Centre needs access to. Although there is a very good panel of advisors in this area who are available for help, access to them has been very difficult in recent years. The main problem here is one of putting the client in touch with the advisor. This area needs to be explored for improvement.

7 CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The primary aim of this project had been to document the material available at the Counselling Centre. This has been achieved for 387 cases that were registered at the Centre in the last ten years. These cover all the cases where information was sufficient in terms of information on clients' socio-economic background and the problems that they brought to the Centre and its resolution. There are 76 other cases registered during the years between April 1990 and March 1992 where only the problems brought to the Centre have been identified. This information has been computerized in a coded form and can be easily retrieved as a list or as individual cases.

As the second section of the report on the preliminary questionnaire indicates, the issues brought to the Centre are mainly related to marriage, harassment, disagreement and need for legal help for divorce, maintenance and custody of children. The women clients coming to the Centre are mostly married and in their twenties or early thirties. Male clients are found to be mostly in the higher age group. This could be because of the age gap in marriage between men and women as well as because many fathers come to the Centre bringing the case on behalf of their daughters.

In terms of education, income and occupation, the bulk of the clients fall in the middle-class category, i.e. the women clients are educated, have jobs in many cases and an assured income. There are some very poor women among the clients who are non-literate and depend on physical labour as their source of income. There are very few male clients in this category.

Property-related disputes are also to be found among the older women clients. Here again, legal help is sought to

solve the problem. The other issues faced by the Counselling Centre include desertion by spouse, alcoholism, physical and mental abuse and emotional disturbance. The problem and the cause of the problem get very inter-linked in these issues. Marriage again plays an important role in these issues but when these become acute, the counsellors have to address this as a problem.

Many of the poorer clients who come to the Centre, who are mostly women, come to seek help in getting employment. They face the same issues as those listed above with the additional problem of poverty. This makes them see economic survival as the issue that needs to be addressed immediately rather than the dispute in their family. Economic survival also becomes an issue with women who are deserted or thrown out of their home. Here, the need for short-stay home for such women also becomes the concern of the counsellors.

In terms of support from the family, when an individual is in distress, the lack of it can impede resolution of a crisis. Wherever there is whole-hearted support for the person in distress from his immediate family, resolution of a crisis has been simpler. Finances of the family concerned also play a crucial role in crisis resolution. When resources of a family are meagre, then the support for a person in crisis also goes down. In fact among the poorer clients, there is no question of seeking help from their immediate family. They have to fend for themselves. Without adequate support structures within the family, these people look for some state support. This is very inadequate in terms of facilities like short-stay home or easy access to loans for starting any small business venture.

What does this mean in terms of policy implications? Since marriage-related problems have been the main concern at this Counselling Centre, prevention of such problems has to be addressed. One point that emerges quite strongly from this study is the need for pre-marriage

counselling. The preparation of young people who are going to embark on a life together to understand what a relationship with another person could mean, is essential in preventing many of the problems that are brought to the Centre.

The second concern is one of strengthening the hands of the counsellors themselves, by providing better access to referral services. At present, there are a host of NGO and government-sponsored programmes to assist people in distress, but there is little organised material on them. Access is difficult because these services are scattered and inadequate. A study that can assess the ground situation on the availability of referral services in Delhi will be very useful.

A last issue that is being continuously assessed and improved but could do with more changes is the one surrounding legal help for clients. Here ignorance of the laws and delays in the legal process create a lot of anxieties. Better use of existing laws through awareness is called for. Legal literacy camps have been held in colleges for this purpose. This could be done on a regular basis with better financial and resource support for the counsellors and could cover high school students as well.

This report cannot claim to be totally comprehensive. There are many aspects of research that have not been covered here. For example, the relationship between the socio-economic variables and the cause of the problem brought to the Centre as well as other counselling-related information that were collected in the course of this study. Aspects of migration and economic mobility of the family as well as the effect of the changing economic environment on the family could not be brought out in this study because of lack of information. However, this study is a beginning in this area of search and, we hope, will lead to more questions and their answers.

Appendix

CASE STUDIES

Thirty nine of the 387 cases were probed in greater detail with the help of resurveys, in-depth interviews and recording of case histories over repeated visits for counselling and referral assistance. A gist of these cases are being reproduced here. All of these cases would fall into one or more of the broad groups and sub-groups specified in Tables II-4 and II-5 in the text.

Case Study No. 1

A and Rb are sisters. There is a great deal of age difference between them. Rb is the eldest of her siblings. They came to the FCC with a unique problem. Rb had been married for almost twenty years and did not have any children. Her husband was being pressurised to 'marry' again so that he may have children. Rb wanted A to marry her husband so that she would have fewer conflicts with her "co-wife".

Social History

A comes from a Brahmin family. Her father is a merchant and has a shop. She has been to school and feels confident that she can take up a job. Her family's circumstances when her sister Rb was young were not as comfortable as later when A grew up. But Rb married a man who prospered in the years after marriage. He also had a lot of say in Rb's natal family as he was greatly respected by them. A was 14 when Rb got married. She liked her brother-in-law. A few years later, A got married to a boy who did not live in Delhi. This marriage did not work out partly because the boy's family harassed A and demanded more dowry.

A came back to her parents very soon after her wedding. Her husband sued her for desertion and after seven years managed to get an ex-parte divorce. A had been home all this while, doing courses of various types.

Meanwhile, Rb's life was getting somewhat miserable. She realised that there were a lot of pressures being put on her husband by his family to remarry so that he could have an heir to his business. They even had a girl in mind. Rb felt that the best solution to her dilemma was to persuade her sister and husband to get married so that she could remain with her husband with as little conflict as possible. A's parents were agreeable to this solution as was Rb's husband.

A was very apprehensive about this proposal initially. She was aware of the legal implications of such a relationship.

FCC Intervention

A came to the FCC to ask for legal advice. She wanted to know if she could get some protection in her situation if she agreed to go ahead with this 'marriage'. The counsellors approached the legal adviser on the FCC panel.

A very interesting discussion took place at the Centre on this issue between the lawyer and the counsellors. The discussions centred on the question that as a feminist organisation should the Centre discourage women from getting into exploitative situations like the one that A had got into, or should the Centre support women as individuals in a society caught up in intricate relationships.

Ultimately, the counsellors warned A of all the pitfalls of bigamy and the possibility of conflict with her sister in the future. A did buckle under the pressures of the rest of her family and married her brother-in-law. Now they are all

waiting for her to deliver the child that they all hope she will. A has taken it all bravely so far and Rb is very happy that her wish has come true. But the Centre is still waiting to see how the rest of this story will develop.

Case Study No. 2

M came to the FCC in February, 1992. She was 34 years old then. She had married G in 1984, and, they had been living together until May, 1990.

Social History

M's family was a well-to-do business family. Her four brothers and a sister were all married. She was the youngest child of her parents. She had been given a very comprehensive dowry during her marriage and her parents had financially supported her husband's business venture as well as major expenses for their household after she got married.

M's father-in-law had passed away in 1989. Her mother-in-law stayed in the house where they lived along with one of G's two brothers and his family as well as his eldest sister. G's eldest brother who had retired from the army, lived separately as did two of G's married sisters. G's sister who lived with him was a teacher at a girl's school.

The Problem

M came to the FCC with a case for compensation and divorce from G. She charged that her husband had been financially demanding and ill-treated her because she felt that she should not be asking her parents to support her husband's ventures anymore. Towards the end of 1989, G had asked for Rs. 2.5 lakhs from her family for factory

machinery. M had refused to ask her parents to help G in this matter.

M and G had been married for five years by now and had no children. M felt that while financial demands on her parental family and their refusal was the main reason for her ill-treatment by her husband, he had started using their childlessness as an excuse to harass her. M was keen to adopt a child and G would have agreed to it but her mother-in-law and sister-in-law felt that they should try and have their own child. A visit to the United States was planned for medical treatment to help in this matter. But G felt that M's parents should finance this trip and M refused to accept this.

In May 1990, a *puja* was being held on the death anniversary of M's father-in-law. At the end of this, her mother-in-law wished that she may be blessed by a grandson. M objected to this as she felt that it was casting aspersions on her childlessness. At this, her husband hit her. M left the house and went back to her parent's place that day. She had hoped that her husband would come and fetch her. But this did not happen.

She stayed with her parents for a year and half before coming to the FCC. During this time M's interaction with her in-laws was limited. They felt she could return to them only if she was able to produce a child! On the other hand, her husband visited her only to demand that she give him a divorce so that he could remarry. During such encounters, G would turn very abusive and aggressive. He would also telephone M and abuse her every now and then. Recently, M had heard that her husband had taken a "wife" again, and she wanted to try and get some compensation for the time and money she had invested in G's life before getting a divorce from him.

FCC Intervention

In March 1992, the FCC at ISST decided to intervene on M's behalf with her husband and in-laws. They wrote a letter to G requesting him to come to the Centre and give his version of the dispute. G's elder brother and sister-in-law visited the Centre in late March, and later G himself came over. The counsellors had about five to seven sessions with M and about fifteen joint sessions with M and G to resolve their differences out of court.

G was very aggressive and loud in the beginning. He accused M of not revealing to him the fact that at the age of 10 she had undergone a surgery which involved removal of her uterus. Medical reports as recent as those of March, 1992 proved that this was not so. But G persisted in feeling that he and his family had been cheated by M and her family in this regard. He also refused to admit that he had started living with another woman whom he had "married" at the *gurudwara*.

The relationship between G and M at the various counselling sessions was curious. In front of the counsellors they could be very confrontational, using abusive language and loud voices. But outside the Centre, the counsellors observed that they would sit in G's car and talk to each other for long moments and even decide to go off and have a cup of coffee together. But through it all, it was clear that M wanted a compensation of some sort before agreeing to give divorce to G, while G wanted divorce unconditionally on the grounds that M had more financial backing on her own - much more than him.

M wanted her *streedhan* back and visited G's residence with the counsellors. During the visit to G's residence by the FCC counsellors, they were accompanied by M as well as two counsellors of the Crime Against Women Cell of the Delhi Police who were to be witnesses. It was found

during this visit that there was a woman living with G as his wife as M had charged. G's mother claimed that she had come to them for a year. G himself came back from his work place during this visit and with a show of verbal force threw this party out of his house.

There were times through this period when G would seem reasonable and listen to M's request for the return of her *streedhan* and any other money that she had invested in G's life. But most often he would walk off from these sessions in a huff. When the FCC finally felt that enough was enough, they handed over this case to the Deputy Commissioner of Police at the Crime Against Women Cell.

M has been in touch with other women's organisations in the hope of getting a just redressal for the life she spent with G. The Housewives' Federation has taken her case upto the Delhi Administration. The last time the FCC contacted M's family, they were informed that M has decided to get a divorce and has managed to get a compensation of Rs. 4 lakhs. M is very confident of starting life all over again. Her husband, who was jailed for a day for bigamy, has been deserted by his second wife and is on his own again, and M feels that justice has been done in her case. M is a member of the Housewife's Federation and feels that she can help other women in distress.

Points for Discussion

1. The role of childlessness in the position of women in the family.
2. The expectation that a girl's parents should continue to support her husband and the family financially because the girl's people are hierarchically indebted to the boy's family!

3. The ease with which a man can remarry in our society with hardly any censure as compared to a woman even in cases where they are known to be already married.

Case Study No. 3

SD comes from a comfortable, Khatri family of Delhi. Her father worked for the government and is now retired and has a flat of his own. SD has a degree in science and a diploma in systems management. She works at present as a systems analyst, earning about Rs 8000 per month. She has a younger sister who lives with the family.

SD got married at the age of 25 when her parents felt that she should get married. Her marriage was arranged through newspaper advertisement. Within months of her marriage to SP, SD felt that she could not live with his family. SP was an engineer by profession. He had a job with a private company and earned about Rs 4000 per month. His family had lived in Bihar and he had been brought up there.

The main objection that SD had against SP was that he was sexually very demanding and discussed his relationship with SD very openly with the rest of his family. Aside from this, SP's family was very conservative about SD's work status as well as her dress habits.

SD came to one of the counsellors to discuss this problem. However, when her husband got to know of it, he threw tantrums. SD resolved to get a divorce from her husband within a year of her marriage. She felt she had tried to adjust to the requirements of her husband and his family but the marriage was not working out. SD was expecting a baby by then but decided to have an abortion and separate from her husband immediately.

SD's parents, especially her father, were very supportive of this move and SD moved back with her parents. Initially, there were some comments from her mother's family against this move. SD's mother herself had felt that SD should make some effort at adjusting, but finally she also accepted the situation.

SD has got a divorce now and stays with her parents. This was possible within a year of her making a decision because it was done on the basis of mutual consent.

Case Study No. 3a

AS comes from a Brahmin family of Benaras. She has a Masters degree and a diploma in counselling. Her husband's family come from Rajasthan. Both these families are well-to-do and own properties in South Delhi.

AS had initial adjustment problems with her mother-in-law on how the household should be run. Her mother-in-law is fastidious and does not like clutter. AS was brought up in a household where there was plenty of household help. AS had come to a counsellor to find out how this could be sorted out.

Today, AS continues to live with her husband's family. Her differences with her mother-in-law are not entirely resolved, but she and her mother-in-law have accepted that they have differences and manage to live together.

Case Study No. 4

SS is a 35 year old woman with a bachelor's degree. She works as a copy editor with the government. SS lost her father very early in life. The government gave them compensation and housing while she grew up and absorbed

her in service when she was ready. She has felt the responsibility towards her family all her life. She has a younger sister besides her mother.

SS got married early to somebody who was also working in the same field as her. She was married for 10 years and has a son. But throughout this married life she was harassed by her in-laws for money and she was prevented from meeting her family. She resolved that she needed to break away from this marriage, and got a divorce in 1991. She was not given custody of her son.

SS came to the Counselling Centre to get help in getting custody of her child. In the last two years, however, she met another man whom she liked and married. She has a child by him. She has not been able to get custody of her first child, but is able to look after her mother and sister now without interference from her husband and in-laws.

Case Study No. 5

VG at 38 is a divorcee who lives with her two sons. She has been divorced for eight years now and runs a printing business of her own. VG comes from a Brahmin family based in Delhi. Her father had a good government job. VG has a Master's degree as well as a B.ed. degree.

VG got married to KG 19 years ago when she was still very young. She is third of four sisters, and has two brothers who are the youngest. Her husband was the eldest in his family, and his family expected a lot from their eldest daughter-in-law. VG found this expectation difficult to handle. Over the years, her husband also turned alcoholic and would physically abuse her. VG could not take it after awhile, and with the help of the Counselling Centre got a divorce and moved out on her own.

Her family supported her move and helped to set her up again on her own. VG's sons are grown up now and she feels confident of managing her life herself.

Case Study No. 6

Social History

M was a 29 year old graduate who had been married for two and a half years when she came to the FCC in May, 1992. She had been working as a stenographer with a salary of Rs 1285 per month. She was going to have a baby within a month. She had been staying with her parents for the last six months. She wanted a divorce from her husband.

M's father had retired a year ago. She had a married older sister and a younger brother who was unmarried. M's marriage was arranged in December, 1989. By the time M, met A, her husband-to-be, she had rejected many suitors recommended by her parents. She had decided that this was the last time she was going to meet a boy.

A came from a large family. His mother was his father's second wife. She had married her sister's husband when her sister passed away leaving three sons and three daughters. She had four sons of her own. At the time of A's marriage to M, the step brothers and sisters of A had been married for several years and lived separately from their step family. A was the third of the four sons of his mother. His two elder brothers were already married.

M's family was told that A, who had a degree in B.Com., had been working as a property dealer with a friend, and had a share in a business run by his older brother. A's mother had also informed M's parents that after they got married she would help A to set up a shop.

M got engaged to A on 6 December, 1989. She got married to him on the 4 February, 1990. In the two months between her engagement and marriage, M met A several times but always in the company of one of A's relatives so that she never had a chance to talk to him alone.

A day after the wedding, M's mother-in-law took away a gold necklace gifted to A by M's parents on the pretext that she had been insulted and the chain should have been rightfully given to her. M also noticed that A's extended family did not visit them very often after the wedding excitement was over.

M and A decided to go on their honeymoon to Nainital. M discovered, to her surprise, that her older brother-in-law and wife were to accompany them on this trip. The whole excursion turned out to be a fiasco as the two brothers would drink heavily and M was not given a chance to have a peaceful vacation or get to know her husband throughout the trip because of the continuous presence of her husband's family.

A would get quite upset by the whole set-up. He would accuse M for having encouraged his family members to be around all the time as his brothers and their family members kept accompanying them to every invitation they received even after their return to Delhi. M was uncertain as to how to deal with the situation but decided to keep quiet initially.

M's eldest brother-in-law, an auto-rickshaw driver, was given to drinking in the evenings and would turn very loud and aggressive. He started calling M a hen who lay golden eggs. The cash gifts given to M by the neighbours at that time were all taken away by her mother-in-law. One of her sisters-in-law would advise her not to give all the money to her mother-in-law. All this confused M a great deal. She felt that the rest of A's family were out to create trouble for her.

The Problem

M had to rejoin her work by now. Initially, her husband would borrow a scooter in the morning and drop her at her place of work. Later she started going on her own. She found that A never went out anywhere to work. A claimed that most of his work was from home. At the end of the month, when M brought back her salary, her mother-in-law demanded that she contribute Rs 500 to the kitchen expenses as her husband's pay was low. A would also demand money from her for various expenses. As M's take-home salary was Rs 850 at this time, she found that she was left with very little money. Besides, she found that although she contributed to the kitchen expenses, she had no say in the matter of cooking done at home and access to the kitchen was cut off for her as it was locked when her mother-in-law was not around. When she came back from work, she had to wait for her mother-in-law to return before she could get herself a glass of water. M found herself getting physically weak and exhausted between the demands of her work and lack of proper nourishment.

When M confronted A about his income from his share of the business he was supposed to be in, A told her that all that was not true. He informed her that his mother had made it up so that he could get married and bring in a dowry. A also told M that he had not been interested in getting married but his family had forced him to it. In April 1990, M finally realised and informed her parents that A was unemployed with no source of income.

M had also discovered by now that A was addicted to a particular brand of *beedi* which he smoked all the time, and that he would drink tea throughout the day if he could get access to it. His mother tried to control these habits without success, and mother and son would have regular arguments on this subject.

M's parents tried to confront A's mother about his joblessness without any result. They tried to ease M's situation by helping her financially, but A would use it up on himself. With her parents' support, M decided that the solution to the problem lay in her moving out of her mother-in-law's house. With her parent's help, she moved out of A's mother's house to a rented place. This move was frowned upon by M's in-laws. A was also helped to find a job. A held on to the job for very little time and then dropped out of it. He went back to hanging around the house smoking *beedis* and drinking tea.

M tried to ask her in-laws to intervene and make A little useful in earning a living. She found the expense of running a place entirely on her own very difficult. Her mother-in-law suggested that having a child may make A more responsible. M moved back with her in-laws. She followed her mother-in-law's advice and decided to have a baby. However, about two months after she had conceived, her eldest brother-in-law started making her life very difficult. He would get drunk at night and knock on the door of M's room. He would loudly accuse M of infidelity and state that the child that M was going to have was not A's. M found the going very difficult and complained to her mother-in-law who suggested that M go back to her parents' house for awhile. But once M shifted in with her parents, none of her in-laws contacted her and she was not asked to return to her husband again.

FCC Intervention

M waited for six months and then came to the FCC to ask for their help and intervention. She wanted a divorce. But the FCC advised her to wait until after her baby was born. When the baby, a girl, was born two weeks later, M's in-laws did not visit her.

At this stage, the counsellors at the FCC sent a letter to A asking him to come to the Centre and talk to them. There was no response from him. They made a telephone call to his house and spoke to his mother who was very positive in her feelings for M. She said that she would like M to come back to them. In fact, she visited M after this and asked her to come back home. But A did not come to visit M.

The FCC asked M to bring A to the Centre. Initially, she was reluctant but finally brought A to the Centre. A's first visit was quite revealing. He was very shabbily dressed and smelled from lack of a bath. He kept silent most of the time and went out frequently to smoke his *beedi*. The counsellors suspected that A may be on drugs. When they mentioned the name of a doctor who treats patients for de-addiction, A claimed he was familiar with this doctor. M now felt that she had a case for divorce on the grounds of A's addiction.

A listened to all the arguments in favour of his going in for a divorce. He was informed that he would not have to spend any money on lawyers for a divorce by mutual consent. That all he had to do with the process was to be in court one day along with M. But ultimately, A decided not to cooperate with M for a divorce with mutual consent, which left M in a dilemma. With the help of the FCC, M retrieved most of her dowry from A's place.

M's father felt that M should be firm in her resolve to break away from A. He felt that A had been given enough chances to mend his ways. M's brother-in-law also played an important role in persuading M that she should go for a clean break with A. This brother-in-law, i.e. her elder sister's husband, also played the role, as far as M was concerned, as a model for a good husband. M felt that he earned a good living and looked after his wife's needs adequately.

However, M's brother was not too happy with her return to her father's house. He was to get married sometime soon

and M sensed that her being in the house may not be taken well by her brother and his new family. Her mother, although supportive, would drop a hint on her place being with her husband. The counsellors at the FCC felt that through this period of negotiations with A, all these factors kept playing on M's mind. So when she was asked if she knew anybody from A's family who could intervene positively on her behalf, she recommended Mrs C, her eldest step-sister-in-law. M felt that money played an important role in her mother-in-law's relationship with people. She had always felt that because she earned, she was held in some degree of respect by A's mother. In the same way, this sister-in-law was married to a well-to-do person. Her decisions were taken kindly by the mother-in-law.

A meeting was held on 2 September, 1992 with the help of M's father's friend. This was attended by M's natal family as well as her in-laws, including Mr C. This meeting was held at Mr C's house. Both A and his mother indicated that they had nothing against M and that they would like her back with them. At this meeting, it was decided that A's mother will contribute a substantial amount of money towards a shop to be set up for A on the premises of A's mother's house, and M would return to A and live with him. It was also decided that the two elder brothers of A along with their families would not stay on the same floor as A. That his mother will see to it that they will not interfere with M's living arrangements there. M would share her kitchen arrangement with her mother-in-law and her younger brother-in-law. She would contribute Rs 400 to the kitchen expenses, while A would contribute Rs 200.

While all these promises, made in good faith, were recorded and signed by the mediators, they were not fulfilled for a long time. This was partly because of a deadlock caused by the chicken and the egg syndrome, i.e. M said that she would not move in with her in-laws until they set up the shop for A and A's family felt that they could not trust A to deal with this

situation on his own, and therefore, until M moved in with them there was no point in investing in the shop.

M continued to stay with her parents for a year while trying to sort out this difference with her in-laws. In December, 1992, she tried to pin A down to his responsibility towards his daughter by opening an account for her in a bank where she expected him to put some money for their child without success. M and A had other sessions with the counsellors to reconcile the two with the same results as earlier.

By September, 1993, M resolved to be aggressive and demanded again that her mother-in-law keep her promise of starting a shop for A so that M could move in with them. Having weighed the situation in her parent's home and her in-law's, M seemed to have come to the conclusion that her place along with her daughter's was in her husband's house, but on her terms. She moved in with A, bag and baggage, one day and is confident that she can help to sort things out in her favour without giving ground to her husband and her mother-in-law.

M has been coming to the Centre off and on recently. Her relationship with her husband has not changed very much and she still goes through an occasional feeling that things could have been different if she had had a partner who was more her equal but she manages at her in-law's house in spite of her differences with them. She is considering leaving her secretarial job and setting up a small business on her own.

Case Study No. 6a

NB, in contrast to M, is another woman with very similar problem with the additional handicap of having a very low level of self-esteem. NB is in a cycle of distress from which she cannot extricate herself.

NB is an undergraduate Punjabi girl who has been working for awhile as a typist. Her husband was unemployed when she married him but she realised this later. He is an alcoholic now. But because of a sense of social pressure, NB returns to her husband after leaving him in desperation every now and then. Her family had suggested that she part ways with her husband, but NB is very uncertain of the status of a divorcee. With some manipulation by her in-laws and her family, she had been given a divorce by her husband at some stage, but she went and remarried the man in a temple. Her family gave money so that she could have a house of her own, but because of her negligence, the property was not registered in her name but her husband's. She finds her situation unbearable but is not able to be forceful in taking a decision. Being the youngest of five siblings, she has always had somebody take a decision for her and she is still waiting for somebody to take a firm decision for her on this issue. Counselling has had little impact on her except for being a place where she can unburden her woes.

Points for Discussion

1. The assigned role of a man in society as the bread winner and provider.
2. A woman's place in her parent's establishment after she is married.
3. Drug addiction and alcoholism.

Case Study No. 7

H came to the Counselling Centre in April, 1987 with three small children in tow. She was not yet 21. She had run away from her husband when she could not take his tyrannical

ways any more. Her family wanted her to reconcile with her husband. So she had nobody to turn to and when she saw an advertisement on *Saheli* in the magazine called *Vama*, she decided to seek their help. Through the network of women's voluntary organizations, she was finally referred to the FCC at ISST by the Central Social Welfare Board.

Social History

H came from a large, middle class family. Her parents had five sons and four daughters. H herself was the last but one child of her parents. Her father, who worked as a pilot engineer with the government, could not cope with his family responsibility. At the age of 56, he decided to take to *sanyas*. He did not make any financial provisions for his family, having forfeited his pension.

H's eldest brother had committed suicide in the recent past. The reason for this had been that he wanted to marry a girl from a different religion which his parents had forbidden. His suicide affected the family a great deal. H's father's decision to take up a holy life may have been connected with this event.

H's second eldest brother was left to take charge of the family when their father left them. H's mother took to sewing and the brother took up a job. This brother's primary concern was now to have his three younger sisters married so that his responsibility towards them could be discharged before he himself settled down. The eldest sister had been widowed and returned to her mother with two children. So when she got a chance to remarry, she did, and moved abroad. The other two sister's marriages were arranged and they too settled with their new families.

Only H was now unmarried. She was around 15 then. Her brother's friend, who lived in Dadri, brought a proposal of a well-to-do doctor of that area. H's brother was impressed by

the financial well-being of this match. H was promised a lot of jewellery and fine clothes. H's family, starved of any monetary comfort, was taken in by this show of wealth as was H herself, who had dreams of a future without misery. At the time of negotiations for marriage between Dr. B and H, the family had told Dr. B that they did not have much money and needed six months to raise a decent amount for the wedding. Dr. B, having met H, was in a hurry to get married and gave H's family a large sum of money to hold the wedding soon. So H got married to Dr B in late 1981.

H's problems started about three months after her marriage. First of all, H discovered that Dr. B had been married before. He had not got his divorce from his first wife when he married H. H was warned by Dr B's first wife that Dr B was a very devious person, but in the euphoria of her newly-married status, H had believed this to be untrue. But after awhile she discovered that Dr. B was cheating on her by having affairs with his nurses. Besides this, H also discovered that there were a lot of underhand dealings that went on at the private clinic run by her husband. This included trafficking in women. The bulk of the money made by Dr B, who claimed to be a gynaecologist, was from abortions that needed discretion. According to H, Dr. B had a degree in *Ayurvedic* medicines!

Initially, H did not understand the implications of her situation in Dr. B's set-up. Their residence was attached to the clinic and all that happened there was apparent to H, but she was too young to understand everything that went on at the clinic. Meanwhile, H had two children. She had no material want and thought she was very comfortable. However, she had started protesting a little to Dr. B about his extra-marital affairs. When she became more vocal about this, Dr B started beating her. H could not keep quiet about the increasing indignities heaped on her. Dr. B's family's attitude was that all men have affairs and that H should not protest too much about this. When she told her brother and mother about these incidents, their attitude was

that she had settled in a well-to-do family and she should not jeopardise her situation by questioning Dr. B's life style.

By the time H was 20, she had three children - two boys and a girl. She had started feeling the hopelessness of having an ordinary relationship with a husband who had a roving eye and crooked ways of making money. H realised that through his wealth, Dr. B had also amassed a great deal of power in the Dadri area. But she wanted to get away from his oppressive clutches. H tried to run away to her mother and brother only to be sent back to her husband. Dr. B was incensed by H's attempt to get away and beat her more. He even tried to disfigure her. A very desperate H finally found her way to the FCC at ISST.

FCC Intervention

H's case was a very difficult one for the Centre. To begin with, their policy as dictated by the CSWB, required them to meet H's opponent, in this case her husband, who refused to cooperate right from the beginning. Secondly, the FCC policy also required that reconciliation should be the goal of any case of family dispute. In this case, H's family had already tried to send her back to her husband only to have H beaten again. H ran away each time.

H was very clear that she did not want to go back to her husband's family. She wanted a divorce, custody of her children and a maintenance from her husband. H was willing to work to make ends meet if she could be helped in getting a place to stay for herself and the children. She had already been to a lawyer to get her papers ready for divorce, and was keen to meet the legal advisor at the FCC to get her opinion as well.

In the first session with H, the counsellors advised H to think over her problem carefully. She had the responsibility of three very small children whose future she had to

consider. H had felt at this stage that she could manage by herself. That is, if she had a place to stay and some work to earn her living.

By the second session, which took place a week later, H had been to various banks in search of a loan to set up a business. She had discovered in the process that her lack of education was going to be a handicap. H had been married when she was just past her eighth class in school and had no chance to keep up with education at Dadri as she was burdened with children immediately after marriage. The FCC tried to help her locate various skill training programmes while it introduced her to the short-stay home at Shaheed Bhawan. H moved in at Shaheed Bhawan by mid May, 1987. She was to take up a beautician's course while staying there.

Meanwhile, H had a brief meeting with the legal advisor for the FCC. H had sent back her children to their father when they fell ill with the hope that they would be looked after better at the clinic. Now she was pining for them. The legal advisor informed H that she could meet her children through a court order. H did go and meet her elder son at the police station in Ghaziabad in this process.

Just as the various requests of H to the FCC were falling in place, H disappeared from Shaheed Bhawan in mid-June. She had told somebody that her daughter had fallen ill and she was going to see her. A few days later, a doctor employed by Dr. B telephoned Shaheed Bhawan to say that H was alright at her husband's place.

By now the FCC had become very involved with H's case and were genuinely worried for her safety. H wrote a little while later that she was alright and thought that things may work out between her and Dr. B again. Her change of heart was a result of having seen her daughter ill and found her husband also in ill health.

But by August that year H was again repenting her return to Dadri as her ill-treatment started again. H felt that a woman was involved with Dr. B. She came to the FCC on 18 August. She had been duped by Dr. B to come to Appu Ghar with the children where he left her with her daughter and went back to Dadri with the sons. H had no place to go to again and, within a week, also realised that she was pregnant again. She wanted an abortion now and the FCC helped her to get in touch with Marie Stopes and get an abortion by the end of the month.

Meanwhile, H also managed to file her case in the courts. The FCC also suggested that H register a case with the police at the Crime Against Women Cell. This case was registered alongwith a detailed case history of H. The case, however, was forwarded by this cell to the CID for some reason. This seemed to frighten H and she wanted to withdraw the case altogether.

After this, there is a gap in the record on H's case with the FCC. It appears that Dr. B approached H's brother and requested that H should come back to Dadri. H was taken there on the pretext of seeing her children and left there by her brother. H stayed on in Dadri for the next year. But by August 1988, things again got out of hand between her and her husband. She filed a case for assault against her husband. The case history shows that the police handled the case in a lackadaisical manner.

Meanwhile, H came back to the FCC, and was helped to put up at the short-stay home at Shakti Shalini. Last year, H had withdrawn her case against her husband as well as the petition for divorce, maintenance and custody of children. To her horror, she discovered that her husband had duped her and managed to get a divorce without any stipulation for H's maintenance in Ghaziabad. This happened as late as 1991. Between August 1988 and 1991, H had been to many women's organisations in Delhi for help, and had repeatedly returned to her husband in the hope of better

treatment from him. He would be courteous and well-behaved for awhile, and get drunk and start a brawl the next. H would fall in the trap of his charm every now and then only to discover that it was temporary.

Dr. B had managed to get the custody of the children alongwith the divorce. So H found herself without home, belongings and children one fine day.

In August 1988, H had made a bid to get back atleast her dowry from her husband's house. On a rainy day, armed only with a letter from the DCP, Crime Against Women Cell, to DCP Ghaziabad to help her, she alongwith the FCC counsellors and two people from Shakti Shalini, went to Dadri. After a great deal of delay in which the Dadri police obviously tried to obstruct access to Dr. B's clinic, the group managed to retrieve a few of H's belongings. H had to fend for herself from this point on until the ex-parte divorce organised by her husband came through in 1991.

Today, H has remarried a person who seems caring towards her, knowing fully well her background. H has found her feet again, but at a tremendous cost to her life at a stage when she should have been establishing herself. The Counselling Centre did its best to help H in various ways including legal help, access to short-stay home, medical help etc, but the strange relationship between Dr. B and H, and Dr. B's crooked methods defeated their efforts.

Case Study No. 8

BK at 28 is separated from her husband. Her divorce will come through soon, and she is planning her future these days in terms of employment and perhaps another marriage.

BK is from a Sikh family that has lived in one of the south Delhi colonies. She is the youngest of five siblings. She

has a Bachelor's degree as well as a Masters in Library Science. BK got married to a fairly well-to-do man who worked as a contractor. BK had to go out of Delhi with him and his family as his work was in another State. After a year of marriage, BK felt that her father-in-law was showing undue interest in her, and had started to physically molest her under the guise of affection. She complained to her husband who did not show any sympathy with her. BK got nervous of her situation in her in-laws' house, and decided to return to Delhi to her parents.

BK came to the Counselling Centre for advice when her husband's family served notice for divorce. She has managed to get a hearing on getting some compensation, and is quite glad of her decision to move away from her in-laws.

Case Study No. 9

Y came to the FCC in late January, 1995. He had broken down, in distress, in front of a senior colleague who recommended that he talk to a counsellor who could help him sort out his troubles. Y had been separated from his wife and child since September, 1994. He wanted to reconcile with them if it was possible.

Social History

Y came to Delhi in 1986 to work towards a Ph.D. He had met S in Orissa while studying for his M.Sc. They had kept up their friendship through the year that S spent in Delhi for her M.Phil. During one of her visits to Orissa, S had suggested that Y could also come to Delhi to study. She had offered to help Y in any way. By the time Y came to Delhi, Y and S had decided that they would get married when one of them started earning.

Y came from a rural background. His father was a small landholder and a petty trader. His mother was a housewife. He had done well for himself in academics and moved to Sambalpur to study where S's parents lived.

S's parents were school teachers. S was the eldest of four sisters, and had an older brother who had migrated abroad and a younger brother. Y's meeting with S's father was unpleasant since they first met. That was when Y went to extend an invitation to S's family for a marriage in his family. Y felt he was treated with little respect.

Later when Y's parents visited S's family to ask for S's hand in marriage, Y again felt that his parents were treated with disrespect. This had always hurt Y a great deal. S herself was unhappy at the way her family behaved, and in spite of the apparent disapproval of her family, she had decided to get married to Y.

The attitude adopted by S's parents towards Y's family could have been due to their differing economic status as well as the fact that the two came from different castes. Y also felt that S's parents had hoped that she would marry into a very well-to-do family from her own caste.

In Delhi, Y and S had started living together during their student days. From Y's side, this was with the belief that free love should be practised, while S felt that, in any case, they were committed to each other. After an initial reluctance on her part, she gave in to Y's desire. Their commitment to each other was such that they helped each other with the requirements of their respective families. S's sister came and lived in the accommodation in which Y lived for awhile. Y's sister was helped in her studies by S. They went for holidays together with other siblings.

S completed her Doctorate in 1990, and got a job immediately after. In January 1991, Y and S got married. Y was still working for his Ph.D. Their sharing of family responsibilities

for each other continued. S had taken a residence in Faridabad near her place of work. Y's parents shifted in with them for awhile. One of his sisters lived with them. Besides, two of S's sisters also came to live with them. They had got a household help in the form of a poor distant relative of Y's. This boy was about 15.

The Problem

The root of the problem in Y and S's marriage took shape as early as in June, 1991. S's youngest sister R was staying with them at that time. She had not completed schooling as yet, and for some reason had been sent to Delhi by her parents. R was demanding attention from her brother-in-law in terms of services like massaging her forehead due to a headache etc. Y had taken these to be flirtatious advances made by R. In the heat of the moment, one night, Y seduced R or as he would like to partially believe, he was seduced by R.

After this first encounter, however, Y continued to have a sexual relationship with R on the sly, while S was not around. This fact was known to the servant in the house as well as S's sister T who was also staying with them at this time. Y's relationship with T was uncertain. Y sexually desired T. But when he tried to approach her, she spurned him.

A word about R and T. R, according to Y, was a simpleton, perhaps intellectually not upto the rest of her family. T, on the other hand, was not only attractive, but quite clever as well. When she first came to Delhi, Y had put her up and introduced her to many of his friends at JNU. Later, he had been irritated by her having developed friendship with a few of them.

T had got upset by Y's overtures, and in a fit of anger, had gone upto S and revealed to her that Y had a relationship going with R. This revelation led to a great row in the family,

and Y threatened to dissolve his marriage to S. He also threatened to 'expose' the girls for what they were if they talked about his relationship with R.

S, for some reason, decided to give Y a chance, and continued to live with him inspite of her family's disapproval. In fact, within a year of Y's infidelity being exposed, S and Y had a child. Things may have gone along in this way for sometime, but around the summer of 1994, Y found that S started getting phone calls from her family. Y did not discuss the content of these calls which irritated Y a great deal. He suspected that S's family was trying to pressurise her to break with him.

R had been staying with her married sister in Orissa. The phone calls were from this sister C, who was worried that R was going through a mental breakdown. She had started getting into fits, and would accuse a "black person" of abusing her physically. This person was taken to be Y. S's sister felt that R should get some medical attention and that S should break off from Y.

S decided to go home in September, 1994 to sort things out with her family. Her mother had passed away sometime back and her father was coping alone. Y wrote to her, at this time, that if she wanted to bring her father back to Delhi, she could. He also wrote that if her family insisted that he move out of the house, he could do so as ne had got a job at the University by now.

Y had not expected a positive response to this and was surprised when S accepted his offer of moving out of their house in Faridabad. S had been convinced by now that R would get into a traumatic state because of her past relationship with Y. S felt that R's charge that Y had used physical abuse to persuade R to have a sexual relationship with him may have some truth in it. She felt that Y had been dishonest with her and she could not live with him

anymore. So she used her father's visit to Delhi as a convenient reason for separating from Y.

S brought R also back with her to Delhi with the hope that something could be done to help her. This was another reason that Y could not stay with his family. Y consulted a few friends who, he hoped, would help him reunite with his family, but nothing came of it. So recommended by his colleague, he came to the FCC.

FCC Intervention

The counsellors at the FCC listened to Y's story and suggested that he come with S to the Centre. For the next session, Y came with S. S gave her version of the case, and felt that there was no hope of reconciliation as Y had not been honest with her. She felt that he could breach her trust again if she gave him a chance.

Meanwhile, the FCC recommended that S show R to one of the psychologists on the FCC panel. S, along with R, has had three sessions with her, and feels that R is telling the truth. But she refuses to bring R to the Centre at this stage.

Y has again been to the FCC with the hope that the Centre would be able to give him a solution on a platter, but has been given an analysis of the situation by the counsellors.

As the counsellors see it, Y has been the pillar of support of his parental family. Being an only son (his older brother died at the age of 18 when he was about 12), he had to take decisions for his family for a very long time. His parents depended on him to take charge of the family as early as possible. Unfortunately, although Y showed great academic promise, by choosing to try his hand at the Civil Services examinations, he missed his chance to establish himself in the academic field earlier. This has been a source of disappointment for his parents. His marriage to S had been

approved by them as S was very supportive of them and genuinely cared for them.

In Y's relationship with S, he had been the dominant figure in spite of the fact that S herself had been very self-supporting. She had chosen to come to Delhi first, and was clear as to what she wanted in terms of achievements. This included her decision to marry Y.

Y had clearly breached her trust in him by having an affair with R. She had reasons to feel that she could not completely trust him in future. Under such a situation, Y's hope that S would take a quick decision on the fate of their marriage was asking for too much. Y had to give S a little time to think about the whole issue, and come up with a solution in terms of the choice between her family and Y.

Y feels he has a case too as he holds R also responsible for the development of the relationship between them. He categorically denies using physical violence on R, and feels it is fabricated to take revenge on him. He feels that S needs to take into account his version of the story as well, and wants the FCC to help in sorting this out between the two of them. This case is on-going and the FCC is open to being the meeting ground for Y and S to sort out their differences. They have consulted a psychologist on the Centre's panel.

Case Study No. 10

RA has been to the FCC for two sessions. She had already been to a private counsellor for sometime, and was told to come to the FCC by her. RA had an extra-marital relationship, and was not sure whether she had done the right thing. She needed reassurance.

Social History

RA is the second of three sisters. Her father worked with the government, while her mother was a teacher. RA feels that her parents set a very good example of a good relationship between husband and wife. They were respectful of each other's profession. Her father encouraged the older girls to participate in the household decision-making by the time they were in their early teens. They were given the money to buy household requirements, keep accounts and taught to save some money all the time. RA feels that this training has paid off dividends as she feels confident of organising her life.

Ra met N in college, and courted each other for the next seven years. Their relationship, throughout this period, was quite turbulent. RA liked N's ability to sing well. They saw movies together. But aside from this, they had very little in common. RA came from a Brahmin family. N was Khatri. N's father was also in the government service, and lived quite close to RA's family. They were a single income family, and compared to RA's family, less well-to-do. N was very possessive of RA. She resented it, but felt that this may have been natural, given his attachment to her.

RA feels that she would have preferred not to have a career outside home, but after graduation, started working in a government office to save for her marriage. N had also started working in a private company. RA did well at work, and found employment in a UN-related organisation in Delhi. Over the years, she has improved her work status, and earns a good five figure salary by now. N, on the other hand, did not improve his financial status in the company he worked for.

Meanwhile, RA and N got married. The two families had accepted the inevitability of this marriage by the time it took place, in spite of some reservations on the part of RA's

parents. N's parents liked RA. But N's relationship with his parents was always strained. N was the eldest of four children, and his father felt that he should contribute to the family expenses. N always resented this. Eventually, N preferred to move out of his parents' house with RA and their two sons. Over the years, N and RA had built a house in one of the west Delhi colonies. This property was in their joint name. RA and N have been married for 15 years as of 1995.

N's possessiveness towards RA continued to trouble RA after their marriage. In fact, he had started showing signs of jealousy as well. He felt she was having an affair with any man she came in contact with. Her earning more than him also irked him a great deal. Their sexual relationship was also very unsatisfactory. N was very demanding of RA, and accused her of frigidity. RA had herself started believing in this until she actually had an affair with a colleague about a couple of years ago.

RA seemed to discover a whole new world of relationships after this affair. Firstly, she discovered that she was not averse to a physical relationship which had elements of caring and sharing. Secondly, in terms of everyday relationships in the family, she discovered that she had been expected to give all the while. Now she wanted others around her to give a little bit of consideration and care towards her as well.

RA had not disclosed her new relationship to any member of her family, but N had been keeping a close tab on her movements, and discovered that she had an extra-marital relationship. This led to a big row between the couple. RA went through a phase of extreme guilt at this stage, and a counsellor for advice.

FCC Intervention

When RA came to the FCC for the first time, she was very uncertain of her situation. She wanted reassurance as she felt that her parents would have an 'I told you' attitude. They supported her in her longing to break away from her husband, but could not give her the moral assurance that she was seeking. Her first session with the counsellors was quite unsatisfactory as she felt that they were busy with other clients and gave her only half a hearing. They promised to meet her husband if she wanted it that way and try to mediate between them.

However, RA came back for a second session having made up her mind to separate from her husband. She seemed less uncertain about having had an affair. In fact, she indicated that she had discovered her identity in this process, and was clear that her future did not lie with her husband. The counsellors took her comments at face value and did not push to follow-up this case.

While doing the in-depth study for this project, it was felt that RA projected the image of the newly emerging woman of middle class India, and we decided to do a case study on her. We found her still quite confident of tackling her problems that, by now included the defection of her elder son to her husband. RA had set-up a new household on her own by now, and not taken anything from her home that she had built with her husband. Her husband was unemployed at the time of the interview. RA was aware that any attempt on her part to try and get a legal separation would mean that she would be required to pay the maintenance for her husband and, therefore, chose to separate without commitment.

RA's sister has moved in with her at present with her young son as she is having marital discord with her husband. So, here was a household of two sisters with a child each

looking after themselves. RA's parents are able to accept this arrangement by giving other examples of sisters living in a household without male support. RA finds this enough of a reassurance to continue on her own.

Case Study No. 11

S is a Brahmin girl from South India who has been living in Delhi for awhile. Her father worked here, and the family has settled down in this city. She is a graduate with a degree in Library Science. She is also proficient in a foreign language. She has been working at the university for awhile.

S is the eldest of three siblings and the only sister. She is single and lives with her parents. She went through a brief period of uncertainty in her life when she had to contend with tradition in her family involving a woman in her menses. The ritual of purity required that she not take part in household activities while going through this period. Her grandmother was staying in the house at that time, and required nursing attention but would refuse to take S's help on 'those' days.

S had rebelled and come to the FCC to intervene with her family on this regard. With support from the FCC, S was able to sort out this difference with her family.

Case Study No. 12

Social History

Y is a woman of about 30 who has had a very chequered existence. Y was about three years old when her mother walked out on her father forever. Y's father had married her mother when he was into his early thirties and she was sixteen. They had a son within a year of their marriage who

was born with Down's Syndrome. They had Y next year, and another daughter after two and a half years. Y's sister was not yet one when their mother left home.

These three children were sent to their paternal grandmother to be brought up by her. But their grandmother found it difficult to manage them, and reminded the children every now and then that if their mother had not left them, this would not have been necessary.

Y felt responsible for her brother and younger sister and, from very early on, tried to be in-charge of their lives. Later, in the absence of her father, who preferred to be only a visitor to the house, she also felt she had to look after her grandmother.

Y's father's attitude towards his family was very cavalier. He was interested in living his life to his personal specifications. His mother and children came very low in his priorities. He was given to drinking and getting very abusive under the influence of alcohol. This is still a problem with him that creates trouble between him and his children. Over the years, Y has felt that the burden of her siblings has been on her, and that of her grandmother was added as she got older. Y's relationship with her grandmother has had its ups and downs. While in her younger years, she and her siblings had seemed a burden on their grandmother, in the recent past their roles have been reversed with Y as the caretaker of her grandmother, atleast for a short while.

The lack of a mother figure in her life was probably felt by her, but never stated like in the case of her younger sister who wanted their aunt to be their mother when she was about nine years old.

Through her school years in Dehradun, Y was popular but aggressive. She also had a tendency to spend money that was accessible to her in her grandmother's house. This money was usually from the prayer room where it was

collected to be distributed to the poor. The use of this money by Y was discovered when the teachers in her school complained that she had too much money to spend at school. Her grandmother pointed out to her that it was not right for Y to take the money from the prayer room but this had little effect on the girl.

The attitude of most of the friends and relatives of the family was that Y was rather cute in her effort at managing her brother and sister at such a tender age.

Through her college years, Y made a lot of friends and found that this was not approved of by her grandmother, especially as she had many male friends. Y charmed people she associated with outside the family. Y had a close relationship with a boy who wanted to marry her. Y suggested that he take up a career in the Army before they got married. But when the boy joined the Army, he discovered that they could not get married for five years. Y walked out on this boy at this stage. Her father had returned to Dehradun around this time, and was staying away from his mother's place. But Y found his presence in Dehradun oppressive.

Y came away to Delhi after she completed her degree in commerce. She contacted the FCC at this stage for advice. She wanted to do a course that could help her get a job. She wanted to be independent of her grandmother and father as she felt that they had become repressive lately.

Y did a secretarial course at the YWCA, and took up a job in Delhi only to be sent back by her father to Dehradun to look after her grandmother. With her father's help, she took up the post of a receptionist in a factory in Dehradun. Her social life, especially her relationship with boys, became a matter of concern for her immediate family at this stage.

The Problem

It was at this time that a family friend introduced Y's family to a boy who belonged to the same community. He was from Chandigarh. The boy's family was very happy with Y as was the boy himself. Y herself got along well with them. Y got engaged to this boy with the consent of both the families. Y continued to work in Dehradun, and her fiancé would visit her often.

At the same time, Y also got to know H who worked at the same company where Y was working. H was known to be addicted to drugs. Y was sympathetic to his problem, and both H and his family started depending on Y to help them with this problem. Y's fiancé was aware of this relationship and was supportive of her efforts. But to everybody's surprise, when they were least expecting it, Y walked out on her family and fiancé, and married H. This marriage was held in a temple, and the reason for this sudden change in Y's plans was given as the threatened suicide of H if Y did not marry him. H's mother had a key role to play in this episode. She had met Y's grandmother earlier, and made enquiries about Y's marriage plans.

FCC Intervention

Y was married to H for about four years during which she tried all possible means to help H break off his addiction to drugs without any success. Ultimately, with the help of the FCC, Y met Dr Satyawati to get an opinion on this problem. The doctor felt that, over the years, Y herself had started experimenting with drugs, and that for her sake it was necessary that she dissolved her marriage to H before she herself became an addict.

Y's younger sister had a role to play in weaning away Y from H. This sister, who had herself experimented with drugs,

felt that Y had got herself into a hopeless situation and should get out of it while the going was good.

Y decided to separate from H but this process is still not complete. Y felt that H's family needed her until her sister-in-law was married. Her mother-in-law had placed part of the responsibility of this wedding on Y, thereby holding her back for awhile.

Around this time, Y's father came to Delhi and insisted that she go back to Dehradun to look after her grandmother. Y did go back giving up her job in Delhi. Y's grandmother's will was prepared around this time, and the major control of her property had been placed in the hands of Y. Y has also removed money from certain joint accounts with her grandmother without her knowledge. All this has distressed the rest of the family a great deal.

At present, Y is close to completing the process of dissolution of her marriage to H. Meanwhile, an old Dehradun friend, who is in the Army, a cousin of the boy she nearly married a long time ago, has proposed to her. Y is considering his proposal.

Points for Discussion

1. Role of mother and father in socialization of children.
2. The nomadic life of a man as compared to that of a woman, and its social acceptance - compare father's lifestyle to daughter's.
3. Disturbed personality.

Case Study No. 13

P has been keeping in touch with the Counselling Centre for a very long time. She needs occasional talking sessions to let her pent-up feelings of despair and inadequacy be aired. At 62, she finds she has very few people she can turn to who would patiently listen to her tales of woe.

Social History

P was brought up with the proverbial silver spoon in her mouth. Her mother came from an aristocratic family, and was an heiress to a lot of property. Her father was with the ICS. P was an only child for six years, and got a fair share of attention from people around her.

Her sister was born when she was six, and that changed a few things for her. P found that her mother's attention was constantly on her sister. She got closer to her father, but resented her mother's attachment to her sister for the rest of her life.

P was educated in the best of schools, and went on to complete her degrees for B.A. and M.A. She did well throughout her student days, and feels that if she had taken up the offer of her college, then she could have taken up teaching as a career. She also had the option of going abroad for higher studies. But both in terms of career and studies, she felt she could not follow it through because she was unsure of being out in the world on her own.

Her parents arranged a match for her with an Air Force officer who belonged to the same community. Unfortunately, P's relationship with her husband was strained right from the beginning of their married life. P's major complaint against him was that he drank a considerable amount of alcohol. It is also possible that P found managing a household on her own quite difficult, having been used to a

lot of services in her parental home. P also did not get along with her parents-in-law. Unfortunately for her, her parents did not take kindly to her complaints about marital life. They felt that she should try to adjust and learn to live in her new environment.

In spite of all her unhappiness, P had two daughters and continued to live with her husband. Her daughters grew up, and the elder one chose a marriage partner for herself. The younger daughter lived with them and worked for a while. But some incident upset her enough for her to take her own life. P feels that her daughter was harassed by labourers at a construction site in their neighbourhood. She feels that the police did not take adequate action when a complaint was lodged. She also feels partly responsible for this incident as she never talked with her daughter enough to understand her problems.

It is two years since P's daughter's suicide. P feels the need to talk to somebody who would try to understand her distress.

P has several grouses that she repeats again and again. The first of these is her husband's alcoholism. She finds her day very long, alone with her husband, who is retired by now, in their flat. She feels some kind of a job would help her get over her loneliness. But she is keen that the job should be well-paying so that she can be independent of her husband. It should also have some convenient way of providing transport for her as she does not like the public transport system.

P would also like to get some legal advice as she feels that she did not get her share of jewellery and property from her mother. She feels that her mother has favoured her sister, and continues to do so in this regard. The other thing that bothers P a great deal is the inaction by the police in the case of her daughter's suicide. She feels that the people who harassed her should be punished.

FCC Intervention

The counsellors have always listened patiently to P's plea of distress. They suggested that P needed psychiatric assistance. P visited the panel psychiatrist, but was unhappy with her assessment as she felt it favoured her husband. P also wanted to move into an old people's home to be able to live away from her husband. However, when it came to finalising the details for this, she backed out. Her contention is that she has never lived in a hostel or any place where she had to be entirely dependent on herself. She feels very dissatisfied with the Counselling Centre for not having delivered on any of her needs. But she is unable to see how she could help herself to survive with what she already has in terms of material comfort and family.

Case Study No. 14

Social History

N is a young man working for the CPWD as a junior engineer. He had completed school, and been through the ITI. Being in a secure job, he would have been considered eligible for marriage. However, polio crippled him in one leg, and he walked with a limp. He advertised for a match through the papers and met K. K was 27 then, but looked younger. N liked her and they got married. They had a son.

The Problem

N came to the FCC in August, 1990. He was suspicious about certain aspects of K's behaviour. He felt that K's maternal uncle, who had been instrumental in arranging his marriage with K, had some kind of influence over K. He had found K giving away a lot of their household belongings and grocery to her aunt. When he had forbidden K from doing

this, his elder brother had received several nasty letters from K's uncle, hinting that K was keeping a lot of secrets of her past from them. That she was not a virtuous woman, and would ruin the reputation of N's household.

FCC Intervention

N wanted the FCC to investigate the truth behind these charges. These included a hint that K may have been married earlier, and that she may have had a baby before marrying N.

The FCC counsellors visited K, and found her to be a pleasant person. She was busy with her baby then. Next, the counsellors visited K's uncle's residence. There they met her aunt, Sm, who became very excited and informed the visitors that K had been married to R some years back. K had run away from her husband within 15 days, and returned to her uncle's house where she had lived for several years. Sm felt that K was a bad influence all around, and called her a "Saut" (i.e. a shared wife of her husband's). According to her, K's marriage to R was never annulled.

The information gathered by the counsellors indicated that N's marriage to K was null and void, and consequently, their new-born baby had no legitimacy. The counsellors concentrated in the next year to dissolve the marriage of K to R as both parties agreed to give each other divorce by mutual consent. N's family was also for this as they wanted K in their family.

However, throughout this process, K's uncle Rd kept sending nasty letters about K's character to N's family. Finally, the FCC decided to have a joint session with K, Rd and Sm as well as two of K's brothers who also resided in Delhi.

At this session, K broke down and came out with her life story. K came from a village in Maharashtra and was from

the mahar community. Her maternal uncle Rd, who was already living and working in Delhi at that time, had brought her to Delhi when K was 5 years old to educate her. Rd seems to have had knowledge of various government institutions where destitute children could stay and be educated. K was put in such an institution with Rd as her guardian.

It is not clear when, but sometime soon after K came to Delhi, Rd started sexually exploiting her. K did not seem to have thought of it as wrong for a very long time. She was fond of and dependent on her uncle. As K became older, her relationship with her uncle became a matter of speculation in their neighbourhood. Rd decided to get married to squelch any rumour. K was around 18 by then.

Rd got married to Sm in a much publicised group wedding held at the Ashram where Sm, an orphan, was brought up and working. Five girls from the Ashram were married to government servants, and the girls were given away in marriage by various big names of Delhi Administration. This was perhaps around 1980 when K was about 18.

Sm discovered, after her marriage, that she was a cover for Rd's relationship with K. Sm had children, and K continued to live with them while working in a factory. When Sm could not bear the influence K had on Rd, she and Rd decided to marry K to R. All this while, however, Rd and Sm took K's earnings and expected her to look after their children. K was quite fond of these children and did her bit.

An additional reason why Rd fixed K's marriage at this time could have been a petition that K's mother filed in her district court alleging that Rd had bad intentions for K, and that she wanted K to return to their village.

R was a widower with four children. K was 25 then, and he was about ten years older than her. K went through the wedding to R, but came back home in 15 days as she

could not bear the responsibility of step mothering R's children. She stayed on with Rd for another couple of years. Meanwhile, K's brothers had also come to Delhi from their village in Maharashtra to be educated and find themselves a job.

Two years later, when she was married to N, she took to him and his family. Although Rd continued to harass her and Sm to blackmail her, K tried to keep her role as N's wife intact. Within a year, she gave birth to a baby boy, and N would have been happy with K in all respects, but for the interference in their lives by K's uncle. He wanted this sorted out, and came to the FCC.

The FCC counselled N to regard K's past as something that she had no control over. They suggested that his marriage could be legitimised by dissolving K's previous marriage through divorce by mutual consent. By the end of 1991, with the active participation of the FCC, the marriage of K to R was dissolved. K had broken off all relationship with her family. This case rested here for awhile because both N and K seemed to be happy with the new arrangement between them.

K had a daughter last year, and for awhile, the case was revived as N was disturbed by the visit of K's brother to the hospital to see his niece. He was reassured by the FCC, and told not to see too much into every action of K's natal family. K was also asked to let her brothers know that they should come to the FCC directly if they required any kind of assistance.

Rd continues to be a great letter writer who spreads discord through his vile pen. But all those who know about him seem to take his writings with a pinch of salt.

Points for Discussion

1. Protection of young girls from sexual exploitation from a relative.
2. Space provided by society to blackmailers and poison pen letter writers.

Case Study No. 15

Sd is a 58 year old widow. She came to the FCC in 1990 when her family beat her up severely. She had been to see the panel doctor to get medicines for her bruises, and was sent to the Counselling Centre by him. The counsellors felt that a case must be registered immediately by the client. So, they took her to the police station to file a complaint.

That day, Sd lodged an FIR against her family, especially accusing her daughter-in-law's family of having physically manhandled her.

Social History

Sd comes from a lower middle class family. Her husband worked as a driver who had to go to Madras to collect vehicles that were driven back to Delhi. Owing to the nature of his work, Sd's husband had to stay away from home for long durations, and Sd had to support her family on her own.

Sd had been married to her husband at the age of 5. Her family had lived in a village around Sonapat in Haryana. Sd had her 'gauna' at the age of 15, and moved in to be with her husband in Delhi. She had a very happy childhood. Being the youngest child in a very large family, she had been pampered by everybody. But, after marriage, she found the going tough. Not only was she in a strange

environment, she also had to manage on her own for long stretches of time while her husband was away on work. Sd had five children--- three boys and two girls. Somewhere along the way, she had started suspecting her husband of having another woman in his life, especially as the duration of his stay away from home increased, and he stopped contributing financially towards the family's upkeep. Sd had started taking work like knitting to keep the family going.

Around 1977, however, Sd's husband managed to buy a small house in the Shahadra area of Delhi, and the family moved in here to live. The daughters were married, and the eldest son had also married when Sd's husband died. According to neighbours, over the years, Sd had started getting very abusive whenever her husband visited her, and the last time he was home, she had thrown him out, and told him not to come back again. For some reason, at this stage, which was in May, 1984, her husband had made a will leaving the house to his wife. He died soon after, i.e., on 13 July, 1984.

After sometime, Sd's second son got married. He and his wife stayed on in the house for awhile, but found their relationship with Sd deteriorating very fast. Verbal quarrels became fisticuffs until the day Sd got beaten very badly, and turned up at the FCC. This was in May, 1990.

The Problem

Sd's family was incensed by her for having implicated them in a police case, and in retaliation, started a litigation against her for a share in the property that her husband left her in his will. This litigation is still in the courts, and is a source of great tension for Sd.

FCC Intervention

After Sd's first visit to the FCC when she was taken to the police by the counsellors to record her statement, Sd came again to the Centre to inform them that a case had been registered by her two elder sons and younger daughter. They were disputing their father's will as a fake, and demanding a share in the property that Sd lived in at present. This case has now been in the courts for almost five years, without any progress. At every summons from the court, one party to the dispute is missing, and the case is dismissed without a hearing. Sd is very unhappy, and feels tense that the only thing that she has as her own may be taken away from her. Her youngest son stays with her, and is supportive of her as also her oldest daughter who is married but keeps in touch. However, the rest of the family has not been very helpful in sorting their differences of opinion out of courts.

The counsellors at the Centre helped Sd get a lawyer through the Free Legal Aid Cell at Patiala House. The last summons that Sd received was for 12 July, 1995. The counsellors went to court alongwith Sd. The case was presented, and then adjourned to verify the authenticity of the will which is the basis for Sd to occupy the house she lives in.

Case Study No. 15a

PD is 56 years old who has had no schooling. She came to the Counselling Centre because she was beaten and thrown out of her home by her husband, son and daughter-in-law. PD blames her daughter-in-law for her situation as she thinks that she is having an affair with her husband.

PD hails from Uttar Pradesh, and is very proud of being a *surya vanshi*. She had a very happy childhood with a great deal of freedom. She was the elder sister among four siblings, and felt that her parents pampered her, and let her do what she wanted. However, since her marriage and relocation to Delhi, her life has been very unhappy. This got worse when her second son got married. She claims that the house where her husband lives was bought by her brother, and she has the right to go back to it.

Unfortunately for PD, her elder son, who accompanies her to the Counselling Centre has hinted that the problem lies in the quarrelsome nature of his mother. He feels that if she gave a chance to his father, there could be reconciliation, but she cannot get alongwith anybody.

The Counselling Centre has found intervention in this case quite difficult. They have not been able to meet the opponent in this case, and PD is very dissatisfied with the lack of intervention on her behalf.

Case Study No. 16

MG is a young widow who lost her husband in an accident. Although he was admitted to the hospital still fighting for his life, MG feels that he died due to negligence. She blames her brother-in-law for not helping enough through this crisis.

MG comes from a middle class background. She went to college, and had been working before her husband died. MG was childless, but this never came in the way of her good relationship with her husband. She feels his loss a great deal. MG's problem started from the time she was widowed. She has been feeling very insecure in her husband's house where she continues to stay. She feels that if he had been alive, they would have been entitled to a share in the property. But without having a child to put in his claim to

this property, she feels that she will be denied any share at all.

MG came to the Counselling Centre with this concern. The counsellors have tried to talk to one of her brothers-in-law, and have referred her to their legal advisor. But MG's hopes remain uncertain as of now.

Case Study No. 17

VK is a 64 year old widow. She works as a craftswoman with an NGO. She comes from a Punjabi Brahmin family. VK has a daughter who has studied well and has a degree in law. This daughter got married sometime back, but returned home after awhile. She had developed schizophrenic tendencies and had to be treated. Since then, she has lived with her mother.

VK came to the Counselling Centre initially to get help because she and her daughter felt that they were being harassed by the son-in-law who wanted the house that they lived in. He was politically active, and wanted the premises for this purpose. The local police station was informed about this, and some protection was provided for the family.

However, the schizophrenic condition of the daughter had been worsening overtime. VK sought the Counselling Centre's intervention to help her in getting psychiatric help. The FCC's intervention has paid off in this regard, and the girl is under treatment.

Case Study No. 18

RR came to the Counselling Centre when she was living with her 4 year old son, and working at a shop that specialised in

making dolls. She had been deserted by her husband before her son was born.

Social History

RR came from a middle class Rajput family of Delhi. She was the eldest of seven children. They lived in a joint family, and her grandfather had great influence on the family. The family lived comfortably, and the atmosphere was one of harmony and affection.

She was married to a cloth merchant in July, 1977. Her husband and his family lived in Farukhabad in Uttar Pradesh RR went to live there after the wedding. But her marriage was troubled right from the beginning. Within eight days of her marriage, she came back to her parents because her husband's family demanded a gold bracelet (*Kangan*). She stayed with her parents for six months before she was taken back to her in-laws.

RR had a son in 1979. The demand for cash from her husband's family continued throughout this period. In fact, she was beaten when her parents refused to comply with these requests, and attempt was made to burn her when she was pregnant. In July, 1981, RR was expecting again. At this time, her husband brought her back to her parents. He never came again to ask her to return to his family. RR had a boy in February, 1982. Her elder son was sickly, and died in 1985. His father never came to enquire after him.

FCC Intervention

RR finally came to the FCC one day when she saw a notice in a paper asking her to present herself at the court in Rae Bareilly because of the divorce proceedings started by her husband. RR had seen a newspaper report about the FCC, and wanted them to help her now with legal advice.

The counsellors put RR in touch with their legal advisor, and counselled RR to try and shift her case to Delhi so that she could have more control over the proceedings of this case. RR needed maintenance as she had been supporting her son on her own on the basis of a very nominal salary.

This case brought into focus the perils of ex-parte divorce that many men use to get rid of their wives' claims to maintenance, and in most other cases, custody of their children as well. By starting court proceedings without the knowledge of their spouse, and having it adjourned twice in their absence (which is due to their lack of knowledge of the proceedings), they insert a small advertisement in the paper for the third hearing which can be easily missed by the defendant. In the case of a third hearing without the defendant, the judge can pronounce the decree of divorce, ex-parte.

As RR was able to locate the advertisement in the paper and rush to the hearing, she was able to stall her husband's efforts at a legal separation. RR did manage to have the case transferred to Delhi. But the court proceedings for compensation/maintenance dragged on from early 1987, when the case was transferred to Delhi, until 1994. The agreement was finally executed in March, 1994. It required RR's husband to make a fixed deposit of rupees one lakh in the name of their son. It is not clear whether this requirement has been executed or not as yet.

However, RR is a confident person. She has the support of her large family most of the time. Alongwith this, she has tried to improve her status at work. Her son is 14 now (she is 39). She feels she can manage her life inspite of her adversities.

Case study No. 19

KR came to the notice of the Family Counselling Centre when she was introduced to the counsellors by her employer, Mr. K. Mr. K had been sympathetic towards KR because of the troubled life she led. But his wife was a bit unhappy about his concern. KR had been working as a packer in Mr. K's business concern.

Social History

KR came from a lower middle class family. She was married at the age of 15 to a boy of her own community. Her parents-in-law had a house in Palam. Her husband was seven years older than her. KR had studied upto the 10th standard, but her husband was not educated. It was only after her marriage that she discovered that her husband had petty criminal tendencies, and had been charged with various offences.

KR lived in her in-laws' house for fourteen years. These were difficult years for her as she never knew when her husband would be home. He was on the run most of the time as the police were always looking for him. Meanwhile, KR had two children, a boy and a girl. Her in-laws were supportive of her for a number of years. KR's brother-in-law, i.e her husband's younger brother was blind, but a gifted musician. He was also very supportive of KR and her children. However, KR's in-laws, who were increasingly embarrassed by their son's behaviour, started blaming KR for this aberration in their life. They did not want him to return to their house. As his main link with the family was his wife and children, KR's in-laws felt that she should move out of the house forever. They wanted to break all relations with their son and his family.

FCC Intervention

KR came to the FCC at this stage. The counsellors felt that the pressure on KR to move out at this stage was to deny her any rights in her in-laws' property. With no assured income from her husband, KR would have been entirely on her own in managing her family.

Ultimately, KR had to shift to her own accommodation. Her father was no more, and her mother had aged a great deal by now. She had no support from her brother. So KR was left very much on her own. When KR had come to the Counselling Centre, she had been very disturbed and depressed. The counsellors gave her moral support and tried to build her confidence in herself.

KR's husband came to the Centre in the initial stage of their interaction. He spoke at length to the counsellors, but seemed to have grand ideas of living. He stated categorically that he did not think that he should be held responsible for the upkeep of his wife and children. He has not seen his family for the last four years, and KR does not know anything about his whereabouts.

KR is still uncertain about her life. Her son, now 18, does not like talking about his father, while her daughter at sixteen feels that he will come back. KR just about copes with life.

The FCC has provided supportive therapy for KR. This has been a case where there was hardly any family support for the client. The client had to learn to fend for herself over the years.

Case Study No. 20

U and B are related to each other by marriage, i.e., U is married to B's brother. U came to the Counselling Centre bringing B's case, but it turned out that U herself required some supportive counselling.

U has been married for 19 years. Her father drove trucks, and has a place of his own to live in. U is second of eleven siblings, and had to work for a living very early in life. She worked as a domestic help in a middle class household before she got married, and has acquired some progressive ideas on living in the process.

U got married to a painter whose job was seasonal in nature. This meant that the household ran well for part of the year, and for the rest, had to make ends meet on the basis of any kind of daily wage that was possible. U herself contributed by sewing a little bit. U has three children at present.

U's husband has turned alcoholic over the years. He is physically abusive. U does not like to take this without protest. She feels that her husband should improve his living habits. Aside from this, U's husband is very fond of his younger sister B who is the only girl child in the family.

B got married a few years ago, but did not get along with her husband, and came back to live with U and her husband. Her complaint was that her husband was a homosexual, and abused her physically. U was a bit upset, and wanted B to return to her marital family. She came to the Centre with this problem. Aside from this, she felt that B was of loose moral character and associated with men of unsavoury reputation.

The counsellors tried to talk to B with little success. She sat through the session without saying anything. U feels that B's brothers pamper her a great deal, and let her get away

with whatever she wants. This session, however, made U talk a little bit about her own problems. She is quite happy with the supportive counselling she gets, and knows that little can be done by others to improve her lot. She is willing to work towards it herself.

Case Study No. 21

G came to the FCC in April, 1993. She claimed she was 25 years old, but looked about 15. She was an orphan, and was brought to the Centre by the women of her community.

Social History

G comes from the community of weavers although her family may have left the occupation of weaving a few generations ago. Her people live around the Ajméri Gate area in an over-congested colony. The women of her community make paper bags and incense sticks (*aggarbattis*). This way, they make a contribution to the family kitty by working from home.

G's father died of alcoholism when G was very young. G cannot remember anything pleasant about her father's family. In fact, she can only remember the abusive nature of her paternal aunt. G's mother moved back with her mother along with her two children, i.e., G and her brother who is younger by seven years. G's mother kept poor health. Given the environment they lived in, and the work they did under poorly ventilated conditions, tuberculosis was inevitable.

G's mother died of TB when G was 15 years old, and her brother 8. G was initially looked after by her maternal uncles for awhile. G's brother ran away from home very early, and when the uncles found that looking after G, who was also a patient of TB, was too much of a responsibility for them,

they arranged a marriage for her. Given the fact that she was penniless and homeless, the best they could do was to marry her to a boy who himself was with little prospect!

So, G was married to a mentally retarded boy who lived with his parents. They needed an extra pair of hands to look after their son, and do some additional housework for them, and thought that G would do very well. In this alliance, the community or caste background of the bride and the groom was not of great consideration.

Today, G does not like to talk about her marriage or her husband and in-laws. Her experience with them was very traumatic and although she had a two year old child, she walked out on her in-laws three years after her marriage. The trauma of this alliance lay in the fact that G was herself a child in spite of her age, and to be married to a person who was perpetually like an infant, but demanded sexual attention all the time proved to be too much for her to handle.

G's extended family, however, wanted G to go back to her in-laws because aside from the responsibility of looking after her, they had the fear that G's husband's family would make a nuisance of themselves in their neighbourhood.

FCC Intervention

The Counselling Centre, as in other such cases, asked G to bring her in-laws to the Centre. G was reluctant, but did bring them to meet the counsellors. G's parents-in-law accused her of being lazy and not doing her share of housework. In fact, they had separated the living quarters of G and her husband K so that she would do her share. However, they found that they had to feed their son, and in the process G herself was left to fend for herself. The counsellors pointed out that G kept poor health, and what was considered to be laziness was actually the client's inability to manage. They tried to convince K's family that G should be taken back

by them. They agreed to do so on the condition that she would not walk out on them again.

G went back to her in-laws only to return to her aunts in a few days without her child. Since then, for the last two years, G has become the responsibility of the Counselling Centre in terms of her health and place of stay.

The counsellors at the Centre first concentrated on her health, and had her checked up again for traces of TB. She went to the panel doctor and was cleared of having any infection.

In spite of this, some short-stay homes refused to take G as their resident. Finally, G was put in an ashram run by a Gandhian institution on the condition that she would not reveal her married status to other inmates.

G's stay for about six months in this institution, by G's own account, was a happy one. But she did have a couple of mishaps that made it impossible for her to stay on at this ashram. First of all, during a medical check-up, G revealed to the medical team attached to the institution that she had been married and had a child. This put those in charge of running the institution in an awkward situation. Secondly, it was felt that she used her illness as an excuse to shirk from work. It was also felt that her presence was not suitable for the little girls who were housed in the ashram.

So G was sent back to Delhi where she was given employment in a house as a maid. Her duties here required her to look after the three children of the family, and wash clothes and dishes. However, after a month of stay here, G called up the Counselling Centre to say that she wanted to meet the counsellors urgently. The reason she gave for this, on the phone, was that she was overworked. The mistress of the house was annoyed at this charge, and sent her packing to her aunt the same day. Later, when G visited the Centre, she indicated that a major reason for her to

leave this job was that she had been molested by the driver employed by the family. Unfortunately, it was very difficult to ascertain from G what really happened as she did not want to talk about it. G was not paid anything by this family.

G's search for an alternative place of stay became intense. Or rather, the responsibility of this had to be taken on by the Counselling Centre again as her extended family did not want to be involved, and G was helpless. It took a couple of weeks for the counsellors to negotiate with the short-stay home at Shaheed Bhawan, before G was accepted there as an inmate. This included another medical examination to check the status of her TB. It came as a relief for the counsellors and G to find out that she was free of infection.

G is at Shaheed Bhawan for the time being, and has joined a diploma course in sewing and tailoring. The FCC hopes that she will take courage after she is through with this experience, and is able to handle her life herself.

G's problem has been her low self-esteem and confidence. An outlook towards life that sees a woman as a dependent, and an inability to see a skill in hand as an asset for making a living has made her life difficult. Ill-health and lack of a stable place of stay has added to her vulnerability. The Counselling Centre hopes that learning a skill and getting a job would give her the courage to survive in future.

Case Study No. 22

KB was on her way to the river to drown herself. She was found near the bus stand at ITO, wailing at the top of her voice that she wanted to be dead. Her troubles were too many, and her only solution was to kill herself. A colleague of the counsellors at the newly set-up Family Counselling Centre of the Institute of Social Studies Trust was passing

by. She asked KB what was her problem and only got a wail for a reply that she wanted to die. KB was asked to come to the Centre and told that perhaps she could be helped by the counsellors.

This was on 20 October, 1984. The FCC had been set-up earlier that year. In fact, KB was their first client. The counsellors asked KB why she wanted to die.

After some coaxing, KB revealed some of the troubles she was in. KB was a fruit vendor at Connaught Place. She bought fruit from Azadpur vegetable market, and sold them everyday in the centre of town. She claimed that when the going was good, she made a lot of money. This money, according to her, was taken by her husband for the use of his extended family. To keep some money safe from her husband, she had given part of her savings to S who was a fire tender at the Fire Station in CP. This had led to a great deal of misunderstanding between her and her husband.

Aside from this, KB had also been borrowing a great deal of money from two women money lenders to cover up the fact that she was making less money in recent times. These women were after her now to recover their money, and threatening to impose very high interest on the loan. This indebtedness had made KB feel that she was being persecuted, and the only way out for her was to commit suicide.

KB had come to the capital as a construction worker many years ago. Her husband was now a worker with the NDMC, and they lived in a *jhuggi* near Chanakyapuri. KB had discovered that she could make a decent profit everyday as a fruit vendor. Her husband, on the other hand, felt that the money earned by her could be plowed into some business that his nephews were interested in. This conflict between them led to a lot of misunderstanding that came out into the open much later.

Meanwhile, the counsellors at the FCC concentrated on helping KB get out of her debts in an organised manner. They tried to trace S who, according to KB, had Rs. 6000 of her savings with him. The counsellors could not get in direct touch with S, but left word with several people to ask S to return this money. After a lot of indirect negotiations over a very long time, some of this money was recovered by KB.

PB and PHW were the two women who had lent money to KB. When KB could not return their money, they threatened to increase the interest. When KB brought these women to the Centre, they pointed out that the money lent to KB was borrowed by them, and they themselves had to pay an interest on it. Initially, the counsellors helped to raise some money to help KB out of her situation, and later they encouraged her to repay the loan to PB and PHW in small instalments in their presence. This process took a long time, but was settled ultimately.

Since KB's first encounter with the FCC, KB has been to the Centre many times with different problems. These have included many problems faced by KB in her relationship with her husband. He had accused her of stealing his family jewellery to pay back her loans. He had also accused her of having an affair with S. KB herself has accused her husband of sexually exploiting their daughter-in-law. In fact, KB moved out to another *jhuggi* for awhile with her younger children. Later, she moved back with her husband when she found running her own establishment very expensive. Her husband organised the wedding of their younger son some years back against the boy's wishes. Both KB and her son felt that this daughter-in-law was also brought by him because he wanted another young girl around. While the counsellors have listened and advised KB to be more moderate in her suspicion of her husband, they have not always been successful.

However, in the sphere of her work, KB has greatly improved her lot. She had started vending fruit near Sena

Bhavan some years back. She found that she was *challaned* by the police every now and then, or had to pay them a bribe to stay in her place. She came and complained to the FCC about this. The counsellors found out that if she collected a certain number of *challans* and proved that she was a regular vendor in that area, then she was eligible for a legally owned kiosk to sell her fruit. KB worked towards this goal, and now is the proud owner of a kiosk.

In the last ten years, KB has also benefited by taking up residence in the alternative accommodation created by the Delhi Administration for *jhuggi* dwellers. She has a house in her name. The last time she was in the Centre, she told the counsellors how her son wanted money to go to the Gulf, and wanted her to sell this accommodation of hers to raise money for it. The counsellors have advised her not to sell her property.

It is hard to predict what would be the next set of problems that KB will come to the FCC with. But her life is a constant reminder of the hardship that the poor of Delhi face, and the way it affects their everyday life and their ability to cope with it.

Case Study No. 23

D is a part-time domestic servant in the Vasant Kunj area. She came to the FCC on 30 December, 1994. She had been taken to the police by one of her employers on a charge of stealing certain objects from their house. But D came to the FCC pleading injustice. She felt that not only was she falsely implicated by these employers, but that they themselves had stolen all her savings of the past couple of years while searching her house for their belongings.

Social History

D came from Karnataka to Delhi when a lawyer from that State offered to give her employment as a domestic help in his house in Delhi. She deserted her husband in the process, and brought her three children with the hope that she would be able to earn enough to send them to school here. Her alternative plan was to buy a house for herself back in her village with her savings.

She had been living in Delhi for almost two years, but had not sent her children to school as yet as she needed their help in earning and saving. So, alongwith her children, she was a part-time domestic help in about ten houses in the locality, and managed to earn an average of Rs 2000 per month. She claims that she had saved about Rs 9000 in the last two years. Instead of keeping this money in a bank, she had been saving this money in a container at home. She also did not think it necessary to inform any of her employers about this saving of hers.

D had always worked very hard to survive. In her family, she had to take on the role of principle bread earner very early. She was the second girl in her family. Her sister died when she was young, and D had to take charge of her siblings. She worked as a domestic for awhile in the local landlord's house. She became quite vocal about the rights of the poor, and felt that the rich oppressed the less fortunate.

D married of her own choice, a man who was a union leader. Her family was against the match. Although she was a favourite of her parents, according to her, this marriage made her family break all relations with her. She moved to Bangalore with her husband. She had four children. Her husband would beat her occasionally, and she was angry about this. So, when she got a chance to move out of Bangalore, she did so with her children.

In Delhi, she established herself as a domestic help while she lived in a rented room in the village near Vasant Kunj. She had the reputation of being hard-working, but talkative and gossip-loving. Her employers were not too sure whether she told the truth all the time, and suspected her of picking up a few things around the house for herself once in awhile. This could be put down to bias on the part of the employers that all household help are liars and thieves!

D had worked with the Gs for sometime. They were an old couple, living on their own in a duplex apartment. Mrs G was a little ill, probably with rheumatism most of the time. Mr G would supervise the cleaning of the house by D. They had promised to pay Rs 500 every month for her services, but according to D, they paid only half of that, and covered the rest of her earning in kind. This was mostly in the form of old saris and pots. D claimed she was quite happy with this arrangement. However, D left the G's employment one day. Her charge is that this was because Mr G tried to molest her, and later suggested that she send her teenage daughter to him. D claims she slapped Mr G at this, and left his employment.

A couple of months later, Mr G went to the police and registered a complaint, charging D of stealing certain items, and gave a list of these as well. The next morning the police received a phone call from Mr. G that D was in their house and they should come to search her place for the missing items. The police, including a woman ASI, reached the house and took D to her accommodation. The search, in which the Gs also took part, brought to light all the items listed in the Gs' chargesheet. D was taken to the police station. The Gs said that now that they had found all the items, they would drop all charges against D if she signed a letter of apology.

D had been stating that she had not stolen any of the items that were recovered from her room. That all these things were given to her by the Gs in lieu of her salary, and to that

extent, she had bought these things. But the ASI advised D that she should sign an apology letter confessing to theft. This way she would be saved imprisonment. D was worried about her children, so she signed this statement of confession and apology and returned home.

The next day, while she was at work, D's children came running to her to inform her that the Gs were in her room again, ransacking the place. D's landlord was a witness to this. When D came back to her room, she claims, everything was turned upside down, and the money that she had hidden was not in its place.

The Gs later said that they went back because a gold ring was missing from the house, and felt that D was responsible for it. They denied having taken any money from D. D had gone running to the woman ASI at the police station to inform them about the visit by the Gs, but her charges were not taken seriously, and she was dismissed. No charges were recorded by the police.

D went with her case to one of her employers who, in turn, mentioned her case to the FCC's legal advisor. D came to the FCC in this way with her story.

FCC Intervention

The counsellors at the FCC contacted the residents of Vasant Kunj who were involved in this case. They got an assessment of D from her other employers and met the police, including the SHO. On 12 January, 1995, a meeting was held in the SHO's room which was attended by Mr. G and his son, the secretary of the housing association of the block where the Gs lived, and the counsellors along with the police personnel involved in the case. Mr G denied the charge that he had gone back to D's house the day after the police search. However, D's landlord turned up at the meeting, and confirmed that the Gs had visited D's room in

her absence and searched it. This agitated the father and son a great deal.

Since the meeting at the police station was very long and inconclusive, it was decided that the group would meet again after a couple of weeks. The counsellors felt that the Gs had not given an honest version of what had happened between them and D, while the police felt that D was changing her statement on issues like how much money was missing from her savings, and her charge that Mr G had tried to molest her was vague.

The second meeting was again inconclusive as the Gs did not turn up for it. The SHO tried to reconstruct the events of the incident by closely questioning the woman ASI involved in the case. She confirmed that she had been called by the Gs on 25 December, 1994 to search D's room. She recovered all the items that were listed in G's complaint. These items were all definitely used items. D did say that she had paid for these items and not stolen them. The ASI persuaded her to sign the statement prepared by her to avoid imprisonment. D did come the next day to the police station to complain about Mr G's visit to her room, but the ASI was leaving for the day then, and did not record her statement. She also did not have time to go and verify the veracity of this statement.

D came again to the FCC to find out if she could institute legal action against the Gs, and recover her lost savings and honour. However, as there was no proof of her savings, and no witness to the money being taken away by the Gs, not much could be done for D.

Where the FCC intervention did come in useful was in diffusing the threat by the Gs that D would not be able to work in the area where they lived. Their effort to blacklist her as a domestic help was not entirely successful.

Case Study No. 24

R, at 38, has been married for twenty years. She has three children---two sons and a daughter. R herself was brought up in the hills of Uttar Pradesh, and had a very happy and carefree childhood. She was the fourth of six siblings, and being one of the younger ones had little responsibility.

Her husband, KR, was brought up in Delhi. His father had been employed in the city in one of the five star hotels. KR had finished his schooling when his father insisted that he marry a girl from their village. KR was against it. He wanted time to settle down and marry a girl brought up in the city like him. Besides, he had heard through village gossip that R was a carefree kind of person and may be difficult to domesticate. KR had tried to run away from the marriage party on the way to the village. But his father was firm and the marriage of KR and R was solemnised.

For fifteen years, this marriage survived. They had three children. There was always some unhappiness in KR's family about R's rural ways and careless method of housekeeping and looking after the children. But they did not have a major upheaval in their family relationship. KR had a steady job. He had ambitions of starting on his own and setting up a business. Encouraged by the rest of the family, including R, KR set up an independent business venture. Since then, life has been troubled for this family.

KR had to take loans from friends and financial institutions, and over time, he found himself increasingly indebted. He left his family in the care of his mother while he was busy with work. R did not get along with her mother-in-law, and differences arose on how to look after the children. Over the past few years, the older children have started isolating themselves from R, and living with their grandmother. Meanwhile, R suspected that KR had met another woman

through his business transactions, and started living with her.

R came to the Centre to get help in locating her husband who had not come home for awhile, and helping her sort her differences with him. Matters reached a crisis situation when she came to the Centre one day complaining of being beaten up by her son.

The counsellors went with her to her *jhuggi*. R's son's defense was that R had been very abusive towards his grandmother, and he could not tolerate this insult. In this process, he had raised his hands at his mother. This elder son, in fact, had stopped staying with his mother, and had shifted in with his grandmother.

After this incident, R came to the Centre with her husband and mother-in-law. KR rattled off a long list of grievances against R, accusing her of sloppiness and uncouth behaviour. He felt he could never come back to her, and had decided that he wanted to live separately. R finds this decision very hard to take. She still hopes that KR will come back to her, but is not willing to see that her behaviour makes her task of reconciliation very difficult. Meanwhile, a legal notice was served on her recently but because of advice from her neighbours, she did not take it from the post. The Centre has advised her that this could lead to an ex-parte divorce. She is waiting for another notice, before taking the Centre's help in the legal proceedings that are bound to follow.

Case Study No. 25

B is a 19 year old girl from the chawls of old Delhi. She has completed primary schooling. Her father used to work as a whitewash painter. She lives with her brothers who work as small-time caterers.

B is the seventh child among nine siblings. Her father turned an alcoholic, and her brothers took charge of managing the earnings of the family. B was ambitious, and wanted to take up a vocational training course so that she could support herself. She was willing to search for opportunities to improve her economic status on her own. Her brothers did not approve of her aspirations, and when she went out in search of something to do, they beat her severely to curtail her movements. B was very unhappy but decided to lodge a complaint with the police. Having done this, however, she had a doubt, and came to the Counselling Centre to find out if she had chosen the right method to protect herself.

The counsellors were supportive of her action. B is confident that she can handle the situation now. She has done a beautician's course and hopes to start something on her own.

Case Study No. 26

NL is 35 years old. He comes from a Punjabi Brahmin family of Delhi. He has a degree in B.Com, and works in a private company with a good salary. NL is the youngest of three brothers, and lives with his family. His brothers are married. NL himself got married about two years ago.

NL's wife lost her father just before the wedding. She was an only child. She had lived a life of comfort while her father was alive. Her father had been a senior officer in the Army. After the marriage, she wanted to visit her mother frequently to keep her company. She had been unhappy in her new home as it was run by the elder sister-in-law who was held in high esteem. NL's wife felt that she was being neglected and given an inferior position in the family.

NL came to the Counselling Centre soon after his marriage. His wife had tried to commit suicide. NL was very agitated as he felt that it would reflect on his character. He wanted to separate from his wife as he feared that she may attempt to kill herself again. The counsellors tried to make him see the situation from his wife's point of view and asked him to try and make an attempt at reconciliation.

NL did not come to the Centre again. It was during the in-depth study that we learned from him that he heeded the advice of the counsellors, and the misunderstanding between him and his wife had been sorted out. He keeps in touch with his family, but has now moved out to his own accommodation, and his wife is happier now.

Case Study No. 26a

R came to the Centre as he had to take a tough decision. He had got married recently, and after a month, discovered that his wife was losing her eyesight due to trachoma. He had taken her to eye doctors, and had been told that the girl had little hope of recovery.

R, at 25, was unhappy as he had married because he was the eldest in his family. His parents were ageing, and he wanted a wife who could be of help around the house. A wife with bad eyesight was of little help here. R was in a dilemma because he liked S, his bride. But he had to be practical. He wanted a quick separation and divorce from S now.

R is from a Punjabi Brahmin family. He has three brothers and sisters. The elder sister is married, but the younger ones are studying. R has to earn for them all and keep the family going. A healthy wife, he felt, was essential in his scheme of living.

R brought his problem to the Counselling Centre primarily because, by sending S away, he did not want to get into legal tangles that would blame him for the separation. The counsellors wanted to meet S as well.

S turned out to be a beautiful, but a very meek girl. She was ready to go through anything that the counsellors advised her. She had been staying with her widowed mother in Aligarh until her marriage. Her mother lived off the rent from some property that she owned. But her decisions were made by a male cousin of the family. S said that her mother knew of the condition of her eyes, but did not reveal this to the bridegroom's family while their marriage was being arranged. In fact, she was still not willing to admit to this problem in her daughter.

S was taken for another round of check-ups by the FCC with the hope that something could be done for her, without any success. R finally decided to take S back to her mother, and leave her there. He has started legal proceedings for separation and divorce.

Case Study No. 26b

VK's brothers came to the FCC with VK's case. His wife had returned to her mother in Madhya Pradesh with a threat of divorce. VK's brothers were advised to send his brother to the FCC.

VK, at 34, is the youngest of five children. He was always cared for by somebody in his family. His family is a middle class Punjabi Khatri family based in Delhi for awhile. They run a family business concern that pays for VK's upkeep as well, so he does not have to worry about a job. He does the chores for the business under the guidance of his brothers.

VK was married in 1987 to a girl of his community. She was an only child, and lived with her widowed mother. She had a comfortable childhood and was educated. She has a degree in law. Her family's economic circumstances were comfortable.

VK and S's married life started on rocky grounds. While S established herself with her in-laws without any problems, she found her relationship with her husband very troublesome. There are very clear differences in the personalities of the two. VK is an easy-going person with somewhat sloppy habits, whereas S is a perfectionist, and finds VK's habits quite annoying. She has been married to VK for almost eight years. They have two children, a girl and a boy. Through these years, according to VK, they have been constantly at loggerheads.

VK came to the FCC after his brothers' visit. He complained that his wife was constantly angry with him on very trivial issues, and even threatened to beat him up. In fact, she had thrown household objects at him when angry, and even taken up an umbrella to beat him.

VK felt that his mother-in-law had a very negative influence on his wife. She stayed with them in Delhi for very long stretches of time, and when not here, encouraged her daughter to visit her for extended periods. VK objected to these visits.

VK agreed that his wife's anger was mainly directed at him. In fact, her relationship with his family was quite good. He was also satisfied with her running of the house and her attachment to their children.

The counsellors suggested some amount of behaviour modification for VK, and felt that he should make the effort to talk to his wife and bring her back from her hometown. This seems to have had some influence on VK because S did come back to Delhi and dropped her threat of a divorce. This

could have also been the work of VK's family. VK did not come to the FCC after this for sometime. He did not send his wife for counselling as requested by the counsellors.

However, two years after VK's first visit to the Centre, he came again, first to answer our in-depth questionnaire, and then, after a gap of about four months, with his wife to meet the counsellors.

Case Study No. 27

D came to the Counselling Centre on 26 September, 1986. He was in his late teens. He was very unhappy with his parents, and wanted help in sorting out his differences with his family members.

Social History

D came from a middle class family of Delhi. His father had a regular job and owned two flats. One of these was given on rent, and the other was partly occupied by the family and partly sublet.

D's father earned enough for the family but was tight-fisted about money matters. D's mother had taken to religion and spent a great deal of her time at her *guru's* place. D was the eldest of four brothers and two sisters. He had completed school and was studying for B.Com. in an evening college while he worked during the day. He had done a secretarial course, but was not happy with the kind of work he was doing. D's younger brother was doing well at college. His sister, however, had not gone beyond the eighth class and was a source of worry for the family. The other brothers and sister were still quite young, but D felt that they lacked supervision and discipline.

The Problem

D was worried about his family and the relationships within the family. He felt that his parents did not value his concerns. He felt that his father was miserly, and his drive for making money out of situations like the subletting of their apartment only added to the misery of the family. In fact, he felt that the cramped space in their house was the reason for his siblings' waywardness.

D's mother would finish her household tasks early in the morning, and go away to the temple. This irked D as he felt that his mother did not fulfil the role of an ideal mother adequately. This was another reason why, he felt, that his brothers and sisters were keeping away from home without supervision. The relationship between his father and mother was also strained.

D's sister was supposed to be interested in a married man. D was unhappy about this. She was about 15, and he felt that she should be working towards finishing school. His brother was doing well at his studies, but was clear that he would leave his family when he was ready to work.

D himself was in a dilemma. At one level, he wanted to take care of his family and participate in its decision-making, and at another, he would have preferred to run away and start anew. D came across the reference to counselling on a T.V. programme, and came to the Family Counselling Centre with his grievances.

FCC Intervention

D found sympathetic ears at the Counselling Centre. The two counsellors gave him a very patient hearing. At the same time, they tried to make D see things from his father's and mother's points of view. D felt relieved to some extent.

The counsellors suggested that D bring the other members of his family to the Centre as well.

D's father came to the Centre. He projected himself as a self-made man, and indicated that because of his thrift they, as a family, managed to live well. He felt that his family could be more supportive of his methods. The counsellors pointed out to him that his children were no longer small, and could be taken more in his confidence. D's father had grown up in a residential school based on traditional values (*gurukul*) where it was necessary to get up very early in the morning, and have a cold bath before starting on the day's chores. He felt this had taught him to be hard-working, and that his children should emulate his example.

D's mother's reaction to his father's demanding nature had been to take to religion. She complained to the counsellors that she could not take the altercation that took place in the family, and chose to get away from it all as soon as she had finished her household work. Religion gave her a chance to find the peace she needed.

D's sister was more difficult to counsel. By the time the counsellors had a chance to meet her, she had been found in the company of her married friend by D who reported this to his father. D's father had beaten his daughter for keeping undesirable company and she had tried to commit suicide.

The counsellors talked to her at length and tried to emphasise the need for her to concentrate on her work at her age. Her letters to the counsellors at a later stage indicate that she did try to follow their suggestions and tried to complete her studies.

D himself kept in touch with the Counselling Centre for a very long time. His expectations from the Centre were as high as they had been from his other family members. He was always dissatisfied by the amount of support he

received from the Centre. He expected them to visit his house regularly and reply to his letters promptly. His confusion regarding his role vis-à-vis his family continued for a long time. He seemed to be in need of a companion who would be supportive, and seemed to demand this relationship from one of the counsellors to whom he sent a number of poems.

As of today, D has been married for a couple of years and he seems to have found a supportive companion. He does not contact the Centre for support on every issue that touches him, but does keep them informed of the various marriages and births in his family. His family has moved into a larger house which has made them more comfortable.

This case, more than other cases recorded at the FCC, has used correspondence as a means of counselling. The letters indicate the confusion in D's mind regarding his role in his family, as well as his role in life in general. The response from the counsellors indicate their patient method of requesting the client to see life rationally rather than emotionally.

This is also a case where marriage was to some extent a solution to a problem rather than marriage itself being a problem, as in the majority of the FCC's cases.

Case Study No. 28

BSN is a 55 year old man who worked as a tailor. His family came from the western part of Punjab which is Pakistan now. His mother committed suicide when he was very young, and his father married his wife's sister. BSN came to know of this much later, and has been troubled by this. He was the eldest of nine siblings, and had a lot of family responsibility. He married and has his own family of six people to look after.

A few years ago, the stress in BSN's life took the form of a sexual aberration in his character. One day, he had run upto a girls' training centre located on top of his tailoring shop, and discarded all his clothes. He had terrified the girls, and been rounded up and sent off home. BSN claims that he did not know what he had done, and is aware of his action only from the accounts given by others.

BSN's family was very distressed by this, and have ostracised him ever since. He does not get alongwith his wife anymore. His daughter had marital problems recently, and this also was blamed on BSN's character. He feels the need to shift out of his home to some kind of old people's home. But as he has a family, he is not acceptable at such homes.

BSN has gone through psychiatric treatment, and is able to talk about his problems rationally. But his family is unable to accept him.

Case Study No. 28a

SM is 33 now. He works at a bakery that is owned by his father. He is the eldest of three siblings. His father had very high expectations from him. But SM did not complete his graduation and came to work at the family business.

SM does not get alongwith his father, and the stress of this relationship has affected him mentally. SM has delusions of being in love all the time. He has a girl in mind, and feels his father is trying to come in the way of this girl and him.

The Counselling Centre had recommended psychiatric treatment for SM. But he has not responded so far to this

treatment. He feels that his whole family is against him and there is no help for him.

Case Study No. 29

B came to Delhi to do a post-graduate course in psychology from Zakir Hussain College in 1982. She went on to do her M.Phil from Delhi University. When she first came to the FCC in December, 1989, it was in search of a job. She was midway through completing a thesis for her Ph.D. She had been living in a rented accommodation, and found it financially taxing. She had a part-time job as a counsellor at a campus girls' college, but needed some additional income to meet her expenses, while she completed her thesis.

Social History

B came from a well-educated family in Orissa. Her elder sister and brother were married to equally well-educated spouses. She had a younger sister who was still studying when B came to Delhi. This sister married a person of her choice who was from the same community and accepted by her family, while B was still working on her Ph.D. This marriage put pressure on B to get married, although she felt that she should wait till she had completed her thesis. This pressure came partly from her brother who felt responsible for her, and partly from herself as she felt that the rest of her family had settled down and she was left to lead a "spinster's" existence.

A search for a suitable match for B was underway while she worked for her Ph.D and earned her stay in Delhi. Advertisement in newspapers as well as suitable connections mentioned to the family were referred to B regularly by her brother as well as her father for her consideration. Any suitable boy visiting Delhi at this time would also be pointed out by her family for her to meet and consider as a possible

groom. In this effort, B's brother was more keen than her father.

A little about B's outlook towards life, as observed by her colleagues, may be useful at this point. B is a very religious person. Besides, she takes pride in the culture she was brought up in. The fact that she did not feel corrupted by the culture of the metropolis that she had adopted as her hometown by now, i.e., New Delhi, was of great importance to her. She is very attached to her family in Orissa and always spoke very fondly and warmly about her affection for her family members, as well as of their great fondness for her. She felt that her father and mother gave her the pride of place in their affection. Her elder brother and sister as well as their spouses were also treated with the same respect and affection. But she felt that her younger sister was flighty and not intellectually the equal of the rest of her family. Her unexpected marriage before she had completed her studies was a matter for contempt besides a little jealousy on B's part, especially as this marriage was accepted by the rest of the family.

It was in this kind of mental state that B had been dealing with the question of selecting a groom for herself. Besides, her ideals for a future companion included high expectations in professionalism from her partner as well as good placing in society and work. She was also particular that she should be able to continue living in Delhi after getting married, and hence, was looking for a person who was willing to work in this city.

In 1992, through advertisement, B finally met A briefly during a visit to her hometown. A was a lawyer by profession and had a good practice of his own. B did not give a definite consent to her brother about this match, and came back to Delhi with the understanding that A would visit Delhi and meet her, giving them a chance for better acquaintance. However, her brother committed B to this match partly because he felt that his family was very well-placed, and

partly because A was willing to leave his well-paying practice at Orissa to try his hand in Delhi.

In early 1993, B went back home still undecided about her feelings for A, but came back to Delhi after her marriage to him. This was because she reached home three days before the wedding date and all preparations had already been made for the occasion. Her brother also felt that there was no question of his backing out of the arrangement as he had promised in front of Lord Jagannath that this wedding would take place.

A returned to Delhi with her and started from scratch at a new job in Delhi. For the first month of her married life, B was full of the splendour of her marriage, and the fact that it was attended by big names in Orissa. B's father-in-law had been a freedom fighter and social worker. He was well-known in Orissa. Very little was said about A himself.

While B's brother was the moving force behind this wedding, B's father had been kept in the dark about it for some reason. In fact, her parents did not attend the wedding at all. B visited her parents after the wedding and did not take A to meet them.

The Problem

On her return to Delhi, B joined her work immediately and tried to balance her new role as a wife with that of a working woman. Within a couple of months of B's marriage, she had to leave for a field trip on work. B had informed A before their marriage that she held a job that required travelling. But this intended trip seemed to have put off A. B decided not to give all the details of her trip to A because she sensed that he may not like the fact of her travelling at night with a male co-worker. However, A waited at the bus station all day and confronted B when she came to board the bus with her

colleague. They had a big row at the bus station. B left for the trip in spite of A's accusations.

FCC Intervention

B contacted the FCC at this stage, requesting them to get in touch with A, and with her brother in Orissa to tell them, on her behalf, how much this incident had upset her.

The FCC tried to contact A without success. They sent a letter to B's brother appraising him of the incident, and asking him to come to Delhi to help in the matter.

A finally came to the Centre only after B returned from her trip. His excuse for not coming in earlier was that B herself had forbidden him from visiting her place of work.

Meanwhile, B's brother wrote a letter to the Centre indicating that he would not be able to come to Delhi until his college closed for vacation. He felt that B and A were grown-up people who should be able to handle these differences on their own. He also suggested that the Centre take them up as their "patients" as they were "two sick people (mentally)" in the same letter. The first encounter with A made the counsellors at the FCC realise that A was having problems adjusting to Delhi. Language was a problem with him. He spoke both English as well as Hindi with a strong regional accent. His attitude was also a little confused. He had wanted a working wife, but expected her to be a traditional housewife as well. He also resented her attitude towards him.

In the sphere of his work, A had to begin at the beginning, and was paid very little at that time. This matter of his earnings irked B as she felt that A was financially dependent on her. B was also ashamed of A's provincialism. Perhaps that was one reason why she had shied away from introducing A to her colleagues earlier.

During a session with A, when confronted by the counsellors at the FCC as to why he had not come to meet B in Delhi before their marriage, A confessed that he had come to Delhi, but had lost B's address, and, in any case, was not very well on his arrival in Delhi. B interpreted this confession to mean that A had been apprehensive that she would reject him as a suitor if he had met her earlier.

B's relationship with A after the incident at the bus station, got from bad to worse. B started spending longer hours at her workplace to complete her thesis. By November, 1993, the mutual mistrust between B and A became intense.

In December, 1993, B decided to move out of the rented accommodation she had been living in all this while. Since A was not willing to leave this place, it led to altercations between the two. B felt that the flat was rented in her name, she was still paying the rent, and had the right to decide to move out. B moved out of the flat with her baggage and moved in with a friend, without an agreement on this matter with A. Since A did not have much choice left on this subject, he also had to leave the flat.

This incident was taken by A to mean that B had left him for good. B herself felt she had had enough, and she did not think she could go back to living with A again.

A came to the FCC at this point in their relationship. He demanded that B give him in writing the reason for her having left him. B gave in to this request and wrote a letter to A without giving an address. The letter basically indicated to A that B could not tolerate her situation with him anymore. She felt a little separation would give them a chance to think things out more clearly. She wanted A to get in touch with the FCC for any clarifications.

In March 1994, A's father came to Delhi. Through his intervention, B moved in with A for a short while in the hope

of a reconciliation. However, once her father-in-law left Delhi, B walked out of A's flat again.

Since November, 1994, the FCC has been suggesting that action could be taken for a more permanent solution to B's situation. A has also been contacting the FCC for help in sorting this out with B. B's attitude has been somewhat uncertain, and she has been saying that she will handle her affairs on her own. The matter still remains unresolved as of now although legal paper work has been worked out by A, and given to the lawyer who helps the FCC with such cases.

Points for Discussion

1. Marriage, at any cost, as the ultimate aim of a woman's life.
2. Migration from a region to a metropolis and its mark on the migrants.
3. Expectations of an educated girl in the qualities required in a life partner, and the lack of change of expectations of men in their wives.
4. Personality - An inability to see things from other people's point of view !

Case Study No. 30

Social History

K is an intelligent and attractive woman. She is the second child of her parents. Her elder sister is a little over a year older than her, and she has a brother and two sisters younger than her. As K grew up, she received a lot of positive attention from her parents she stood out

academically as well as in physical attraction as compared to her sister. She had an outgoing nature and made friends easily. She finished her schooling early in terms of age and went on to graduate.

Here, her sister's contrasting character and academic record started coming in K's way. She could not go to the college of her choice because her sister did not get admission in it. Her activities were monitored by her sister all the time, and hindered her in getting to know people of her choice.

After graduation, K wanted to go on to do her post-graduation, but this was not encouraged by her parents. So she took up a clerical position in a bank. She improved her academic status by completing her post-graduation after this, and, side by side, improved her work status at the bank by giving various examinations that led her to a post as an officer in the bank.

Her sister, meanwhile, was marked for marriage by her parents. Suitors were viewed, but K's personality often distracted the prospective groom's family. If K was around, then she was preferred by them instead of her sister. This situation led to K's family deliberately keeping her away during such viewing sessions. Her sister's marriage was arranged and she got married.

K's outgoing personality and attractiveness led to unasked for attention from several quarters. Men would use her younger sisters to send notes to her. At work in the bank, she met a person she liked, and the two decided that they would like to get married. Her parents objected to the match as the boy did not belong to their community. They advised the boy to seek another wife, and he got married to a person of his parent's choice. This incident made K very unhappy with her parents.

Around this time, K's family was also expanding their business interest. K's earning, which went into the family

accounts, was also used for business purposes. K had been actively involved in these processes, especially as she had experience in a bank.

Meanwhile, the proposals brought for her marriage were all rejected by her and her parents as their expectation of a suitable match was always very high. K was getting on to be twenty five years of age. She was well-settled in her job and her marriage became a matter of concern for her parents. K went through about 15 or more prospective matches, but most of these were not considered suitable, either by her parents or by herself.

K finally met her present husband in her place of work. He had been recently jilted by a girl friend. In physical appearance, he resembled the colleague she wanted to marry earlier. Although he did not belong to her community, K was determined that she would marry this person. Her parents were again against this match, but K insisted that she would not change her mind this time. In spite of the very active opposition of her parents, K married him in a simple marriage attended by her immediate family.

K's younger sister had been very close to her all this while. This was partly because K helped her out whenever her parents were not supportive in her ventures as she grew up. This sister reciprocated and helped K whenever required. But on the question of K's marriage to her present husband, her younger sister also did not support her. She felt that K was marrying him for all the wrong reasons, and he was not the right husband for her. But K took this opposition badly and transferred her affections to the youngest sister.

Through the negotiations that K carried out with her parents for marrying A, K used the possibility of suicide as a threat. She would swallow pills of various kinds to make her parents relent and change their minds regarding A.

K's parents, at this stage, also used the threat of cutting K off any property that she may have claim to in their financial arrangement. They made her sign away any claim on her parental property which included her savings that she had contributed towards the family business when she decided that she would get married to A. The relationship between K and her husband and her family, therefore, was very distant right from the beginning.

The Problem

The problem in K's marriage started from the very first day when her husband used physical violence on her on the night of their marriage. Since then, violence has been part of their married life.

The change in K's personality from her childhood to the time she got married had been very marked. From a person with an engaging and outgoing nature, she had become uncertain about what she wanted in her relationships by the time she got engaged to be married. From being a receiver of attention, she had turned into somebody who was constantly seeking attention.

After marriage, she found A to be a very suspicious husband. He delved into K's past and wanted proof of any contact she may have had, at any time, with the opposite sex. K was made to recreate certain incidents like receiving notes from male admirers. She would make her younger sister write out notes similar to those she received years ago and produce it in front of her husband. These past incidents as well as the strained relationship with K's parents would incite A to perpetrate more violence against K.

After five months of marriage and battering, K could not take it any more, and came to the FCC where her younger sister worked. In the presence of one of the counsellors, she took a "medicine" and fainted. She was rushed to a hospital, and

her other relatives were informed about this incident. Her mother came to the hospital but was very displeased with what she felt was an act. K's husband came the next day. K wanted her mother to apologise to her husband, and her mother did not see any reason why she should. So the matter stood. K returned to her husband's house.

The counsellors visited the hospital when K was there to try and work out some understanding between K, her husband, and her mother without success. A did not talk except to convey that he felt K's family was interfering in his married life. K's mother felt that the trouble lay with A, and there was no need for her to feel responsible for K's situation.

After this incident, K felt that having a child would improve her relationship with her husband. She came to the Counselling Centre and asked to be helped in getting books on sexology which had explicit pictures in it. K's younger sister, who is a counsellor, tried to give her some basic books on the subject which did not seem to satisfy K. K did conceive soon after, but other problems started bothering her now.

K had been working through all these troubles. Her stay at the different branches of her bank were always short-lived because of A's suspicions about her interacting with her male colleagues. She had been through many transfers to avoid too much of controversy. Now that she was going to have a baby, she felt that she could not cope with her full time job and the requirements of household management without the help of a maid. So she came to the FCC again for advice on hiring a household help. With her mother's help, K did find a maid. But the maid did not stay very long as she was frightened by the regularity of violence in the house. A had, in any case, felt that the maid had been sent to spy on his family.

While K was pregnant, A started battering her again. K, who had not spoken regularly to her parents since her marriage

started calling them up, and talking to them regularly. K had a daughter. A was very happy at this as he had wanted a daughter. He felt that this was a proof that the child was his as in his family the first child that anybody had was a girl!

Meanwhile, K and A had started building a house for themselves with loans from the bank. But when K needed more money, she asked her sister to approach her parents and take a loan on her behalf. Her mother helped to raise this money. Having taken the money, K felt that it was no longer a loan, but a return of money that she had invested in her parents' business.

For the housewarming ceremonies, K expected her parents to give her in-laws new clothes and other gifts. The ceremonies were held on a grand scale - almost like a wedding. A invited his in-laws for the ceremonies, but treated them in an off-hand manner. This did not help in the process of patching up that both the sides hoped for.

At present, although the families are on talking terms, K is contacted by her natal family through A as direct contact is frowned upon. When K does visit any of her relatives, she does it surreptitiously.

In 1993, she came to the FCC wanting to break off her relationship with A. This was the first time that she voiced this feeling. However, she did not follow-up on this request. She came again the next year as she needed help in getting an abortion. She wanted her sister's help in terms of moral support as well as for financial help as she did not want A to know that she had been through it. Her last visit to the FCC was in December 1994, when she came in with a bleeding nose and wanted to see a doctor. She also wanted to return to her parents. But this did not happen. She is still with her husband.

K's daughter is 8 now. She does not fully comprehend what is happening in her house. All she knows is that her father

gets very angry and beats up her mother, and then both of them beat themselves, one because she is unhappy that she made her husband angry, and the other because he is unhappy that he lost his temper.

FCC Intervention

FCC intervention, in this particular case, has been only to provide assistance of any kind that K has demanded, whenever it suited her to demand attention. It has been difficult to counsel in this case because the client was never ready to be counselled, and ran away everytime an attempt was made to do so.

ANNEXURE I

**PRELIMINARY QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR DOCUMENTATION**

Date of the case :

Sex :

Occupation :

Age :

Marital status :

Education :

Case brought by :

The problem with which the client came :

Cause of the problem as the client sees it :

The problem as the counsellors see it (see list) :

The nature of counselling given to the client / family :

The number of sessions with counsellors :

The kind of help given to the client (see list) :

Was there any change in the situation of the client in terms of

Before
counselling

After
counselling

a) Physical state of the client

i) Health

ii) Place of stay

b) Mental state of the client

c) Attitude of the family

The client's psychological status to:		
a) Members of the family	i) Natal	1)
	ii) Marital	2)
	iii) Distant relatives	3)
b) Members outside the family	i) Friends	4)
	ii) Counsellors	5)
	iii) Others	6)
Any other details		
Total income of the family in which the problem took place		
How long has the client been married?		
Did the marriage take place within the same religion?		
Had any dowry been given at the time of marriage?		

II. Information on the opponent.

Name of the opponent :

1. Past relationship to the opponent

2. Present relationship

3. Age

4. Sex F M

5. Marital status UM M
 S D
 W

6. Education

7. Occupation

8. Income

9. Family type

10. Family size

11. Family religion

12. Caste/Community

13. Family language

14. Parent's address

15. Client's address

16. How often does the opponent visit his/her hometown every year?

Once Twice Thrice More often

17. Present Childhood

Income levels of family

Occupation of head of family

Standard of living of family

(additional questions attached)

III. Crisis Management and Intervention.

1. Statement of the Problem
(Q. What was the problem that took you to the FCC ?)

2. Genesis of the crisis. (Placement in the family cycle)

Q. When did the problem start ?

[Childhood, adolescence, marriage, birth of a child, growing children, children's marriage, grand children, old age.] or
[Other situations like employment related, property related etc.]

3. Incident that brought the crisis into focus.

(What happened which made you realise that something must be done to improve your situation ?)

4. Who was responsible for this ?

5. What was the state of your health at this stage ?

Good Bad

6. Steps taken to resolve the crisis at its peak.

(What did you do to help your situation once you realised you had a problem?)

7. Who did you turn to for advice?

8. What kind of solution did you want ?
(Give qualitative information where available)

IV. Expectations from and the role of FCC.

1. Who suggested FCC intervention?

2. Type of FCC intervention received.

(Q. What kind of steps were suggested by the FCC to help you solve your problem ?)

(Moral support, legal support, material support, advisory support, analytical support, any other)

3. How satisfactory was this intervention ?

Very satisfactory Satisfactory Not satisfactory

4. If unsatisfactory, why ?

5. What kind of referral services were provided by the FCC?

Legal Psychiatric Medical Police Any other

6. Were these satisfactory ?

Very satisfactory Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

7. If unsatisfactory, give reasons.

V. Socialization Of Client.

1. Placement in natal family hierarchy. (ACTUAL)

(Q. How many brothers and sisters do you have? Where are you placed in this hierarchy ?)

No. among siblings - 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8

No. among brothers/sisters - 1,2,3,4,5

2. Placement in terms of importance given by parents.

1 2 3 4 5 OR equal placement given to children by parents.

3. Household decision-maker. (Relationship to the client)
(Who takes most of the decisions in your family)

4. Treatment of boys in the family.(Q. What kind of attention do boys in your family receive in terms of food, clothes and space in the house in relation to girls)

Good Fair Poor

5. Treatment of girls in the family. (What kind of attention do girls in your family receive in terms of food, clothes and space in the house in relation to boys)

Good Fair Poor

6. Family values on self-esteem. (boys)

a. How loved and wanted were boys made to feel in your house ?

Very much Not very much Average care

b. How much importance was given to the tasks they performed?

Very much Not very much Average importance

c. How much were they allowed to dictate terms to the rest of the family ?

Very much Not very much Little

d. How much responsibility was given to them for everyday tasks?

A lot Little None

e. Overall level of self-esteem

High Average Low

7. Family values on self-esteem (girls)

a. How loved and wanted were girls made to feel in your house?

Very much Not very much Average care

b. How much importance was given to the tasks they performed?

Very much Not very much Average importance

c. How much were they allowed to dictate terms to the rest of the family?

Very much Not very much

d. How much responsibility was given to them for everyday tasks?

A lot Little None

e. Overall level of self-esteem

High Average Low

8. Family values on education (boys)

(Q. Is schooling for boys considered a must, a choice, waste of time, waste of money, not a necessity?)

High Average Low

9. Family values on education (girls)

(Q. Is schooling for girls considered a must, a choice, waste of time, waste of money, not a necessity?)

High Average Low

10. Family values on marriage (boys)

a. Favour early marriage [yes / no]

b. Why?

c. Marriage a must/ boy's decision

11. Family values on marriage (girls)

a. Favour early marriage [yes / no]

b. Why?

c. Marriage a must / girl's decision

12. Role of school in building self-esteem

Which school did you go to?

Did you enjoy going to school? (Yes/No)

Did the school or a particular teacher teach you to be self-reliant? (Yes/No)

Did the school help you to build your self-worth? (Yes/No)

Did it give you a sense of responsibility? (Yes/No)

Positive Passive Negative

VI. Role of family members in crisis situation.

How did each member of your family react to the crisis in your life? Did they support you? Did they support your opponent? Did they ignore the situation?

	Positive	Passive	Negative
<u>Family</u>			
Husband			
Wife			
Son			
Daughter			
Son-in-law			
Daughter-in-law			
<u>Parental</u>			
Father			
Mother			
Brother			
Sister			
Brother-in-law			
Sister-in-law			
	Positive	Passive	Negative
<u>Marital</u>			
Father-in-law			
Mother-in-law			
Brother-in-law			
Sister-in-law			
<u>Any Other</u>			
Any Other Relative			
Friends			
Neighbours			

VII. Self-confidence level of client at present.

1. How confident are you of taking decisions about your life?

Very confident Uncertain Not confident

2. How confident are you that your decisions are right?

Very confident Uncertain Not confident

3. When in doubt who do you turn to for major decisions?

4. How confident are you of the decisions offered to you?

Very confident Uncertain Not confident

VIII. Expectations from marriage.

(For the ever married respondent)

1. How long have you been married or were married?

(Give no. of years -)

2. Are you staying with your spouse at present? (Yes /No)

3. If no, where are you staying at present (with whom - Self, Parents, Brother, Sister, Parents-in-law, Friends, Any other.)

4. Was your marriage arranged or did you choose your spouse.

Arranged Not Arranged

5. What was your family's response ?

Positive Negative

6. What was your spouse's family response ?

Positive Negative

7. What were your expectations in a life partner?

(Physical attraction, Consideration, Well-mannered, Caring, Supportive, Masterful, Indifferent)

8. How many of your expectations were fulfilled?

All of it Some of it None of it

9. What were your expectations from the institution of marriage?

10. How many of your expectations were fulfilled?

All of it Some of None of it

IX. Role of religion.

1. Are you a follower of any religious leader ?

Yes No

2. If yes, do you take your personal problems to him/her ?

Yes No

3. If yes, do you follow the advice given by this person ?

Yes No

4. Is this advice more important to you than that of your family members ?

Yes No

X. Statement of any other comment on the problem in client's life and the role of the FCC in sorting out.

(* Additional Questions for I, 17.

How many earning members are there in your family?

What is their total monthly income?

What kind of work is done by the head of your family?

Do you live in an owned accommodation or in a rented place?

What kind of modern amenities do you use for everyday living?
(Vehicle for personal transport, Refrigerator, Television, Cooler)

Additional Questions for IV, 1 and 2.

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

How many are older than you?

How many brothers are older than you?

How many sisters are older than you?

What was your relationship with your father?

Where did he place you in the family hierarchy?

What was your relationship with your mother?

Where did she place you in the family hierarchy?

XI Any other additional information regarding the case.

DETAILED CODES FOR THE DOCUMENTATION

(See Tables II.2, II.3, III.1 to III.5 and IV.1)

1. The problem that the client faced when they came to the FCC

- 01 Harassment by husband
- 02 Harassment by in-laws
- 03 Harassment by children
- 04 Harassment by brother
- 05 Harassment by parents
- 06 Harassment by any other member of the family
- 07 Harassment by community
- 08 Harassment by authorities (Police)
- 09 Harassment by wife

- 11 Death of daughter by burning
- 12 Suicide
- 13 Cheating / Blackmailing
- 14 Husband / Spouse involved in illegal activities

- 21 Disagreement with husband
- 22 Disagreement with in-laws
- 23 Disagreement with family/children
- 24 Disagreement with community

- 31 Forced out of house
- 32 Wants to move out of home (parental)
- 33 Wants to move out of home (marital)
- 34 Deserted
- 35 Broken engagement
- 36 Reconciliation
- 37 Accommodation problem

- 41 Uncertainty over marriage
- 42 Emotional disturbances
- 43 Loss of self confidence
- 44 Anxiety over high family expectations
- 45 Lack of family support during personal crisis
- 46 Lack of communication with family members
- 47 Family pressures for marriage
- 48 Homosexuality
- 49 Alcoholism

- 50 Wants to marry
- 51 Adultery within the family
- 52 Adultery outside the family (extra marital affair)
- 53 Drug addiction

- 61 Financial problems
- 62 Medical problems
- 63 Career/ Employment related problems
- 64 Adoption related help
- 65 Police assistance
- 66 Psychiatric help
- 67 Family planning related assistance
- 68 Sexual harassment
- 69 Property dispute
- 70 Education related problem (admissions)
- 71 Legal support for divorce
- 72 Legal support for maintenance
- 73 Legal support for property dispute
- 74 Legal support for will
- 75 Legal assistance on case for attempt to murder/assault
- 76 Legal support for separation
- 77 Legal support for the custody of child
- 81 Need for domestic help /help from outside

2. Cause of the problem as the client sees it

Marriage related

- 01 Dowry
- 02 Suspicious husband (within family liaison)
- 03 Suspicious husband (outside family liaison)
- 04 Suspicious wife (within family liaison)
- 05 Suspicious wife (outside family liaison)
- 06 Unfulfilled sexual desire
- 07 Extra marital affair (within the family)
- 08 Extra marital affair (outside the family)
- 09 Abusive spouse (physical and mental)

Expectations from marriage related

- 10 Uncertain about marriage
- 11 Spouse not upto expectation (personality)
- 12 Spouse not upto expectation (socio-cultural)
- 13 Spouse not upto expectation (financial)
- 14 Apprehension of adjustment in a marriage
- 15 Lack of communication between husband and wife
- 16 Lack of communication between natal and marital families
- 17 Interference in marriage by parents
- 18 Interference by in-laws
- 19 Interference by children

Health related

- 20 Alcoholic (self)
- 21 Alcoholic (spouse)
- 22 Drug addiction (self)
- 23 Drug addiction (spouse)
- 24 Malnutrition
- 25 Family planning related
- 26 Lethargy in spouse
- 27 Infertility (childlessness)
- 28 Want of a male child
- 29 Health problem

Employment and economy of family related

- 30 Financial problems
- 31 Employment problems
- 32 Dissatisfaction with job
- 33 Property dispute (with parents/brother/sister)
- 34 Property dispute (with in-laws)
- 35 Special education (handicapped)
- 36 Time constraint
- 37 Deserted
- 38 Legal custody of children

Strains in family relationships

- 40 Harassment by husband
- 41 Harassment by in-laws
- 42 Harassment by brother/sister
- 43 Harassment by parents
- 44 Harassment by children
- 45 Lack of support from the family
- 46 High expectations from the family
- 47 Spouse not interested in family responsibilities
- 48 Incest
- 49 Aggressive behaviour

External causes (external to the family)

- 50 Social disturbances
- 51 Harassment by authorities/employer
- 52 Uncooperative community
- 53 Sexual exploitation at work place
- 55 Loopholes in legal system
- 56 Religious factors
- 57 Second marriage
- 58 Problem of old age
- 59 Temptations
- 60 Land or property dispute
- 61 Homosexuality

- 62 Cheated
- 63 Inter-religion marriage

3. Problem as the counsellor sees it

- 01 Confrontation due to growing self-esteem
- 02 Problem due to low self-esteem
- 03 Disturbed due to unable to adjust herself and cope with high expectation of family

- 11 Physically abused
- 12 Mentally abused
- 13 Subjected to verbal abuse
- 14 Emotional disturbance caused by harassment of daughter
- 15 Emotional disturbance due to broken engagement

- 21 Cheated by in-laws in marriage (boy)
- 22 Cheated by in-laws in marriage (girl)
- 23 Marriage without parents' consent
- 24 Maladjustment with in-laws
- 25 Conflict due to personality differences

- 31 Adjustment problems in marriage because of relocation in place of stay (migration)
- 32 Dowry
- 33 Reconciliation with spouse
- 34 Demanding and unsupportive husband towards wife's family

- 41 Family interference
- 42 Over-protective parent
- 43 Adolescent behavioural problem
- 44 Disagreement between parents and adolescent child
- 45 Conflict between parents and children
- 46 Unsupportive children towards old parents

- 51 Unfulfilled sexual desire
- 52 Aggressive sexual drive

- 53 Sexual harassment
- 54 Homosexuality
- 56 Sexual apprehensiveness /anxieties/ enquiries

- 61 Alcoholism
- 62 Drug addiction
- 63 Health condition
- 64 Infertile
- 65 Want of male off-spring
- 66 Child's death / abortion

Marriage related

- 71 Complication caused by a second marriage
- 72 Distressed by marital status
- 73 Mistrust between husband and wife/lack of communication between spouse
- 74 Extra marital affair
- 75 Pre marital affair
- 76 Desertion
- 77 Thrown out of home
- 78 Unwanted pregnancy before marriage
- 79 Unwanted pregnancy after marriage

Referral needs

- 81 Financial problems
- 82 Medical problems
- 83 Career/employment related problems
- 84 Adoption related problems
- 85 Police /legal assistance
- 86 Psychiatric help
- 87 Family planning related
- 88 Property dispute
- 89 Landlord and tenant dispute
- 90 Problems related to education
- 91 Need domestic help
- 92 Harassment by police

- 93 Harassment by employee
- 94. Accommodation problem
- 95 Migration socio-economic difference with community

4. Nature of counselling given

- 01 Supportive / moral support
- 11 Informational / material support
- 21 Catharsis
- 31 Suggested behaviour modification / advisory
- 41 Confrontational
- 51 Legally supportive
- 61 Reconciliatory
- 71 Analytical
- 81 Investigative
- 91 Confidence building

5. Kind of help rendered

- 01 Counselling
- 11 Referred for legal assistance
- 21 Asked to get legal assistance
- 31 Referred for police assistance
- 41 Referred for psychiatric assistance
- 51 Referred to short stay home/alternative accommodation
- 61 Asked to seek employment
- 71 Asked to seek medical treatment/referred to medical assistance
- 81 Referred to the National Commission or any other NGO
- 91 Employment related assistance and help

Codes for Occupational Categories

- 01 Unpaid home worker (housewife)
- 02 Student
- 04 Domestic help
- 06 Retired /unemployed
- 07 Beggar

Class IV

- 11 Government employee (sweeper, peon, chowkidar, anganwadi worker)
- 31 Worker in a factory
- 33 Traditional occupations (washerman, pressman etc.)
- 41 Self employed in craft
- 42 Hawker
- 43 Petty shopkeeper

- 05 Stenographer/typist/ clerical/Library assistant

12 Driver

21 Sales woman/man/beautician

22 Cashier

32 Skilled technical worker (Electrician etc.)

44 Large shop owner/businessman

45 Dairy owner

51 Service (private sector)

03 Teacher/lecturer/researcher/working in an NGO

14 Accountant

16 Air hostess

17 Nurse

13 Service (government scientist)

15 Computer profession

52 Bank officer

53 Lawyer

61 Industrialist

Others

70 Illegal activities/job

99 NA (No information available)

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