BHUMIKA HELPLINE

(1800 425 2908)

ANALYSIS REPORT

April 2010 – March 2011

Implemented By

HELPLINE ANALYSIS
(April 2010 – March 2011)

INTRODUCTION:

Bhumika Women's Collective, Hyderabad has been running a tele-helpline to support the women in distress for the past five years. They operate the helpline from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm every day except Sunday. In the short span of a year they have responded nearly 3000 calls. During this period the helpline has extended its activities to network with relevant support agencies, increase the state wide alliances, volunteer base, media presence, awareness activities and a host of other initiatives, in line with the core purpose of providing relevant and appropriate support to women in distress.

The purpose of the current analysis is to understand the way the helpline is able to reach the women in distress and whether they are accessible to all sections of the society. More specifically the questions the helpline team is constantly asking themselves are:

- Is there any pattern discernable in the cases of violence reported to the helpline

- Are the support system and networks available with us sufficient to address the complex issues of women

- Does the skill or lack of it reflect in the way the cases are handled

- Are there any regional variations in the cases reported

- What are the possible areas of growth and improvement

The current report attempts to answer the above in light of the data available from the calls. Confidentiality and anonymity are two pillars around which the phone based support is provided. Hence as a matter of routine no personal demographic details are asked except those which get divulged during the course of the counseling session. This limits the possibilities for a comprehensive data analysis. All calls are documented in a register as soon as the tele counseling session is over. The purpose of the documentation is not as much for data analysis as for proof of conversation (offline help, to improve quality of advice/guidance given or follow up calls). Counselors are expected to ask only questions which are relevant to the issue being discussed; hence data provided by the callers is not necessarily very consistent. The data analysis hence focuses on some broad trends, points which are emanating. For the following parameters there is a reasonable data available for analysis:

- District from where we get the calls

- Gender of the caller

- Relation of the caller with the survivor

- Nature of complaint (divorce, second marriage, husband's harassment, in-laws harassment, property etc)

- Nature of violence experienced by the survivor (Sexual, Physical, Psychological, Economic, Follow-up)

- Categorization of time when the calls were received

- Cases for reference (nature of guidance given which in some cases might require offline help)

CALLS RECEIVED FROM DIFFERENT PLACES
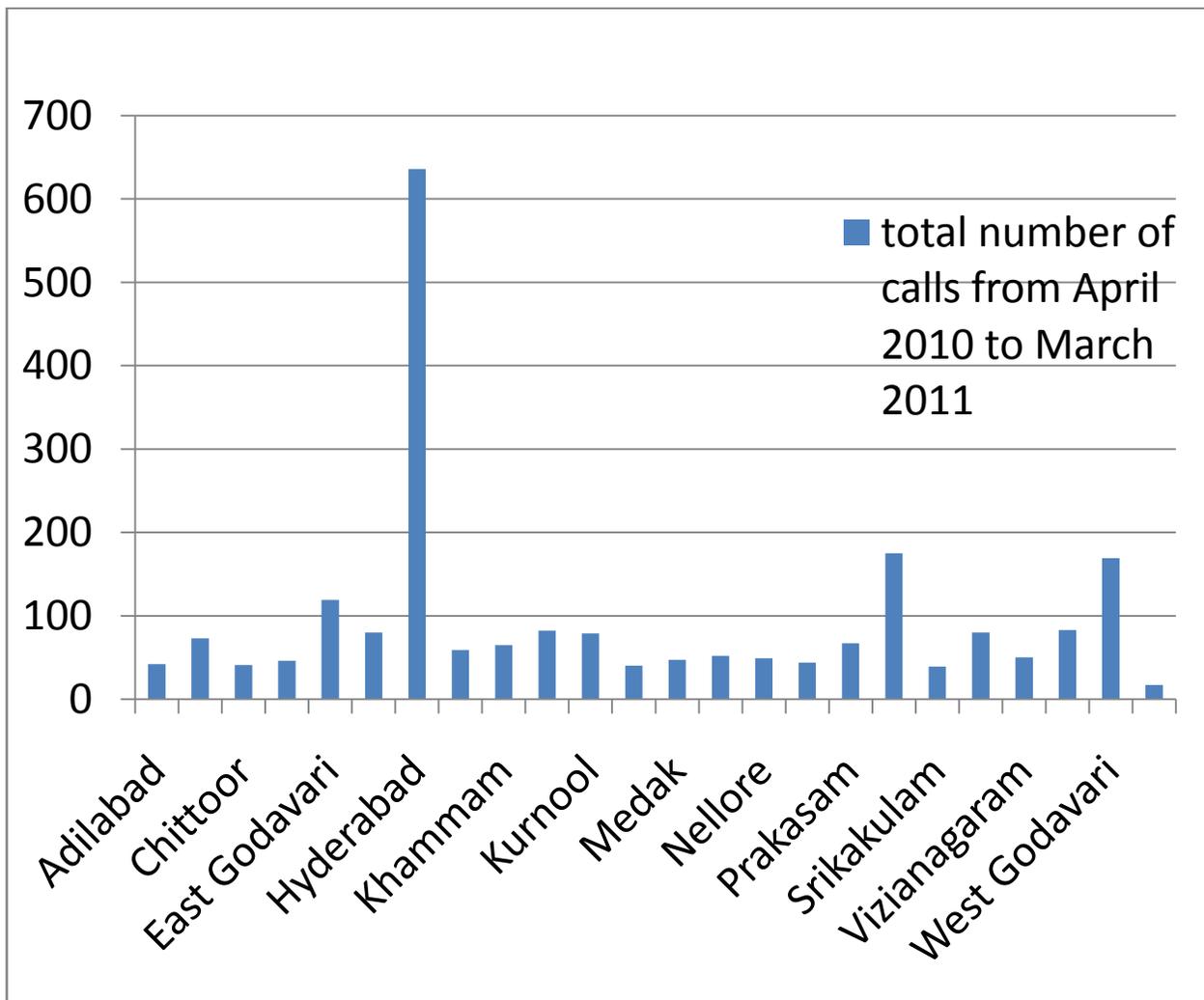
According to the graph it is visible that the majority of calls are from Hyderabad which might be due to the awareness campaigns, talk shows we conduct and participate wherein we distribute the

material pertaining to Helpline (stickers, cards which display the number). The other reason could be comfort levels with phone usage are a function of education and degree of urbanization. Our estimate is that more than 60 % of the calls are from urban centres (like Hyderabad, Rangareddy, East Godavari, (Rajahmundhry), Krishna (Vijayawada), West Godavari Visakhapatnam, Warangal, Tirupati etc). On an average a call is received every month from outside the State. All cases from outside the State are those pertaining to people of Andhra Origin. The reasons for lower number of calls could be due to less access of telephone and lack of awareness about the helpline.

## NUMBER OF CALLS AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN A DAY
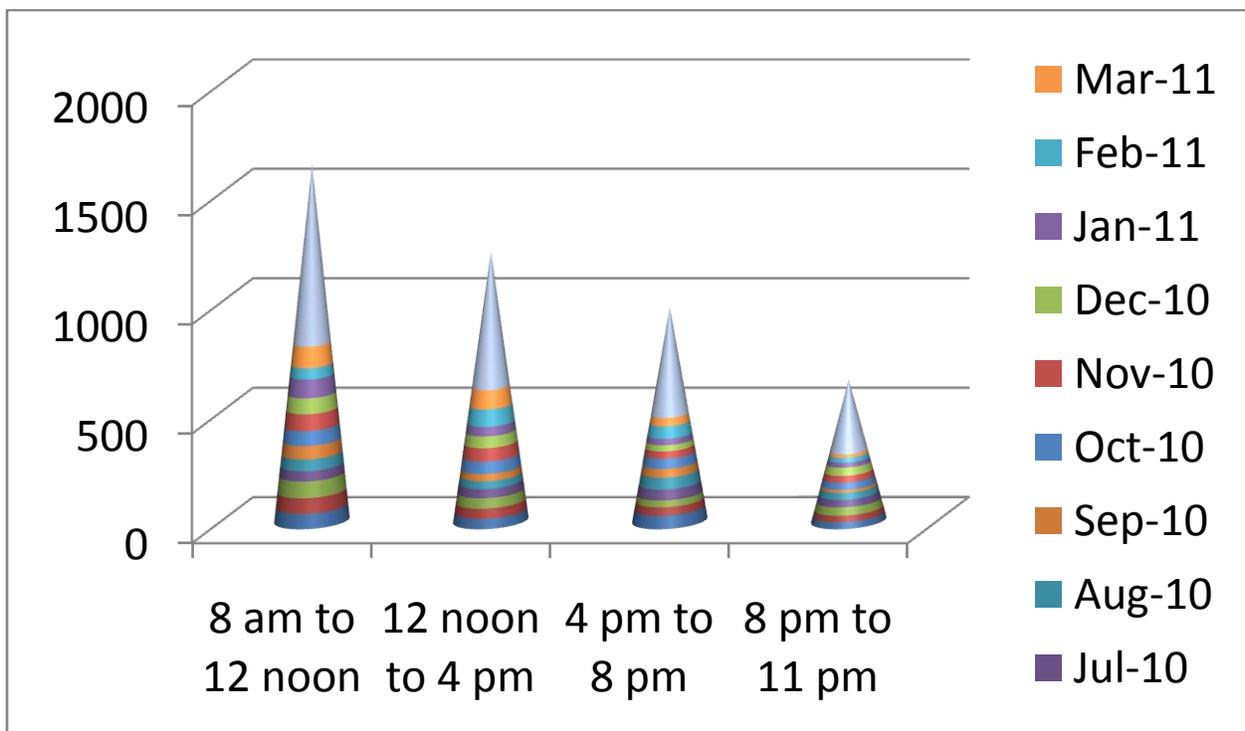
From the graph it is visible that more number of calls is coming in between 8:00 am – 12 noon which might be due to unavailability of family members especially husband would be away for work and children to school. After finishing the household chores the women takes time to express her agony and vent out her feelings which she has been facing.

NATURE OF VIOLENCE
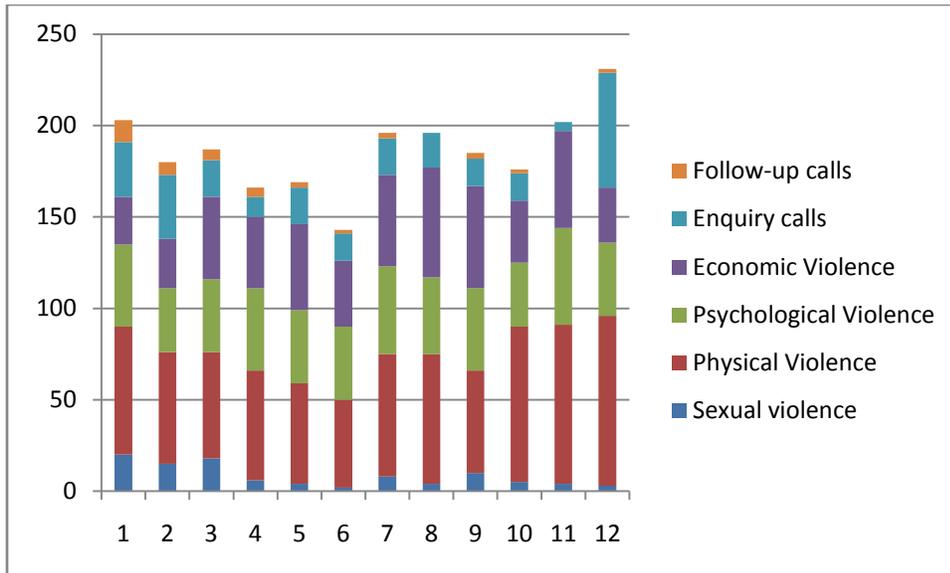
Among the different types of violence, physical harassment is high comparatively with other violence. But there has been a change in the trend among the violence as there is a mixture of different types of violence along with physical. It is visible from the data that psychological violence has also increased tremendously followed by economic violence . Other than this, enquiry calls are the calls where the caller is either interested in knowing the address or phone number of an appropriate support agency or where people call just to know more about the helpline and its activities and secondly some of the enquiry calls become the cases for us in future.

NATURE OF CALL / COMPLAINT
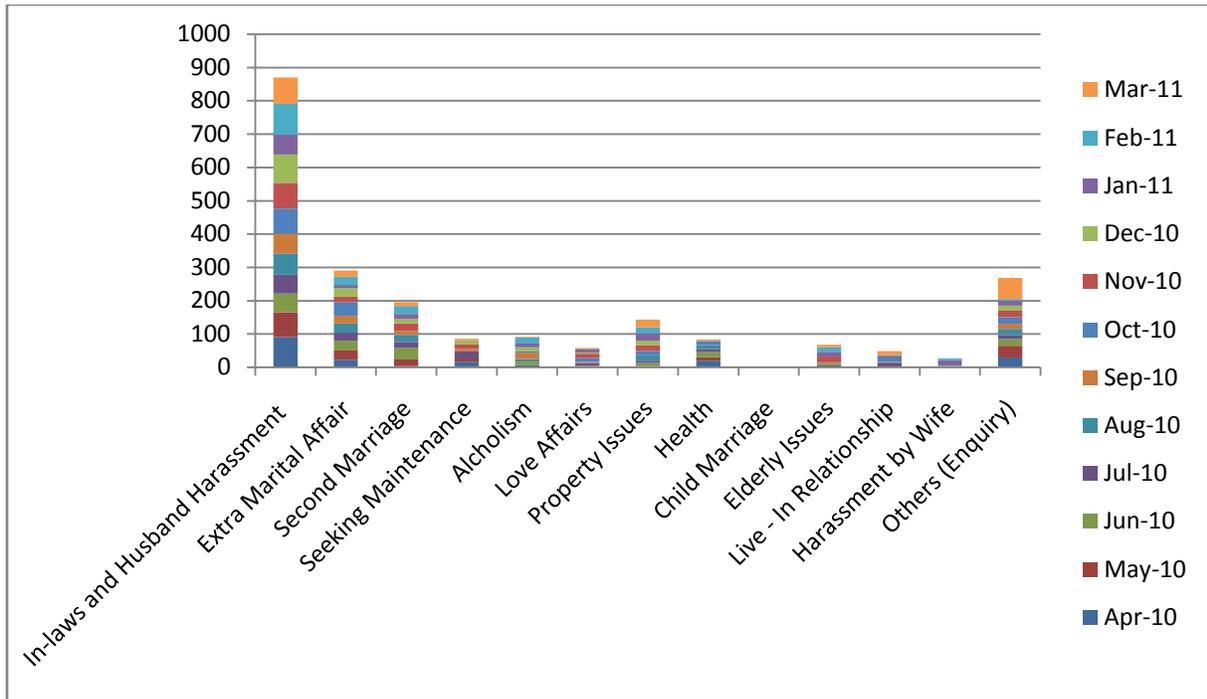
Harassment by husband and in-laws is very rampant which might be due to extra demand for dowry, more influence of parents from either of the sides which creates unrest among the relationship between the spouses and leads to violence. Secondly, extra marital affairs stands second when it comes to the nature of complaint as in many cases one of the spouse is having a relation either with the colleague, within the family or the neighborhood.

AGE
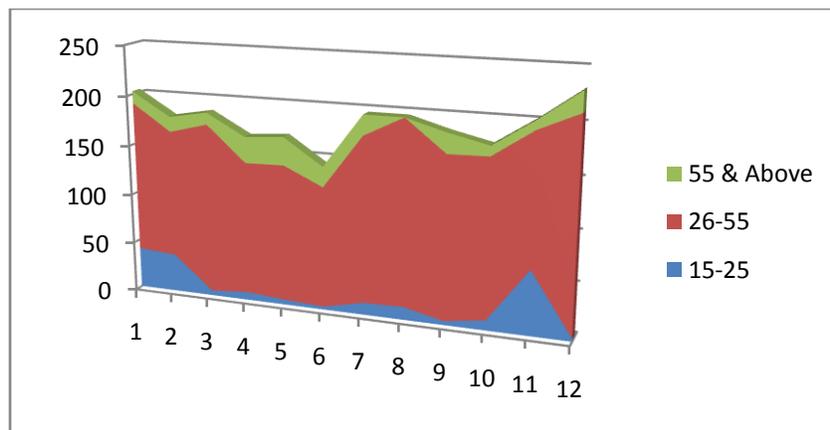
According to the data it is clearly visible that the harassment is more among the age group of 26 – 55 years.

CASES FOR REFERENCES
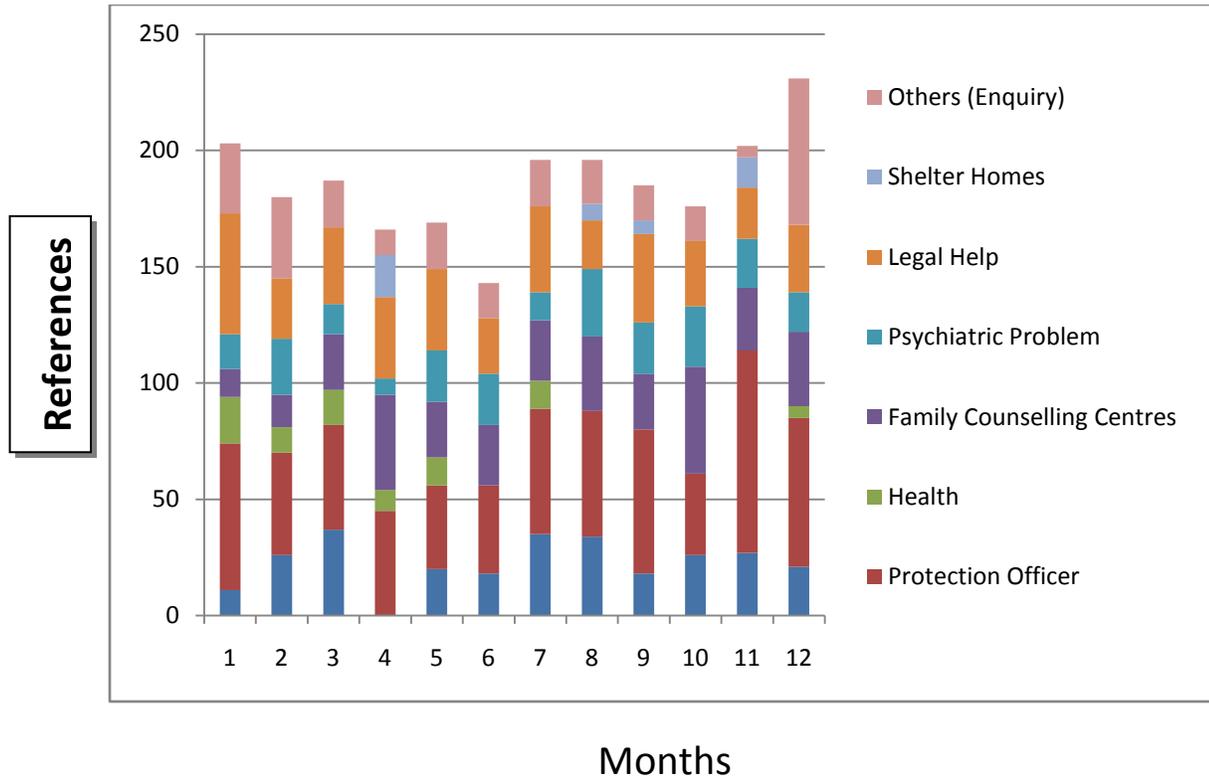
Majority of the cases are referred to the Protection Officers of the respective districts from where we get the calls and other than that, we refer the cases for legal aid depending on the case. The moral support is given especially to the students who have been in depression due to love affair, live in relations etc.

DIRECT INTERVENTION CASES
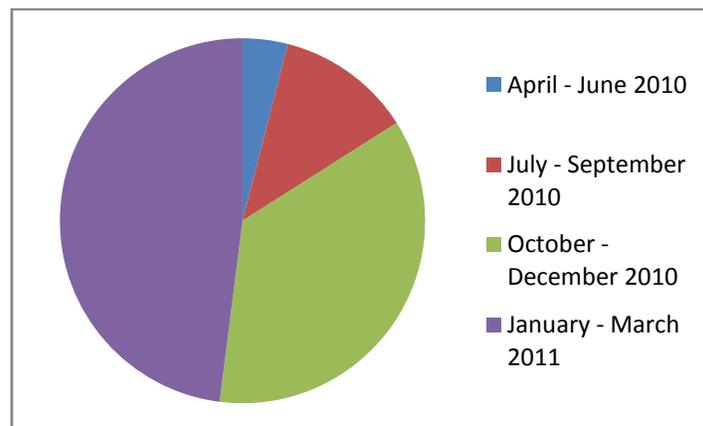
This year there has been an increase in the demand from the callers to have a face to face interaction with the Counselors for which we have accepted their request. It is clearly visible that

there has been an increase in the cases during the month of January – March 2011 due to an article published in one of the highly circulated newspapers all over the State which paved way for an increase in the number of cases.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS:

Bhumika Helpline has made tremendous progress in making the helpline and its activities relevant and appropriate to reach out to the women in distress. Awareness levels have gone up manifold during the last five years and this is evident from the fact that they are receiving calls not just from all the districts of Andhra Pradesh, but also in some cases from outside the State and from other countries. Some salient points from the analysis:

- Calls are coming from all districts and the regional variations seem to be a function of degree of urbanization, education levels and access to telephone. Good progress has been made on awareness generation so much so that call is being received from outside the State also.

- Calls between 8:00 am – 12 noon are maximum, indicating potentially the time period when women are free from household chores to call and discuss their situation

- The callers are seeking legal aid which resulted in starting a legal aid centre in the office premise which lead to an increase in the direct intervention

Suggestions:

- Support systems and networks available are probably not sufficient and with the increased guidance from the helpline the pressure on the support systems would only increase. It is important to simultaneously work on improving and making the support systems more responsive and sensitive for which appropriate strategies have been planned which includes providing gender based training to Magistrates, Police, and WCD Department.

- There is a need for a more consistent data format. While one is already available, it needs to be revisited and improved, in light of the ability to document the salient features of each call for instance, information about their caste, class, religion, educational qualification etc.

- A monthly summary sheet needs to be generated so that data analysis can be simplified.