



IMPACT AND INTERVENTIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG WOMEN IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Domestic violence is a significant problem in India, affecting many women both physically and psychologically. Rooted in social, cultural, and economic factors, domestic violence manifests itself in various forms of abuse, including physical, emotional, verbal, economic, and sexual abuse. Social stigma attached to domestic violence creates a culture of silence and shame, making it difficult for women to seek help or report abuse. The Indian government has taken some steps to address domestic violence; including passing the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act in 2005, but implementation has been inconsistent. NGOs and civil society groups have also been working to raise awareness and provide support to women. Education and awareness-raising campaigns are crucial to changing cultural norms that perpetuate violence against women. Past studies have highlighted the extent and impact of domestic violence on women's physical and mental health and underscore the urgent need for effective interventions that address the root causes of domestic violence and provide support to women who experience abuse. The present paper elicits extent, causes, impact and interventions of domestic violence among women in India.

Keywords: Domestic Violence on Women, Social Stigma, Cultural Factors, Economic Factors, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act

INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is a widespread problem in India that affects many women, both physically and psychologically. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), there were 498,000 cases of crimes against women reported in India in 2019, with 30% of these cases being related to domestic violence. This problem affects women of all ages, social classes, and religions, and it is a serious violation of their human rights. The root causes of domestic violence in India are complex and multifaceted, including social, cultural, and economic factors. Some of the contributing factors include gender inequality, patriarchal attitudes, dowry system, and poverty. In many cases, women are seen as inferior to men and are expected to be subservient to their husbands and other male family members. This mentality leads to a sense of entitlement and control over women, which can manifest itself in various forms of abuse.

Domestic violence is a major social issue in India that affects countless individuals, primarily women. It is a complicated issue rooted in societal standards, economic concerns, and gender based power relations. Despite legislative protections and measures to prevent domestic abuse, it remains a prevalent problem with terrible repercussions. The Vienna Accord of 1994 and the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action (1995) have acknowledged this. The United Nations Committee on Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in its General Recommendation No. XII (1989) has recommended that State parties should act to protect women against violence of any kind especially that occurring within the family.

Physical violence is the most visible form of domestic violence, but it is not the only one. Emotional abuse, verbal abuse, economic abuse, and sexual abuse are also common forms of violence that women experience in their homes. Emotional abuse includes constant belittling, insults, and humiliation, while verbal abuse involves yelling, threatening, and intimidation. Economic abuse involves controlling a woman's finances, limiting her access to money, and preventing her from working outside the home. Sexual abuse includes forced sex, unwanted sexual contact, and other forms of sexual coercion.

TYPES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

As per Section 3 of D.V Act domestic violence is of four types:

- (1) Mental / Physical harm injury which includes - (i) Physical abuse, (ii) Sexual abuse (iii) Verbal and emotional abuse (iv) Economic abuse
- (2) Harassment or injury caused due to unlawful demand of any dowry or other property or valuable security.
- (3) Any type of threat by the respondent/ husband or any person related to the respondent/ husband in order to create any harm to the women
- (4) Any other harms or injury either physical or mental to the women.

CAUSES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The patriarchal character of Indian society is one of the main reasons for domestic violence. In Indian culture, it is common for women to be considered less valuable than men. As a result, men believe they have the right to control their relationships and will resort to violence to maintain that power. • Poverty is a crucial element that fuels domestic violence. Since women from low-income households are frequently financially dependent on their partners, they are more likely to experience domestic abuse. • Presently, where a women is

subjected to cruelty by her husband or his relatives, it is an offence under section 498-A of the Indian Penal Code. But the criminal laws does not however address the domestic violence in its entirety

EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is devastating for the victim women and also to her children. It creates mental as well as physical health problems to the victims. Children who witness domestic violence are under great risk of developing long-term issues like anxiety, depression, and behavioural problems. As they get older, they could become more prone to acting violently. The effects of domestic violence are massive. They range from the physical health impacts to psychological and emotional problems. Battered women are not the only persons who suffer the damage wrought by domestic violence. In most cases, children are found to be very vulnerable to the long term effects of family violence, just like the mothers themselves.

Domestic Violence and Socio-Economic Indicators

Education of Women Educated women reported less psychological pressure. One in every two women who are not educated faced psychological pressure whereas a 15 percentage point reduction is registered if she has attained education up to the secondary or above level. Emotional violence shows a negative relationship with education. Education appeared as the key to end or reduce physical violence against women. The occurrence of physical violence has a negative relationship with women's level of education. The occurrence of physical violence with women having no education is 2.5 times higher than with those having attained a secondary or a higher level of education. A clear negative relationship is found between educational status and the proportion of women who experienced sexual violence. The proportion of illiterate women who experienced sexual violence is three times more as compared to the proportion of women having education up to the secondary level or above.

Economic Status (Wealth Quintile)

The percentage of women experiencing emotional, physical and psychological violence reduces with the increase in the economic status of the women's household. There is a 24 percentage point gap between the poorest and richest quintile in terms of the proportion of women experiencing psychological pressure whereas in terms of emotional violence there is an 11 percentage point gap between richest and poorest. There is also a negative relationship between the proportion of women who experienced sexual violence and the wealth quintile.



Women from the poorest households faced more than three times more sexual violence as compared to women who belonged to the richest wealth quintile.

Health Effects

The main stream of domestic violence research is related to the consequences on the violence survivors. This issue is more discussed by medical researchers with the scope of their study were more focused on the impact of violence on the victims' health consequences

Domestic Violence and Work Effects

Many faced domestic violence admitted that the violence affect their capacity to get to work. During their previous relationship, 70% experience refraining actions from their partners to go to work which affects their performance and productivity at work. Women who live in domestic violence situation are force to get out of their home which impact on their daily routines such as missing their personal belongings during force evacuations or managing child care issues. The victims feel exhausted, unwell or distracted to work and being late to work. Various studies have shown that behaviour of perpetrators against victims affects women's performance at work.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES

One of the biggest challenges in addressing domestic violence in India is the social stigma attached to it. Women who experience domestic violence are often blamed for their own abuse and are told to tolerate it for the sake of their families or marriages. This mindset creates a culture of silence and shame, making it difficult for women to seek help or report the abuse. Many women also fear retaliation from their abusers or believe that the police and legal system will not support them. The Indian government has taken some steps to address domestic violence, including passing the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act in 2005. This law provides women with legal protection from domestic violence, including restraining orders, monetary relief, and shelter. However, the implementation of this law has been inconsistent, and many women still face barriers in accessing legal remedies.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups have also been working to raise awareness about domestic violence and provide support to women who experience abuse. These organizations provide counselling, legal aid, and shelter to women, as well as work to change societal attitudes towards domestic violence. Education and awareness-raising campaigns are also essential to address domestic violence in India. These campaigns



should be targeted at both women and men, and they should focus on changing cultural norms that perpetuate violence against women. Education on gender equality, human rights, and non-violent conflict resolution can also help prevent domestic violence from occurring in the first place.

SOLUTIONS TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

- ❖ To curtail domestic violence, it is necessary to address the fundamental causes of the problem. This might include modifying cultural perceptions of women, enhancing women's access to education and employment prospects, and offering assistance to victims.
- ❖ Another important step to curtail domestic violence is to change the views towards the women and by promoting gender equality.
- ❖ Media efforts can promote favourable attitudes toward women, and educational projects can be utilized to teach kids about gender equality and healthy relationships with the women. It is to impress them that a girl child has equal rights on all the sphere of society and deserves to be treated with dignity

Improving Access to Education and Economic Opportunities

- ❖ Improving access to education and economic opportunities for women can also help to prevent domestic violence.
- ❖ Financially independent women are less likely to experience domestic violence as they are not dependent on their partners for support.
- ❖ Initiatives such as microfinance programs and vocational training can help women to become economically independent and reduce their risk of domestic violence.

Providing Support for Victims

- ❖ Providing support for victims of domestic violence is also essential. This can involve providing access to counselling, legal aid, and safe shelters for women who need to escape an abusive relationship.
- ❖ Raising awareness about the issue is also crucial, and encouraging victims to speak out about their experiences is also vital.

Legal Protections

- ❖ Legal protections can also play an important role in preventing domestic violence.
- ❖ The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) enacted in 2005 is an important act to provide victims with legal protections.

- ❖ This act is a laudable piece of legislation enacted in 2005 to tackle the domestic violence and to bring women's human rights into sphere of the home, which has been an important site of violence.
- ❖ This law provides for the issuance of protection orders that can prohibit the abuser from contacting or approaching the victim and can also provide for financial support and access to shared property.

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

The Act ensures woman's right to reside in her matrimonial home. This Act has a special feature with specific provisions under law which provides protection to a woman to „live in violence free home. Though this Act has civil and criminal provisions, a woman victim can get immediate civil remedies within 60 days. Aggrieved women can file cases under this Act against any male adult perpetrator who is in domestic relationship with her. They can also include other relatives of the husband and male partner as respondents to seek remedies in their case.

Salient features of the Act

- ❖ Ensures Right to Residence under sec 17.
- ❖ Ensures economic relief by recognising economic violence.
- ❖ Recognises verbal and emotional violence.
- ❖ Provides temporary custody of child.
- ❖ Judgements within 60 days of filing of the case.
- ❖ Multiple Judgements in a single case.
- ❖ Cases can be filed under PWDV Act even if other cases are pending between parties.
- ❖ Both petitioner and respondent can prefer Appeal.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT, 2005

The following remedies are available under the protection of women from domestic violence act, 2005

Section 18 -- Protection Order

Section 19 -- Residence Order for residing at Matrimonial House

Section 20 -- Monetary Orders which includes maintenance for herself and her Children

Section 21 -- Temporary Custody of Children



Under the Domestic Violence Act, 2005, Protection Officers have been appointed by the Government to help the aggrieved woman in filing the case against her husband or against any male adult person who has committed domestic violence and who is in domestic relationship with the petitioner. The Protection Officer facilitates the women to approach the court by providing legal aid and get appropriate relief from the courts concerned. Further, they execute the orders of the Court wherever necessary with the help of police. Options are also available to the aggrieved person to file the petition before the Judicial Magistrate Court or with the service provider or in the nearby police station.

Under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, service Providers are the members from notified Non Governmental Organizations They co-ordinate with all the stakeholders in getting justice and relief to the victims of domestic violence. The Service Providers help the aggrieved women in filing the Domestic Incident Report, provide accommodation in the short stay homes along with their children, counsel them and help the aggrieved to get medical treatment if necessary. They also impart them with vocational training to help them secure employment and sustainable income.

CONCLUSION

Domestic violence is a serious problem in India that affects many women, both physically and psychologically. The root causes of domestic violence are complex and multifaceted, including social, cultural, and economic factors. Addressing domestic violence requires a comprehensive approach that involves legal protections, support services, education, and awareness-raising campaigns. By working together, we can create a society where women are free from violence and can live with dignity and respect. Domestic violence is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted approach to prevent and address. Changing societal attitudes towards women, improving access to education and economic opportunities for women, providing support for victims, and strengthening legal protections are all critical components of preventing domestic violence. By taking these steps, we can work towards creating a society where all individuals are valued and treated with respect and dignity



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