

Domestic Violence against Women in India

Sapna Singh¹

In our society, violence is bursting. It is present almost everywhere and nowhere is this eruption more intense than right behind the doors of our homes. Behind closed doors of homes all across our country, people are being tortured, beaten and killed. It is happening in rural areas, towns, cities and in metropolitans as well. It is crossing all social classes, genders, racial lines and age groups. It is becoming a legacy being passed on from one generation to another. ⁽¹⁾

The incidence of violence of all forms within family has also gone up. Even today, various forms of violence against women are prevalent in our society, though many cases remain unreported due to cultural norms, apathy or ignorance. They may manifest themselves directly in wife battering, abduction, eve-teasing, verbal abuse or verbal rebukes.

Women on many occasions are victimized but all sorts of discriminations, deprivations and obstructions in goal achieving and responses. These incidents may occur in the family, industries or even public places. ⁽²⁾

The worst part of the problem is that women today, are not feeling safe and secured even in the family. The concept of home, sweet home, is no more, so far many women, who suffer violence against themselves by the members of the family. Home is no safe place when it comes to aggressive behaviour. ⁽³⁾

In the last four decades, there has been alarming increase in the incidence of violence within and outside the family. Today we hear more about wife beating, dowry deaths, sexual crimes and even reversion to medieval practices like 'sati'.

Over the year, the nature of domestic violence has changed, now it has assumed following characteristics:

1. Differences between the husband and wife and increasing divorce are common.
2. Men are marrying more than once, partly because they can get a new girl partly because of the dowry.
3. Human feelings are gradually evaporating. A man resorts even to murder the wife if he does not get the expected dowry or if he is attracted to another woman.
4. The growing dowry system is gradually making the baby girl unwanted. People are resorting to foeticide and some times, baby girls are even killed after birth.

¹ Research Scholar, Deptt. of Sociology, Faculty of Social-Sciences, BHU, Varanasi

5. Women are ignored in house work and outside home. They are suffering innumerable tortures from their in-laws and husband. They are frequently beaten-up and denied food and shelter.

All these cases reveal the true nature of the system of marriage and family in our society. ⁽⁴⁾

Characteristic of domestic violence

Domestic violence is violent victimization of women, within the boundaries of family usually by men (or his family). ⁽⁵⁾

A Woman may of any age; she may be girl child, unmarried, married or elderly woman including a widow or such women with whom men have marriage like relationship. Violence can be both physical and psychological. It indicates threats or aggressive behaviour towards her not only to her physical being, but towards her self-respect and her self-confidence.

Domestic violence against women may be psychological, physical or sexual. Psychological violence is carried out with psychological weapons (threats, insult, humiliating treatment, denial of human existence) rather than physical attacks. Physical violence includes all type of aggressive physical behaviour towards the women's body (victim). Sexual violence could include both passive (denial) and active violence. It will also include cases of perversity. ⁽⁶⁾

Remedies

Domestic violence is big problem in India. It knows no age, socio-economic, religious, racial, gender or educational barriers. It is myth that only the poor or uneducated are victims of domestic abuse. Most studies indicate that there is high incidence of spousal abuse in the more affluent neighbourhoods. Although a poor victim has the terrible problem of not having resources available, the more affluent spouse may also be in an equally desperate trap due to social stigmas, greater economic pressure and the increased societal position and power that the partner may have at his or her disposal. ⁽⁷⁾

So it is clear that domestic violence is wide spread phenomena in India without any exception of cast and class. So remedies for this problem must be broader in perspective.

Both government and society should play active role in preventing this crime. Because, it is not only the problem of law and order, but also, a big social problem.

On the front of law and order, government has made strict law against domestic violence which is known as "Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005". This act ensure the reporting of cases of domestic violence against women to a protection officer, who then prepares a domestic violence incident reports to the magistrate and forward copies thereof to the police officer in charge of the police station within the local limits of jurisdiction.

Non-governmental organization can also play a major role in preventing domestic violence. So many NGO's are already active in this

field. These NGO's continue to spread awareness amongst people regarding the legal rights they have in hand for fighting against the atrocities they are subjected to. They are encouraging more and more people to report any case of domestic violence, so that proper action may be taken against the culprit.

Police also can play major role in tackling the domestic violence cases. They need to be sensitized to treat domestic violence cases as seriously as any other crime. Special training to handle domestic violence cases should be important to police force. They should be provided with information regarding support network of judiciary, governmental agencies and departments. Gender training should be made mandatory in the training of the police officers. There should be separate wing of police dealing with women's issues, attached to all police stations and should be excluded from any other duty.⁽⁸⁾

In conclusion we can say that it is very serious problem of our society. It puts far wider and deeper impact on those women's life who are the victim of domestic violence. What is necessary that we should analyze the factors which provoke the domestic violence. If these factors can be controlled then definitely the problem of domestic violence against women can be tackled in effective manner

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