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## **Socio-Psychological Correlates of Domestic Violence: A Multi Case-Study**

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### **Abstract:**

*The study aims at examining socio-psychological correlates of Domestic violence. The investigator collected a list of total 90 cases from Police Stations and a lawyer of Ludhiana. The purposive sampling technique was followed. Out of these 90 cases, 25 cases were randomly selected, the study, on whom was conducted. For the qualitative analysis of data, case study method was applied to find out the sociopsychological correlates of domestic violence, the case histories were prepared on the basis of information provided by the victim of domestic violence, family members of the victim and their neighbours. Using Interview technique, for collecting information, the investigator personally visited the women who had faced domestic violence. An information sheet was prepared to get desired information from the victims. The data reveals the fact, that the seven victims of violence's had higher educational qualification. Out of twenty five cases, nine cases of violence relates to dowry offence, eight belong to incompatibility, three of extramarital relationship and other found to be of drug, infertility and their combination, drug and dowry or infertility and dowry. In some cases it was recorded that giving a birth to a female child also became the cause of domestic violence and its appearance becomes sharper when two or three daughters enter their house. Recorded data also shows that the rate of conviction at the trial court level is very low. Only educated and well qualified victims approached to the court for the solution. Eight cases of domestic violence sought the help of court and the judgments were delivered as divorces. The conviction rate was low, and in one case of infertility, poison was given to victim and she died but the parents did not file the case.*

### **1. Introduction**

Women occupy a unique position in the society due to the importance in procreation of the human race. In the Vedic period women had an exalted position and enjoyed a fair amount of freedom and equality like men. She was the center of the domestic world. However, in the post Vedic period position of women started declining. Manu stated "Husband is the Lord and master of his wife, he must be adorned and obeyed even if devoid of all virtues." Further, widow re-marriage was also prohibited by Manu code. It is to be noted that Manu and Dharmashastras sowed the seeds of domestic violence and since then, women have always been an object of gross discrimination and severe violence at the hands of man. The biological weakness of woman makes her an easy prey to fall upon. Ramcharitmanas of Tulsidas had given adverse remarks against the women like "Dhol, Gawar Shudra, Pashu, Nari Sakal Tadna key Adhikari" (Drums, uncivilized illiterates, lower caste, animal and women are all fit to be punished). Besides other indicators like Pardha System, Sati System (subject to women only) reflects the history of women's subordinate status.

During the Medieval period, the situation of the women further deteriorated. The husband exercised greater control over the wife and she on account of her illiteracy and ignorance become easier prey to ill treatment and tyranny. Since Independence, efforts are afoot to promote the welfare of women. The constitution of India envisages that all human beings are equal before law, irrespective of their religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. The Indian penal code contains numerous provisions to check the crimes against women like sexual exploitation, harassment by husband and in-laws (Sec-498-A), dowry deaths (Sec-304), abetment to commit a suicide (Sec-306) etc.

With the era of women education we have observed a remarkable sign of improvement in the status of women. The results of the most of the examinations conducted by the universities and school boards of every year show the highest percentage of the female candidates. Despite that, at present in India, the status of the women is not very honorable. No doubt with the passage of the time there has been a remarkable change in the mindset of society; the educated parents have stated treating their daughters equal to their sons. So, Education has created awareness among women to exercise their protection and use her fundamental rights. But, majority of the women are still exploited by their families, in-laws and the society at large.

Because of the evil socio-religious rites and human sinister customs, irrational religious rites and inhuman superstitions the position of women in the house is in a sorry state of affair. The concept of 'Ardhangini' (half of the body) seems to be restricted only in literature

and has never been implemented in practical life. The subordinate status of women combined with sociocultural norms that are inclined towards patriarchy and masculinity can be considered as important factors in determining the domestic violence problems.

Women have still not been able to get her free from clutches of domestic violence. In our society near about 50% of the total population are women. Although the government and other agencies have tried their level best to educate and provide a healthy environment for the development and for upbringing the status of women, yet the major part of women population is still lacking behind. If the degree of socio-psychological domestic violence is to be made on the declining curve on the graph, it is necessary to identify the correlated of domestic violence. Different correlates of domestic violence, related to our social system include Dowry, child marriage, illiteracy and giving the birth to female child. Besides, it also has Domestic violence also has psychological correlates like stress, anxiety and frustration etc. It is also essential to study the judicial process of our country and on dowry related offences and to moot suggestions for rendering gender justice. Some studies related to domestic violence also reveal the same findings about the correlates of domestic violence.

According to a 2011 report prepared by India's National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a crime has been recorded against women in every three minutes in India. Every 60 minutes, two women are raped in this country. Every six hours, a young married woman is found beaten to death, burnt or driven to suicide.

National Family Health Survey. (1995). Seventy one point five percent (71.5%) increase in cases of torture and dowry deaths in women in India during the period from 1991 to 1995 has been reported by the National Crimes Record Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 1995. According to Women's Feature Service 2002, New Delhi, in every six hours in India, a young married woman is burnt alive or beaten to death or forced to commit suicide. At least 20 per cent of the married women aged between 15 and 49 years have experienced domestic violence at some point or other in their lifetime and many may have suffered almost continuously.

While many researchers come out with findings that lifestyle of men such as smoking, alcoholism and drugs promote men to commit domestic violence (Leonard, 1992; McKenry et al., 1995; Rao, 1997 and Bhatt, 1998) in a cross-cultural study on family violence and rape, drawing data from 90 societies throughout the world and suggests that four factors;

1. Economic inequality between men and women.
2. A pattern of using physical violence to resolve conflict.
3. Male authority and control of decision making and
4. Restriction on women's ability to leave the family setting.

Diwan (1997) in his study 'Law relating to Dowry Offences, Dowry deaths, Bride burning, Rape and related offences' included insatiable demand of dowry leading to various dowry offences and dowry deaths. Dowry is getting into exaggerated dimensions. Despite the efforts to make dowry prohibition laws more stringent, to enact new provisions in the criminal law against cruelty on women and dowry related deaths or suicides; these offences are on the increase.

Heise (1998) proposes a clearer and interrelated ecological framework for understanding violent behaviour among individuals. This framework includes a range of physical, social, emotional and psychological factors at the personal community and societal levels.

Karlekar M. (1998) Domestic violence includes not only inter-spousal violence, but also violence perpetrated by other family members. Generally, an important part of the power relationship between spouses and their families relates to dowry and its ramifications.

Heise (1999) in his studies concluded that lifetime rates of physical abuse by a partner ranging from 10% to 52%, including results from a study from Chile in which researchers found that 26% of Chilean experienced abuse in their current relationship.

Gerstein (2000) is of the view that low educational level and poverty are important reasons for domestic violence. Further, marriage at a younger age makes women vulnerable to domestic violence

International center for research for women (ICRW) (2000) in their study concluded that 45% women reported to have experienced at least one incident of physical or psychological violence which include in them violent physical injuries.

Sheela Saravanan. (2000). Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence which result in, physical, sexual or arbitrary deprivation of liberty in public or private life and violation of human rights of women in violation of human rights of women in situations of armed conflicts.

Behshid Gaurassi (2004) had views that Violence against women is one of the most significant, yet little understood and acknowledged factor instrumental in the phenomenon of marginalization of women in the development processes. Gender violence manifests itself in various forms female foeticide and infanticide, sexual abuse, marital rape, incest molestation, sexual harassment, at work and on the streets, domestic violence in the form of wife assault and women battering. In some places, there exist culture specific forms of violence against women like female genital mutilation in some African countries and harassment /murder /beating for dowry in India. Of all the forms of violence that women face, domestic violence remains the least reported and largely suppressed.

Murthy et al. (2004) is of the view that numbers of family members, type of marriage and husband's education besides menstrual problems have significant influence on domestic violence.

Wahed Tania and Bhuiya Abbas (2007) concluded that in the South Asian Region, violence against women begins long before they are born and continues throughout their lives. The lives of unborn girls are terminated through sex selective abortions. Every sixth death of a female infant in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan is due to neglect and discrimination. In the Region, females face restrictions in mobility, usually have less to eat than their male counterparts, are denied proper education and health care, are often forced into early arranged marriages, have few opportunities of employment and are under represented in the governments.

Stephenson. R, et al. (2008) demonstrates a clear relationship between a woman's experience of physical violence from her husband and her ability to achieve her fertility intentions. The need to improve the measurement of pregnancy intendedness is clear, and a move toward using prospective measures as the standard is necessary.

Abhik Sinha et al. (2012) observed higher per capita income, presence of social support and property to be protective against domestic violence. Alcohol addiction and infidelity of the husband were found to be strongly related to the presence of domestic violence in this study.

After reviewing the related literature, it was observed that a lot of work has been conducted by foreign authors on domestic violence. It has given the direction that the woman facing different types of problems. Like anxiety, frustrations, chronic pain, dowry deaths, bride burning, rape, stalking, intimidation, pregnant and non-pregnant homicide, suicide in our society. The above analysis of review literature impelled the investigator to take up the study to explore the socio-psychological correlates of domestic violence, which directly affect the life of the woman. Through, there is a lot of literature on various aspects of violence against women. Most of the literature is on sociological and socio-legal aspects of domestic violence in India. But there is lack of qualitative research work in India on domestic violence. Only a few books based on doctoral research are available. Hence, this necessitates the investigator to take up the present study.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

1. To know the causes of domestic violence.
2. To reveal sociopsychological correlates of domestic violence.
3. To study the impact of education on domestic violence.
4. To give the suggestion to eliminate domestic violence.

## 3. Methodology

Keeping in the mind the objectives of the present study, the investigator collected a list of total 90 cases from Police Stations and a lawyer of Ludhiana. Out of these 90 cases, 25 cases were randomly selected, on whom the study was conducted. So, in the present study, only 25 case studies were conducted from Ludhiana district of Punjab with the use of purposive sampling technique. In the present study, case studies were prepared on the basis of information provided by the victims and the family members of the victims. Investigator personally visited the women who had faced domestic violence to collect the information. To draw out the expected information the investigator spent maximum time in being compatible emotionally to the victim of domestic violence, Interview technique was used to collect information from the victim of domestic violence. After establishing congenial rapport, desired questions regarding study were asked by the investigator. So the information collected by this method was used in preparing case history.

## 4. Results

Out of twenty five cases, nine cases of violence relate to dowry offence, eight belong to incompatibility, three of extramarital relationships and other found to be of drug, infertility and their combination, drug and dowry or infertility and dowry. In some cases it was found that giving a birth to a female child also became the cause of domestic violence and its appearance became sharper when two or three daughters enter their house.

Recorded data also show that the rate of conviction at the trial court level is very low. Only educated and well qualified victims approached the court for the solution. Eight cases of domestic violence sought the help of court and the judgments were delivered as divorces. In many cases the accused husband or in laws were acquitted for want of clinching evidence or insensitivity of the judiciary. Since the conviction rate was low, so in one case of infertility, poison was given to victims and she died but the parents did not file the case.

After analyzing the various case studies of different victims to constitute the sample following causes were identified according to the two variables in the study i.e. social correlates and Psychological Correlates.

### 4.1. Social Correlates

1. Men's habit of consuming excessive liquor.
2. Infidelity/suspected infidelity by the husband or by the wife.
3. Economic inequality between men and women.
4. Hierarchical gender relations and established traditions in the family.
5. Tendency of polygamy (due to the woman's infertility, family pressures etc.).
6. In-laws dissatisfied with the dowry.
7. Rising awareness among women about their rights is another cause of violence against women.
8. Literate and educated women raise their voices against such violence.
9. Illiteracy of the woman.
10. Giving birth to a female child.
11. Live-in relationships with other woman.

#### 4.2. Psychological Correlates

1. Insulting and criticizing.
2. Mistrust (Keeping watch on activities, where she goes whom she calls and spend time with.)
3. Jealousness
4. Emotional blackmailing and humiliation
5. Incompatibility of educational standard between husband and wife and in-laws.
6. Husband of the victims and in-laws subjected her to abusive languages and criticizing, insulting behaviour causing tension for her living in the house.
7. Victims become frustrated and choose the path of suicide and finish her life so as to get salvage from these problems. A woman when subjected to verbal and psychological torture by her husband and in-laws, create anxiety in her mind.

The data reveals the fact, that seven victims of violence's had higher (PG) educational qualifications in comparison to their spouses. It was noted that the educational attainments had created awareness among woman about their status, importance, self-respect and confidence. So, they dared to expose themselves to help the investigator for collection of the data against violence.

After the analysis of 25 case studies of different victims, following causes were identified for the domestic violence:

1. Illiteracy among women.
2. Lack of awareness about their rights.
3. Dowry culture.
4. Poor socio-economic status of in-laws.
5. Birth of girl child.
6. Extra material relationship.
7. Drug addiction.
8. Doubtful attitude.
9. Infertility.
10. Incompatibility

#### 4.3. Suggestions

After analysis of the case studies of the victims of domestic violence, some suggestions are given by an investigator for reducing the domestic violence.

1. Education must be provided to those women residing in the remote areas.
2. Compulsory and free education up to the higher level for women.
3. To get education should be the fundamental right of the woman. If she is deprived of this right, then state/parents should be held responsible for that.
4. With the help of education there should be provisions of awareness about their fundamental rights to the women.
5. 50% of the posts should be given to the women as there is near about equal ratio between men and women in the world.
6. 50% of the seats in Parliament/Assembly and legislature must be given to the women by virtue of democratic thoughts.
7. If social or psychological violence occurs then, accused should be held for punishment in the society and in the court with firm hands.
8. Old women should be educated through Audio-Visual, pictures and latest techniques against their narrow thinking, superstitions, superiority of man in home prevailing in present the society.
9. Remarriage of victimized divorced women should be encouraged by provided those financial help as employment, loans, self employment, medical facilities, legal advice and educating them to become self reliant.
10. Affidavit from every Govt/ Semi Govt. /Private servant or mate partner is solemnly affirm and undertaken that he has not accepted any gift/dowry and will not demand for the same.
11. Affidavit from the female parents solemnly affirm and undertaken that they have not given any gift/ dowry and will not provide for the same in future. She will be treated equal to their sons in the application of their fundamental rights and will not be deprived of.
12. Right to property

The urgency of dealing with the deep rooted custom of dowry compels women groups to take up, own war footing, a range of issues such as women's inheritance equal right to property and economical empowerment as a rolling point. Than only the helpless woman victims would be liberated from the evils and clutches of their counterparts and in-laws.

The investigator felt that, if the above mentioned suggestions are implemented faithfully in the society, in the real sense, then the degree of the domestic violence like incest, molestation of eve teasing, infertility, incompatibility and alcoholism etc. will be on the declining curve on the graph. One can be sure that the backbone of the dowry custom will be hammered and crack down. The circulation of black money will turn in white. Earnest money will be utilised for the development of the nation by setting new industries, opening new educational institutions. These education institutes will help to burn a candle of light in the remote areas where darkness is prevailing. The education will empower the society to eradicate and understand the evil of superstitions and social customs.

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