

Study of domestic violence against women with reference to domestic violence act' 2005"

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Domestic violence that is any act of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, or the threat of such abuse, inflicted against a woman by a person intimately connected to her through marriage, family relation, or acquaintanceship is universal and has its root in the socio-cultural set up of the society. Domestic violence can be Psychological Abuse, Social Abuse, Financial Abuse, Physical Assault and/or Sexual Assault. In developing cities the rates of domestic violence against women are high. Domestic violence has attracted the attention of the general public and the judiciary in the city due to series of unpleasant incidents the loss of life and threat to life in several parts of the city. There were several cases of women who were ill treated, tortured and even murdered for not meeting the demands of the so called head of the family. The ultimate solution lies in awareness building geared through determined community action. In this study, efforts have been made to find out the prevalent forms of domestic violence, the factors leading to it, economic status of the family, the awareness of Domestic Violence Act' 2005, the utilization of the Act and also impact of the Act. The present study included sections on the prevalent forms of domestic violence, the factors leading to it, economic status of the family, the awareness of Domestic Violence Act' 2005, the utilization of the Act and also impact of the Act on the lives of victims. A total of 15 women victims of domestic violence were selected from the centers for the study. Through Case history method consolidated raw data were framed. The results revealed that Domestic violence in the form of physical attack was a common feature, the most prevalent cause of violence is extra marital relations of husbands, most of the victims belonged to middle income group families and are aware of the Domestic Violence Act and the reason for not utilizing the Act is because of fear of social stigma. This Act has both positive and negative impact on the lives of victims according to the present study.

Keywords: domestic violence, domestic violence act, programmes and its impact

Domestic Violence can be described as when one adult in a relationship misuses power to control another. It is the establishment of control and fear in a relationship through violence and other forms of abuse. The violence may involve physical abuse, sexual assault and threats. Sometimes it's more subtle, like making someone feel worthless, not letting them have any money, or not allowing them to leave the home.

Domestic violence against women is an age old phenomenon. Women were always considered weak, vulnerable and in a position to be exploited. Violence has long been accepted as something that happens to women. Cultural mores, religious practices, economic and political conditions may set the precedence for initiating and perpetuating domestic violence, but ultimately committing an act of violence is a choice that the individual makes out of a range of options. (Kalsi, & Singh, 2010)

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act'2005

It is an Act that provides for more effective protection of the rights of women guaranteed under the Constitution who are victims of violence of any kind occurring within the family and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

The kinds of abuse covered under the Act are-

Physical abuse

- an act or conduct causing bodily pain, harm, or danger to life, limb, or health;

- an act that impairs the health or development of the aggrieved person;
- an act that amounts to assault, criminal intimidation and criminal force.

Sexual abuse

- any conduct of a sexual nature that abuses, humiliates, degrades, or violates the dignity of a woman.

Verbal and emotional abuse

- any insult, ridicule, humiliation, name-calling;
- insults or ridicule for not having a child or a male child;
 - repeated threats to cause physical pain to any person in whom the aggrieved person is interested.

Economic abuse

- depriving the aggrieved person of economic or financial resources to which she is entitled under any law or custom or which she acquires out of necessity such as household necessities, stridhan, her jointly or separately owned property, maintenance, and rental payments;
- disposing of household assets or alienation of movable or immovable assets;
- restricting continued access to resources or facilities in which she has an interest or entitlement by virtue of the domestic relationship including access to the shared household.

Aim of the study

To study the domestic violence against women with reference to Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act' 2005.

Objectives of the study

- To find out the prevalent forms of Domestic Violence
- To identify the prevalent causes of Domestic Violence

- To find out the prevalent economic status of the family for Domestic Violence
- To know about awareness of the Domestic Violence Act'2005 among victims
- To study the reasons for not utilizing the Domestic Violence Act'2005
- To find out if Domestic Violence Act'2005 has impact on victim's life.

Hypotheses of the study

- There is a high number of physical violence.
- The major cause of violence is economic problem.
- Majority of the cases belong to low socio-economic families.
- The majority of the victims are not aware of Domestic Violence Act'2005.
- Lack of awareness as a reason for not utilizing the Domestic Violence Act'2005.
- Domestic Violence Act 2005, has had impact on the lives of victim.

Area of study

Domestic violence is one of the most prevalent least addressed social maladies of our times. It plagues the lives of Indian women to such an extent that they appear to accept it as part of their lives. The rate of Domestic Violence is on the rise in a city like Mysore. Women victims of domestic violence registered in one of the Courts, women protection organization and one of the NGO in Mysore city were taken for study.

Method

Participants

A participants of domestic violence women victims were selected from Court, Women's organization and from an NGO in Mysore city. The cases taken from Court is 3, Women organization is 6 and NGO is also 6 cases. A total of 15 cases were selected for the present study.

The method utilized in this study is the case history method. Case histories are a detailed account of the facts affecting the development or condition of a person or group under treatment or study, especially in medicine, psychiatry, or psychology. A self framed questionnaire was used for interviewing which comprises questions regarding their demography, state before marriage, state after marriage, economic status, knowledge about the Act and solutions sought.

At first the researcher sought permission from the centers to carry out the study and introduced herself and told the purpose of conducting the study. They were also assured about the confidentiality of the information of the cases taken.

The names of women registered in these centres were selected. The researcher interacted with the victims and counsellors at the centres.

The detailed case histories of the victims in the centers were studied and the victims were interviewed at the centre. Those women who are not staying at the centre their addresses were sought for and the researcher interacted with them and took their interviews. The study included sections on demographic information; household economic status; partner characteristics; history of violence; associated consequences of violence; knowledge about the Domestic Violence Act'2005; initiation of the complaint and impact of the

Domestic Violence Act'2005 on the lives of victims.

The respondents viz. the victims and counsellors at the centres constituted the source of primary data. Documents, books, reports of surveys and studies, literature pertaining to domestic violence and other relevant publications formed the secondary data source.

A consolidated table is drawn from the information taken and interpreted.

Findings and analysis

The consolidated table1 shows the clear cut picture of the cases and an analysis is drawn from it.

Among the victims, victim 'J' is the youngest (22yrs) and victim 'L' is the eldest (46yrs). 7 victims are in the age group of 20-30yrs, 7 in the 31-40yrs and only 1 is above 40yrs. The table1 shows that age is not a barrier for domestic violence to occur. However women in the age group of 20-40 are at greater risk of being subjected to domestic violence than women of other age groups.

Education can boost a young woman's confidence and teach her life skill, equipping her to make her own judgments. Out of 15 victims, 1 victim did not finish schooling, 6 victims have done SSLC, 3 have done PUC, 1 have done TCH, 1 have done Home Nursing, 1 have done BE, 1 have done B.Ed and 1 have done DCA. The educational status of the respondents revealed that vast majority of them was literate. Almost all the victims received basic education and it can be inferred that domestic violence occurred irrespective of the educational status, though more cases of violence were seen in the less educated category.

Most of the perpetrators are educated as well and are fully aware of their acts. It is clear from the table that employed women too are not immune to domestic violence in spite of the fact that they add additional income to the family. The figures thus pointed out to the fact domestic violence is prevalent more among those who are unemployed. Nevertheless, it does not exclude the others from this abrasive problem that dismantles the bonds of family life. The dominance of unemployed suffering from domestic violence could be due to the reality that these cases come to light more prominently compared to those who are employed or those who are better off.

Domestic violence is most common among married women (13 women) and the most prevalent perpetrators of violence are husbands/partners of the victims. The male partners always nurture a superior power position compared to women. The data too is in line with the above trend as it showed that majority of the families were controlled by the husbands themselves.

Majority of victims got married in the traditional arranged way. In arrange marriages they lack the opportunity of getting to know each other and hence this lead to maladjustments and violence. So a chance should be given for the couple to know each other well before rushing into marriage. Pre-marital and marital counsellings should be given to the youths.

It was found that the majority of the victims are Hindus.

From table1 it is clear that the most prevalent (in 5 cases) cause of violence is extra marital relations of husbands followed by alcoholism of husbands (in 3 cases) and marital maladjustment (in 3 cases), property dispute seen in 2 cases, dowry seen in 2 cases and suspicion in 2 cases and for economic problem, cheating in love matter, husband's unstable mentality and employment of wife-1 case reported for each. The prevalent cause of violence according to the table1 is extra marital relation which contradicts the hypothesis drawn.

Table 1:-Consolidated Raw Data of Cases

SL No.	'V' Name	'V' Age (yrs)	'V' Education	'V' Occupation	'V' Marital Status	Type of Marriage	Religion of 'V' & 'P'	Violence Perpetrator	'P' Age (yrs)	'P' Education	'P' Occupation	No. of Children	Gender & age of children	Monthly family income(₹s)	Type of Violence & Causes	'V' Awareness of D.V. Act	Nature & Duration of case	Solutions or settlement
1.	A	35	PUC	Cook	Mr	Love	Hindu	Husband	40	PUC	Real Estate broker	1	'M'- 2.6yrs	Below 5000 (LUG)	Mental, physical & financial violence. Economic problem.	No know- ledge	Unsolved (3months)	Reconcile with 'H'
2.	B	23	TCH	Not Working	UMr	-	Hindu	Step mother	42	6 th std	Farmer	nil	-	Below 5000 (LUG)	Physical & mental harassment. Property dispute.	Has idea but did not utilize	Unsolved (6months)	Separation from family
3.	C	26	PUC	Not working	Mr	Arranged	Hindu	Husband	32	MBA	Marketing Executive	2	'M'-4yrs 'M'- 2.5yrs	Above 20000 (HIG)	Mental & Physical harassment. Marital maladjustment, dowry & extra marital affairs.	Has know- ledge & utilizing it	Unsolved (4months)	Divorce
4.	D	28	8 th std	Not working	Mr	Arranged	Hindu	Husband, FIL & MIL	'H'- 33 'P'- 35 'MIL'- 50	'H'- PUC 'P'- 3 rd MIL- illiterate	'H'-Peon FIL & MIL- farmers	nil	-	3000- 20000 (MIG)	Physical & mental harassment. Marital maladjustment.	No know- ledge	Unsolved (10months)	Separation
5.	E	26	Home nursing	Home nurse	UMr	-	Hindu	Partner (lover)	28	PUC	Not working	1	'M'-2yrs	3000- 20000 (MIG)	Physical & mental harassment. Cheating in love matters.	Has know- ledge & filed a complaint but dismissed by herself.	Solved (2yrs)	End relation with partner
6.	F	32	SSLC	Tailor	Mr	Love	Hindu	Step mother & Husband	'H'- 38 'SM'- 51	'H'- PUC 'SM'- illiterate	'H'- Business 'SM'-not working	4	'M'-16yrs 'M'-14yrs 'M'-11yrs 'M'-9yrs	3000- 20000 (MIG)	Physical & mental harassment. Unstable mentality.	Has idea but did not utilize it	Solved (2.6yrs)	End relation with 'H' & stay without contact
7.	G	31	SSLC	Not working	Mr	Arranged	Muslim	Husband	42	SSLC	Auto driver	2	'M'-6yrs 'M'-7yrs	Below 5000 (LUG)	Physical & mental harassment. Alcoholism & extra marital relations.	No know- ledge but wants justice	Unsolved (8months)	Reconcile with 'H'
8.	H	32	SSLC	Tailor	Mr	Arranged	Hindu	Husband	37	SSLC	Carpenter	1	'M'-12yrs	3000- 20000 (MIG)	Physical & mental harassment. Extra marital relations.	No know- ledge	Unsolved (1.6yrs)	Divorce

Most of the victims (11 victims) are aware of the Domestic Violence Act which is contradictory to the hypothesis. Handful victims are still not aware of the Act and thus there is a need for awareness programs so that there is 100% awareness about the Act among the beneficiaries. Also it will make the victims seek out help instead of keeping silent and bearing with the violence. The reason for not utilizing the Act is because of fear of social stigma and also because of lack of awareness among the handful number of victims which is according to the drawn hypothesis.

It was seen that majority of the victims filed for divorce & separation which indicates that the women are becoming more independent and because the societal views about being single or a divorcee is slowly changing and are accepting the fact.

Domestic violence in the form of physical attack was a common feature for an overwhelming majority of the victims under study which is according to the hypothesis drawn and reported experienced mental strain in one form or the other due to domestic violence.

The table 1 shows that domestic violence is common among middle income group families (8 families) which is contradictory to the hypothesis drawn. Due to the rapid socio-economic changes, life has become highly competitive creating severe challenges towards survival. Living style has also become more materialistic oriented. This does not mean that only middle classes are more prone towards domestic violence.

It was found that the Act has both positive & negative impact on the lives of victims which is according to the hypothesis drawn.

According to Sahoo Harihar and Pradhan Manas Ranjan (2009), Domestic violence is one of the crimes against women which is linked to their disadvantageous position in the society. Domestic violence refers to violence against women especially in matrimonial homes. Therefore domestic violence is recognized as the significant barriers of the empowerment of women, with consequences of women's health, their health-seeking behaviour and their adoption of small family norm. An attempt has been made in this study to find out whether ever married women of reproductive age group in India view wife-beating as justified. The prevalence of beatings and physical mistreatment since age 15 and also in last one year are used as the dependent variables. The National Family Health Survey II data (1998-99) which covered 90,303 ever married women is used in the analysis. Background characteristics such as education, age, marital duration, place of residence, caste, religion, sex of the head of the household, standard of living, work status of women, exposure to mass media and the autonomy of women with respect to decision making, freedom of movement and access to money are linked to domestic violence. An autonomy index is computed to understand the relationship of women's autonomy with domestic violence. Bivariate analysis is used to examine the variation of domestic violence by background characteristics. Logistic regression is carried out to predict the domestic violence with the selected independent variables. The analysis shows that the women belonging to low socio-economic status are more likely to agree with each of the different reasons justifying wife-beating. Also domestic violence is more among lower autonomy and women belonging to low socio-economic status.

Another study by Chaudhary Anurag; Girdhar Sangeeta and Kumar Soni Ravinder (2009), a study was carried out in population covered under the urban field practice area of the Department of Community Medicine, Dayanand Medical College and Hospital,

Ludhiana city, Punjab. In this study 276 married women were interviewed in the age group of 15-45 years attending OPD at Urban Health Centre from Jan to June 2006. The results of the study is that out of 276 women 147 (53.3%) reported occurrence of domestic violence. It was found to be significantly higher in those women who were working (68.4%) as compared to housewives. In women whose husbands were alcoholic, 87.5% had ever experienced violence. Emotional abuse occurred in 40.6% followed by economical abuse (37.0%) and physical violence (22.4%). The predominant cause of domestic violence was observed to be stress in the family.

According to a new study by Research Triangle Institute, International (2005-2006) Working women help in bringing financial stability to a family; their professional life often subjects them to increased domestic violence in India.

The issue of domestic violence according to Baker and White, (2010) is often viewed as a legal issue - something to be dealt with by police, attorneys and courts. Domestic violence, however, goes beyond the legal system and studies reveal the impact of the violence on women's health and well-being. This fact suggests the need for a multi-sector solution inclusive of health services and health care professionals

The International clinical Epidemiologists Network (INCLIN) (1997 and 1999) conducted a study in seven diverse and regional sites of India: Bhopal, Chennai, Delhi, Lucknow, Nagpur, Thiruvananthapuram and Vellore were taken. According to this study the overall figure of domestic violence for India is 36.9% physical violence and 35.5% psychological violence. In the rural areas the overall figure is 51.7% of physical violence and 49.7% of psychological violence, while the urban figure 68.8% physical violence and 68.9% psychological violence.

The present study identifies the main types of violence, causes for it, prevalent economic group for it, awareness & utilization of Domestic Violence Act'2005 and also the impact of the same among the victims in Mysore. The findings were that the most prevalent type of violence is Physical & mental harassment, the prevalent cause of domestic violence is extra marital relations, the prevalent economic group for domestic violence is the middle income group. It was found that majority of the victims are aware of the Act and the reason for not utilizing the act is lack of awareness or tied up with fear societal stigma also the Act has impact on the lives of the victims.

The study suggests that educating of girls should aim at strengthening their inherent abilities and utilizing them for their own development as well as for the society's development, the victims be intimidated with the law, media to aid in educating the masses about domestic violence. This will help improving the status of women and raising voice against atrocities and harassment.

Suggestions

- Parents should be sensitized about gender issues;
- Awareness about gender equality and women's rights should be instilled in boys and girls from a very early age in order to bring about a change in the mindset of the future generation;
- Stigma attached to victims of domestic violence should be removed by conscientising the community through outreach programmes;
- Legal literacy camps should be conducted on a regular and systematic basis at the local community level;

- List of NGOs and governmental organizations dealing with women's issues should be made known to the public;
- Media should be used to sensitise the officials and the public about domestic violence so as to develop a positive attitude towards women

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