

Domestic Violence against Women

1) Introduction

- Women have always been ill-treated and deprived of their right to life and personal liberty as provided under the constitution of India.
- Women are considered as a physically and emotionally weaker than the males, whereas at present women have proved themselves in almost every field of life affirming that they are no less than men
- According to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Crimes against women reported every two minutes in India
- The statistics of increasing crimes against women is shocking, where women are subjected to violence attacks

2) Factors/Causes responsible for Domestic Violence

- exploitation of women for demanding more dowry
- discrimination of women and alienation of women's self acquired property fraudulently
- torture by husband and in-laws of the husband
- **Aggressive Attitude**
 - a) The word tolerance is losing its relevance in today's world.
 - b) They believe that every matter inside and outside the home should be solved with physical power not with peace.
 - c) Women are not allowed to be ahead of men because of the belief that a man who cannot control women would not regard as man in real sense.
- **Poverty**
 - a) When a person is not able to meet even two meals a day, he may get aggressive and violent and this leads to domestic violence often against woman.
- **Status Difference**
 - a) In every society besides of great advancement man, try to achieve high status and for that his greed for money increases and this may lead to domestic violence.
- **Dominating Behaviour**
 - a) Domestic Violence may start when one partner feels the need to control and dominate the other.
 - b) Low self esteem, extreme jealousy, difficulties in regulating anger and other strong emotions or when they feel inferior to the other partner in education and socio-economic background.

- **Drug Addiction**

- a) Alcohol and other chemical substances may contribute to violent behaviour.
- b) A drunk or high person will be less likely to control his violent impulse.

- **Extra-marital affairs**

- a) These are an increasing factor in marital conflicts which lead to domestic violence.
- b) Lack of trust, doubtful and suspicious attitudes lead to disputes which can lead to physical abuse/beatings of partners.
- c) Children may suffer due to separation/divorce of parents due to neglect by either parent who is more concerned about their affair.

- **Stress**

- a) Stress is considered as a cause of domestic violence.
- b) This person has a tendency to be violent towards the partner.

3) Concern

- many cases go unreported because of the low position of women in India's patriarchal society
- Many women go for out-of-court settlements, while others continue suffering because they are either not aware of this provision or their families keep them from reporting it

- **Social Stigma**

- a) The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) mandates all cases to be settled within 60 days, but court hearings go on for months, even years
- b) Resistance from within the family, despite having knowledge of a legal recourse, is a reason why women continue living in abusive relationships.
- c) Lack of education or financial dependence on her partner can hold back a victim from seeking relief
- d) the social and family pressure to make a marriage work, especially if there are kids, can keep even educated, financially independent women from taking action

- **Improper implementation**

- a) Under the PWDVA law, state governments are required to appoint protection officers or POs. However many of the POs drawn from the government cadre already have part-time or full-time employment in another capacity, which means that their PO duties are an additional charge.
- b) There aren't enough shelter homes for women and most of the functional homes are in a deplorable condition

- c) In Delhi alone, there are 13 shelters and short-stay homes for women, but most are shabby or overcrowded and used mainly by the underprivileged.
- d) Most states still do not have a separate budget for the implementation of the Act, while others have not formulated a scheme for its implementation.
- problems of inadequate budgetary allocations, unspent budgets and unplanned expenditure on the part of state governments
- **Fears of misuse**
 - a) The domestic violence Act is also being misused.
 - b) the girl gets married against her will and uses PWDVA to file for divorce or to bring her in-laws' family to strike a compromise

4) Suggestions

- The Draft National Policy for Women, 2016, recognizes the need to improve the living conditions in state-run temporary or permanent shelters for survivors of domestic violence or any other forms of violence.
- the battle is only half won when a woman gets a court order in her favour
- **Awareness generation and sensitization**
 - a) 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
 - b) Stigma attached to victims of domestic violence should be removed by conscientising the community through outreach programmes
 - c) Legal literacy camps should be conducted on a regular and systematic basis at the local community level
 - d) List of NGOs and governmental organizations dealing with women's issues should be made known to the public
 - e) Health care providers such as doctors, nurses, and other Para-medical staff should be properly sensitized to treat women experiencing violence
- **Health care support**
 - a) Domestic violence should be recognized as a health issue
 - b) The prevalence and the health consequences of domestic violence should be documented
- **Counselling**
 - a) Pre-marital counselling should be made compulsory
 - b) post-marital counselling is to be arranged as follow-up, in order to prevent breakdown of families

- **Fostering Self-Employment among Women**

- a) Self-employment is considered to be the best because it not only helps to change women's own self perception but also helps to attain social status

- **Judiciary**

- a) There should be a special court with a woman judge and magistrate in each district to handle domestic violence cases
- b) Mobile courts should be introduced as an effective strategy to provide justice to the victims of domestic violence

- **Role of Government**

- a) Government should ensure proper enforcement of existing laws related to women's rights
- b) Women should be made aware of Women's Commission
- c) offices of the Women's Commission should be opened at the district and lower levels

- **Role of police**

- a) Police should be trained to be respectful and courteous to women in distress
- b) A separate wing of police may be opened for dealing with women's issues, in all police stations and personnel of this wing should be exempted from other duties

- **Role of Media**

- a) Media should be used to sensitise the officials and the public about domestic violence so as to develop a positive attitude towards women in general, and women victims, in particular
- b) Censoring of the programmes should be implemented effectively, so that violence and negative impact programmes do not get undue attention of the public

- strengthening research and research capacity to assess interventions to address partner violence

5) consequences of domestic violence attack on women

- domestic violence attack on women, which will affect victim as well as family of the victim
- Domestic Violence affects women's productivity in all forms of life i.e. assaulted women will always get agonized and emotionally disturbed and remain quite after occurrence of the torment.
- The suicide case of such victimized women is also a deadly consequence and the number of such cases is increasing day by day.
- A working Indian woman may lose her efficiency in work or drop out from work in some cases.
- Domestic Violence may affect the life of children at the larger extent because child will be having greater attachment with her mother

- Sometimes marriage life will become a burden to the spouse and one of the spouses will opt out for divorce or separation which again affects life of the children.
- Children who witness domestic violence may develop serious emotional behavioural, developmental or academic problems.
- The social and economic costs of intimate partner and sexual violence are enormous and have ripple effects throughout society.

6) Laws against domestic violence

- In 1983, domestic violence was recognised as a specific criminal offence by the introduction of section 498-A into the Indian Penal Code. This section deals with cruelty by a husband or his family towards a married woman.
- To prevent violence against women and to protect the rights of aggrieved women, the legislation 'The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005' was passed by the parliament.

7) Conclusion

- The Government should come out with some more stringent laws to protect the rights of women who are victims of violence, so that it will work as the preventive measure to eradicate the crime.
- Women's empowerment is both a right and "smart economics".
- Empowering women is empowering society. Better women make better homes and a better society