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Strategies for countering domestic violence

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Abstract

Domestic violence is a large social issue in India today, as well as all over the world. Domestic violence includes sibling abuse, elder abuse, spouse abuse, and child abuse. Domestic violence has many names; family violence, wife or child beating, and domestic abuse. Spouse abuse talks about abuse from a marital or a dating partner in an intimate relationship. Domestic violence is merely not just physical, but is any behavior that is intended to control another person through the use of verbal assaults. Domestic violence is a very important social issue because it has a large negative affect on the victims. Even though Domestic violence can be caused by either male or female it is usually caused by the male due to the large physical advantage. This paper will discuss the causes of domestic violence, as well as explain the forms of domestic violence, and strategies to prevent domestic violence.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Women, Social Issue, Victimess

1. Introduction

Violence against women is an international phenomenon. In India, rape, sexual assault, physical and verbal abuse become especially pervasive given their strongly roots in India's history and societal norms. The issue of violence against women grows increasingly urgent, statistics illustrating that violence against women is on the rise. Between the years of 2001 and 2011, the number of crimes against women has risen an alarming 59%, the number one crime being rape (John 2013).

There is no unanimous definition of domestic violence. In fact, it is very difficult to define the term family violence. The term family violence and domestic violence is used interchangeably in different literatures. The meaning of both the terminologies is same. Different researchers used different definitions and different terminologies in their studies. Some of the definitions are given below which are used by different researchers and academicians: One definition views violence as 'an act carried out with the intention or perceived intention of causing physical pain or injury to another person. The physical pain can range from slight pain i.e. a slap to murder.'

Sociologically speaking, families contain not only individuals but also relationships such as husband-wife, parent-child, and brother-sister, and so on. These relationships imply connections, bonds, attachments, and obligations between people.

Types of Domestic Violence

Violence and abuse are best understood as a pattern of behaviour intended to establish power and maintain control over family, household members, intimate partners, colleagues or groups. The roots of all forms of violence and abuse are founded in many types of inequality which continue to exist and grow in our society.

Violence and abuse may occur only once, it can involve various tactics of subtle manipulation or it may occur frequently while escalating over a period of months or years. In any form, violence and abuse profoundly affect individual health and well-being.

- Physical Violence
- Sexual Violence
- Emotional Violence
- Psychological Violence
- Spiritual Violence
- Cultural Violence
- Verbal Abuse
- Financial Abuse

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Causes of Domestic Violence

Causes behind domestic violence are numerous, which also vary from society to society and culture to culture. In the developing countries, poor financial condition, lack of education, personality factors, addiction, stress, and leading a disruptive life are the major factors behind family violence. Even within the developing countries like India causes of family violence are different among different social strata. In general, it may be stated that family violence occurs more in the lower and upper social strata and the precipitating and predisposing factors are also different in case of these two different social strata. In lower social strata, lack of education, alcoholism, poor financial condition, poor housing and some familial situations are the factors behind family violence while in the upper social strata leading a disruptive social life, alcoholism, stress and strain in daily social life, ego-clash are the main reasons behind it.

Devi (2005) [5] stated that domestic violence against women is a global phenomenon. The domestic violence may take the form of wife battering, demand for more dowry, divorce, bride burning, psychological torture, wordy quarrels, uncared and so on. The increased economic insecurity, unemployment, poverty, alcoholism, lack of mutually satisfying relationship and lack of a sense of belonging are the reasons for the increased domestic violence.

Barbara *et al.* (1885) revealed that inequalities in the household, as represented by education and employment gaps between husbands and wives, are linked to domestic violence.

According to Dreze J. (1995) the well-being of widow is not just a question of economic security, but also one of dignity, self-respect and participation in society. Many widows suffered from different forms of social isolation, psychological abuse or emotional distress.

Statement of the Problem

Violence against women is a multifaceted problem that requires proactive mitigation strategies by the society, government, families and individuals. The significance of the problem emanates from the fact that its escalation and devastating effects not only lower quality of life but also leads to physical harm, emotional and psychological torture and even death. Negatively, Violence against women is thus a far reaching consequence in family and social relationship. Hence the researcher has chosen the topic for the study.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study will significantly contribute in understanding of the various issues relating to domestic

violence against women. Specifically, it will be possible to analytical understand and appreciate, with an aim of reducing the various causes and effects of violence, care givers, the policy makers and the society attempts to help curb the crime based on espoused effects to groups and individuals. In effect, the various stakeholders and special interest groups would be able to develop mitigation and intervention strategies that would assist the victims, punish crime and promote harmonious living in the families.

Objectives

- To identify the forms of domestic violence based on gender To study the response of women while facing violence
- To probe the causes of violence and its impact on development issues

Research Hypotheses

- Gender disparity influences violence against women.
- Educational status influence of violence against women
- Domestic violence has a direct impact on economic empowerment.

Study Universe

Tamil Nadu is the study universe. Out of 32 districts in Tamil Nadu, Six districts were selected for the study. Those districts have been selected on the basis of the data availed by the State Crime Records Bureau (ie) Three Districts with Higher rate of Violence(Tirunelveli, Madurai & Salem) and Three Districts with Lower rate of violence (Sivagangai, Thiruchirappalli & Nilgiris).

Sampling

Purposive random sampling method has been adopted to investigate the violence against women issues from the respondents. Therefore, 50 samples were selected from each of the six districts and totally 300 samples were selected for this study.

Apart from this, All Women Police Station, Tamil Nadu Social Welfare Board, Self Help Groups and Non-Governmental Organizations have also been purposively consulted for understanding the violence against women in a proper manner. Data collected through the interview schedules have been tabulated and classified according to the purpose of the research, violence against women with necessary statistical interpretation.

Analysis And Interpretation Problems Faced By Women

District	Problems Faced by Women					Total
	Dowry Problems	Alcoholism	Illegal contact	Intercaste marriage	Doubting	
Sivaganga	24 9.71%	12 4.85%	4 1.61%	6 2.42%	2 0.80%	48 19.43%
Trichy	21 8.50%	13 5.26%	4 1.61%	7 2.83%	2 0.80%	47 19.02%
Nilgiris	19 7.69%	6 2.42%	4 1.61%	5 2.02%	1 0.40%	35 14.17%
Salem	20 8.09%	9 3.64%	3 1.21%	7 2.83%	2 0.80%	41 16.59%
Madurai	16 6.47%	11 4.45%	4 1.61%	2 0.809%	1 0.40%	34 13.76%
Tirunelveli	24 9.71%	7 2.83%	4 1.61%	5 2.02%	2 0.80%	42 17.08%
Total	124 50.02%	58 23.48%	23 9.31%	32 12.95%	10 4.04%	247 100%

The above table reveals about the problems like dowry, alcoholic husbands, illegal contacts with others and inter caste marriage faced by the women who are not having cordial relationship with their partners. Among the 247 respondents, 50% of the respondents are facing dowry problem. 23% of the respondents have problems because of alcoholism, 9% of the respondents have stated that illegal contact as the source of problem in the family. 13% of the

respondents are having inter-caste marriage problem. Finally 4% of the respondents are affected from suspected infidelity. This study reveals that the majority of the women are facing many problems because of dowry, alcoholism and illegal contact.

Reasons for Inequality

District	Reason for Inequality				Total
	Male dominating society	Sentimental Value	bread winner of the family	Female child are expensive	
Sivaganga	13 7.22%	4 2.22%	4 2.22%	5 2.77%	26 14.44%
Trichy	10 5.55%	7 3.88%	5 2.77%	9 16.66%	31 17.22%
Nilgiris	9 5.00%	5 2.77%	4 2.22%	3 1.66%	21 11.66%
Salem	13 7.22%	8 4.44%	11 6.00%	3 1.66%	35 19.44%
Madurai	9 5.00%	5 2.77%	5 2.77%	10 5.55%	29 16.11%
Tirunelveli	16 8.88%	5 2.77%	13 6.00%	4 2.22%	38 21.11%
Total	70 38.88%	34 18.88%	42 23.33%	34 18.88%	180 100%

The above table reveals that 40% of the respondents have stated that boys are given more preference than girls. 39% of the respondents opined that boys are given preferential treatment over girls because the present day society is a male dominating society, 23 % of the respondents have observed that male is considered as the bread winner hence there exists preferential treatment, 19% of the respondents

have the sentimental attachments as sons they will be doing the funeral ceremonies to the parents and the remaining 19 % of the respondents consider female child are not preferred because they are expensive in terms of dowry.

Perpetration of Violence in Family

District	Perpetration of Violence in Family				Total
	Husband	Mother-in- law	Siblings	Husband and Mother- in-law	
Sivaganga	20 9.09%	11 4.97 %	5 2.26%	14 6.33%	50 22.62 %
Trichy	24 10.85%	12 5.42%	6 2.71 %	5 2.26 %	47 21.26%
Nilgiris	11 4.97%	1 0.45%	0 0.00%	5 3.61%	20 9.04%
Salem	17 7.69%	9 4.07%	4 1.80%	13 5.88%	50 19.45%
Madurai	10 4.52%	5 2.26%	2 0.90%	4 4.52 %	50 12.21%
Tirunelveli	14 6.33%	5 2.26%	2 0.90%	4 4.52 %	50 12.21%
Total	96 43.43%	22 9.95%	46 5	22 7	57 50

In the family situation women encounter more acts of violence from their husbands. When the researcher had a personal discussion with the respondents, it was inferred that both the husband and the mother-in-law together

constitute as another major source of violence for the women selected for the study.

Forms of Violence Faced By Respondents in the Family

District	Forms of Violence			
	Physical violence	Psychological violence	Economic violence	Social violence
Sivaganga	30 13.74%	38 17.19%	20 9.04%	8 3.61%
Trichy	39 17.64%	34 15.38%	19 8.48%	11 4.97%
Nilgiris	34 15.38%	29 13.12%	19 8.48%	9 4.07%
Salem	33 14.93%	33 14.93%	18 8.14%	9 4.07%
Madurai	35 15.83%	28 12.66%	15 6.78%	9 4.07%
Tirunelveli	32 14.47%	38 17.19%	18 8.14%	3 1.35%
TOTAL	203 91.85%	200 90.49%	109 49.32%	49 22.17%

Violence faced by the women in different types. The respondents have reported that they face physical form of violence more frequently than other forms. While interviewing the respondents, it is found that apart from physical violence other forms of domestic violence are not considered as violence at all. They are not much bothered

about these forms of violence and they feel that it is part of their life. It reflects the awareness level of these women and much has to be done to make them aware of their rights and safeguard their interests.

Reasons for Violence in Family

District	Reason for Violence			
	Alcoholism	Dowry	Extra Marital affaires	Doubting
Sivaganga	10 4.52%	20 9.09%	10 4.52%	14 6.33%
Trichy	12 5.42%	11 4.97%	8 3.61%	9 4.07%
Nilgiris	13 5.88%	18 8.14%	11 4.97%	10 4.52%
Salem	7 3.16%	11 4.97%	7 3.16%	12 5.42%
Madurai	11 4.97%	17 7.69%	6 2.71%	11 4.97%
Tirunelveli	12 5.42%	17 7.69%	10 4.52%	12 5.42%
Total	65 29.41%	94 42.53%	52 23.52%	68 30.76%

The demand for dowry is the major cause of violence against women in India. Dowry related deaths are frequently reported in the media. In the present study, majority (43%) of the respondents have observed that dowry demand is the prime reason behind the violence they face in the family. 29% of the respondents felt that alcohol contributes to violence against women in the family and 24% of the respondents felt that illegal contact is another reason behind violence against women in the family and 31% of the respondents felt that doubting is another major reason of violence against women.

It is found that there are various factors responsible for domestic violence. From the above analysis it could also be inferred that these factors are interrelated and one cannot single out any factor solely responsible for family violence. Dowry, alcoholism and extra marital affairs are found to be the major reasons while in many cases doubting is also the result of alcoholism. Hence it can be concluded that dowry and alcoholism is the major reasons for family violence.

Findings of the Study

Nearly one third of the respondents are affected by the family violence due to the socialization pattern. Women encounter acts of violence in everyday life.

It is significant to note that both the husband and the mother-in-law together constitute as the major source of family violence in the study.

In the study universe, it is interestingly noted that the respondents are faced physical form of violence more frequently than other forms. Apart from physical violence other forms of domestic violence are not considered as violence at all.

It is observed that 60% of the respondents have been affected by their husbands. There are various factors responsible for domestic violence. From the study, it could also be inferred that these factors are interrelated and one cannot single out any factor solely responsible for family violence.

In the present study, it has been observed that dowry demand is the prime reason behind the violence they face in the family. The demand for dowry is the major cause of

violence against women in India. Dowry related deaths are frequently reported in the media.

The study reveals that 29% of the respondents are being affected by violence under the influence of alcohol.

It is important that whatever is shared with the respondents is kept confidential. Hence women prefer to share their feelings and bad experiences with parents, they trust the most. A majority (34%) of the respondents are approaching their parents when they are in distress.

It is revealed that the significant number of respondents have expressed their desire to have counseling in order to solve their problems.

Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest that Gender Based Violence is a very complex process influenced by multiple factors. The severity and frequency of violence is difficult to measure as violence can take many forms and be of varying intensities. However, it is clear that traditional gender values, roles, and responsibilities underlay many of all the factors that lead to violence against women.

In recent years, on the one hand, incidents of aggressive violence against women are reported to be escalating alarmingly in our country, and this in itself is a sufficient cause for increased concern, and on the other hand, awareness of rights among women has increased, leading to the rise of feminist movement, resulting in a new sensitivity to all forms of subjugation of women by men.

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