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Analytical study of social causes of domestic violence in Chhatarpur district (Madhya Pradesh)

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Abstract

Violence against women is widespread in every country, crossing across boundaries of culture, class, education, money, ethnicity and age. Even though most civilizations prescribe violence against women, yet the fact is that breaches of women's human rights are often sanctioned under the garb of cultural traditions and conventions, or via misinterpretation of religious teachings. It is one of the most ubiquitous of human rights violations, denying women and girl's equality, security, dignity, self-worth, and their right to enjoy fundamental freedoms. Domestic abuse takes place across all tribes and cultures. Various research have showed that miscommunication between the husband and the wife, adultery, economic discrepancy between men and women, demand for dowry, uncaring attitude of in-laws, infertility etc. are common causes of domestic violence. Based on a sample of 200 respondents picked from Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh the study explores the societal reasons of domestic violence against rural women. A stratified random sample strategy was employed to obtain information from female victims of domestic violence recruited from rural parts of Chhatarpur district. For the present study, an explanatory research design was adopted. The research provides important insights into the link between gender inequality and discrimination as root cause of violence against women, and in identifying the socioeconomic causes of domestic violence and their nature against rural women in Madhya Pradesh.

Keywords: Social causes, domestic violence, rural women, Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh

1. Introduction

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, defines domestic violence as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life." (Suruchi, 2012) ^[1]. Power disparities between men and women, as well as rising economic disparities within and between nations, are linked to all of these types of violence. The gender gap and discrimination have caused women to make up approximately half of the global population. The male-dominated society throughout the universe has exploited them and subjected them to violence. Violence against women, both physical and psychological, is the most agonizing form of discrimination against them. Although it is a common occurrence, domestic violence has not received much attention from the general public. Among gender-based violence, domestic violence is the most prevalent type.

Women are "trapped in a traditional situation which is characterized by discrimination, suppression, and inequality," and domestic violence is a significant sociological issue (Hussain, 2014) ^[2]. Every nation has violence against women, regardless of age, race, class, education, income, or culture. Despite the fact that violence against women is encouraged by most communities, in practice, abuses of women's human rights are sometimes excused by local customs and conventions or by misinterpreting religious principles. Furthermore, the state and the law enforcement apparatus's implicit quiet and inactivity effectively condone the abuse when it occurs within the home, as is frequently the case. The worldwide epidemic of violence against women and girls continues to kill, torture, and target them on a physical, psychological, sexual, and financial level. It is one of the most widespread breaches of human rights, depriving women and girls of their basic freedoms, equality, security, dignity, and self-worth (Directorate-General for Justice, 2009) ^[3].

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Domestic violence occurs in many civilizations and communities. Verbal, emotional, psychological, financial, spiritual, sexual, and physical abuse are just a few of the various ways it can manifest. Around the world, women of all ages, social levels, races, religions, and nationalities are victims of violence against women. When a man or woman inflicts violence on another man or woman, it can take many different forms, including economic, psychological, sexual, and physical assault. At least two individuals are involved: the actor or perpetrator of the violence and the victim or person who is the target of the violence. Globally, violence against women has a catastrophic impact on women, children, families, and communities on a physical, emotional, financial, and social level (Singh, *et al.* 2009) ^[4]. Therefore, violence against women occurs in all social classes and communities.

Different theoretical models have been developed and employed by social scientists and psychologists to comprehend the nature and magnitude of domestic violence against women and to identify the key social components linked to domestic violence. The foundation of the resource theory is the idea that each person's contribution to the relationship greatly influences the decision-making authority in family relationships. As a final resort, violence is employed to restore the status quo. The social control model of domestic violence is put forth by the social control theory. Theoretically, relationships between relatives are difficult to sever. As a result, family members turn to violence when they feel that everyday interactions are unfair. The various meanings people ascribe to violence and the implications of these meanings in a given context are examined by the symbolic interaction theory of domestic violence. According to the subculture of violence theory, certain subcultural groups establish norms and beliefs that place a higher emphasis on the use of physical violence than the dominant culture deemed suitable. Domestic violence is explained by general system theory as a systemic issue rather than a personal one. The phenomenon of domestic violence against women has been and is being understood through the application of the dependency framework. Numerous studies have identified the following typical causes of domestic violence:

1. Alcohol consumption by men is a regular source of conflict between husband and wife. It is rarely comfortable for the wife to see her husband intoxicated at home.
2. Spousal conflict arises when either the husband or the wife commits or is suspected of committing infidelity.
3. Another factor contributing to family discord is the disparity in wealth between men and women. Men typically earn the majority of the family's income, thus they believe they should have a higher status. This frequently results in them using forceful tactics to silence their spouses.
4. One of the causes of violence against women is established family customs and hierarchical gender relations. Violence against women in the home, whether they are the wife or the child, is viewed as a form of discipline that is necessary to uphold the male authority structure in the family.
5. The tendency to engage in polygamy (due to the women's infertility, family pressures, etc.) can lead to spousal fighting, which is the most degrading experience for women;
6. In-laws who are unhappy with the dowry may torture the daughter-in-law to give in to their greed;
7. When educated and literate women speak out against such violence, the male partners may retaliate by provoking and escalating more violence against them;
8. Reporting incidents such as late or improper cooking, or failing to discipline or care for a child may seem insignificant, but in cases of failure to fulfill such "duties," it becomes an excuse for violence against women (Nayar, 2010) ^[5].

Domestic violence against women can have several causes. These causes range from the mundane to the bizarre, such as improper housekeeping, dressing in a certain way, jealousy of the husband, alcoholism, demands for dowry, the husband's mistress, irrational laughter, frequent hair combing, high-pitched speech, a free and gregarious personality, close relationships with friends and boyfriends, disrespectful behavior toward family elders, refusal to bring money from the parents' house, suspicion of extramarital affairs, and a single personality factor. Finally, it might be argued that any explanation can be used to justify violence against women. The phenomenon of domestic violence against women cannot be explained by a single factor.

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Universe of the study

The universe of present study constitutes female victims of domestic violence in district Chhatarpur. The district has 11 tehsil's: Bada Malhera, Bijawar, Buxwaha, Chandla, Chhatarpur, Gaurihar, Ghuwara, Laundi, Maharajpur, Nowgong and Rajnagar. According to census (2011), Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh has total population of 1,762,375 as per the Census 2011. Out of which 936,121 are males while 826,254 are females. In 2011 there were total 356,297 families residing in Chhatarpur district. The Average Sex Ratio of Chhatarpur district is 883 (Census of India, 2011) ^[6].

2.2. Sampling plan and design of the study

A sample of 200 female victims of domestic abuse selected from the rural parts of the district of Chhatarpur served as the basis for this study. It should be noted that, in accordance with the study's purpose and nature, the entire sample of 200 respondents was selected from among the female victims of domestic abuse. Information was later gathered from the respondents using a stratified random sampling technique. A descriptive research design was employed for this investigation. The respondents were given interview schedule procedures in order to collect empirical data from the field. In order to analyze and give some guidance for the drafting timetable, the pertinent literature was reviewed. The main instruments for gathering data were the respondents' schedule and casual conversations. The interview schedule was tested beforehand and adjusted as necessary. To get information from the respondents, in-depth interviews and conversations were used as data gathering methods. The main instrument, the interview schedule, was designed with the respondents' information gathering in mind. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used in this study. For primary sources, first-hand information was gathered through field observations and interview schedules. Books, journals, papers, news pieces, periodicals, and other relevant materials serve as the

foundation for the secondary data. Body language and facial expression were valued, and casual conversations with respondents enhanced the research. The current study employed the American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition (APA) style for references and citations.

2.3. Hypothesis of the study

The following theories were established in order to analyze the specified study problem: In Madhya Pradesh, rural women are viewed as inferior, unequal, and weak. Both their personal partner and their in-laws are abusing them physically and psychologically. Infertility, inattentive in-laws, and dowry demands are the main socioeconomic reasons of violence against rural women.

2.4. Objectives of the study

In order to testify the aforesaid mentioned hypothesis, the following broad objectives have been taken into consideration:

1. To trace the link gender inequality and discrimination as root causes of violence against women,

2. To identify the social causes of domestic violence against rural women in Chhatarpur district (M.P.),
3. To explore the nature of social causes of domestic violence against rural women in Chhatarpur district (M.P.).

3. Analysis and Discussion

3.1. Causes of Domestic Violence against Women

Due to historical and systemic power disparities between men and women, which vary in severity throughout all societies worldwide, gender inequality and discrimination are major contributors to violence against women. Violence committed against women cannot be explained by a single factor. The rise in violence against women can be attributed to a complex combination of social, economic, and cultural factors, including domestic violence. Due to the stress that comes with marital problems and financial hardship, these factors may increase the likelihood of violence against women. The following lists several causes of domestic violence against women.

Table 1: Causes of Domestic Violence in the Family? (Multiple Responses)

S. No.	Causes of domestic violence in the family	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Demand for Dowry	137	68.50
2.	Indifferent attitude of in-laws	120	60.00
3.	Extra- marital affair of husband	86	43.00
4.	Infertility	92	46.00
5.	Financial problems/economic dependence of women	144	72.00
6.	Lack of understanding	108	54.00

Source: Field work, 2023 carried out in Chhatarpur district

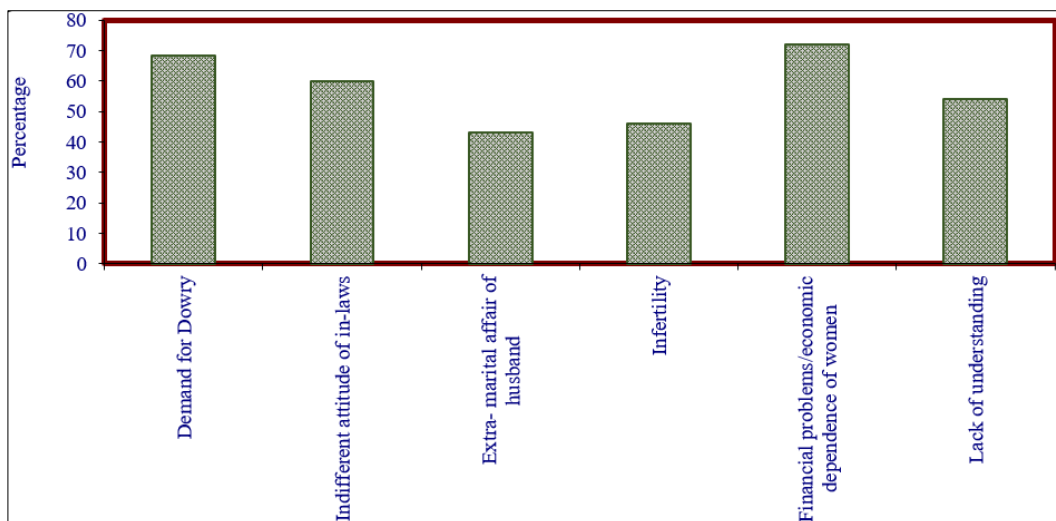


Fig 1: Graphis analysis of the percentage causes of domestic violence in the family

The above table 1 shows that multiple responses of the respondents about the various factors that were identified as causes of the domestic violence in the family. It shows that out of total 200 respondents, 68.5 percent respondents think that demand for dowry is the main cause of domestic violence against women. While 120 respondents i.e. (60.0 percent) think that Indifferent attitude of in-laws is the another reason of violence, whereas 86 respondents i.e. (43.00 percent) respondents think extra marital affairs is the main reason of violence and 92 respondents i.e. 46.00 percent thought that infertility one more cause of domestic violence, 144 respondents i.e. 72.00 percent revealed that financial problem is the major cause of domestic violence

and 108 respondents i.e. (54.00 percent) admitted that foremost reason of domestic violence in the family is lack of understanding.

The primary instrument used to exploit married women is dower. In India, dower is one of the oldest customs. The gift or financial payment made to the bridegroom's family at the time of marriage is known as the dower. Despite being illegal since 1961, this practice is being carried out in India, where dowry sums have increased significantly in recent years (Rehan, 2012) [7]. The bride's family is thought to be severely financially burdened by the dowry system.

The majority of respondents said that the demands of their in-laws, particularly their husbands, fathers, and mothers-in-

laws, for dowries are the first source of issues for women in their post-marriage lives. The demand persists and keeps growing every day even if it is met. As a result, dowry-related violence is rapidly rising. The study found that dowries are increasingly being used as a threat to abuse and burn women who endure severe harassment and torture at the hands of their in-law relatives. The entire family is involved in pressuring married women to pay dowries. Additionally, it was observed that parents complied with the dowry demand out of concern for their daughters' harassment.

Another factor contributing to domestic abuse against women is the in-laws' callousness. Indifferent treatment of the daughter-in-law has a negative impact on women's lives after marriage and contributes to overall growth and family dissatisfaction. Therefore, the in-laws' behavior toward the daughter-in-laws has a crucial role in determining whether the environment is one of happiness or sorrow.

The majority of respondents in the field report that they were not involved in decision-making within the in-laws' family. Therefore, it can be claimed that men are more powerful and prestigious when it comes to making decisions both inside and outside the home. Because Chhatarpur district (M.P.) society is patriarchal, it may be inferred that men make all significant family choices without properly consulting the women in their own households.

Another factor contributing to domestic violence against women in the home is extramarital affairs. Having extramarital affairs with someone other than your husband is nasty and leads to divorce. Domestic violence against women in today's society is primarily caused by extramarital relationships. Extramarital affairs are most frequently cited as a contributing factor to domestic violence. The vast majority of cases demonstrated that extramarital affairs were the cause of domestic violence.

One of the main factors contributing to domestic violence against women is infertility. The failure to conceive after a year of attempting to get pregnant is commonly referred to as infertility. A biological problem, infertility has significant sociocultural ramifications. To bear and raise a child, a woman is viewed as a reproductive machine.

Women become economically dependent on men as a result of gender inequity. Particularly in undeveloped nations, women are economically reliant on men. The extent to which an individual depends on others to meet their needs is known as economic reliance. Because of the patriarchal culture and society, women in Chhatarpur district (M.P.) are economically reliant on their husbands and are not allowed to spend their own money anyway they like.

Relationship trust may suffer as a result of a lack of understanding. Many misunderstandings and uncertainties start to surface in a relationship when there is a lack of trust. Couples must thus figure out how to handle one another and develop mutual understanding. Couples who don't understand one another may become less trusting of one another, which might result in more arguments.

4. Conclusion

Domestic violence is a particularly intricate and heinous type of abuse that is typically perpetrated within the confines of the family or within certain, deeply ingrained power dynamics and socioeconomic structures that forbid even acknowledging this abuse. Every nation has violence against women, regardless of age, race, class, education,

income, or culture. The worldwide epidemic of violence against women and girls continues to kill, torture, and target them on a physical, psychological, sexual, and financial level. It is one of the most widespread breaches of human rights, depriving women and girls of their basic freedoms, equality, security, dignity, and self-worth. Numerous studies have shown that common social causes of domestic violence against women include men's alcohol consumption habits, infidelity or suspected infidelity by the husband or by the spouse, economic inequality between men and women, hierarchical gender relations, established family traditions, and a lack of understanding. Domestic violence against women can have a variety of causes. These reasons can be as simple as not cleaning the house properly, dressing stylishly, the husband's jealousy, demands for dowry, the husband's mistress, laughing irrationally, talking in a high voice, having close relationships with friends and boyfriends, acting disrespectfully toward family elders, etc. In Chhatarpur district (M.P.), the most frequent social causes of domestic violence against women have been the demand for dowry, the indifferent attitude of in-laws, the husband's extramarital affair, infertility, women's financial difficulties or economic dependency, and ignorance.

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