

An Analysis of Violence Against Women in India

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Introduction:

India is a country of unbelievable irony. It is a country where people worship a variety of female Shakti in the hopes of gaining money, wisdom, and power. Thousands of couple's travel thousands of miles each year to shrines of goddesses in the hopes of being blessed with a child in this country. However, a couple is deemed to be 'fortunate' in this country only if they have a male child; a girl is never considered a blessing in our society. Her birth does seem to spread a dark mist over the entire family. Instead of celebrating her birth, the entire family complains.

Gender prejudice has been a characteristic of patriarchal Indian civilization since time immemorial [1]. The Vedas featured sections that highlighted the importance of son. 'May you be the mother of a hundred sons,' has long been a favourite blessing given to young brides by elders. It is an established fact that, notwithstanding variations in socioeconomic and intellectual level, practically all parts of society are united in their desire for a male kid. Daughters, on the other hand, are unwelcome; they are regarded as a burden, and those who do not wish to bear this 'burden' for long dispose of them as soon as possible, because in Incredible India, 'death of the girl child is no sin.'

When we go back in history, we can see that women had a respectable status during the Vedic time. They were treated equally with men and were held in great regard in society. However, their social standing worsened over time. They began to be treated like if they were animals, husbands frequently beating them. Women were deprived from getting an education. Their activities were limited to housework and reproduction assistance. In society, having a girl kid was considered a curse. Husband was their Parmeshwar . They had no independent existence. Their existence was based on their relationship with men as a wife, sister, or mother. She was deemed to be a burden because dowry was to be paid. Dowry is still prevalent in our society[2]. Widows were looked down upon. System of sati was prevalent which even snatched the right to live. They had to die with their husbands on the funeral pyre. Crime against women has been on increase. It has existed in the past in almost all countries, regions, cultures and communities. The crime has much to do with the existing low status of women prevalent in our society. The violence is at various levels. It is at physical, mental, emotional, domestic and public [3]. They are society's most oppressed and subjugated group. Various education and economic independence measures have been implemented, but they are still far from improving their standing, which directly or indirectly contributes to the increase in crime against women [4].

The range of crime against women is very wide including rape, wife beating, bride burning, child marriages, prostitution, sexual harassment, etc. Nowadays the girl child is killed even before the birth. This has become easy due to improvements in science and technology, e.g., amniocentesis, i.e., sex determination tests. The discrimination towards development of girl child is the greatest crime against women. They are deprived of basic educational opportunities essential for development of child. Neglect of proper nutritious food to them is quite evident. Even pregnant women do not get balanced diet which has vital effect on off springs which lead to rise in infant mortality rates. Our society has become violent today. On slightest pretext violence takes place. This is due to increasing lawlessness and formlessness in our society [5]. Our value system has succumbed to various perversions. Women are once again the worst sufferers in this case. Men are to blame for the rise in violence. They have gotten tainted. People aspire to get money by whatever means possible. Women are barred from owning property. They are unable to own property. They are



severely thrashed if they offer even the tiniest resistance. Dowry is once again dominated by property. Grooms anticipate a large dowry from their brides. If they do not bring a sufficient dowry, they are mistreated by family members, particularly the mother-in-law[6]. When women refuse to assist one another in improving their conditions, the situation becomes terrible. Instead, they are humiliated. Women's educational success and economic independence have improved as a result of their growing educational consciousness. In every profession, women may compete with males. However, this has caused certain issues for working women. When they get home from work, they are supposed to take care of the housework. Tension and ego confrontations are common in man-woman relationships, which is unhealthy [7].

Violence against women manifests itself in numerous forms in all communities around the world. However, recently it has been acknowledged that the eradication of gender-based violence is critical to equality, development, and peace. The landmark report on the 'Status of Women-1975' in India did not address this issue. The Indian women's movement focused on dowry killings, female feticide, sati, rape, and other types of violence in the late 1970s and early 1980s. More recently, international conferences such as those held in Vienna in 1993, Cairo in 1994, Copenhagen in 1995, and Beijing in 1995 openly addressed this problem. In 1996, the World Health Assembly agreed that violence against women constitutes a public health issue. The United Nations marked the 50th anniversary of the "Declaration of Human Rights" in 1998 with a global effort to stop gender-based violence. The goal was to change public opinion, attitudes, policies, practices, and legislation to make it easier for women to live a life free of violence. To ensure that women are not subjected to violence, attitudes toward them must significantly change [8]. They must be treated equally and with respect. The laws must be effectively administered, and those who violate or perpetrate violence against women must face severe consequences. Women's education is a top priority for today's parents. We help families, not just women, by educating women. It is possible to use a two-pronged strategy. First, men should change their attitudes in order for women to have adequate space to improve themselves. Second, women must unite together and spread awareness, which will aid in true social development [9]. Only then will we be able to eradicate the social evils that plague our society. We must create conditions that will enable them to be a "better half," so assisting in the effective solution of the problems of violence against women.

Objectives to Prevent Violence Against Women:

The purpose of these policies is to promote women's advancement, development, and empowerment. The Policy will be widely distributed in order to stimulate active participation of all stakeholders in order to achieve its objectives. These Policies' specific goals are as follows:

- i) Creating an environment for women's full development through beneficial economic and social policies that allow them to reach their full potential;
- ii) The de jure and de facto enjoyment of women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal footing with males in all aspects – political, economic, social, cultural, and civil [10];
- iii) Women's equal inclusion and decision-making in the nation's social, political, and economic life.
- iv) Women get equal access to healthcare, quality education at all levels, career and vocational advice, employment, equal income, occupational health and safety, social security, and public office, among many other things.
- v) Increasing the effectiveness of legal systems aimed at eradicating all forms of discrimination against women.
- vi) Changing societal attitudes and community practices through active participation and participation of both men and women.
- vii) Egalitarianism must be incorporated into the development process.
- viii) Discrimination and all forms of violence against women and girls must be eliminated.



- ix) Partnerships with civil society, particularly women's associations, are being built and strengthened.
- x) Primary and applied research on women and development should be conducted, generated, and promoted.
- xi) Encourage women to take an active role in politics and national development [11].
- xii) Encourage and collaborate with academic institutions, grass-roots organizations, and individuals involved in research, advocacy, and similar activities.
- xiii) Provide gender-related advice and consulting services to institutions and organization's both within and outside of government, including development agencies.
- xiv) Organize and support training programs for academics, planners, administrators, development practitioners, members of women's groups and/or cooperatives, and members of civil society.
- xv) Engage in initiatives that promote social transformation in order to ensure women's full and effective involvement at all levels of society.

Reasons Of Violence Against Women:

Women are seen as the weaker members of society. As a result, they are subjected to various forms of violence. During conflict between two groups or communities, they become the easiest target and victim. Due to their weakened situations, they are unable to resist injustice. It has become their practice to suffer in silence both inside and outside their houses. Rape and sexual harassment are used to teach hostile groups a lesson. Women are the first and easiest targets during communal or caste conflicts. Teasing or harassing women can sometimes act as a catalyst for two antagonistic groups to fight, resulting in violence [12]. The low position of women in our community is one of the causes of escalating crime against women. Women's perceptions have not significantly changed. They are considered a burden and hence are denied an education. According to the 1991 Census, women had a literacy rate of 39 percent compared to 63 percent for men. Literacy rates among women from lower castes are alarmingly low. In certain states, it is even lower than 39 percent. The sex ratio fell from 933 in 1981 to 929 in 1991, indicating that the number of female children born has decreased, which is a sad state of affairs. Women are treated as commodities. They are considered properties. They are unquestionably taken for granted. Efforts have been made to make women dependent [13]. They are still economically dependent, which has exacerbated their situation.

It is generally universally accepted that females are emotionally closer to their parents, are more responsible in society, and are not in any way less capable than boys. Despite this, the traditional Indian mindset, which is influenced by a variety of socioeconomic and cultural variables, has traditionally supported the birth of a male kid and discouraged the birth of a female child in the family [14]. This has greatly led to the rapid increase of female feticide in India, making it one of the world's most skewed sex ratio-affected countries. The following are the most important elements that encourage violence towards women in India:

1. Dowry Malpractice:

Dowry is basically one of the elements that has aided in the widespread practise of female feticide. Parents believe it is preferable to avoid female babies altogether rather than pay costly 'dowry' when marrying off their daughters. As a result, in order to avoid dowry, people resort to sex selection tests in order to eliminate the female foetus. Most couples, especially those from the middle class, appear to believe that "paying some rupees now for abortion is better than paying huge amount for dowry afterwards." In contrast, the boy is seen as a valuable asset capable of bringing in a large dowry for the parents. Hence boys are naturally preferred to girls.

2. Religious Factors:

The Hindu religion places a high value on the birth of a son. In a Hindu patriarchal society, the son is the one who carries on the family lineage, or 'Vansh.' Manu states that a man cannot get moksha unless he has a son to light his funeral pyre [15]. It also states that a lady who gives birth to

exclusively daughters may be abandoned in her eleventh year of marriage. Such gender-biased rituals and practises in traditional Hindu society have over-emphasized the birth of sons while discouraging the birth of girl children in the household, paving the path for Female Feticide.

3. Personal Causes:

Female offenders have relatively low levels of schooling than male offenders. Many female criminals are illiterate or partially literate. They lack social understanding and experience, as well as weak survival abilities. They lack analytical abilities when it comes to dealing with difficulties, and they are not sensible when it comes to dealing with things. When they are encouraged or seduced by others, they are easily coerced or mislead, leading them astray and into a life of crime. Their legal awareness is limited due to their low level of education. When they have been violated by unlawful infringements, they are unable to look at and solve problems from a legal standpoint, but must resort to extreme, aggressive, and lawless solutions. Some women, for example, are victims of domestic violence but may not know how to use the law to protect themselves. They fight violence with violence, and when they cannot endure domestic violence, they will kill the perpetrators. And there will be perpetrators. In addition, psychological factors such as vanity, unrealistically compare, hedonism, narrow-minded, vindictive and so on also contributes to an important cause of female violence.

4. Financial Dependence of Women:

In India, the socioeconomic background has also been implicated as a contributor of the tragic female feticide. Certain societies desire to get rid of female children who are forced to do so due to degrading poverty, unemployment, superstition, and illiteracy. Some men apparently cannot see women succeeding when they are unemployed or underemployed. They blame such women for their failures, so they nurture a grudge against them and commit crimes against them to vent their frustration. In some circumstances, husbands have not even left their wives to vent their frustrations, despite the fact that she supports the entire family through her salary. They imagine the wife insulting or looking down on them because they are relying on her while sitting at home without a job. They imagine the wife disrespectful or looking down on them because they rely on her. They image her having fun with other men at work. Unemployed men have been seen assaulting their wives over insignificant household matters.

5. Women's Status:

Sons are typically expected to carry on the family lineage, offer protection and care to parents, particularly in their later years, increase family income and property, and execute last rites and ceremonies. Daughters, on the other hand, would go to another's house and drain the family's fortune. Furthermore, they must continually be protected, defended, and cared for, putting an additional responsibility on the family. One of the most powerful causes that has induced strong son preference and hence encouraged Female Feticide is the conservative mindset of Indian society, which fundamentally considers women as a "burden." [16] All of these facts indicate to the conclusion that our country's long-standing gender bias in favour of men, as well as the perception of women as a "burden," is the driving force behind India's horrific statistics on female feticide.

6. Patriarchal Society:

It has been cited as the main cause of violence against women. Where women have a higher economic status than their husbands and are seen as having sufficient power to change traditional gender roles, risk for violence is high.

7. Gender Based Violence:

There are many types of violence against women, including state-sanctioned physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, as well as violence perpetrated in communities and families [17]. Gender-based violence takes many forms, including gender-based killings, rape, and sexual violence; forced marriage – which includes child marriage of children under the age of 18; sexual harassment

in workplaces, schools, and public places; female genital mutilation and other harmful practises; trafficking and online violence against women; economic violence, including dowry abuse; and psychological abuse. Perpetrators are more likely to target women and girls who are more stigmatised because of other aspects of their identity, such as living with a disability or being gay, bisexual, or transgender women and girls. [18] These forms of violence are diverse, but they are also interconnected. For example, child marriage, which occurs in all parts of the world, is associated with higher incidence of domestic violence, including rape within marriage. The life-cycle approach throws further light on the many forms of gender-based violence by identifying that perpetrators target girls and women at different ages for various types of violence [19].

8.Marital Maladjustment:

This element is caused by a huge number of crimes against women. The transition of the female who joins their in-laws' household, their work, and the enlightened one is really challenging. Mothers-in-law who have complete control over their family members are jealous and frustrated by their daughter-in-independence [20]. law's Indian husbands place a higher value on their moms informing them about their wives' protests. Temperamental maladjustment and incompatibility in methods of thinking, working, dressing up, and behaving play a significant role in the development of schizophrenia. As a result, the husband neglects his wife or becomes preoccupied with quarrels or minor matters. He will sometimes abandon his wife or turn to prostitutes to satisfy his wants.

9.Sex and Power Motive:

Women's violence is thought to be driven by a desire to dominate them. This perspective conjures up images of a powerful man using violence against women to preserve his dominance, but evidence reveals that the relationship is more complex. Intimate partner violence is commonly motivated by power and control, but it can also be motivated by a man's emotions of impotence and unwillingness to accept rejection [21]. It has also been stated that rape, in particular, satisfies sexual demands through violence, although research has indicated that power and anger reasons are more significant in rationalizations for sexual aggression than sexual desire. Laboratory studies of men's sexual response to stimuli depicting pure violence, pure consensual sex, and nonconsensual sex plus violence have been used to try to resolve the sex versus power issue. However, sexually aggressive men appear to be more sexually aroused in general, either to consenting or rape and rapists respond more than nonsexual offenders to rape cues than to consenting sex cues. Sexually aggressive men openly admit that their sexual fantasies are dominated by aggressive and sadistic material.

10.Insufficient level of Public Safety of Women:

Outside of their houses, women are largely unprotected. The gang rape happened on a bus, and even Indian officials admit that public spaces in the country can be dangerous for women. According to a recent assessment from the Ministry of Women and Child Development, many streets are inadequately lit, and there aren't enough women's restrooms. Women who drink, smoke, or go pubs are often regarded as morally sloppy in Indian society, and village clan councils have blamed an increase in the incidence of rape on a surge in women conversing on cell phones and going to the bazaar.

11.Encouraging Rape Victim to Compromise:

Village elders and clan councils frequently push rape victims to "negotiate" with the accused's family and drop charges — or even marry the attacker. Compromises like these are made to ensure harmony amongst families or clan groups. Furthermore, it is regarded that a girl's chances of marrying are more important than bringing a rapist to justice.

12.Alcoholism:

It has become one of the main causes of crimes against women. This evil is increasing in the society rapidly. The evil effects of alcohol result in heavy damage of the mind and the body and results in susceptibility to crimes. Excessive drinking becomes the cause of in starvation for the

family member assault and quarrels between husband and wife, between father and child, desertion, beating, cruelty, etc. Habitual drunkards have even molested their own daughters in the state of emotional excitement; when the normal restraints of a person disappear under the influence of drugs or drinks and their hostile and aggressive fantasies, intimately intermingled with sexual lust, are converted into irresponsible action. Alcohol – related crimes illustrate a reckless disregard of time, space and circumstances.

13. Honor killing:

Honor killings are frequently the outcome of profoundly sexist attitudes toward women and the status of women in society. Women in these historically male-dominated society are dependent on their father first, and later on their husband, whom they are supposed to obey [22]. Women are considered as property rather than as individuals with agency. As a result, they must submit to male authority figures in the household; refusal to do so might result in severe punishment [23]. Violence is viewed as a means to ensure conformity and prevent rebellion [24]. The property's owner has the authority to decide its fate. Women have become a commodity that can be exchanged, purchased, and sold as a result of the concept of ownership." Women are not allowed to regulate their bodies or sexuality in such cultures [25].

14. Early age Marriage:

Married adolescent females with low levels of education are more likely to experience social isolation and domestic violence than highly educated women who marry as adults. Following marriage, girls typically travel to their husband's home and assume the domestic role of wife, which frequently entails transferring to a different village or neighborhood. This shift may result in a young girl dropping out of school, moving away from her family and friends, and losing social support. Because of her youth, a spouse's family may have higher expectations for the girl's submissiveness to her husband and his family. Isolation from a support system can have serious mental health consequences, including depression. Large age gaps between the child and her spouse makes her more vulnerable to domestic violence and marital rape. Girls who marry as children face severe and life-threatening marital violence at higher rates. Husbands in child marriages are often more than ten years older than their wives [26]. This can increase the power and control a husband has over his wife and contribute to prevalence of spousal violence. Early marriage places young girls in a vulnerable situation of being completely dependent on her husband. Domestic and sexual violence from their husbands has lifelong, devastating mental health consequences for young girls because they are at a formative stage of psychological development. These mental health consequences of spousal violence can include depression and suicidal thoughts. Child brides, particularly in situations such as vain, also face social isolation, emotional abuse and discrimination in the homes of their husbands and in-laws.

Conclusion:

Women in modern India have faced violence in their household, place of work and in the society at larger scale. However as far as the law of land goes women has given equal right to man but the implementation of these are lacking on part of the government level. The government's organ i.e. the legislature, the executive, the judiciary lacks intent in the past to curb the violence against women due to patriarchal mindset. Because the people who make these laws or implement these laws comes from the same society which given the women secondary status, but due to the awareness about their rights and due to their long battle for equal status now the women are getting recognition in society worldwide.

In India women are termed worse than cattle. This situation is not related to rural area but in urban area also. The problem that is faced by today's men is that he can't change his mindset of people; he is not willing to give respect, safety or security to the women due to his feudal mindset. The women in today's world is beaten mercilessly without assigning any reason, she was burnt alive



due to not able to providing dowry to the family of her husband, if women fails to comply to the rotten patriarchal norms of the society she can face severe consequences for that without any fault. However there are so many laws that shield women's rights, but the efficiency of Indian's judicial system is not hidden.

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