

The Inner Pain of the Goddess! A Sociological Study of Domestic Violence

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Abstract: Domestic violence is a common evil in all societies which does not arise due to special class, ethnicity, religion or culture. The root cause of this is the unequal distribution of power and prestige between two sexes. Yet the Indian urban society (especially the middle class) has been more affected by such incidences. The reason is rapidly developing new power structure formats and developed feminism. On the one hand, education, awareness and urban environments are making them logical and progressive, while on the other hand, the mentality of men and oppression of men forces them to accept the subordination of men. Such mutual reactions often lead to conflict. If there is a comprehensive analysis of these interrelationships of middle class and women, then violence against women can be minimized. How the class plays a complex role in domestic violence and how to minimize it, is the burning question of this research. The paper presented is a functional research to explain the relationship between gender violence and social class.

Key Words: Violence, Domestic Violence, Problems of Working Women, Social Problems.

1. INTRODUCTION:

We are proud of being a 21st century's Indian who celebrates happiness on the birth of son. On the other hand, if a daughter is born, it becomes calm! So much love for the boy! And sometimes in desire of a boy, we have been killing girls at the time of birth or before birth. If fortunately we could not kill them earlier, then we can find many ways of discrimination against them throughout the life to kill them. Indian society is the male-dominated where women have faced many atrocities. Generally, the problems faced by women, are appear in form of molestation, sexual harassment at workplace, domestic violence, dowry deaths. There is a steady increase in the cases related to women's violence and now, are increasing rapidly. Violence refers to injuring or harming someone physically, verbally, mentally or socially. Domestic violence and the dowry in the house, incidents of sexual abuse, molestation and misbehaviour are examples of domestic violence. Straining girls, working for embryonic wounds, pressure to widow woman to follow Sati, etc. falls under social violence. All these incidents have been affecting large sections of women and society. Violence against women is constantly increasing and now it has become a worrisome topic. The roots of domestic violence have deepened in our society and family. It is often seen that cases of domestic violence are increasing day by day. If any female voice is voided against domestic violence, then it is meant to talk about a radical change in society and family. Now the general disputes of violence are turning into a form of 'Demand for radical change and non cooperation of the family and society as well as social norms. Forms and aspects of violence may change in different aspects, but victims of problems always found same. Due to domestic violence, death, murder and suicide rate have increased. Prostitution trend has also increased due to this. Women's public participation is interrupted and the working capacity of women decreases, as well as gone with fear. The result is that a repressed woman becomes a mental patient who sometimes reaches the extent of insanity. As a Second class status is established in the victim's house and always seems hectic and painful for women within her own family.

2. METHODOLOGY AND AREA OPTED:

This is a working paper cum case study, based on interviews of 27 women as victim of gender violence within the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh. The interview was carried out in December 2017 to May 2018 with 25 sessions of approximately 35 minutes each. As per ethical and privacy concerns, I am not going to introduce any personal information of my respondent but for better understanding of the case I will provide her a fictional name as well. Area of research is a Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh and at the first stage, a universe of 125 was decided to have an interview by snow ball sampling but only 52 agreed to interview. On the final stage of the interview, only 27 provided their consent. This was also a matter of surprise for researcher and that will be discussed as a problem/objective at the implementation stage of study.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

This work tends to highlight the major aspects of domestic violence and the impact of that problem in their daily life. This is focus to access the level and situations of domestic violence middle class arena. The following problems were accessed for the research;

- What is level of domestic violence in Varanasi?
- What are the major factors affecting to domestic violence?
- Why the incidents generally face the problem under reporting?
- What is the most common scenario, lying behind incident?
- Why women continue in such abusive relationship while they are successively being empowered by legislations and governmental provisions?
- At what level incidences are frequent in Varanasi and how this problem may be reduced to bottom level?

Basically, I have made an effort to find out the basic forms, factors and sociological mechanism of domestic violence against women, so that the problem can be properly understood, diagnosed as well as eradicated from society.

4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

Let us try to understand the problem and its perception with few examples. My first respondent is Maya (name changed). Maya is working lady and a teacher by profession in a secondary school of government sector. She has a little girl child of one year. Her husband is a constable in you UP Police and earns less than Maya (Not only money but also respect). She is living with her parents in law and an unmarried sister of her husband. Maya is my far relative and somewhere more attached with my personal sentiments. She is a victim of domestic violence and all things, I personally know about her and her family. When I asked her to arrange an interview about this problem, she was frightened, but anyhow, I convinced her, and succeed to organize an interview. She agreed to interview in lunchtime at her school. She was afraid with the fact that her family may create problems at home about all that. She said that all incidences started in May 2014 when she was married. She got the job just after second month of her marriage. Starting a few months was good but later on worse. Later, she gradually was being persecuted by the mother-in-law for some things and expenses. Her Mother in law often used to taunt on her that her father cheated in marriage about dowry. Slowly the usual talks were turned into physical violence. In the own words of Maya: "At first, I thought that because the sources of income in the family were far below and my husband was the only earning person of family. First, I thought that if could collect these requirements, then the stress might end, but it was not so. All of them were on my salary. My mother in law wanted that she be given complete of my salary. I could not do this. This was the matter of my own and my daughter's future. Now the same thing became the cause of everyday violence for us. My Husband also had a consensus in somewhere because he also believed that I didn't need money. If needed, I may ask for money from mother in law". She Continue: At first, it was only mental and psychological, but later on, things turn into barbarous attacks from oral scolding and criticism. Then the recurrence of such incidents increased and now it is a matter of daily happenings. I am working and earning as well, and if I am facing all that then I feel fear about those girls who neither have a job nor family support. As in own words of Maya: She Said: "Not as a Daughter, Not as a Sister, Not as a Wife, not as a Mother, Not even as a Woman, I demand Justice as my Rights as a Citizen". As a researcher, it is still difficult for me that why she is continuing such distracting relationship. On asking the reason of all that, she added, "You can't understand my thing as a male person, be first a lady to understand the things"

Second Case belongs to Neha (another respondent with hidden identity). Neha is lady having a mediocre height, good-looking face and confident personality; it would be difficult to say that she has also been a victim of domestic violence. Neha is currently working on the post of district program officer in an NGO and is living easily without any fear of survival. When I got an opportunity to talk to him, I come to know that she is not with her husband for five years. When asked about reasons, then she said- "at beginning, I took that- I came from a different environment, maybe I do not have much understanding of things and an urban culture, and gradually with the period of time I would succeeds to learn things)Since Neha has come from a rural surroundings and her husband and her family have been in the urban environment since the beginning) then I may adjust the all, but things are not for change. When I made complaints to my originated family, then papa used to condemn her with remarks like - "That house (her father's family) is not your home where people will follow you and your wishes and set you on the eyes. Your mother has spoiled you, improve yourself and learn to adjust in a new environment and people". Many times Neha's mother also explains to her, "Daughter, this is the process of re-socialization and defiantly takes time. it takes time to understand people of a new environment, and in reconciliation with them, this is not your problem alone, its common with everyone, be patient and be all right." talking next, she took a long breath and comes with a smile and saying back, "It took me five years to be patient and accommodate things that what is an actual problem."

Now a conflict arises as – "why women continue in such an abusive & distracting relationships? is a big and burning question for us. In Our society, there is no place for women in the maternal home and not in-laws. This is the reason that women keep many unwanted agreements in lieu of land to protect the roof and feet to hide the head. As one of my respondents; Sheetal Says: "Just after one year of marriage, he used to quarrel with me on daily deeds, sometimes on a topic of my dedications for his family and relatives. He used to taunt me in my early life as about my behaviour before marriage, and even on my character. He was well known to me and my family and I only

agreed to marry with him after one year of his proposal. He used to talk and wants to meet, at least once in a month. He was very honoured and polite for me till my yes for marriage and never made any controversy on any topic, but later on things remained changed. After marriage, it all was started just after 5 or 6 months. I ignored as thinking it natural between husband and wife, but I was wrong. At early of marriage, the moment he quarrels, but calmed later on. Sometimes, he said sorry with an apology on face having the reason of work load in back to that, and with a promise of not to do so again. But after sometime, it becomes a general deed of regular life. Sheetal Continues- just after one year of our marriage, he is now frequently cruel to me in several aspects of life like lifestyle and personal freedom. Now he began to create unnecessary ribbons for me. He used to tell me like- I do not have any intelligence in myself and don't know how to behave in public. He started seeing evil in my friends too. He stopped me from meeting them. A few days before, came with a new SIM for me and made an email also too for social networking with an instruction of stop my all communication with my old friends. He used to check my phone and chats with my friends. Not only this, he also started banning my jewellery, western outfits, and high heels. Now there was a quarrel between us on topics of none importance. Still, I am in hopes of being this end soon. Taking so many pooja path and all that for him, I am still trying to survive. Whenever I complained of husband's behaviour to my parents, they would say that it is normal between husband & wife; even I do suffer with all that.

Many women agreed with the fact that- after violent relationships, women should get out of it. Although some women agreed that there should be a chance to save relationships from breaking down. Many times it has been seen that despite being financially independent, women cannot decide to be separated from violent weddings. It is not necessary that women are financially free or not, in fact, they are emotionally attached to another person, they cannot go beyond that person, they feel that they shift from the mainstream of society as well as socially neglected and dishonoured, that's why they keep on trying to save the marriage while suffering all the pain. Awareness is also a reason in back to that incident. Most of the cases have been seen and lodged-in in those areas, where women are aware and educated, and police and women's groups are more active. Today's educated and self-reliant women are not accepted to remain silent. They are not afraid to raise a voice against injustice, because they now also have the support of the laws. As per the research of Rana & Choudhary 76% of the respondents are unknown about constitutional protections related to domestic violence while 94% of the respondents are not aware of any organization/Helping agencies related to victims of domestic violence.

5. CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS:

Domestic violence against women is a social problem that occurs in almost every corner of the world. While the policies and practices designed to protect women have emerged in India, but it is far behind on this issue. Literature on women and politics shows that the representation of women can increase the level of security of domestic violence, because women legislators have the possibility of continuing women's issues on the agenda and making policy choices that take advantage of their sex. Alternatively, a state's culture can determine whether the society supports rights for women, including security from domestic violence or not. The roots of domestic violence have deepened in our society and family. It also provides management support from patriarchy. If a woman is vocal against domestic violence, then it considers that she is rebelling in her own society and family. The cases of domestic violence are increasing day by day. Jealousy, hatred, greed, ego, humiliation within the family and society relations are the main reasons for domestic violence. Indian society has been a man-oriented society for centuries. Considering women as a living object, and the material for the maintenance of families and children is pre-considered. They have always been harassed by the people of own house and family, seeing them in disgrace. In these cases, domestic violence is carried out indoors, which is difficult to declare as a crime in the law because of the fragility of the relationship and whose family members and those living around the house do not even have the knowledge of the same. In order to deal with domestic violence within a family, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 has been made effective from October, 2006. In the middle Ages in Indian history, the conflict between Islam and Hindu religion encouraged violence against women. Minor girls were married at an early age and strict instructions were asked to stay in the curtains all the time. For this reason it was impossible for women to establish any kind of contact with the external world except for their husband and family. Simultaneously, polygamy was born in society, which required women to share their husbands with other women. Apart from this, women should not get enough food, lack of proper health facilities, lack of opportunities for education, sexual harassment of minor girls, burning of the bride alive, assault of the wife, neglect of elderly woman in the family. Now age comes of Independent India and still problem remains same. All kinds of discrimination or inequalities will continue to go along with the constitutional framework, but actual changes can be possible only when men's thinking is changed. When this type of thinking will change, a type of humanity begins to behave in a similar manner to a woman, not to consider her as a subordinate. Even not only men, but women also have to change their old conservative thinking according. Men and women both are part of the same nature and they can't exist without each one, this is the nature as well as culture. Therefore, women empowerment is strongly needed, where women can become financially independent and self-reliant, where they can become fearless, where they can remove their rights from men's control and patriarchy. They are also not required to ask anybody, where they can get a good education and become their own self-esteemed

personality and their best even growth to get them beyond the limits imposed by the man. We can only hope that our participatory democracy will be able to solve the problem of gender inequality in the coming arena and with the collective efforts of men and women, with the reality of thinking and actions to all of us. The trend of increasing dowry practice in our society, it is very much responsible for domestic violence against women and never can be eliminated without eradication of the dowry system. Dowry has become a complicated problem, which has many aspects of violence. The dowry practice has reduced the status of minor girls in society as well as in high standards society. It is often seen that if the dowry is not given at the time of marriage, then the bride is abused daily by oral remarks in the form of taunts, abuse and physical harms. Every day, thousands of girls are becoming victims of this social monster. If we want to eradicate the problem of domestic violence, it is essential that we educate and socialize our children for social and cultural equality. They should be told that there is no difference between girl and boys instead of some biological specifications. As long as they will not learn to respect women from childhood, they will not get the habit of respecting a woman and her modesty.

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