



## Violence Against Working Women

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### KEYWORDS :

Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women" and that "violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.

The abused women endure enormous psychological suffering nightmares, sleeplessness, trauma Sex and violence has been increasing as a major problem. Different types of violence include domestic violence, incest, sexual assault and rape. Sexual violence remains unreported and therefore invisible. Women feel vulnerable in the absence of adequate legal or social protection. Rape cases have a background of gang rape, brutality or rape followed by homicides. Yet the victims keep silent because of the burden of proof, fear of retaliations, and social stigma. There has been an alarming increase in the number of cases in which women had been beaten, tortured, raped, burnt or have died in suspicious circumstances. Although working women help in bringing financial stability to a family, their professional life often subjects them to increased domestic violence in India, according to a new study.

Violence against women is a worldwide yet still hidden problem. Freedom from the threat of harassment, battering, and sexual assault is a concept that most of us have a hard time imagining because violence is such a deep part of our cultures and our lives.

Violence against women is woven into the fabric of society to such an extent that many of us who are victimized feel that we are at fault. Many of those who perpetrate violence feel justified by strong societal messages that say that rape, battering, sexual harassment, child abuse, and other forms of violence are acceptable. Every day we see images of male violence against women in the news, on TV shows, in the movies, in advertising, and in our homes and workplaces. It is a fact of life for women of all ages, races, and classes.

In the broadest sense, violence against women is any violation of a woman's personhood, mental or physical integrity, or freedom of movement through individual acts and societal oppression. It includes all the ways our society objectifies and oppresses women. Violence against women ranges from sterilization abuse to prescription-drug abuse, pornography, stalking, battering, and rape. It includes the sexual and physical abuse of young girls and the abuse of elders.

Every form of violence threatens all women and limits our ability to make choices about our lives. Sexual violence is particularly insidious because sexual acts are ordinarily and rightly a source of pleasure and communication. It is often unclear to a woman who has been victimized and to society as a whole whether a sexual violation was done out of sexual desire or violent intent or whether these motivations are even distinguishable, because violence itself has come to be seen as sexual or erotic.

Thirty years ago, most forms of violence against women were hidden under a cloak of silence or acceptance. As more and more women talked with each other in the recent wave of the women's movement, it became apparent that violence against women occurs on a massive scale; that no woman is immune; and that family, friends, and public institutions have been cruelly insensitive about it.

Over the past thirty years, women have mobilized to offer direct services to those who have encountered violence, to educate people

about the range and nature of male violence against women, and to develop strategies for change. This chapter reflects the important work of some of these women.

Self-defense can increase the options and choices that we have in any given situation, including situations where we are at risk of violence. Self-defense itself is a choice that is made at a particular moment. Each woman will make the best choice that she can, based on her resources and knowledge at the time.

Just as there is no one right way to respond to violence committed against us, there is no right way to defend ourselves. And, as much as self-defense may help in certain situations, the most important step in ending violence against women is to stop men from being violent and from allowing others to be violent.

Women have mobilized to offer direct services to those who have encountered violence to educate people about the range and nature of male violence against working women to develop strategies for change more workshops need to be developed implemented. For the sake of women and to develop the will power it is essential for the government to take certain counseling activities and to fight for themselves there is a huge need of karate and the thiquando and more over intelligent and look forward attitude is more important for working women, above all these strategies violence is violence until it effects us we strong and be brave and to fit forward and find a non vacant part within in yourself.

In the male-dominated Indian society, women suffered to extreme levels of exploitation. Some factors – like death of bread winner, sudden fall in family income or inadequate family income – forced women to seek employment in informal sector (small trader, artisan or field laborer on a family farm) but yet, that did not result in women empowerment. The participation of women as workers and women's education was negligible.

Indian women is distinct from their western counter parts in that they do not shed their conventional roles as mothers and house wives in spite of their professional responsibilities. They are skilled at blending professional excellence and traditional love for home harmoniously. The study is purely exploratory in nature and seeks to identify the factors preventing women employees from aspiring for higher post and problems faced by women executives in public sector banks related to work performance. Although workplace violence is receiving increased attention in the media, the incidents that make the news are only the tip of the iceberg.

- In 2000, 13,935 women had injuries or illnesses involving days away from work that resulted from assaults and violent acts (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS]).
- Homicide is the second-leading cause of fatal occupational injuries for women, after traffic accidents. Thirty-one percent of women who die at work are killed as a result of an assault or violent act. In 2003, 119 women died as a result of an assault or violent act in the workplace (BLS).
- 12.7 percent of all female violent crimes were committed while the victim was working or on duty. These acts of nonfatal violence include rape and sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault and simple assault (BLS).
- Some 36,500 rapes and sexual assaults occur annually in the workplace. In 80 percent of these incidents, the victim was fe-

- male (NCVS).
- Nurses experience workplace crime at a rate 72 percent higher than medical technicians and at more than twice the rate of other medical fieldworkers (NCVS).
- Professional (social worker/psychiatrist) and custodial care providers in the mental health care field were victimized while working or on duty at rates more than three times those in the medical field (NCVS).
- Junior high school teachers have a rate of victimization in the workplace similar to convenience store clerks—54.2 versus 53.9 per 1,000 workers (NCVS).

The data on workplace violence is scattered and inadequate to understand the extent of the problem. Many acts of nonfatal violence and threats in the workplace go unreported because there is no coordinated data-collection system to process the information. More than 936,000 of the nearly 2 million workplace crimes committed yearly were not reported to the police. Rape and sexual assaults were reported to the police at an even lower rate of 24 percent.

#### **Most incidents of violence fall into four categories: Workplace Violence Four Types of**

1. Violence committed by clients or patients.
2. Violence associated with robbery or other crimes.
3. Violence among co-workers or managers.
4. Domestic violence that spills over into the workplace.

#### **Taking Action, Preventing Violence**

It is the employer's responsibility to maintain a safe workplace free of violence. Supervisors should not assume violence is just "part of the job" and that workers shouldn't complain.

**Work with your union.** If you experience workplace violence and are represented by a union, talk to your union representative. Urge other members to document all assault incidents, close calls and abusive behavior.

Unions have been pushing for the recognition of workplace violence as an occupational issue, not just a criminal justice issue, and support voluntary implementation of workplace violence prevention programs.

**Contact OSHA.** Although there is no OSHA standard designed to protect workers from violence, OSHA has cited employers under the General Duty Clause, which requires employers to provide a safe workplace. To sustain a general duty clause violation, OSHA must prove the existence of a hazard, which is recognized and causes or is likely to cause death or serious physical harm, and the existence of a feasible and effective method to abate the hazard.

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#### **Violence against Women and the Corporate Sector**

The economic empowerment of women is an essential element in addressing the structural and underlying causes of violence against women and girls. The corporate sector has an important role to play in efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls given that it employs millions of women and girls and holds vast potential in offering opportunities for the enhancement of gender equality and women's economic empowerment. Many companies are also proactive in leading and contributing to initiatives aimed at preventing and ending violence against women and girls through their marketing

and communications strategies, as well as a targeted philanthropic support.

Under the Ontario Human Rights Code, everyone has the right to equal treatment in employment without discrimination because of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, record of offences (in employment only), marital status, family status, disability, gender identity or gender expression. If your workplace falls under federal jurisdiction, you are protected from discrimination under the Canadian Human Rights Act

Stephanie worked in the financial industry and was paid more than \$150,000 by her employer as compensation for harassment and discrimination at work. She constantly faced sexist remarks, such as, "This is a man's job" and "Women should be home doing dishes and washing" She was often asked questions about her bathroom habits. This situation created a lot of stress for Stephanie, and she was forced to take extensive sick leave. Her sick leave resulted in a poor performance appraisal, and she was eventually fired.

Other female employees at the company had been subjected to sexist comments and said that their supervisors and male peers were rude or uncooperative. Some of them said their male colleagues had lied to them about information related to their jobs.

The company had no anti-harassment policy and did not offer training for staff to prevent and deal with harassment. Following an investigation by the Canadian Human Rights Commission and settlement of the complaint, the company agreed to financial compensation for the women who had been harassed. It also agreed to develop an anti-harassment policy, set up an internal redress procedure, train staff to investigate complaints, and create a new staff position with the mandate to eliminate discrimination and provide harassment awareness seminars for employees

#### **Prevalence:**

- A study of domestic violence survivors found that 74 percent of employed battered women were harassed by their partner while they were at work
- Between 1993 and 1999 in the United States, an average of 1.7 million violent victimizations per year were committed against persons age twelve or over who were at work or on duty.iii
- Homicide was the second leading cause of death on the job for women in 2000.iv
- More than 29,000 acts of rape or sexual assault are perpetrated against women at work each year.
- More than 1 million women are stalked each year in the U.S., and over a quarter of them report missing work as a result of the stalking.vi
- Of the 4 million workplace crime incidents committed against females from 1993 through 1999, only 40 percent were reported to the police.vii
- In a 1997 national survey, 24 percent of women between the ages of 18 and 65 who had experienced domestic violence said that the abuse caused them to arrive late at work or miss days of work.