



Self Concept Among the Women Victims of Domestic Violence.

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ABSTRACT

Women in Indian society have been victims of humiliation, torture and exploitation, in spite of legislative measures, spread of education and economic independence of women. The victims of domestic violence are women who feel helpless and depressed. Such women live in stressful family situations. They cannot react to the perpetrators of violence because of family and social pressures. Self-concept, strictly defined, is the totality of our beliefs, preferences, opinions and attitudes organized in a systematic manner, towards our personal existence. Simply, it is how we think of ourselves and how we should think, behave and act out our various life roles. This article helps to find, what domestic violence victims women think, perceive and cope with the environment. It also helps to know the total aggregate of attitudes, judgment and values which women holds with respect to their behavior and worth as a person.

KEYWORDS : Self Concept, Domestic Violence, Women Victim, Personality

INTRODUCTION:

Our self-concepts are not always perfectly aligned with reality. Some students might believe that they are great at academics, but their school transcripts might tell a different story. According to Carl Rogers, the degree to which a person's self-concept matches up to reality is known as congruence and incongruence. While we all tend to distort reality to a certain degree, congruence occurs when self-concept is fairly well aligned to reality. Incongruence happens when reality does not match up to our self-concept.

Definitions of Self Concept:

"Self-concept is our perception or image of our abilities and our uniqueness. At first one's self-concept is very general and changeable... As we grow older, these self-perceptions become much more organized, detailed, and specific." (Pastorino & Doyle-Portillo, 2013)

"A self-concept is a collection of beliefs about one's own nature, unique qualities, and typical behavior. Your self-concept is your mental picture of yourself. It is a collection of self-perceptions. For example, a self-concept might include such beliefs as 'I am easygoing' or 'I am pretty' or 'I am hardworking.'" (Weiten, Dunn, & Hammer, 2012)

"The *individual self* consists of attributes and personality traits that differentiate us from other individuals (for example, 'introverted'). The *relational self* is defined by our relationships with significant others (for example, 'sister'). Finally, the *collective self* reflects our membership in social groups (for example, 'British')." (Crisp, R. J. & Turner, R. N., 2007)

Components of Self-Concept

Bracken (1992) suggested that there are six specific domains related to self-concept:

Social - the ability to interact with others
Competence - ability to meet basic needs
Affect - awareness of emotional states
Physical - feelings about looks, health, physical condition, and overall appearance
Academic - success or failure in school
Family - how well one functions within the family unit
Humanist psychologist Carl Rogers believed that there were three different parts of self-concept:

- **Self-image** or how you see yourself. It is important to realize that self-image does not necessarily coincide with reality. People might have an inflated self-image and believe that they are better at things than they really are. Conversely, people are also prone to having negative self-images and perceive or exaggerate flaws or weaknesses. For example, a teenage boy might believe that he is clumsy and socially awkward when he is really quite charming and likeable. A teenage girl might believe that she is overweight, when she is really quite thin.

Each individual's self-image is probably a mix of different aspects including your physical characteristics, personality traits, and social

roles.

- **Self-esteem** or how much you value yourself. A number of different factors can impact self-esteem, including how we compare ourselves to others and how others respond to us. When people respond positively to our behavior, we are more likely to develop positive self-esteem. When we compare ourselves to others and find ourselves lacking, it can have a negative impact on our self-esteem.

- **Ideal self** or how you wish you could be. In many cases, the way we see ourselves and how we would like to see ourselves do not quite match up.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

Meaning:

Domestic violence, also called intimate partner violence, happens in many forms including physical, emotional and economic violence, and can affect people of any age. It does not have to be within the home to be classified as domestic violence. It is a form of violence that can occur within any relationship (family or intimate partner). Domestic violence is about power and control and there are many ways this Control can be expressed.

Types of domestic violence:

Physical - If someone is hurting you, or threatening to hurt you, a loved one or a pet, then you will need to take some action.

Emotional - This form of violence is often unrecognized and can be very hurtful.

Economic - Having money and being able to make decisions about it, is one means of being independent. If someone is controlling your money, keeping you financially dependent, or making you ask for money unreasonably, then this is a form of violence

Social - Social violence occurs in relationships that often include other forms of violence. If someone is insulting you or teasing you in front of other people, keeping you isolated from family and friends, controlling what you do and where you go, then they are being violent and you may need to take some action

Spiritual - This type of violence involves a situation where you are not allowed to have your own opinions about religion, cultural beliefs, and values, or your spirituality is manipulated to keep you feeling powerless.

METHODOLOGY:-

The study was conducted from an NGO (Name is kept confidential), Anand, and Gujarat and was descriptive as well as exploratory in nature using structured interview schedule. Study conducted on those women who were victims of domestic violence and residing in NGO. Total 50 women victims were taken randomly from the age group of 15 to 45 years.

The interview schedule administered on women were edited, codified and tabulated. Data was processed and analyzed using Ms Excel program.

Significance of study:-

Women in the Indian society have been victims of humiliation torture and exploitation for ages. Ideologies, institutional practices and the existing norms, attitude of society have contributed much to their harassment. In spite of legislative measures adopted in favors of women after independence, the lack of education and economic independence compels women to be subjected to domestic violence. They are beaten up. Kidnapped, raped and murdered along with mutilation of mental torture.

Every individual in the present playing specific role is judged by society, in the accordance to his or her fulfillment of these expectations. This in turn women too, as a victim of violence evaluates herself which hinders her in performing the expected goals and has effect on the self image, self confident and behaviors of the women.

The study will enable to highlight and understand the personality of women victims with respect to the following aspects.

- Socially perceived self
- Personally perceived self
- Self Esteem
- Self Evaluation

Objective of study:-

To understand self concept of women victims subjected to domestic violence.

To study the respondent's self esteem.

To study the respondent's awareness about self potentiality.

CONCLUSION:

It can be concluded that women silently suffered assaults and abuses within their homes that too by people whom they know very well. Domestic violence is widely prevalent but has remained largely unseen. Domestic violence includes physical, sexual or psychological aggression or coercion and is a pattern of behavior employed by one person in relationship to control the others. The abuse is typically directed at women and girls and can create health, social and economic costs for the individual, the family and society. Women living in an abusive relationship may be forced to become pregnant and have abortion against her will, or her too a sexually transmitted infection. Domestic violence against women and girls is a routine affair in most families in one way or other. Mainly these women victimized by domestic violence belong to the category of house wife and have no income. Education has positive impact on domestic violence and self concept. Among the illiterate women level of domestic violence is high and their self concept is low.

SUGGESTION:

Women are helpless due to denial of opportunity. Traditional stereotypes label them as "Dependents". So there is need to change this attitude. Following suggestion helps to improve the status of women in

society.

Teaching of "Human Rights" should become part of curriculum in schools and colleges, so that women become aware of these rights.

More women's police station must be setup at various parts of India, to provide more committed response to victimized women who are distressed or harassed.

Legal literacy programmed must be conducted. Free legal advice should be provided to the battered women.

Setting up the adequate short stay homes, working women's hostels, safe shelter houses etc should be implemented so that women could seek refuge.

Courses, seminars and workshops should be organized for health professionals, police and judiciary at all the levels to sensitize them about the nature of family violence, the needs of battered women, handling of domestic disputes within the framework of law etc.

Voluntary organizations (NGO's) must play active role in women welfare. Empowering battered women and providing vocational training should be initiated by NGO's.

There are loopholes in the existing legislation and its implementation. There is a need to modify law and redraft certain items to have effective and meaningful legislations. Voluntary organizations can extend their helping hand in mitigating the evils through short term and long term measures.

Autonomous women's group should work for women issues from a new perspective. The women activists were not merely content with deliberation with high power bodies or passing resolutions. They have been fighting for women's rights in a militant manner. They have attempted to delve deep to the roots of oppression of women. They must not be influenced by the leaders of political parties.

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