RESEARCH PAPER
Impact Factor : 3.6241
Physical Education
Index Copernicus Ic Value: 74.50
Volume : 5 | Issue : 12 | Special Issue Dec 2015 | ISSN - 2249-555X
Empowering People: Effective Social Work Approaches & Strategies



A STUDY ON MENTAL HEALTH AMONG VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

KEYWORDS: Domestic violence, Mental Health, Women

Dr. R. Arjunan
Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work
Bharathiar University, Coimbatore

R. Samuel Raj
Research Scholar, Department of Social Work Bharathiar University, Coimbatore

ABSTRACT

Domestic violence is a serious problem concerning human rights violation. In the last two decades domestic violence has been emerged as the most burning issue throughout the world. Day to day violence is taking a lift in spite of all the necessary actions taken by the Government. This problem is not only widely spread geographically, but its incidence is also wide-ranging, making it a typical and accepted behavior. Domestic violence is wide spread, deeply embedded and has serious impacts on women's health and well-being. Domestic violence is a multifaceted problem that requires proactive mitigation strategies by the society, government, families and individuals. The significance of the problem originates from the fact that its escalation and devastating effects not only lower the quality of life but also leads to physical harm, emotional and psychological torture and even leads to death. The low status of women and the limited effectiveness of laws protecting women allow dowry killings to continue virtually unacknowledged in India (Vindhya, 2000). The World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that domestic violence puts women at risk internationally for the negative health outcomes of physical injury, mental health problems, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV-AIDS and unwanted pregnancies (Turmen, 1998). Experiences with violence can have significant impacts on women's mental health. Systematic reviews examining the link between violence against women and depression have found significantly higher rates for women who had experienced violence in their lives compared to general populations of women. (Cascardi, O'Leary & Schlee Feb 2011). The main objective of the study is to know socio-economic conditions and to know the level of mental health among the respondents. Descriptive research design was adopted.

Introduction

Domestic violence is a severe problem regarding human rights violation. In the last two decades domestic violence has been emerged as the most burning issue throughout the world. Domestic Violence is taking a raise in spite of all the necessary actions taken by the Government. This problem is not only widely spread, but its occurrence is also wide. Domestic violence is wide spread, deeply rooted and has serious impacts on women's mental health and well-being.

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is violent victimization of women, within the boundaries of family; usually by men or his family to whom they are married or with whom they have marriage like relationship. Violence can be both physical and psychological. It indicates threat or aggressive behaviour towards her not only to her physical being but towards her self respect and self confidence. Psychological violence is carried out with psychological weapons rather than physical attack. Physical violence includes all types of aggressive physical behaviour by husband or his family towards the women's body (victim). Sexual violence could include both passive (denial) or active violence. Domestic violence could occasionally be seen in other relations also.

Family as an institution in ancient India laid down the principles which regulated the relationship between husband and wife and parents and children. A man as a husband had certain responsibilities towards his wife. A husband was to act as a provider and was called upon to cohabit with his wife. The husband was also required to provide identity, leadership and physical protection to his wife. The husband has complete control over the mind and body of his wife. Without his consent a wife had no right to perform even a religious act. Husband had the right to use physical corrective methods over his erring wife which was the same as those possessed by a teacher over a pupil or a father over a son, viz., he could administer beating with a rope or a thin piece of bamboo on the back but not on the hand.

According to Kautilaya, husband has right to beat his wife of refractive nature. He allows the husband to beat his wife, wither with the bamboo bark or with a rope or with a palm of hand on her hips. A wife on the other hand had only duties. The foremost duty of a wife was to honour and serve her husband. She must always stay with him even in adverse situations. The husband – wife relationship was not based on love, affection, mutual give and take and on equalitarianism the relationship was marked by authoritarianism and submissiveness. Wife was not only secluded from outside contacts but was looked at with suspicion.

Definition of Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is defined differently in the different state constitutions of the US. According to Washington State Law, domestic violence is physical harm, bodily injury, assault, the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, sexual assault, or stalking. The UK Law defines Domestic Violence as "Any incident of threatening behavior, violence, or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality" The UNICEF accepts Domestic Violence as violence perpetrated by intimate partners and other family members and manifested through physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse.

As per The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, omission or commission or conduct of the respondent shall constitute domestic violence in case of the following:

- Harms or injures or endangers the health, safety, life, limb or well being, whether mental or physical, of the aggrieved person or tends to do so, and includes causing physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal and emotional abuse and economic abuse; or

Volume: 5 | Issue: 12 | Special Issue Dec 2015 | ISSN - 2249-555X

- Harasses, harms, injures or endangers the aggrieved person with a view to coerce her, or any other person related to her, to meet any unlawful demand for any dowry or other property or valuable security; or

- has the effect of threatening the aggrieved person or any person related to her by any conduct mentioned in clause (a) or clause (b); or
- Otherwise injures or causes harm, whether physical or mental, to the aggrieved person.

Theories related to Domestic Violence
1. Psycho-analytical theory
2. Social learning theory
3. Socio-political critique

Psycho analytical Theory
These focus upon stress, anxiety, anger and guilt instilled during child rearing. They frequently depict the abused women as masochistic or exhibiting 'learned helplessness'. The men who better, from this perspective, are fearful and hateful towards women because of the childrearing they have received. Men develop hyper masculinity to overcompensate for their emotional insecurities.

Social learning theory
These theories consider the abuse to be an out-growth of learned patterns of aggressive communication to which both husband and wife contribute. They consider family as "cradle of violence" where violent behaviour is inter-generational i.e bitterer learns to be violent by watching or experiencing the violence of his parents. Similarly a battered child learns to be recipient of violence. Especially in Indian context most of the adults rule and behaviour learned where the aggressive and submissive behaviour by male and female respectively, has a social sanction.

Socio-political critique
These theories give emphasis on domestic violence as being manifestation of patriarchal and hierarchical social structure. It excludes women from political, business and religious leadership. Women are forced into subordinate position by two processes.

I. Discrimination that block women from being in influential position.

II. Ideology of innate inferiority which is often enforced by religious values, and glorification of feminine virtues. The aggression and dominance as masculine virtues and sacrifice tolerance etc., as feminine virtues are emphasized right from childhood through plays, play materials, songs, sayings and idioms. In this process women start believing (and are forced to believe via domestic violence) that it is 'right for them to be subordinate'.

Violence by men against women, and specifically against their partner is not a new problem; it is assumed by some to have begun with the first monogamous pairing. What is new however is public admission that violence against women occurs in a civilised society and the insistence by the government and well meaning citizens that such violence is no longer acceptable that we should discuss that problem and search solutions which will put an end to such violence.

Types of Domestic Violence
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Financial Abuse

Physical Abuse
Physical abuse can be part as the threat of harm or any forceful physical deeds that purposely or accidentally causes physically harm or property destruction.

Sexual Abuse
Sexual abuse is any forced or hassled sexual act or behaviour motivated to gain power and control over the partner. It is not only forced sexual contact but also contact that disgrace or humiliates the partner and instigates feelings of shame or vulnerability – particularly in regards to the body, sexual performance or sexuality.

Emotional Abuse
Emotional abuse is any use of words, voice, action or lack of action meant to control, hurt or put down another person. Emotional abuse typically includes mockery, threats or coercion. This type of abuse is more difficult to define and to identify than physical abuse.

Financial Abuse
Financial abuse is the use or misuse, without the partner's freely given consent, of the financial or other financial resources of the partner or of the partnership.

Domestic Violence in Tamil Nadu & in India
According to Press Trust of India, Tamil Nadu reported the highest number (3,983cases) cases of domestic violence was registered followed by Gujarat with 3,266 and West Bengal with 1661. (Business Standard, Nov 30, 2012)

India's National Family Health Survey-III, carried out in 29 states during 2005-06, has found that a substantial proportion of married women have been physically or sexually abused by their husbands at some time in their lives. The survey indicated that, nationwide, 37.2% of women "experienced violence" after marriage. Bihar was found to be the most violent, with the abuse rate against married women being as high as 59%, Tamil Nadu (41.9%) and West Bengal (40.3%). Over 40% of Indian women have experienced domestic violence.

Review of Literature
Isabelle Ouellet-Morin, Helen L. Fisher, Marianna York-Smith (2015)
The study, published in the journal Depression and Anxiety, showed that women who were victims of domestic violence had a three times higher risk of developing schizophrenia like psychotic symptoms. "We studied the impact of domestic violence on the risk of mental health problems, particularly depression," said first author Isabelle Ouellet-Morin, professor at the School of Criminology at the University of Montreal in Canada. Over 1,000 mothers participated in this study over 10 years. Only those with no previous history of depression were considered for the study. The findings showed that more than a third of the women reported suffering violence from their spouses. They were twice as likely to suffer from depression, even when controlling for the impact of childhood abuse. Domestic violence had an impact not just on mood but on other mental health aspects as well.

Vijaykumar Harbishettar & Suresh Bada Math (2014)
In a survey, 40 per cent of the survivors had poor mental health. Violence leads to mental disorders such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety disorders, self-harm and sleep disorders. Chronic violence of increased severity is associated with severe depressive disorders. 14 per cent were identified as having PTSD. In another study on urban women, 22.3 per cent of them had suicidal thoughts and 3.4 per cent had attempted suicide.

Volume: 5 | Issue: 12 | Special Issue Dec 2015 | ISSN - 2249-555X

AK Sharma, Alka S Vachher (2010)
A community-based, cross-sectional study was conducted in Raj Nagar- I, urban locality in west Delhi near Palam. 350 women of 15-49 years age group residing in the community were selected by stratified random sampling. Mental health status of these women was estimated by using self-reporting questionnaire 20. 12% of the women reported mental ill health. Women who had experienced domestic violence were more likely to report mental ill health status and suicidal tendencies as compared to women who had not experienced violence. Conclusion: Domestic violence is associated with mental ill health.

Shuba Kumar, Lakshmanan Jeyaseelan (2005)
In a survey of rural, urban non-slum and urban slum areas from seven sites in India, the population of women aged 15-49 years was sampled using probability proportionate to size. The Self Report Questionnaire was used to assess mental health status and a structured questionnaire elicited spousal experiences of violence. Of 9938 women surveyed, 40% reported poor mental health. Findings indicate a strong association between domestic spousal violence and poor mental health, and underscore the need for appropriate interventions.

Shuba Kumar, Lakshmanan Jeyaseelan, Saradha Suresh And Ramesh Chandra Ahuja (2002)
In this study, the risk of poor mental health was higher among women who had experienced domestic spousal violence compared with those who had not. This supports findings from other studies, which have shown that a history of being the target of violence puts women at increased risk of depression, suicide attempts, psychosomatic disorders and physical injury (Heise & Garcia- Moreno, 2002).

Suggestions
- Premarital and Post marital counselling should be given to all.
- It is best that social workers should insist marriage convents between husband and wife. Child rearing method should be taught to everyone.
- Proper awareness should be given on Women's help line in India.
- Social worker should contact schools and college and address to the students about the gender balance.
- Should bring awareness on preventive legal measures Domestic Violence Act 2006.
- Education is a instrument, that can completely eliminate this domestic violence. The more awareness we create among people, the more they stand against this evil.

Conclusion
Domestic violence is a crime against women, yet it is observed that, it is increasing day by day in the world. Therefore necessary steps to be taken to prevent the domestic violence. In order to provide a healthy atmosphere for women, all kinds of legal supports should be given. Severe punishment should be given for the abusers without mercy. Women should be treated equally with men.

REFERENCE
1. Ashine Roy, (2003). Violence against women- Rajat Publications, New Delhi-110 002) | 2. AK Sharma, Alka S Vachher (2010) Domestic violence against women and their mental health status in a colony in Delhi, Indian Journal of Community Medicine, Vol. 35, No. 3, July-September, 2010, pp. 403-405 | 3. Charlette SL, Nongkynrih B, Gupta SK (2012) Domestic violence in India: Need for public health action. Indian J Public Health 2012;56:140-5) | 4. Isabelle Ouellet-Morin, Helen L. Fisher, Marianna York-Smith, Stephanie Fincham-Campbell, Terrie E. Moffitt, Louise Arseneault (2015). Intimate Partner Violence And New-Onset Depression: A Longitudinal Study Of Women's Childhood And Adult Histories Of Abuse. Depression and Anxiety, 2015; journal | 5. Vijaykumar Harbishettar & Suresh Bada Math (2014). Violence against women in India : Comprehensive care for survivors :by Med Res, Uttar Pradesh, National Crime, Records Bureau, Multi-country Study, Domestic Violence, Against Women,United Nations | 6. Shuba Kumar, Lakshmanan Jeyaseelan, Saradha Suresh, Ramesh Chandra Ahuja (2005). Intimate Partner Violence and Its Mental Health Correlates in Indian Women