



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Law

IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON THE LIVES OF WOMEN

KEY WORDS: Domestic violence, stress

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ABSTRACT Domestic violence is one of the forms of abuse which is often being executed against women within four walls of the family house. The incidence of violence against women within and outside family has an alarming increase from the last some decades. Domestic violence badly impacts on the health and lives of women victims and they suffered with lack of sleep; depression; frustration, stress, worry and lower self esteem and it also effects on family life and emerge conflicts, misunderstandings, loss of trust, communication gaps, quarrels/fights among family members which often spoils the cordial relationships among the members of the family.

INTRODUCTION

The incidence of violence against women within and outside family has an alarming increase from the last some decades. Domestic violence is one of the forms of abuse which is often being executed against women within four walls of the family house. About 61.3% of married women experienced domestic violence within last 12 months in slums, where majority i.e. 75.8% of married women were illiterate who experienced domestic violence and about 56% were housewives. A woman of any age, she may be a girl child, and unmarried, married or elderly women including a widow are such women with whom men have marriage like relationship, 95.9% of women experienced domestic violence by their husband and 3.5% by mother in law.

Neither the violence against women nor its consequences is a new phenomenon which could be *physical; sexual; or psychological/emotional economical*. It indicates threats or aggressive behavior towards her not only to her physical being, but towards her self-respect and self-confidence. Psychological weapons are usually applied for psychological violence such as insults, humiliating treatment, ignoring the woman's existence rather than physically attacking, use of abusive language or inappropriate words, criticizing in public or in front of someone being an outsider. As physical violence includes all types of aggressive physical behavior towards the women's body, Sexual violence too includes both active and passive violence, sodomy (unnatural sex) referred u/s 377, IPC. Cases related to perversity are also included.

The most common causes domestic violence are dissatisfaction with the amount of dowry, argument with the partner, refuse to sex with him, neglecting the responsibility of children, going out of home without informing the partner, not cooking properly or on time, indulging in extra-marital affairs, not taking care of in-laws/ not looking after the desires of in-laws, talking to parents or neighbors etc. in some cases family members (in-laws) assault woman due to infertility (unable to bear a child).

OBJECTIVE

To find out the impact of domestic violence on the lives of women.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in North- East District, Delhi. The North-East District has five sub-divisions and sixteen Police stations. Sub-divisions- Seelam Pur, Khajuri Khas, Gokul Puri, and Shahdara are divided into three police stations each and Sub-division. The size was comprised of 25 women, between the age group of 20-35 years who faced domestic Violence. The targeted groups for the study were married women of this

area. "Simple Random Sampling Design" was adopted for the study. Interview Schedule for women respondents, informal discussion /Focus Group Discussion with family members and neighbors, informal interview /Focus Group Discussion with social activists, officials of police department, hospitals and officers of social welfare department, Crime against Women cell (CAW) in Delhi, Case laws/ judgments, Case studies, Books, internet sources/ library sources, journals, magazines, news paper articles, Reports from U.N., WHO, NCRB etc.were used for data collection.

IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence has a significant impact on the health and well-being of women both in the immediate and longer term, continuing even after the relationship has ended. Abuse can have a serious impact on the way a person thinks and interacts with the world around them. The chronic exposure to domestic violence and the stress fear resulting from this exposure can cause not only immediate physical injury, but also mental shifts that occur as the mind attempts to process trauma or protect the body.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

Table 1. Distribution of domestic violence impacts upon women

Impact of Domestic violence	Frequency (25)	Percentage (%)
Depression	8	32
Stress	5	20
Frustration	6	24
Worry	3	12
Lack of sleep	10	40
Low self esteem	3	12

The impact of domestic violence in the table 1 shows that 40 percent of women victims suffered with lack of sleep; 32 percent had depression; 24 percent faced frustration; while 20 percent and 12 percent of women were suffered from stress, worry and lower self esteem respectively.

Table 2 shows the Impact of domestic violence on Family Life and conflicts are normal features of family life. The domestic violence against married women perpetrated by their husbands or other members of the family spoils the cordial relationships among the members of the family.

Table 2. Distribution of consequences of domestic violence upon women

Consequences of Domestic violence on family life	Frequency (25)	Percentage (%)

Family tension	9	36
Quarrels/fights on minor issues	6	24
Misunderstanding	3	12
Trust is lost	4	16
Don't want to live in family	2	8
Any other	1	4

It was found that 36 percent of women respondents reported that husband wife relations were strained and the same were always under family tension. 24 percent of the respondents reported that quarrels/fights took place between the husband and wife and other members of the family on very minor issues very often. About 16 percent of the respondents stated that violence resulted in loss of trust between the husband and the wife and nearly 12 percent of them were worried about the family gap giving rise to misunderstandings. While 8 percent of the respondents don't think a family to be place to live. About 4 percent of the respondents were not specific about the impact of violence on their family life.

CONCLUSIONS

It was found from the study that women victims of domestic violence suffered with lack of sleep; depression; frustration, stress, worry and lower self esteem respectively. Domestic violence has a significant impact on the health and well-being of women both and it was also found domestic violence also effects on Family Life and give birth to conflicts, misunderstanding, loss of trust, communication gaps, quarrels/fights among family members which spoils the cordial relationships among the members of the family.

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