
A Study of Domestic Violence against Women

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Abstract :

Domestic violence, also known as domestic abuse, spousal abuse, family violence, dating abuse, and intimate partner violence (IPV), is a pattern of behavior which involves the abuse by one partner against another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, cohabitation, dating or within the family. Domestic violence includes all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners. Violence by a person against their intimate partner is often done as a way for controlling their partner. Domestic violence has attracted the attention of general public and the judiciary due to series of unpleasant incidents such as loss of life and threat to life. The present study aimed at finding out the prevalent forms of domestic violence, leading factors, awareness, utilization and impact of domestic violence Act on the victims of domestic violence. Twenty victims of domestic violence were selected from BPS Govt. Medical College, Khanpur Kalan,

Sonapat. Through case history method consolidated raw data were framed. The results revealed the physical attack is most prevalent form of domestic violence. Economic problems, Extra-marital relations and marital maladjustment found to be most prevalent cause of violence. More than half of the cases were aware of the domestic violence Act but not utilizing because of fear of social stigma as it has both positive and negative impact on the lives of victims according to the present study.

Keywords : Domestic violence, Women, Victim .

Introduction

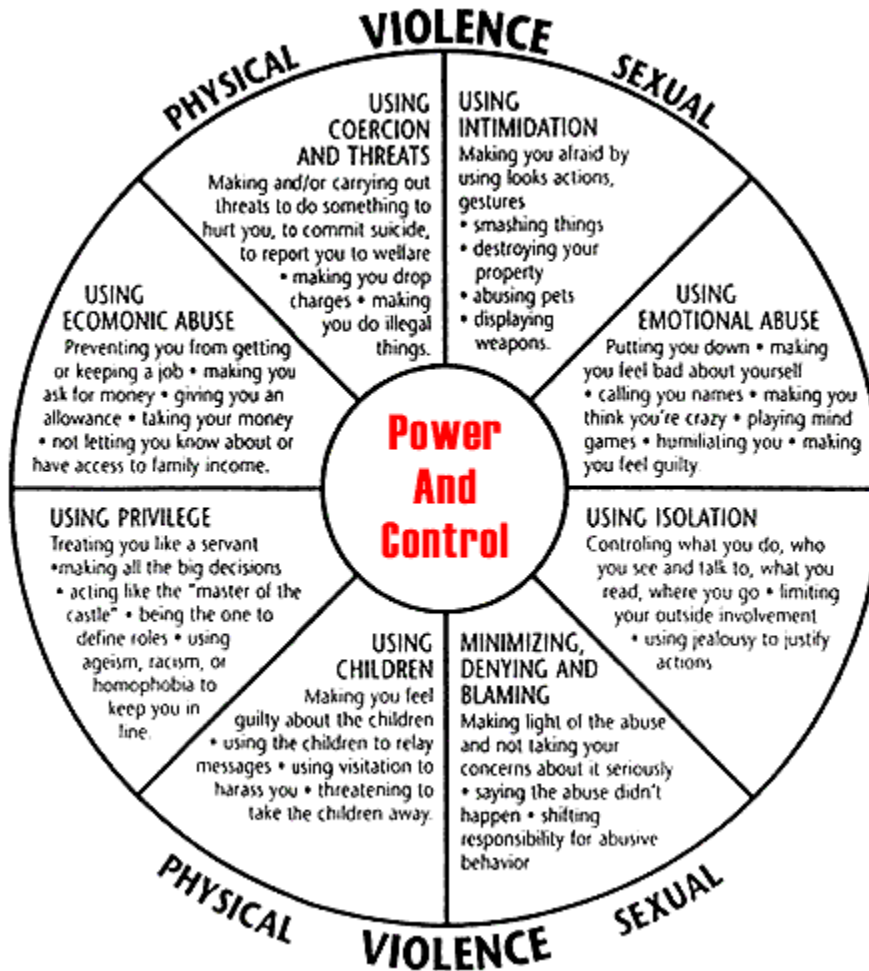
Domestic violence that is any act of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, or the threat of such abuse, inflicted against a woman by a person intimately connected to her through marriage, family relation, or acquaintanceship is universal and has its root in the socio-cultural set up of the society. The perpetrators of domestic violence have often been found to be the



males and the victims, their sexual partners. Internationally, one in three women have been beaten, coerced into sex or abused in their lifetime by a member of her own family (Heise et al. 1999). Starting from childhood to the end of her life she has to be under the control of father or husband or the son. The subordinate status of women combined with socio cultural norms that are inclined towards patriarchy and masculinity can be considered as an important factor determining the domestic violence.

Murthy et al. (2004) is of the view that numbers of family members, type of marriage and husband's education besides menstrual problems have significant influence on domestic violence. While many researchers come out with findings that lifestyle of men such as smoking, alcoholism and drugs promote men to commit domestic violence (Leonard, 1992; McKenry et al., 1995; Rao, 1997 and Bhatt, 1998), some are of the view that masculinity and domestic violence are closely interlinked (Duvvury and Nayak, 2003 and Hamberger et al., 1997). Again, persons

with lower socialization and responsibility are found to be the enhancers of the problem (Barnett and Hamberger, 1992). Studies have also revealed that sons of violent parents (Martin et al, 2002), men raised in patriarchal family structure that encourages traditional gender role (Fagot et al., 1998 and Malamuth et al., 1995) are more likely to abuse their intimate partners. Gendered socialization process is what mainly responsible for domestic violence (Sahu, 2003). Another study among Uttar Pradesh men by Gerstein (2000) is of the view that low educational level and poverty are important reasons for domestic violence. Further, marriage at a younger age makes women vulnerable to domestic violence (Mishra, 2000). Domestic violence is simply not a personal abnormality but rather it roots in the cultural norms of the family and the society. Again, looking from another angle, it is found that many of the victims of domestic violence has either refused to name the perpetrator of the assault or attributed the injuries to other reasons (Daga et al., 1999).



The Domestic Violence Act of 2005 provides victims of abuse with a means for practical remedy through prosecution. Physical abuse, Sexual abuse, Verbal and Emotional abuse and Economic abuse are covered under the act. In order to develop effective intervention programme and policy, it is vital to know the attitude and perception of the women towards the issue in-depth. Specifically, the objectives of the present paper are as follows:

- To find out the prevalent forms of domestic violence,
- To find out the leading cause of domestic violence
- To study the awareness, for not utilizing and impact of domestic violence Act on the victims of domestic violence.

Method

Sample

20 domestic violence women victims were selected BPS Govt. Medical College, Khanpur Kalan, Sonapat for the present study. Each woman was assessed individually as per their convenience. Consent was taken for participation in the study from each participant. They were assured that the information obtained would be kept strictly confidential and used for research purpose only.

The method utilized in this study is the case history method that is a detailed account of the facts related to the person and group under treatment or study. A self-

framed questionnaire was used for getting the information related to their demography, type of violence, awareness and solution for their problems. All the information is shown in the table 1.

Results and Interpretation

Table 1 depicts the detailed description of cases and an analysis is drawn from it. It is shown that women in the age group of 20-40 are at great risk of being subjected to domestic violence than other age group. Almost all the victims received basic education and it can be inferred that domestic violence occurred irrespective of the educational status.

Table 1: Raw Data of 20 Cases of Domestic Violence

S.no	Age (V)	Edu (V)	Occupation (V)	perpetrator	Age (P)	Edu (P)	Occupation (P)	Type of violence	Type of cause	Awereness of Act	Cause of not utilizing Act
1	26	10	HW	Husband	30	10	NE	Mental/Physical	Economic problems	No	-
2	32	8	HW	Husband	33	12	Dealer	Phys ical	Extra-marital	Yes	Embarrassed
3	26	12	HW	Husband	27	12	Farmer	Mental/Physical	Maladjustment	Only idea	Shame
4	28	8	HW	H/M in Law	30	10	NE	Physical	Extra-marital	No	-
5	34	6	HW	Husband	44	8	NE	Mental/Physical	Maladjustment	Yes	No guarantee to justice
6	30	8	HW	Husband	32	6	farmer	Mental/Physical	Maladjustment	Yes	Economic dependency
7	36	6	Sweeper	Husband	40	5	vendor	Mental/Physical	Extra-marital	Yes	Fear
8	33	10	Tailor	Husband	34	8	NE	Economic/Physical	suspicious	Yes	For children
9	22	10	HW	Husband	26	12	Vendor	Mental/Physical	Dowry	Yes	Economic dependency
10	21	8	HW	Husband	23	10	Farmer	Mental/Physical	Maladjustment	No	-

11	34	8	Shopkeeper	M in law	38	12	NE	Mental/Physical	Economic problems	Only idea	Ashamed
12	33	10	Tailor	Husband	35	10	NE	Mental/Physical	Maladjustment	Yes	No guarantee to justice
13	23	10	Beauty-parlour	Husband	26	10	Driver	Mental/Physical	Extra-marital	Only idea	Fear
14	38	8	HW	Husband	40	10	Farmer	Mental/Physical	Alcohol	Only idea	Economic dependency
15	24	12	Tailor	Husband	30	10	NE	Mental/Physical	Extra-marital	No	For children
16	26	10	HW	Husband	29	10	Driver	Mental/Physical	Maladjustment	Yes	No guarantee to justice
17	23	8	HW	Husband	32	8	NE	Physical	Economic problems	Yes	For children
18	25	4	Go to Farm	Husband	26	9	Plumber	Economic/Physical	Extra-marital	Yes	Fear
19	33	BA	HW	H & M in Law	38	12	NE	Physical	Alcohol	Only idea	They deserve this
20	36	10	HW	Husband	32	8	Driver	Physical	Extra-marital	Yes	Economic dependency

V victim, P perpetrator

The most prevalent perpetrators of violence are husband and families were controlled by the husbands as they are nurtured a superior power position compared to women. Employed women are also victim in spite of the fact that they add income to the family. It is clear from the table that most prevalent cause of violence is extramarital relations of husband (7) followed by marital maladjustment (6), economic problems (3), alcohol (2), suspicious (1), and dowry (1) are reported. Most of the marriages took place in arranged ways that lack the opportunity of getting to know each other and lead to maladjustment and violence. So pre-marital and marital

counseling should be given to the youths. Most of the victims were aware of the domestic violence act yet they do not utilize it. Many victims are too afraid that if they report the abuse the batterer will kill them, harm their children or other family members. Reporting domestic violence can be demoralizing. Victims are ashamed and often too embarrassed to report to law enforcement. Many victims suffer in silence believing that they somehow deserve to be abused emotionally or physically. Other think that there is no guarantee that reporting will lead to an arrest or conviction. The reasons so many cases go unreported are both personal (embarrassment, fear of

retaliation, economic dependency) and societal (imbalanced power relations for men and women in society, privacy of the family, victim blaming attitudes). But we also need to know whether or not all those unreported cases are really invisible for the social environment surrounding the victims (friends, family, neighbors, social services, public health sector...). And if they are socially visible, but not reported, we need to respond accordingly. So it has been found that the Act has both the positive and negative impact on the lives of victims. Handful victims are still not aware of the act and there is need for awareness about the Act.

Suggestion:

- Public awareness campaigns should also focus on the invisible part of the iceberg of domestic violence against women, pointing out that it is the result not only of the victim's silence but also of the silence, tolerance, and inhibition of the social circles surrounding the victims.
- Public education campaigns need to transmit the idea of social responsibility in issues of domestic violence. Greater social response (in particular of those who know but choose not to tell) would help break the climate of social tolerance, thus increasing the costs for perpetrators, and acting as a deterrent.

- Media should be used to develop a positive attitude towards women.
- List of NGOs and governmental organization should be made public
- Awareness about gender equality and women's right to change the mindset of future generation.

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