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Domestic violence in COVID-19 pandemic situation: A study of population in western Odisha

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Abstract

Domestic violence is a common problem now-a-days. It is found that, reports of family violence has increased around the world in this pandemic COVID -19. Due to pandemic many people lost their jobs, faced a lot of financial problems for which women were generally the victims of men's abusive behaviour. The WHO had put out the data that, world-wide about one in three women or 736 million women across ages are subjected to violence in pandemic. In this paper we have studied the form of different domestic violence faced by women (both house wife and working women) of Sundargarh Town of Odisha state, which is situated in the eastern India.

Keywords: Domestic violence, COVID-19 pandemic situation, population

1. Introduction

Domestic violence is one of the most crucial problem in today's world. It is a pattern of behaviour which involves the abuse by one person against another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, cohabitation, dating or within the family. It is any act of physical, sexual or psychological, verbal, economic, religious, reproductive abuse. It can range from marital rape to deaths. Globally, the victims of domestic violence or family violence are women. Generally the family violence often occurs when the abuser believes that he is supreme and all he behaves is right and respectable. 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 the Vedic age to twenty first get the equal rights and freedom compared to male. The concept of "Ardhangini" is constricted only in literature and never implemented in practical life. It is always the women, who is always subject to injustice and contemned as inferior sex. Starting from the childhood to the end of her life, she is always under the control of the patriarchy system of the society.

In addition to this, extracts from Ramcharitamanas of Tulsidas like 'Dhol, Gauwnaar, Shudra, Pashu aur Nari; Sakal Tadan ka Adhikari' [drums, uncivilized illiterates, lower castes, animals and women are all fit to be beaten] besides other indicators like Pardaha system [hiding the face in veils], Sati system [self immersion of the lady in husband's pyre] that are subject to women only; is a reflection of the history of women's subordinate status. In short, it is always the women who have to be in the tight rope, subject to inequality and looked down as an inferior sex. Staring 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.

Althreya U.B. *et al.* [1] and Campbell R. *et al.* [6] and Reiss, A.J., and Roth, J.A. [15] discussed on Domestic violence in rural Uganda: Evidence from a community-based study. Goodman L.A. *et al.* [11] studied Violence against women with Physical and mental health effects. Caralis P.V. and Musialowsk R. [5] discussed women's experiences with domestic violence and their attitudes and expectations regarding medical care of abuse victims. Sexual and physical abuse in women with functional or organic gastrointestinal disorders were discussed by Drossman D.A. *et al.* [9]. Marshall, L.L. [14] had discussed the Effects of men's subtle and overt

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psychological abuse on low-income women. Shields, N.M., and Hanneke, C.R. [16] had put their idea on Attributional processes in violent relationships: Perceptions of violent husbands and their wives.

In the chequered history of mankind one finds that different and disparate cultures, however distant they may be in time and space have at least one thing in common and that is the contempt of women. However, the Gandhian era and the decades after independence have seen tremendous changes in the status and the position of the women in the Indian society. The constitution of India has laid down as a fundamental right- the equality of the sexes. But the change from a position of utter degradation of women in the nineteenth century to a position of equality in the middle of the twentieth century is not a simple case of the progress of men in the modern era. The position of women in the Indian society has been a very complicated one. In fact, it could not be an exaggeration to say that the recent changes in the status of women in India is not a sign of progress but it is really a recapturing of the position that they held in the early Vedic period. Yet, the status of women who constitute almost half of the Indian population is not that encouraging. Gender based violence – including rape, domestic violence, mutilation, murder and sexual abuse- is a profound health problem for women across the globe. Nonetheless, it is not considered as a public problem of serious concern.

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, defines Violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm, or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty; whether occurring in public or private life”. Paragraph 117 of the Beijing Platform for Action quotes: “The fear of violence, including harassment is a permanent constraint on the mobility of women and limits their access to resources and basic activities. High social, health and economic costs to the individual and society are associated with violence against women. Violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men”. Gender based violence is clearly based on unequal power relation between men and women. The status of women in India is not equal to the status of men in terms of access, participation and reward. It owes this situation to the patriarchal and feudalistic structure of the society. Hamberger, L.K., Saunders, D.G., and Hovey, M. [12] had discussed on Prevalence of domestic violence in community practice and rate of physician inquiry

2. Factors of violence

The issue of gender discrimination manifests itself as violence in the family, community and society. It takes the form of female foeticide, female infanticide, abuse of the girl child, social harassment, mental torture, physical violence and cruelty affecting the body and mind of the women.

Violence occurring within the family, which is referred as Domestic violence, cuts across lines of race, nationality, language, culture, economics, sexual orientation, physical ability and religion to affect people from all walks of life. It is the most pervasive form of gender violence. Although men are victims of street violence, brawls, homicide and crime, violence directed at women is a distinctly different phenomenon. Men tend to be attacked and killed by strangers or causal acquaintances whereas women are most at risk at home from men whom they trust. Violence against them is

often grounded in power imbalances between men and women and is caused and perpetuated by factors different than violence against men. Domestic violence though means violence in the family refers to violence against women in particular, as almost always the victims are women. Domestic violence means physical or mental assault of women by their male partners. The term wife abuse is also often used to mean the same. Masculine behaviour-aggression, risk taking, and the consumption of drugs and alcohol –is often believed to underlie male violence against women. Domestic violence is not only on the increase, but is also assuming subtler forms every day. Earlier victims of domestic violence did not lodge complaints, as they feared that such complaints might create a hostile home environment. Very often, women used to endure the violence towards them in silence for fear of repercussions.

The various forms of physical violence are

1. Female foeticide and female infanticide.
2. Incest, connivance, and collusion of family members to selfish, sexual abuse, rape within marriage.
3. Physical torture like slapping punching, grabbing, murder.
4. Overwork, lack of rest, Neglect of health care
5. Curbing freedom to associate with the natal family, neighbours friends etc.
6. Curtailment of self-expression.
7. Promiscuity of the husband, Accusing of unchaste behaviour
8. Alcoholic and irresponsible husband, Scapegoatism and victim blaming
9. Money related violence namely persuasion and coercion to get more money from the women’s parents, denial of freedom to spend money, refusal to spend money to run the household.

3. Study Analysis

Table1 present the different type of women groups in the study area. This shows that working women are more than house wives.

Table 1: Female on the study area

female	No of household	percentage
housewives	40	40
Working women	60	60
total	100	

Table. 2 present the different cause of wife battering. Out of the common causes are alcoholism, financial problem, unemployment. According the opinion mainly alcoholism cause wife battering. Relatively all cases the less proportion of wife battering is ill treating towards in-laws.

Table 2: Opinion of the female on the causes of wife battering

Causes of woman battering	Female		
	Yes	No	No response
Financial Problem	75	25	0
Unemployment	45	55	0
Alcoholism	98	02	0

Table.3 presented the investigation on the motivating factors for wife battering. It was found that over expectation for more care, extravagant spending nature and inability for sexual satisfaction motivate husbands to battering their wives. Some cases when women do not respect the family members of their

husbands then husband batter their wives.

Table 3: opinion of the male and female on the motivating factors for wife battering

Opinion of male and female on the motivating factor for wife battering	Female		
	Yes	No	No response
Expectation about domestic work	75	25	0
Extravagant Spending	45	55	0
Disrespecting in-laws	98	02	0
Ignoring Siblings	30	70	0
Comparing husband with father and brother	22	78	0
Not satisfying sexual needs of the husband	58	42	0

Table.4 presented the opinion of women who silently bear the suffering inflicted upon them by their husband. Most of the women give their opinion that they are depended on their husband for social, economical and emotional reasons by which silently women are batted by their husband.

Table 4: Opinion regarding types of women who silently bear the suffering inflicted upon them by their husband

Opinion regarding types of women who silently bear the suffering inflicted upon them by their husband	Female		
	Yes	No	No response
Who consider marriage as religious sacrament	92	8	0
Who are dependent on their husbands socially, economically and emotionally	38	62	0
Who accept their husband's promise to reform	12	85	3
Who are masochist	19	81	0

4. Conclusion

In this paper we have studied the form of different domestic violence faced by women (both house wife and working women) of Sundargarh Town of Odisha state, which is situated in the eastern India. It's found that alcoholism is the main reason of violence due to unemployment and loss of jobs in pandemic. Also we found that disrespecting in laws is one of the main cause domestic violence. Women who consider the marriage as religious sacrament suffers a lot and tolerate family violence. We have analyse our result through different tables.

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