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Violence against women – Its causes and ways of Prevention**Dr. Aradhana Sethi**

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The abuse of women and girls is the most pervasive and unaddressed human right violation on earth.

Jimmy Carter

Vedic period was indeed the golden period for woman. During the period, she was bestowed high respect in the form of mother, was given supreme place in the form of wife. Even she was considered as a goddess and given a very honourable place in society. Gradually their position began to deteriorate. They were begun to be confined in the walls of home due to safety reasons and consequently got victimized to violence. Although now in the 21st century, majority of women have become educated and independent yet we find violence against them.

Violence against women is an international problem. It is the major problem faced in our society. Even though the constitution of India gives equal rights to women, and there is a plethora of laws in favour of women, yet we find that social mindsets do not allow them their rightful place. In the present scenario, we see that the married women are subjected to violence in the cruel hands of their husband and in-laws. The violence initiated by husband and his family members can include physical, emotional and psychological. It is in the form of threat of divorce, Cruelty by husband and In-laws, No permission to meet her parents, overburden of domestic work, Abusing, snatching her salary if she is employed, to stop movement outside home, slapping, Acid attacks, rape , dowry death, kidnapping and abduction of women etc.

Every newspaper, magazine and TV Channels keeps on reporting on rising crimes against women. A woman is not safe with the priest, teacher, father, colleagues, on the road, in a hostel or in a hospital. In this vast world, there is no place where women are safe. Just as there is no utopia-a perfect ideal state, so is there no Wotopia a place ideal for women, where she can be secure. While women are guaranteed equality under the constitution, legal protection has little effect in the face of prevailing patriarchal traditions. Women lack power to decide to whom they will marry, and are often married off as children.

Although we are living in 21st century, where we claim that man and women are equal, yet we find that Crimes against women have more than doubled over the past ten years, according to latest data released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

Year	Number of crimes
2005-	50,000
2006-	63,128
2007-	75,930
2008-	81,344

Year	Number of crimes
2009-	89,546
2010-	94,041
2011-	94,135
2012-	106,527
2013-	118,866
2014-	122,877

(Source: National Crime Records Bureau)

Causes of Violence against women,

There is no denying the obvious fact that the rate of violence among women has considerably increased. If serious steps are not taken to eradicate this problem, definitely it will cross the limits by leaps and bounds. The causes of violence against women are man dominant society, domestic violence, illiteracy, evil customs, gender inequality, and identity crises. Besides these, some of the major causes are as follows:

1. In the male dominant society, women are dominated by man. In the Indian families, husband home is the only place for woman. Even if the in-laws torture them, she does not have any other option but to bear it. She has this fact in mind that if she returns home, that would bring dishonour to the family. So she bears violence done to her.
2. There is no denying the obvious fact that for the exploitation and violence of one woman, other women are responsible, whether it is mother in law or sister in law. They play active role in instigation.
3. Education is considered to be the active agent to transform the society as well as not to bear any sort of injustice. But in India, the situation is totally different. Education is not as effective here as it is anywhere else. Here even educated women in middle class families do not dare to raise their voice against injustice.
4. In India corruption is rampant on a vast scale. Here law exists that prohibits dowry and dowry murder but these laws are ignored. The reason is quite clear- The majority of officials are corrupt.

Ways to prevent Violence against women

Man and women are the two sides of the same coin. There is no worth of one in the absence of other. It is indeed very unfortunate and ironical on the part of law that even after the constant safety mechanism, women are not safe. Every day or the other, the newspapers tell the story of violent incidents. Anyhow this menace is to be ended. There are certain ways by which we can prevent violence against women.

1. Respecting, Promoting, Protecting the human rights of both men and women

In order to achieve gender equality and to remove violence against women, there is a need to recognize and implement women's rights as human rights. This includes effectively respecting, protecting and promoting the human rights of both women and men as equal. If people began to respect, promote and protect the human rights of women, then definitely violence against them will be automatically removed.

2. Right of Decision making to women at all levels and in all fields

In a male dominant society, women are considered as inferior subordinate products. They are always to be kept under the protection of their father, brother or husband. Decision making right

is not given to them. The persistent under-representation or sometimes absence of women in decision-making at all levels and in all fields of life is a major problem. Thus, it is important also that women become visible in societal events to the same degree as men. They should be having right of decision making at all levels and in all fields.

3. Stop stereotyping of men and women role

It has always been the general tendency among people that males are superior to females. Women are always kept suppressed whether it was ancient time or modern time. Although now women have been educated but still we find many women in pathetic position. There are many people who regard that man is for field and women are for home. So if we actually want to reduce women violence, we will have to stop stereotyping role of men and women.

4. Education – a key factor for bringing gender equality and ending of violence

Education is a key target for gender equality as it involves the ways in which society transfers norms, knowledge and skills. It is crucial that the education systems and all elements of these systems (teachers, schools, textbooks, research institutes and so on) empower both girls and boys. Education is a tool which helps to broaden the outlook of both man and women. There is a need to realise that educated woman can contribute well to the development of society and nation. Govt. should make a plan for the women residing in towns, villages, hilly areas, deserts to have compulsory education till class 12. Educated women will have knowledge of law and hence they will surely be aware of their rights. Such families should be pointed out where girls are being deprived of education. Although State and central govt. is providing a lot of facilities in this regards, still there is a need that these policies should be strictly enforced.

5. Need to change the thinking and mentality of people

Even in this 21st century, there has been a deadly thinking like gender disparity among the 80% people of the society. Regeneration of women cannot be done without changing the narrow point of view of such people. Even today, in uneducated society, girls are being instructed to bow down their heads because they consider their sons as Asset and daughter as Liability. This is the reason that families adopt double standards to treat their sons and daughters. In such circumstances, girls consider themselves inferior. It is the need of the time to remove such disparities in boys and girls. It is the responsibility of the family to understand the sensations of their daughters and think about them. It is the responsibility of the parents to educate their sons to respect women of the family, school, relatives, society and neighbourhood, so that they may not have violent and criminal inclination towards women in any point of their life. In order to make the social balance, parents should whole heartedly appreciate the achievements of their daughters. From the very beginning, parents should impart anti-dowry education to their sons so that on reaching young age, they do not mistreat any girl in the greed of dowry.

6. Independent and self reliant

In most of the middle class families, women are dependent on the income of males. This is also one of the major reasons of violence done to them. If women become self-reliant, definitely their position in the family will have considerable improvement and consequently will get respect in the family. It's not necessary that only educated women can be independent and self reliant, even the uneducated house-wife can also be indulge in some productive work and thus can earn money and can contribute for the financial status and betterment of the family. Women can get the equal status in society by being independent and self-reliant only. It has been seen that in most of the poor

and middle class families, the cause of violence is economic problem only. If the women are independent and self-reliant, definitely violence among them will be reduced

7. Training of self-defence to girls

In Indian school system, self-defence should be the mandatory subject for students irrespective of gender. Training of self-defence like judo karate and other measures of safety should be the part and parcel of practical training. Besides this, girls should be given special training and practice classes' to increase their physical strength, so that they may protect themselves from violence which is being done to them and safeguard their modesty in society.

Conclusion

Now the women won't have to be deaf and dumb to bear the torture done to them. They themselves have to improve their condition. They should never forget that self-help is the best help and God help those who help themselves. They should never think themselves in terms of fair sex. The weak and helpless are destined to be ever exploited and discriminated. They will have to raise, struggle and sweat for justice, freedom, empowerment and economic independence. They should be refused to be treated as sex objects, a thing of domestic utility. They should rise as one powerful body and fight the menace of dowry and child marriage. They should fight tooth and nail whenever there is abuse, exploitation, humiliation and injustice. They should raise their voices against all social evils and male arrogance. Thus, It can be concluded that Violence against women is a stigma which hinders the social, economic, and political life of the country. This stigma needs to be eradicated if we want our country to touch the ever increasing boundaries of success. The fight against injustice and violence against women is to be done from home. It has been rightly stated that:

"If we are to fight discrimination and injustice against women we must start from the home for if a woman cannot be safe in her own house then she cannot be expected to feel safe anywhere".

" Aysha Taryam

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