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E.MBA, LL.M, PH.D, PGDSAPM

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BBA. LL.B. (Hons.) (Amity University, Rajasthan); LL. M. (UPES, Dehradun) (Nottingham Trent University, UK); PH.D. Candidate (G.D. Goenka University)

Subhrajit did his LL.M. in Sports Law, from Nottingham Trent University of United Kingdoms, with international scholarship provided by university; he has also completed another LL.M. in Energy Law from University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, India. He did his B.B.A.LL.B. (Hons.) focussing on International Trade Law.

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WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal provide dedicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TOWARDS MEN: A SILENT EPIDEMIC

AUTHORED BY - TANU MITTAL

BA.LLB (2022-27)

Alliance School Of Law

Alliance University, Bangalore

ABSTRACT

“Mard Ko Dard Nahi Hota” ¹It is a common saying quote by society. When we talk about ²domestic violence. We assume that men are physically strong, so they cannot be the victims, as they are only the wrongdoers prescribed by society. In General, violence can be understood as the intentional use of force that leads to injury, damage, abuse, or sometimes death. It is mostly women who are considered to be the victims of it. Men can be the victims of domestic violence. The simple explanation is that they also live in shared, or the same house, and women can be violent. It is not the sex.³ Of a person who is the deciding factor of humanity. In general, society has developed more and more, but what about men in our society, as we are talking about equality in nature? We can clearly say that the law is silent about gender bias, which only protects women from violence rather than men and other genders, with the question of doubt. This research will address the issue of domestic violence from a different angle, which is unrecognized, unaccepted, distrusted, and swept under the rug. It will seek to explore the nature of abuse against men, cast a light on why men stay in abusive.⁴ Relationships, and their effects on abuse.

Little or nothing is known about a man’s harassment in a domestic violence situation. Generally, domestic violence is viewed from the lens of a woman, with the typical idea that women are the victims while men are the perpetrators of violence. Over time, this societal perception is beginning to subside as researchers have proven that men are also victims of

¹ <https://en-m-wikipedia>

org. translates. goog/wiki/Mard_Ko_Dard_Nahi_Hota?_x_tr_sl=en&_x_tr_tl=hi&_x_tr_hl=hi&_x_tr_pto=tc

². Domestic violence is violence committed by someone in the victim's domestic circle. Physical abuse includes assault and unlawful force

³ “Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define humans as female or male.

⁴ using harsh, insulting language

domestic violence (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980)⁵.

Patriarchy has been inserted in history at multiple layers across global societies. Although the primary understanding of patriarchy puts men in a one-up and women in a one-down position, no one benefits from patriarchy. The word patriarchy reflects “man-dominance.” In addition, when we hear words like “violence”⁶ or “abuse,”⁷ the immediate hypothesis is to see women as victims and men as perpetrators. Set straight this label, it is important to bring to light that men are also at the receiving end of violence and abuse. A recent study conducted in 2019 reveals that approximately 52% of men report having experienced violence from an intimate partner/spouse at least once in their lifetime⁸.

Further, why is violence against men unrecognized, and how does society react, as well as possible “remedies”⁹ That could help in dealing with the taboo¹⁰ The topic of abused men?

INTRODUCTION

India is a patriarchal ¹¹Country. Our society has a general hypothesis that men are strong and are supposed to cover their emotions. If they show their emotions, they are labelled as weak and epicene. In such an environment, men feel ashamed to talk about their sufferings and bottle up their feelings, instead of speaking about them in public. Many different types of domestic violence exist. It could be physical, psychological, social, economic, or sexual. Since it marks all groups equally, Violence can be committed by those in authority against the weak or by the weak in retaliation against pressure from others to deny their powerlessness. Unfortunately, our society has long had a built-in culture of Domestic Violence. It is a harsh and remarkably complicated form of Violence. Domestic abuse repeatedly occurs within the walls of the family home and is deeply rooted power, forceful and socio-economic structure that bans even the acknowledgement or recognition of the Violence.

As earlier noted, the issue of maleness also plays a significant role in society’s perception of

⁵ <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/behind-closed-doors-violence-american-family>

⁶ uses physical force to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy.

⁷ to use or treat to injure or damage

⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6437789/#:~:text=Out%20of%201000%2C%20males%2051.5,cases%2C%20physical%20assaults%20were%20severe.>

⁹ the means to implement a right or to prevent or obtain redress for a wrong; the relief

¹⁰ Taboo describes an activity or behaviour considered completely unacceptable or forbidden.

¹¹ the male head of a family, tribe, community, church, order, etc.

male Domestic Violence victims. In this study, the researcher argues that Domestic Violence against male victims does exist and that the known statistical data that portray the contrary cannot be relied on; men do not report their victimization because most would rather remain. After all, society will not believe them when a report is made. Some believe that they could get in trouble because it is often assumed that a man is always the perpetrator of an IPV case, and the woman may have acted based on self-defence, or that they should be able to handle their victimizer by themselves. For others, it is mostly the stigma that comes with being a victim that worries them the most (Arnocky & Vaillancourt, 2014)¹². These reasons relate to the ideology behind male masculinity and how most men tend to uphold this idea of masculinity even in the face of adversity.

Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code¹³ States that “Whoever, being the husband or relative of the husband of a woman, subjects such woman to cruelty shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

”Unfortunately, Section 498A does not recognize men as the victims of domestic violence. There are no laws on domestic violence that can protect men from the violence inflicted by women or their family members/relatives. Due to the stereotypical mentality of people, it is hardly believed that women can inflict violence on men. However, during personal interviews and interactions with a lot of men, it was observed that men also suffer from domestic violence. According to estimates of the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), male victimization is a significant public health problem.¹⁴

1 Spousal abuse is something that women do not just face. There have been cases where women have taken the wrong advantage of laws provided to protect them and have falsely accused their partners of Domestic Violence and Dowry Harassment¹⁵. Even though media outlets frequently cover stories about crimes against women and dowry harassment, an increasing

¹²https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265160731_Sex_Differences_in_Response_to_Victimization_by_an_Intimate_Partner_More_Stigmatization_and_Less_Help-Seeking_among_Males.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10009901/>

¹³ <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/show>

¹⁴ <https://www.cdc.gov/intimate-partner-violence/about/intimate-partner-violence-sexual-violence-and-stalking-among-men.html#:~:text=Male%20victimization%20is%20a%20significant,sexual%20violence%20in%20their%20life%20time>.

¹⁵ The legal framework for Dowry harassment and dowry death is included under the “Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961”. Giving or receiving a dowry is illegal under this act, and offenders incur serious consequences. Related provisions are 498(A) of IPC for “Cruelty”, and Section 113(B) of the Indian Evidence Act.

number of men are also victims of physical and psychological abuse at the hands of their spouses.

According to Save India Family Foundation General Secretary Rukma Chary, "Domestic violence against men in India is not recognized by the law." The prevailing belief is that men are incapable of being victims of violence. This enables ladies to escape unscathed. To shield men from domestic abuse, legislation ought to be in place. These laws will further help in reducing the misuse of Section 498A IPC.¹⁶

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act of 2005¹⁷, is the primary legislation addressing domestic violence, but its title and language may discourage male victims from seeking help. Notwithstanding the prevalent societal focus on domestic Violence against women, there exists a significant but underreported problem of domestic violence against men in India.

Domestic violence against men is a significant yet often overlooked issue that challenges the traditional perceptions of domestic abuse. While societal descriptions commonly focus on women as victims and men as perpetrators, research indicates that men can also be victims of various forms of domestic violence, including physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse. Domestic violence against men encompasses a wide range of abusive behaviours. According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 1 in 10 men experience some form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime, with 1 in 3 men encountering abusive acts at some point.¹⁸

OBJECTIVES

To examine the causes of domestic abuse directed towards men.

To talk about the function of gender equality laws in India.

To research other nations' legislation about gender.

To evaluate the judiciary's contribution to the fight against male-on-male domestic violence.

¹⁶ <https://www.ijfcm.org/html-article/13600>

¹⁷ <https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/2021#:~:text=An%20Act%20to%20provide%20for,connecte d%20therewith%20or%20incidental%20thereto.&text=Notification%3A,S.O.>

¹⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK499891/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/intimate-partner-violence/about/intimate-partner-violence-sexual-violence-and-stalking-among-men.html>.

REASONS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN

Underreported Cases: Domestic Violence against men in India remains largely unreported due to societal norms, labels, and limited awareness. Men often face barriers when seeking help or disclosing their experiences, further perpetuating the silence surrounding this issue (Nadda, 2019).¹⁹

Lack of Legal Protection: The legal framework in India primarily focuses on protecting women from domestic violence, leaving men with limited legal recourse and protection. The absence of specific laws and policies addressing domestic Violence against men perpetuates the notion that they are not susceptible to abuse (E.V, 2021)²⁰. Laws that are gender-neutral dominate India's legal environment regarding domestic abuse. The main law addressing domestic abuse is the Protection of Women from Domestic Abuse Act, 2005, yet its name and wording may deter male victims from getting assistance (Nayak, 2021).²¹

Gender Bias: Existing gender labels assume that men are always criminals and women are always victims of domestic violence. This biased perception can hinder men from coming forward, seeking support, and receiving fair treatment when they report abuse (Awsthi, 2023).²²

Support Services: Establishing support services that cater to the unique needs of male victims is crucial. This includes helplines, counselling services, and shelters that are sensitive to the experiences of male survivors.

Awareness and Education: It's critical to spread knowledge about domestic violence against men to dismiss myths and advance a more thorough comprehension of the problem. Education campaigns can help dispel myths and promote candid discussions. Global Views: Gaining knowledge from global best practices and experiences in combating domestic abuse of males can be extremely beneficial in formulating policies and initiatives in India.

¹⁹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8661038/>. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/3>.

²⁰ <https://www.tsld.com/domestic-violence-against->

²¹ <https://www.tsld.com/domestic-violence-against-men>.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/379793932_Domestic_violence_against_men_in_India_A_critical_analysis_with_special_reference_to_Indian_laws.

²² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3175099/>

Economic Distress: The likelihood of domestic violence rises when one is jobless. According to the study, the incidence of domestic violence in US couples where the male partner worked full-time was 4.7%. The rate of intimate partner violence increased to 12.3 percent for males who had two or more periods of unemployment, and to 7.5 percent for those who had only one term of unemployment.²³

²⁴The primary cause of violence (60.1%) was the husband's unemployment at the time, which was followed by arguments and non-listening to each other (23%) and the perpetrator's addiction (4.3%).²⁵

Frustration: Many women verbally abuse their partners to vent their resentment, but some resort to physical violence. Anyone, regardless of gender, who harbours hatred and anger management disorders may become cruel.²⁶ Anger management problems are common among women, and they can result in both verbal and physical abuse.²⁷ Men may experience physical and psychological effects from this, including depression.²⁸

GENDER-BIASED LAWS CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORSENING OF MEN'S CIRCUMSTANCES

It is essential to acknowledge that gender biases and inequalities affect both men and women in society. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that safeguards fairness, equality, and protection for all individuals, regardless of gender. Attempting gender-neutral laws and policies that consider the separate experiences and needs of both men and women can help further a more equitable society.

Gender-biased laws can pointedly impact the instances of men in India, potentially exacerbating their difficulties in certain areas. It's important to note that gender biases can manifest in various ways, affecting men and women differently in different contexts. While there may be instances where men face disadvantages due to specific laws or policies, it is crucial to approach this topic with a balanced perspective (Shalini Shivaji Rao Ghumare,

²³ <https://docs.iza.org/dp7515.pdf>

²⁴ <https://docs.iza.org/dp7515.pdf>

²⁵ [https://openpsychologyjournal.com/VOLUME/16/ELOCATOR/e187435012309110/FULLTEXT/#:~:text=Ma lik%20and%20Nadda%20\(2019\)%20reported,for%20perpetuating%20IPV%20%5B%2010%5D.](https://openpsychologyjournal.com/VOLUME/16/ELOCATOR/e187435012309110/FULLTEXT/#:~:text=Ma%20lik%20and%20Nadda%20(2019)%20reported,for%20perpetuating%20IPV%20%5B%2010%5D.)

²⁶ extremely unkind and unpleasant and causing pain to people or animals intentionally.

²⁷ Physical abuse is intentional bodily injury. Some examples include slapping, pinching, choking, kicking, shoving, or inappropriately using drugs or physical restraints. Signs of physical abuse.

²⁸ Depression is a mood disorder that causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest.

2021).²⁹

To consider regarding the potential impact of gender-biased laws on men in India:

Family Law: India's family laws have historically been criticized for being gender-biased, primarily favouring women in divorce, child custody, alimony, and property rights. For instance, laws like "Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code", which addresses dowry harassment, have been misused, leading to false accusations and hardship for men. While these laws aim to protect women, their implementation can sometimes lead to unfair treatment. ³⁰of men (Gupta, 2023)³¹.

Domestic Violence: "The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act" in India aims to safeguard women from domestic violence. However, the law's whole focus on women as victims and men as perpetrators can overlook male victims of domestic abuse and their needs. This can create challenges for men who experience abuse and seek legal assistance. ³²Or support (Dubey, 2023). ³³

Sexual Assault Laws: Sexual assault laws primarily focus on women as victims, given the higher prevalence of crimes against women. However, the narrow-gendered definition of sexual assault can overlook instances where men are victims of sexual crimes, preventing them from receiving adequate legal protection and support (Deshpande, 2019). ³⁴

Paternity Rights: India's legal framework provides limited rights for unwedded fathers, particularly regarding child custody and guardianship. In cases of dispute, fathers frequently face challenges securing custody or visitation rights, which can impact their relationship with

²⁹ <https://www.ijnrd.org/pubcurrentissue.php?v=8&i=5>.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/381583718_Domestic_Violence_Against_Men_By_Women_In_Punjab_An_Empirical_Study.

³⁰ Unfair treatment in the workplace refers to any form of discrimination, bullying, or harassment that negatively impacts employees. Discrimination can occur based on a person's race, gender, age, or disability, leading to unequal opportunities and treatment.

³¹ https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/Adv498_220114_0.PDF

³² Free legal aid is the provision of free legal services in civil and criminal matters for those poor and marginalized people who cannot afford the services of a lawyer for the conduct of a case or a legal proceeding in any Court, Tribunal, or Authority.

³³ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/08862605211035870>

³⁴ <https://lhssccollective.in/gender-neutral-rape-laws-in-india-limitations-of-the-bns/>

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338262246_Sociocultural_and_Legal_Aspects_of_Violence_Against_Men

their children (Patel, 2022).³⁵

Workplace Laws: While laws like "the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act" aim to protect women in the workplace, the focus on women as victims can overlook instances where men face workplace harassment or discrimination. Men may hesitate to report such incidents due to societal opportunities or the recognized lack of legal support (Thakur, 2020).³⁶

Why are Complaints Not Filed?

Fear of being laughed at: As compared to women, men are significantly less vocal about domestic violence.³⁷ The phrase "men don't cry" imposes pressure on young boys to prove masculinity to our culture. Owing to such a mentality, men are often hesitant to complain, thinking that people will not believe them or will choose to ignore their problems. There have been instances where men have removed the courage to go to the police station and file complaint against their sadistic wives, but instead, they are threatened and laughed at by the police and neighbours. These occurrences make it even more challenging for men to ask for help, and they prefer to suffer in silence as there are no laws to protect them from domestic violence.

Fear of false allegations: There are a lot of laws relating to women in India. Many women have taken the wrong advantage of Section 498A IPC³⁸ and have made false allegations about their intimate partner. Men fear that their wives might file false complaints of domestic abuse or dowry harassment against them. False cases of domestic violence can have serious adverse effects on the person accused. Scared of possible consequences, men desist from attempting to communicate about it to society.

In **Arnesh Kumar v. State of Bihar**³⁹, it was found that the domestic violence case filed by

³⁵ <https://aklegal.in/a-study-on-custody-of-child-and-visitation-rights-under-personal-laws-in-india/>

³⁶ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338262246_Sociocultural_and_Legal_Aspects_of_Violence_Against_Men

³⁷ <https://cmrj.in/008-Tiwari-Law-Apr-24.pdf>

³⁸ Whoever, being the husband or the relative of the husband of a woman, subjects such woman to cruelty shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine."
https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/Adv498_220114_0.PDF

³⁹ Equivalent citations: AIR 2014 SUPREME COURT 2756, 2014 AIR SCW 3930, (2015) 1 MADLW(CRI) 318, (2014) 3 CRILR(RAJ) 721, (2014) 4 MH LJ (CRI) 47, 2014 (3) SCC (CRI) 449, (2014) 2 GUJ LH 547, 2014 CRILR(SC&MP) 721, (2014) 2 MARRILJ 465, (2014) 140 ALLINDCAS 118 (SC), 2014 (2) CALCRILR 457,

the petitioner was false and that she misused the ⁴⁰Domestic Violence Act, of 2005. The Supreme Court observed that misuse of Section 498 A results in harassing the husband and his relatives by getting them arrested under this section.

In ⁴¹**In Bibi Parwana Khatoon v. State of Bihar**, the court acquitted the husband and held that the court must guard against false implications of the relatives.

In ⁴²**Rajesh Kumar and others v. State of U.P.19**, The Supreme Court laid down comprehensive directions to prevent the misuse of provisions of Section 498A, IPC.

Fear of losing custody: Mostly, women are seen as the victims and gain sympathy in cases of child custody and domestic violence. Men fear that if their intimate partner intentionally makes false allegations of domestic violence, there would be a possibility of losing custody of their child. If children are exposed to domestic violence, they will probably develop low self-esteem, aggressive behaviour, and psychotic behaviour. Fathers don't want to leave their children in the hands of their abusive wives and fear that if they file a complaint, then their intimate partner (wife) will try to take their children away from them. Men fear that they might become the victims of false allegations and hence prefer to become silent victims of domestic violence.

2014 (8) SCALE 250, 2014 (140) ALLINDCAS 118, 2014 (8) SCC 273, 2014 (3) ABR (CRI) 46, 2014 ALLMR(CRI) 1705, (2014) 3 CRIMES 206, (2014) 2 DMC 546, (2014) 2 ORISSA LR 562, (2014) 210 DLT 599, (2014) 2 GUJ LR 1848, 2014 CRILR(SC MAH GUJ) 721, (2014) 4 CAL HN 73, (2014) 3 RECCRIR 527, (2014) 3 CRIMES 40, (2015) 1 MPLJ 117, (2015) 1 CIVLJ 852, (2014) 4 MPHT 81, (2014) 4 KANT LJ 177, (2014) 3 KER LJ 330, (2014) 3 KER LT 143, (2014) 3 MAD LJ(CRI) 353, (2014) 58 OCR 999, (2014) 3 PAT LJR 314, (2014) 3 RAJ LW 2171, (2014) 3 CURCRIR 144, (2014) 3 ALLCRIR 2670, (2014) 8 SCALE 250, (2014) 3 JLJR 313, (2014) 3 GAU LT 102, (2014) 3 BOMCR(CRI) 362, (2014) 3 KCCR 1977, (2014) 3 DLT(CRL) 151, (2014) 86 ALLCRIC 568, (2014) 3 ALLCRILR 623, 2014 CRILR(SC&MP) 506, (2014) 2 ALD(CRL) 779

Bench: [Pinaki Chandra Ghose](#), [Chandramauli Kr. Prasad](#)

⁴⁰https://www.indiacode.nic.in/bitstream/123456789/15436/1/protection_of_women_from_domestic_violence_act%2C_2005.pdf

⁴¹ Equivalent citations: AIR 2017 SUPREME COURT 2386, 2017 (6) SCC 792, AIR 2017 SC (CRIMINAL) 880, (2017) 67 OCR 454, (2017) 2 DMC 402, (2017) 2 CURCRIR 429, (2017) 2 JLJR 405, (2017) 2 RECCRIR 970, (2017) 2 ORISSA LR 85, (2017) 100 ALLCRIC 977, 2017 CRILR(SC MAH GUJ) 521, (2017) 2 ALLCRIR 1551, (2017) 2 UC 1299, (2017) 2 CGLJ 503, (2017) 2 ALD(CRL) 269, (2017) 2 CRILR(RAJ) 521, (2017) 2 PAT LJR 450, 2017 CRILR(SC&MP) 521, (2017) 5 SCALE 773, 2017 CALCRILR 3 394, (2017) 3 BOMCR(CRI) 256, (2017) 6 MH LJ (CRI) 6, (2017) 2 CRIMES 374, (2017) 177 ALLINDCAS 76 (SC), (2017) 3 ALLCRILR 1, 2017 (3) SCC (CRI) 446, 2017 (3) KCCR SN 322 (SC)

Author: [Prafulla C. Pant](#)

Bench: [Prafulla C. Pant](#), [N.V. Ramana](#)

⁴² [Rajesh Kumar vs The State of U.P. on 29 November 2022](#) cites.

<https://indiankanoon.org/search/?formInput=cites:85473052>

Review of Literature

In the meantime, figures from organizations like the National Coalition Against Domestic Abuse and the World Health Organisation are frequently cited when discussing domestic abuse issues in the US and around the globe.

These figures tend to have the central focus on women as the primary victims and men as the abusers (Ruth, 2012).⁴³

However, various surveys and literature on the subject have shown that men are almost as abused as women (Allen-Collinson, 2009; Douglas & Hines, 2011; Fiebert, 2014; Straus & Gelles 1975).⁴⁴

Continuous contempt of domestic violence performed against men may result in an irreversible breakdown in society. Various theories have been used to explain domestic violence as well as review literature findings from various researchers on the prevalence of the forms of domestic violence against men, and what impacts male victims' reporting decision-making.

Theoretical Framework

Understanding the sociological ideas surrounding domestic violence would benefit victims, law enforcement, and the public by enabling them to recognize when a violent situation. For example, more employment and opportunities for victims could help them improve their socioeconomic standing. Raising awareness in society about the need to do away with gendered roles and perform duties following agreements reached by both parties could also help curb the power and control theory as advocated by feminist groups.

For instance, the theory of social learning would help parents learn how their actions affect their kids. Equipped with this knowledge, most parents would be reluctant to use violence around kids, and even in those cases, the criminal justice system might be more adept at removing kids from dangerous situations.

Finally, the behavioural and situational theory would give in-depth knowledge of how people

⁴³ <https://dc.etsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5668&context=etd>

⁴⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8336931/>

can involve themselves in Domestic violence and their past and current circumstances play a role in intimate partner violence. With this knowledge, victims would be more equipped to make wise choices should they end up in similar circumstances.

Sociological Theories of Domestic Violence / Intimate Partner Violence

Rather than approaching it from an individual standpoint, this theory aims to explain how the social structure of society functions.

For instance, according to socioeconomic theory, intimate partner and domestic violence are signs of disagreements and conflicts inside the family, which can only be understood by looking at the subcultures that support violence in society (Wolfgang and Farracuti, 1967)⁴⁵.

According to this hypothesis, violence is also sparsely distributed within the social structure's groupings, which is more common in impoverished metropolitan areas than in places with greater financial resources. This helps to explain why there is a strong correlation between an individual's status in society and violence. According to feminist theories, family violence is primarily caused by a person's gender. ⁴⁶This theory's proponents contend that men's power and control over women to dominate the female gender is expressed in domestic violence and intimate partner violence (Lawson, 2013).

Feminism

This perspective argues that domestic violence is closely related to gender and power inequality between the opposite sexes in a relationship. The theory is based on the societal messages that support a man's use of violence and force throughout their lifespan, and the required roles, such as the man's exhibition of control over his family and the woman's unequivocal submission to the man which is expected from both genders when in an intimate relationship (Pence & Paymar, 1993)⁴⁷.

The goal of radical feminism is for society to be changed at its core to break the patriarchy (Thobejane & Luthada, 2019), and doing otherwise, such as blaming women for their violence

⁴⁵ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/15248380231210939?icid=int.sj-abstract.citing-articles.1>

⁴⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3946893/>

⁴⁷ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238580284_Theoryderived_explanations_of_male_violence_against_female_partners_Literature_update_and_related_implications_for_treatment_and_evaluation

is deviating from what society should be doing and further reinforcing the patriarchy.

⁴⁸Additionally, Burelomova et al. (2018) added that women's violence against men should be considered as self-defense, pre-emption of violence to be perpetrated by a man, or retaliation for violence already perpetrated. They further agreed with the assertion that female violence against men is a special type of violence that should be viewed as a unique case different from other forms of violence (Dobash & Dobash, 2004)⁴⁹ and concluded that the only treatment for female violence against men would depend on the manner of education addressing patriarchy a man receives and the way women are being treated by men.

Usually, only women who have been victimized or are currently undergoing Domestic Violence /Intimate Partner Victim, victimization make use of these shelters. Having to rely on data from research conducted with these samples for the general population (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2011) may greatly affect the validity of the findings⁵⁰.

Finally, researchers have criticized the feminist movement because their principles are focused on the well-being of women alone, even when these principles are clearly detrimental to men. Most women know the effect of the law on a man who has been convicted of Domestic Violence /Intimate Partner Violence, also armed with the knowledge that abuse against men is rarely believed, which would provoke the man to violence.

The theory that Domestic Violence /Intimate Partner Violence relates to power and control, with regards to societal views on patriarchy can sometimes create an opportunity for female abusers to goad their victims into retaliation (Gadd et al., 2003; Hines et al., 2014) or when abuse has not occurred allow false accusations to uphold the narrative to involve the legal system (Tilbrook et al., 2010)⁵¹.

⁴⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3946893/>

⁴⁹ <https://www.brown.uk.com/domesticviolence/dobash.pdf>

⁵⁰ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/51580936_Understanding_the_nature_and_etiology_of_intimate_partner_violence_and_implications_for_practice_and_policy

⁵¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4768593/>

Individual Theories of Domestic Violence (DV) / Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

The individual theories seek to explain DV/IPV from an individual's view. Most research that subscribes to this theory thinks that DV/IPV commission or acceptance is peculiar to individual experience. This means that people make decisions to be either victims or perpetrators based on their prior personal experience. Some of the theories that will be described will talk more about how an individual situation can influence their involvement in Domestic Violence /Intimate Partner Violence, background, and childhood also play a big role in how they view Domestic Violence /Intimate Partner Violence.

Forms of Domestic Violence/ Intimate Partner Violence

Rape

The word rape is derived from the Latin word rapier, which refers to the act of seizing or taking by force (Alston & Goodman, 2013)⁵².

Rape is usually defined as a form of sexual intercourse or other form of sexual penetration committed by a perpetrator against the will of the victim (Smith, 2004)⁵³.

The definition of rape has varied through jurisdictions, professions (Maier, 2008), and both historically and culturally (Maier, 2008; Smith, 2004)⁵⁴.

According to the World Health Organization (2002), rape is the penetration of the vulva or anus, through the means of force or coercion, using a penis, any other body parts, or an object, notwithstanding how slight the penetration may be (Krug et al., 2002)⁵⁵.

However, the Centre in explaining forms of sexual violence, further listed other coercive, non-consensual activities such as being pinned or held down violently by the perpetrator, or engaging in aggressive sexual acts, that may or may not include penetration, as what constitutes rape.

⁵² <https://www.studocu.com/in/document/guru-gobind-singh-indraprastha-university/bba-llb/rape/21236077>

⁵³ [https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=74594#:~:text=Rape%20is%20defined%20in%20mo s,consent%20\(%20Smith%2C%202004%20\).](https://www.scirp.org/journal/paperinformation?paperid=74594#:~:text=Rape%20is%20defined%20in%20mo s,consent%20(%20Smith%2C%202004%20).)

⁵⁴ <https://legalpediaonline.com/rape-under-the-nigerian-laws/>

⁵⁵ https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/ti_pubpdf_mh0417297enn_pdfweb_20170602161141.pdf

Before 2012, forcible rape had been defined by the FBI's Uniform Crime Report to mean the carnal knowledge of a female, by a man against her will. This definition of rape has been in use since 1927.

However, the definition changed in 2012 to include the penetration of the vaginal/vulva or anus, no matter how slight, with any body part or other objects or oral penetration of a victim by another person/perpetrator, without the consent of the victim.

This updated definition of rape by the FBI recognized both genders as victims and perpetrators (Savage, 2018). Generally, sexual offenses are the least reported offenses in the United States (DOJ, 2020; FBI, 2017). Among the offenses that constitute sexual offenses, rape has the lowest reporting rate (FBI, 2020).

Even though most sexual crime is believed to be committed by male perpetrators against female victims, a proportion of sexual offences committed are carried out against men (Turchik & Edward, 2012). About 3% to 8% of the total male American population have reported experiencing an adulthood incidence of sexual victimization in their lifetime (Coxell et al., 1999; Elliott et al., 2004; Sorenson et al., 1987; U.S. Department of Justice, 2000). Meanwhile, about 5% to 10% of the total rapes recorded in the US are perpetrated against men (U.S. Department of Justice, 2000).

Despite the above statistics, most researchers have failed to capture the full range of sexual violence by ignoring violence against men due to the assertion that rape and other sexual violence cannot be carried out against a man (Robertson, 2010; 33 Struckman-Johnson & Anderson, 1998)⁵⁶.

⁵⁷On why rape against a man does not meet the same research interest and societal input as a rape committed against a woman, Turchik & Edward (2012), argued that the prevalence of male rape is often downplayed because of the various myths associated with it.

While the vast majority of rape myths have been directed towards female victims; because females have always been believed to be the only victims of rape, more recent myths are rooted

⁵⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10135558/>

⁵⁷ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0886260518817777?icid=int.sj-abstract.citing-articles.7>

in expressions such as “men cannot be raped”, “only gay men can be victims of rape”, “real men would defend themselves against rape”, “rape does not affect men as it does women,” male rape can only be carried out in a prison”, “homosexual and bisexual males deserve to be raped”, “victims of rape asked for it”, and “sexual assault by one’s sex causes homosexuality” (Anderson, 2007; Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996; Garnets et al., 1990; Kassing & Prieto, 2003; Sarrel & Masters, 1982; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992; Yeager & Fogel, 2006). Turchik & Edward (2012) further argued that these rape myths against the male gender are prevalent because of gender stereotypes and societal norms regarding masculinity and the sexuality of a man.

The researchers conducted a study on 315 college students who were asked to rate their agreement with three general rape myth beliefs:

- a) that male rape does not happen.
- b) that rape is the victim’s fault; and
- c) that men would not be traumatized by rape victimization. The researchers found that a good number of the respondents disputed the stated beliefs. Respondents disagreed most strongly with the myth surrounding traumatization.

On one hand, the study found that female respondents had a considerably greater degree of disagreement across the said beliefs than men. It also showed that the respondents were most likely to accept a myth if the rape perpetrator was a female and the victim was male. This is linked to the fact that most men would rather protect the idea of manliness rather than accept the fact that they have been victimized by a woman. The second study examined the rate at which rape myths are accepted by the public (Chapleau et al., 2008).

In order to achieve this, the researchers researched 423 college students, presenting them with a range of male rape myths, and asking the respondents to identify the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the presented myths. Chapleau et al. (2008)⁵⁸ Found that male respondents were considerably more in agreement with the male rape myth than the female respondents.

Specifically, male respondents were more supportive of the myths that reflected the idea that male rape victims are responsible for their victimization. The lowest level of agreement was

⁵⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8258646/>

observed with the statement, “Men cannot be raped”.⁵⁹ Statistically, the findings from this study correlate with the study done by Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson in 1992.

The researcher suggested that even though these myths are untrue, if not challenged, they could escalate and hinder men from reporting their victimization and seeking help. This barrier, according to Chapleau et al. (2008)⁶⁰, can manifest two-fold.

The studies all point to the fact that the Criminal Justice System plays a great role in a man’s decision to report their sexual victimisation, as the fear of not being believed or even being embarrassed and ashamed by law enforcement limits willingness to report their victimization. Accordingly, Hammond et al. (2016) argued that men may not report sexual offenses carried out against them because they do not believe that the Criminal Justice System will take their case(s) seriously, and as such, the offender may not be prosecuted and/or convicted. In cases such as these, the victims become more vulnerable to shame and stigmatization. Some of these victims believe that their disgrace can be avoided if they overlook their victimization. The lack of confidence in the Criminal Justice System by victims can sometimes be linked to the prevalence of the various rape myths against male victims.

The lack of appropriate support services directed at male victims (Scarce, 1997)⁶¹, and the lack of information on male sexual assault is another possible factor impacting reporting rates for male sexual offences.

Stalking and Harassment/Threat of Harassment

Even though the offence of stalking became known after these two events, the term stalking only became a household American terminology in 1989, upon the death of Rebecca Schaeffer, an upcoming actress who was murdered by an obsessed fan who had been stalking her.

According to the U.S NIJ (1998), stalking generally refers to harassing or threatening behaviour that an individual engages in repeatedly. This means a continuous harassing behaviour occasioned against someone (Heckels & Roberts, 2010)⁶².

⁵⁹https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5593270_Male_Rape_Myths_The_Role_of_Gender_Violence_and_Sexism

⁶⁰ <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jip.1462>

⁶¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10135558/>

⁶² <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/overview-stalking>

Forty-six percent of the male victims reported being stalked by only females, 43% reported being stalked by male stalkers, and 8% reported being stalked by both genders. Fremouw et al. (1997), in one of the first research on the prevalence of stalking in the United States, found that 34 percent of females and 17 percent of males reported stalking victimization⁶³. Because stalking does not have one acceptable definition in all states, the researchers used the acceptable definition of stalking in the state where the study was carried out.

Questions asked included, “Have you ever been stalked, which was defined as having someone knowingly and repeatedly following, harassing, or threatening you?” Results showed that male victims who reported having been stalked were often stalked by a friend or someone known. Cyberstalking has become as prominent as traditional stalking. This form of stalking is characterized by repeated and fear-inducing actions that take place in cyberspace, such as in social media, chat rooms, or emails (Alexy et al., 2005)⁶⁴.

Alexy et al. (2005), in an empirical study assessing the rate of cyberstalking in college undergraduates, found that cyberstalking criminals were most regularly the last intimate partners of the victims.

The research also found that men were more likely to be victims of cyberstalking than females. Earlier research by Novel (1999) found that most males have undergone more harassment online than females. The reason for this however may be because more men are active online than women. This research will not deny that stalking is largely carried out against women with a higher percentage of the stalkers being men. However, the male population should also be given the same attention both by law enforcement and researchers as given to women for this might regularly affect how men recognize their victimization.

The role society and media play when men report their victimization should be revisited. The attitude of the Criminal Justice System towards male victims of Domestic Violence /Intimate Partner Violence which is supposed as a lack of identification and seriousness as well as researchers' lack of interest in exploring victimization against men, greatly impacts what the public thinks about victimization against a man.

⁶³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10515444/>

⁶⁴ <https://www.thelawadvice.com/articles/understanding-cyber-stalking-a-growing-digital-menace#:~:text=Cyber%20stalking%20can%20be%20defined,platforms%20to%20track%20and%20intimidate.>

The research hypotheses for the current study are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: To maintain their masculinity, men withhold some forms of victimization from being reported. This study includes the emphasis that earlier research on the relationship between masculinity and male victimization has placed. The choice not to disclose their victimization appears to be influenced by their masculinity⁶⁵, a particular type of offense, or all types of domestic abuse, but no prior research has addressed this issue.

Hypothesis 2: When a male victim decides to come forward, he would rather tell a friend or family member than call the police. The opinions that most male DV/IPV victims hold about police officers have made this theory necessary. According to Drijber et al. (2013)⁶⁶, the main deterrent for males not to disclose abuse is their perception that law enforcement would not take them seriously.

Hypothesis 3: If a man is victimized only once, he will not report it. Psychologists view reporting criminal activity as a form of assistance-seeking behaviour. It is ambiguous whether the recurrence of sexual victimization in two out of three cases will be due to men's failure to disclose the incident (Classen, 2005)⁶⁷. The study's researcher contends that there is a cycle of victimization in which one victimization might result in another, but males are hesitant to come out with reports of victimization until they have experienced it repeatedly.

Hypothesis 4: The separation of victimization that male victims suffer has an impact on the reporting rate. Before choosing to report an incident to the police, victims of crime must classify it as a crime and choose whether it is serious enough to report, according to Greenberg and Ruback (1992)⁶⁸ reporting model. The person may choose not to report the incident until it is deemed serious, and they identify as the victim. The stigma attached to domestic abuse may make most men want to disclose certain offenses but not others.

Hypothesis 5: If men were victimized as adults, they would come forward and report it. It's a common misconception that someone who experiences abuse as a child would almost certainly

⁶⁵ Masculinity is defined as qualities and attributes regarded as characteristic of men. When we talk about masculinity, we're talking about a person's gender.

⁶⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9326798/>

⁶⁷ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15564886.2022.2069898>

⁶⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9326798/>

experience abuse as an adult (Bjornholt, 2019)⁶⁹. This discovery is the basis of this research inquiry. The researcher contends that there is a connection between childhood victimization and victimization not being reported. If a male was victimized as a child, he is unlikely to report the abuse.

Hypothesis 6: When it decides that men who have been victimized to report, there are important indicators. According to the study, several factors typically support a man's decision to disclose victimization. For instance, the victim's age, marital status, level of education, employment status, kind of victimization suffered, and frequency of such victimization. The purpose of a regression model would be to determine the validity of this hypothesis.

Suggestions

It will be difficult for the male victims to report such assault to the authorities if there is the myth that males are always the offenders and women are the victims. Further conversations, interviews, and studies are required on this topic. By planning additional efforts to increase awareness of male victims of domestic abuse and end the cycle of violence, we can all work together to bring about change. The message may be propagated, and social norms can be changed through mass media.

Raise Awareness: Start public awareness programs to disperse misconceptions and social conventions that support the myth that males cannot suffer from domestic abuse. Programs for education and awareness can help debunk myths and promote asking for assistance and reporting instances.

Support Helplines and Counselling Services: Provide specialized hotlines and counselling services for men who are victims of domestic abuse. For people in need, these services can offer emotional support, counsel, and direction. It's critical to guarantee that these services are freely available, private, and judgment-free. **Legal Defence:** To better protect male victims of domestic abuse, legal structures should be strengthened. Make sure that men are included in the definition of domestic violence and that all victims have access to legal remedies including restraining orders and protection orders. Promote the reporting and prosecution of male victims of domestic abuse.

⁶⁹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8099960/>

Supportive Shelters: Provide secure havens and short-term housing options for men who are victims of domestic abuse. In addition to offering a haven, these shelters must also offer men access to legal aid, counseling, and safe surroundings.

Education for Law Enforcement and Medical Professionals: To raise awareness of the problem of domestic violence against men, law enforcement agencies, medical professionals, and social workers should hold training sessions. Improve their comprehension of the special requirements and difficulties faced by male victims and teach them how to react helpfully and efficiently.

Engage Men in the Solution: Men should be urged to participate actively as allies in the battle against domestic abuse. Men should be included in community outreach initiatives, workshops, and campaigns that support gender equality, civil dialogue, and respectful relationships.

Boost Assistance Networks: Work together with community organizations, NGOs, and support groups to provide male victims with all-encompassing assistance. To guarantee a coordinated response and to make referrals for counselling, legal aid, and other essential services easier, establish agreements with these organizations.

Research and Data Collection: Invest in research projects to acquire trustworthy information about the incidence and consequences of domestic abuse against males. Policymakers, organizations, and stakeholders will be able to better understand the problem and create evidence-based preventative and intervention measures with the aid of this data.

Inclusive Policies: Promote gender-neutral laws that acknowledge and cater to the needs of men who are victims of domestic abuse. Urge the government to provide funding and create initiatives specifically designed to assist male victims of domestic abuse and to stop it.

Prevention and Education: Include lessons on gender equality and how to prevent domestic abuse in school curriculums and community programs. Encourage respectful and diplomatic interactions, consent, and early conflict resolution techniques.

Conclusion

It is untrue to say that "men don't cry" or "men don't feel pain." Men are increasingly being harassed by their spouses and family members due to the rise in fictitious reports of dowry harassment and domestic abuse. Anyone can become a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, ethnicity, caste, creed, or culture. Domestic abuse will never stop if this problem is not addressed seriously, as many men suffer in silence. This calls for further research and gender-neutral domestic abuse legislation in India.

It is not widely understood how common domestic violence is against men in our society. This is a result of the widespread, traditional gender standards that dictate that men should always be strong and in command. This makes men feel as though they must hide any indications of fragility⁷⁰ or vulnerability, which makes it difficult for them to seek assistance when mistreated. Several approaches can be taken to address the problem of domestic violence against men.

The first is raising awareness of the issue and how common it is. Campaigns for public awareness and education can help achieve this. Further progress can be made by enacting a specific law for men that is analogous to 'The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act of 2005' for women⁷¹. These services should be available discreetly, be easily accessible, and provide both practical and emotional support. There has been a substantial shift in the current situation. Our way of life has changed because of globalization and the development of modern technologies. Western concepts have a significant impact on our cultural norms and social ideals. The family unit as we have known it is changing.

Nowadays, women in the family can play the same protective and saving roles that men always play. It's also time to acknowledge the tragedies that men experience while they live at home. Awareness should be raised to solve these concerns by enacting gender-neutral rules and establishing necessary legal standards that should protect both spouses from domestic abuse.

⁷⁰ Fragility is a state of being delicate or breakable. The fragility of your grandmother's juice glasses might make you nervous about taking even one sip. An object's fragility makes it likely to get broken or damaged, and a person's fragility means that he's not physically strong.

⁷¹<https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/2021#:~:text=India%20Code%3A%20Protection%20of%20Women%20from%20Domestic%20Violence%20Act%2C%202005&text=Long%20Title%3A,connected%20th erewith%20or%20incidental%20thereto>.