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WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal provided 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



SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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Abstract

The most widely used definition of violence against women (VAW) is the Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, defines Violence Against Women as “any act of gender-based violence against women 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 deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private spaces”. Ahuja and Visaria have recently conducted studies on ‘domestic violence’ within marital relationship. The findings of their study have been discussed below. Domestic violence has been defined as “all actions by the family against one of its members that threaten the life, body, psychological integrity or liberty of the member. (Anthony and Miller, cited in Adriana Gomez) In identifying factors leading to wife beating, both Visaria and Ahuja, in their survey, have tested the co-relationship between wife beating and education. According to Visaria’s survey in Gujarat, illiterate women face more violence than literate women. Relationship between abusive behaviour and level of education has been found to be statistically significant (Visaria). Illiterate women and those with education up to primary level (class 4) tend to be more subjected to violence as compared to those who had received education beyond the primary level. However, one has to keep in mind that the percentage of literate women in Gujaratis overall only between 20% to 50%. In one district, Banaskantha in Kutch, the total percentage of literate women is even lesser than 20%. In contrast a study by Ahuja shows that there is no significant relationship between beating and educational level of

the couple. Educated women are beaten as much by their husbands as those who are illiterate or less educated.

Keywords: *The Constitution of India, Violence, Women, India, Relationship, Domestic Violence etc.*

Introduction

In almost all societies over the world the first question parents and relatives ask when the newborn emerges into this world is the same: is it a boy or a girl? The urgency and the intensity in the question reveal the great importance that human societies attach to sex differences. This is a manifestation of the fact that every societies differentiates between its men and women and prescribes separate sets of values, norms and role specifications for the two gender categories. Although such a differentiation, in principle, does not lead to the superiority and dominance of one group over the other, in practice gender dissimilarity is translated into gender inequality. No wonder therefore, the gender inequality is perhaps the oldest form of structural inequality and hence the resultant domination and exploitation of one sex by the other¹.

Throughout human history, the inferior status of women has been taken as a self-evident fact of nature of life and this assumption was shared by both men and women. Its multi-faceted dimensions have started unfolding only recently after social scientists have increasingly engaged in reflective and multi-pronged analysis of this critical issue. Suffice it is to state this fact in a sentence here because we reserve the latter half of the present chapter for an elaborate discussion of this issue.

Such is the case of the 'fair sex' despite the known fact that India is one among the early third world nations to constitutionally consider women at par with men in all respects including franchise, education, employment and other life opportunities. In fact, much before independence, the freedom struggle involved scores of Indian women who sacrificed their traditional gender roles as housewives and got into the main stream of national life. They braved the conservative elements in the Indian society which looked down upon them for crossing the boundaries of respectable femininity and sex role expectations of traditional social structure. It

¹ F. Agnes, "Women's Movement Within a Secular Framework: Redefining the Agenda" 29 Economic & Political Weekly 1123 (1994).

is really sad that their sacrifice remains only a part of history books and the younger generations of women remain where they were in social hierarchy².

What it means to be 'male' and 'female' is a question asked explicitly or implicitly in every society- traditional or modern. Through cross cultural research studies by social scientists like Mead and others, it has been firmly established that 'culture' rather than 'nature' is the major influence in determining the differences between the sexes. As a result, it is now agreed that the word 'women' or 'man' in a given social context can be explained in cultural forms more precisely and more completely than in terms of innate qualities. For instance, from the time they are born, children are taught how to become men and, in the typical Indian cultural milieu girl is taught to act 'feminine' by expressing gentleness, responsiveness, timidity or through helping her mother in domestic chores at a tender age, whereas the boy is taught to express physical courage, toughness, aggression, competence and the like³.

Domestic Violence

Defining violence against women

The most widely used definition of violence against women (VAW) is: The Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, defines Violence Against Women as "any act of gender based violence against women 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 deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private spaces"⁴.

The Centre for Diseases Control in the US has defined four different types of violence:

- Physical violence
- Sexual violence
- Threat of physical or sexual violence, and
- Psychological or emotional abuse.

² K. Ahmad, "Studies of Educated Working Women in India: Trends and Issues" 14 Economic and Political Weekly 1435- 1440 (1979).

³ Ahola, "The Association Between Burnout and Physical Illness in the General Population-Results from the Finish Health 2000 Study" 61 Journal of Psychosomatic Research 59-66 (2006).

⁴ S. Azim & Riti, "Study on Measuring Women Empowerment in Family Decision Making Process in Social, Economical and Household Spheres" 5 Behavioural Research Review 266-273 (2013).

Social Perspective of Domestic Violence

The second approach includes the particular plight of women with regard to the so-called "second generation" human rights such as rights to food, shelter, health care, and employment. This is an approach favored by those who see the dominant Western human rights tradition and international law as too individualistic and identify women's oppression as primarily economic.

This tendency has its origins among socialists and labour activists who have long argued that political human rights are meaningless to many without economic rights as well. It focuses on the primacy of the need to end women's economic subordination as the key to other issues including women's vulnerability to violence. This particular focus has led to work on issues like women's right to organize as workers, and opposition to violence in the workplace, especially in situations like the free trade zones which have targeted women as cheap, non-organized labour. Another focus of this approach has been highlighting the feminization of poverty, or what might better be called the increasing impoverishment of females. Poverty has not become strictly female, but females now comprise a higher percentage of the poor⁵.

Looking at women's rights in the context of socioeconomic development is another example of this approach. Third world peoples have called for an understanding of socioeconomic development as a human rights issue. Within this demand, some have sought to integrate women into development and have examined women's specific needs in relation to areas like land ownership or access to credit. Among those working on women in development, there is growing interest in violence against women as both a health and development issue. If violence is seen as having negative consequences for social productivity, it may get more attention. This type of narrow economic measure, however, should not determine whether such violence is seen as a human rights concern. Violence as a development issue is linked to the need to understand development not just as an economic issue but also as a question of empowerment and human growth. One of the limitations of this second approach has been its tendency to reduce women's needs to the economic sphere, which implies that women's rights will follow automatically with third world development, or socialism. This has not proven to be the case. Many working from this approach are no longer trying to add women into either the Western capitalist or socialist development models, but rather seek a transformative development

⁵ S. Amin, Agra, "Social Freedom Among Women in Punjab" 5 Indian Journal of Health and Well-Being 745-747 (2014).

process that links women's political, economic and cultural empowerment.

Social Freedom

For centuries, philosophers (inside and outside of high school social studies classrooms) have struggled with defining the meaning of freedom and tracing its historical development. In the United States, most citizens have accepted some social restraints on their actions, though they frequently disagree over what the limits should be. Libertarians identify freedom with the absolute right of individuals to control their own lives and want sharp restrictions on the power of government to interfere with the social and economic market place. On the other hand, religious conservatives often want governments to severely limit the options available to women who want to terminate pregnancies and oppose extending certain legal rights, including health benefits for partners and the right to marry the person they choose, to homosexuals. Defining freedom in the modern world is complicated. The activities that follow are designed to help high school students explore the complex meaning of freedom. The first activity provides students with a series of definitions of freedom from the past and present. It asks students, working either individually or in groups, to evaluate the definitions and arrive at their own. The second activity uses Amartya Sen's idea of substantive freedom to help students critically evaluate international ratings presented in Freedom House's 1999-2000 survey Freedom in the World. Again, students can work either individually or in groups.

In *Freedom: Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* (1991), Orlando Patterson declared, "today freedom stands unchallenged as the supreme value of the Western world (ix)." However, he also acknowledged a problem with discussions of the meaning of freedom, because "like love and beauty, (it) is one of those values better experienced than defined...Nearly everyone in the Western world worships freedom and will declare herself willing to die for it. Like all intensely held beliefs, it is assumed to be so self-evident that there is no need for explicitness". Patterson believes that what the contemporary world understands by the concept of freedom is actually a three-part composite of ideas that initially emerged in ancient Greece and have developed during the last two millennium of western history. His book traces the idea of freedom in Western civilization and seeks to identify its survival and evolution in different historical epochs.⁶

⁶ Supra note 3 at 66.

Patterson identifies the three ideas associated with our modern concept of freedom as “personal”, “sovereignal” and “civic” freedoms. He believes these ideas can be in conflict within any given society, making human freedom a matter of degree, rather than an absolute value. According to Patterson, personal freedom means not being coerced by individuals or governments and having the ability, within acceptable limits, to “do as one pleases.” Sovereignal freedom can mean the ability to restrict the personal freedom of others in order to enhance your own economic or social benefits. This includes the power of the master over the slave and of the capitalist over the worker. Contradictions between personal and sovereignal freedom explain how the Southern states could secede from the United States in defense of both freedom and slavery.

A different perspective on the idea of freedom is offered by Nobel Prize winning economist, Amartya Sen. His concern is substantive (quality of life), rather than limited procedural, freedom (voting). Sen believes there is a fundamental relationship between individual and political freedom and economic development, with the “expansion of freedom” serving as both “the primary end and the principal means of development.” Sen argues that a meaningful concept of freedom for the twenty-first century cannot separate political rights from the opportunity to have an education, receive adequate health care and live in safety. Any society that calls itself free must insure that its citizens enjoy this broader substantive freedom. He is critical of a wealthy country like the United States, where life expectancy, child mortality and the availability of health care differ markedly for different racial and ethnic groups.

Economical Perspective of Domestic Violence

Violence against women and girls has a multi-dimensional effect on the overall health of an economy both in the short-term and long-term.

In the short term, women from abusive homes are likely to work fewer hours and be less productive when they do work. In the long run, high levels of domestic violence can decrease the number of women in the workforce, minimize women’s acquisition of skills and education, and result in less public investment overall as more public resources are channelled to health and judicial services.

Previous studies have found domestic violence costs a given economy between 1 and 2 percent

of GDP. However, these studies use simple accounting mechanisms and often don't account for potential reverse causality.

An economic downturn, such as the one caused by the pandemic, can contribute to an uptick in domestic violence. This exacerbates the economic costs of domestic violence compared to normal times.

Domestic violence is more detrimental to countries without protective laws against domestic violence and countries rich in natural resources where extractive industries are more likely to crowd out more women-centered jobs and lead to less economic power among females.

We also found that the economic costs of violence against women is lower in countries like South Africa, where there is a lower gender gap in education between partners and where women have more decision-making power than in other sub-Saharan African countries.⁷

Stopping violence against women is an indisputable moral imperative, but our research shows that it's economically important too. The economic costs of domestic violence are higher during downturns and could make recovery more challenging.

Countries should take efforts now to strengthen laws and protections against domestic violence. Strong laws are critical to deter violence against women, protect victims of domestic violence, and promote women's participation in the workforce.

Improving education opportunities for girls is an important step in the longer term. Reducing the gender education gap gives women more economic freedom and less ability to be influenced and controlled by men.

In efforts to build back better from the pandemic, policies to support women and combat gender-based violence are more important than ever.

- Under the PWDV Act, economic abuse is defined as the deprivation of all or any economic or financial resources to which the aggrieved person is entitled under any law.

⁷ S. Ashraf, "A Study of Human Right Awareness Among Prospective Teachers" 2 International Journal of Scientific Research 535-536 (2013).

- The law recognises that prohibition or restriction to continued access to resources or facilities which the aggrieved woman is entitled to use is economic abuse as well.
- Further, the disposal of household effects, any alienation of assets whether movable or immovable, valuables or other property in which the aggrieved woman has an interest is also included under the meaning of economic abuse.
- Specific to the Indian context, economic abuse also brings up related issues such as dowry and exploitation of stridhan.
- Stridhan is whatever a woman receives during her lifetime. Women have an absolute right over their Stridhan.
- Moreover, the Courts have held that deprivation of economic or financial resources or stridhan amounts to domestic violence under the PWDV Act.
- Further, Act provides, a protection order can be passed in favour of the aggrieved woman prohibiting the alienation of any assets, operating bank lockers or bank accounts, regardless of single or joint ownership, without the leave of the Magistrate.⁸
- This also includes the aggrieved woman's stridhan or any other property held either jointly or separately by both parties.
- **Impact:** Economic violence holds back women from being truly independent, obstructs their ability to take decisions regarding their lives, and is frequently a major contributing factor in their inability to leave abusive situations, or separate themselves from their abuser.
- A cross-sectional survey in informal settlements in Mumbai, found that 23% of ever-married women reported at least one form of economic abuse. Economic abuse was independently associated with positive screens for moderate-severe depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation.

Status of the Economic Abuse in India

- In 2022, a survey conducted by Tata AIA, a leading Indian insurance company, revealed that 59 per cent of working women do not make their own financial decisions, indicating the extent of financial dependency of Indian women.
- The NFHS 5 finds that 32% of married women (18-49 years) have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional spousal violence. The most common type of spousal

⁸ M. B. Bhatt, "Effect of Employment on Life Satisfaction of Working and Non-Working Women" 1 International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research 69-71 (2013).

violence is physical violence (28%), followed by emotional violence and sexual violence.

- A 2017 study by the All-India Democratic Women's Association found that 72% of women had experienced some form of economic abuse in their lifetime.

Factors that Contribute to the High Prevalence of Economic Abuse

- **Patriarchal Attitudes:** Economic abuse is often rooted in the patriarchal norms that give men more preference over women in the household and society. Women may face discrimination and barriers in accessing education, employment, and property rights, which make them more dependent on their male partners.
- **Lack of Economic Opportunities for Women:** Women in India are often denied access to education and employment opportunities. This makes them more financially dependent on their husbands, which can make them more vulnerable to economic abuse.
- **Lack of Awareness:** Many victims of economic abuse may not recognize it as a form of domestic violence or may not know their rights and options to seek help.⁹
- **Social Stigma:** Economic abuse may also be normalized or justified by cultural or religious beliefs that assign different roles and responsibilities to men and women. This can discourage victims from seeking help or reporting abuse.

Psychological Perspective of Domestic Violence

On average, more than half of the women seen in mental health settings are being or have been abused by an intimate partner. There are specific diagnoses that are commonly experienced by these women: post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety. In addition, traumatic events produce profound and lasting changes in physiological, arousal, emotion, cognition, and memory- changes that wouldn't necessarily result in psychological diagnosis.

It's important to understand that someone's mental health can be impacted without having PTSD, depression, or anxiety. Whether or not someone develops PTSD as a result of domestic violence depends on numerous factors, not everyone is impacted in the same way. The ways in which a victim-survivor's mental health can be impacted can include: difficulties with being

⁹ R. Bradley & R. Corwyn, "Life satisfaction among European American, African American, Mexican American, and Dominican American Adolescents" 28 International Journal of Behavioural Development 385 (2004).

productive at work, school, with caregiving, establishing and engaging in healthy relationships, and adapting to change and coping with adversity.

A victim-survivor's mental health can also be weaponized and used as another form of violence and harm. Mental health coercion is a commonly used tactic that is targeted toward the victim-survivor's mental health as part of a broader pattern of abuse and control and includes: deliberately attempting to undermine a survivor's sanity, preventing a survivor from accessing treatment, controlling a survivor's medication, using a survivor's mental to discredit them with sources of protection, support, to manipulate the police or influence child custody decisions, or engaging mental health stigma to make a survivor think no one will believe them. Other common tactics that target mental health include other forms of emotional abuse, especially gaslighting.

Role of the Judiciary for Protecting the Rights of Women from Domestic Violence

“In *S.R. Batra vs. Smt. Taruna Batra*¹⁰, the court held that the wife is only entitled to claim residence in a shared household. The shared home means the house belonging to the husband, or taken on rent by the husband, joint family property in which the husband is the member of that family”.

“In *Krishna Bhattacharjee v. Sarathi Choudhury and Another*¹¹, Supreme Court said that there are some duties or principles followed by the courts while deciding the domestic violence case”.

“In *Vimlaben Ajitbhai Patel v. Vatslaben Ashokbhai Patel and Ors*¹², the court said that the husband has a personal obligation to maintain his wife”.

“In *V.D Bhanot vs. Savita Bhanot*¹³, the Delhi High Court said that even the wife who had shared a household before the domestic violence act came into force would be entitled to protect the domestic violence act”.

Lasting Impacts

A common experience for domestic violence victim-survivors that has ways of impacting their mental health wellness is a loss of agency. “Agency is the technical term for the feeling of being in charge of your life: knowing where you stand, knowing that you have a say in what

¹⁰ AIR 1979 Pat 266.

¹¹ (1979) 4 SCC 260.

¹² (1981) 4 SCC 335.

¹³ AIR 2003 SC 3331.

happens to you, knowing that you have some ability to shape your circumstances. Agency starts with what scientists call interception, our awareness of our subtle sensory, body-based feelings: the greater that awareness, the greater our potential to control our lives. Trauma can shut down victim-survivors inner compass and rob them of the imagination they need to create something better.¹⁴

Not being able to discern what is going on inside their bodies causes them to be out of touch with their needs and they have trouble taking care of themselves, whether it involves eating the right amount at the right time or getting the sleep they need. This failure to be in touch with their bodies contributes to their well-documented lack of self-protection and high rates of victimization and also to their remarkable difficulties feeling pleasure, sensuality, and having a sense of meaning.”

Childhood Experiences and Impacts

The ways in which a victim-survivor of domestic violence responds to trauma, is impacted by trauma, and their ability to lead happy, healthy lives is largely influenced by their childhood experiences. Many of the ways we know how to handle stress and navigate conflict stem from our childhood when we learned different strategies through watching our parents/caregivers and those around us. Children are unfortunately yet often left out of the discussion of domestic violence, with the primary focus being on adults experiencing intimate partner violence. However, we know that experiencing domestic violence in childhood has significant detrimental impacts on children. Dr. Van Der Kolk says “Not being seen, not being known, and having nowhere to turn to feel safe is devastating at any age, but it is particularly destructive for young children, who are still trying to find their place in the world.”

Study Based on Survey

Another community-based study was undertaken with 346 women across five villages of Kheda district in rural Gujarat with an aim to examine interrelations between women's education and their health seeking behaviour. Overall 66 percent women reported being subjected to verbal or physical violence in their marriage in the past and that they continue to experience it. Nearly 42 percent of all women, reported having experienced domestic violence

¹⁴ M. Balachandran, A.S. Raakhee, et.al., “Study on Life Satisfaction and Alienation of Elderly Males and Females” 33 Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology 157-160 (2007).

which was more than just a heated verbal exchange between spouses but which involved physical assault by the husbands on the wife. Remaining 23 percent of the women reported that they have been periodically scolded or subjected to abusive language by their husbands and taunted as “good for nothing”, or have been threatened to be locked up in the house or not allowed to move out, but have not been physically beaten by their husbands. Of those experiencing physical violence, slapping was reported as the most common form of violence. Hitting with any object was another common form of violence experienced. Sexual assault was reported by 10 percent of women.

Domestic violence in India: An empirical analysis. Domestic violence is one of the crimes against women which are linked to their disadvantageous position in the society. Domestic violence refers to violence against women especially in matrimonial homes. Therefore, domestic violence is recognized as the significant barriers of the empowerment of women, with consequences of women's health, their health-seeking behaviour and their adoption of small family norm. However, an attempt has been made to study whether ever married women of reproductive age group in India view wife-beating as justified. In addition, the prevalence of beatings and physical mistreatment since age 15 and also in last one year are used as the dependent variables. The National Family Health Survey II data, 1998-99 which covered 90,303 ever married women is used in the analysis. Background characteristics such as education, age, marital duration, place of residence, caste, religion, sex of the head of the household, standard of living, work status of women, exposure to mass media and the autonomy of women with respect to decision making, freedom of movement and access to money are linked to domestic violence. An autonomy index is computed to understand the relationship of women's autonomy with domestic violence. Bivariate analysis is used to examine the variation of domestic violence by background characteristics. Logistic regression is carried out to predict the domestic violence with the selected independent variables. The analysis shows that the women belonging to low socio-economic status are more likely to agree with each of the different reasons justifying wife-beating. Again domestic violence is more among lower autonomy and women belonging to low socio-economic status.

Women experience some form of domestic violence in their life time. Specifically, the wives of alcoholic's experience manifolds of physical, psychological and sexual threats and consequently they develop depression, guilt, tension, fear, loss of trust, low self-esteem and high suicide risk. The purpose of the study was to assess objectively domestic violence and

suicide risk of the wives of alcoholics and non-alcoholics. Retrospective design was used to measure domestic violence and suicide risk of the wives of alcoholics and non-alcoholics by using suitable psychological scales. 32 wives of alcoholic patients and thirty-two non-alcoholics (normal subjects) were selected for this study. Domestic violence and suicide risk scales were administered to the patients and accompanying persons of other psychiatric disorders and demographic variables such as age, religion, income, education, and occupation were collected from the patients. Percentage, mean, standard deviation and t-test were used for analyzing and interpreting the obtained data. Results revealed that the wives of alcoholics and non-alcoholics differed significantly in physical and psychological aspects of domestic violence but they did not differ in sexual aspect and the groups differed significantly in suicide risk. The wives of alcoholics had significantly more domestic violence in physical and psychological aspects and more suicide risk than the wives of non-alcoholics who came for treatment to the hospital. The present findings could help the planners to develop strategy / intervention to reduce the domestic violence and the suicide risk of the wives of alcoholics for better coping and mental health.

The present investigation attempted to examine the differences among personality, emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction of violent and non-violent couples. Total sample comprised 60 couples (30 each violent and non-violent), randomly drawn from Patiala city in the age range of 25-45 years, both working professionally. Psychological measures were used to assess personality Big five inventory, Emotional intelligence scale and marital satisfaction (ENRICH Couple Scales). Significant t-values indicated differences between the two types of couples on various dimensions of Personality, Emotional Intelligence and Marital satisfaction.

A community based study of married women from Mumbai. In the field survey the major task was eliciting information on domestic violence from 424 ever-married women who agreed to participate in the survey. The study examined three major forms of violence - physical, psychosocial and economic during a one-year reference period and during their lifetime. Detailed probe list was used to reduce underreporting. Field experience showed that for women sharing psychosocial violence was more acceptable than sharing about other forms of violence. Though in this study we have included this as a case of 'domestic violence' many of the women who reported this viewed it as a part of married life and not as violation of her rights. Data on experience of physical violence was reported with some difficulty. Perhaps the women who experience severe forms of physical violence and who are not in a position to report it might

have withdrawn from the interview itself considering the high rate of 14.5 percent refusals. Violence during their entire marital life was reported by about 64 percent of the women, which is higher than other studies. Overall violence reported in this study is lesser as compared to some other studies (Mahajan A, 1990). Results indicated that 17 percent of women experienced domestic violence during twelve months prior to the study. These cases of domestic violence constitute the reference for understanding the correlates of violence. Among the women experiencing violence it was mainly psychosocial and followed by physical and economic violence. This study used a detailed checklist for probing to reduce under reporting of domestic violence and this resulted in an additional 51 percent of the different types of violence being reported. Analysis of differentials in violence within entire marital life showed younger women to be experiencing higher violence compared to their older counterparts. The prevalence of domestic violence was lesser when age difference between spouses is less. Violence was also reported to be lesser among woman who married at a later age than those who got married at an early age. This is mainly due to power imbalance created by high inter spousal age difference and low age at marriage, making women more vulnerable to violence. Social status indicators showed that education and occupational levels of husband to be more closely related to violence within marriage than in the case of women.

In a paper based on a study conducted in Bangladesh with 199 women in Gazipur district near Dhaka city. 72% of women interviewed reported that they were scolded, mentally tortured or physically harassed by their husband in the last one year. Some of the more common forms of violence were scolding (40 percent), slapping (44 percent) or severe beating (19 percent) and forced sex (15 percent). The women were also mentally tortured by not allowing them to meet with parents or other near maternal relatives (24 percent), by criticizing their work (21 percent) or looks (10 percent). This paper clearly brings out the high prevalence of violence against women by their husbands.

The study mainly recorded physical and sexual violence against women. In another similar study, Rebello (1982) surveyed 50 (30 rural and 20 urban) battered women in South Kanara district of Karnataka. Her findings are also similar, that the existence of wife beating cuts across the classes, educational levels, age groups, religion, duration of marriage, number of children, type of marriage (love or arranged), dowry paid in marriage, type of family (joint or nuclear), alcohol intake by husband and the occurrence of extra-marital affairs by any spouse. But these two studies could not be generalized due to their narrow focus.

Also, (1998) studied the prevalence of domestic violence in the two states of Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh amongst 1842 women aged 15-39 years from two districts each of UP and TN. The study findings revealed that 36-38 percent of Tamil women and 42-48 percent of women from Uttar Pradesh suffered beating by their husbands.

And in Inclen, (2000) A community based multi centric study was undertaken by INCLEN across 7 sites in India (Bhopal, Chennai, Delhi, Lucknow, Nagpur, Thiruvanthapuram, and Vellore). This study covered 9,938 households with each family having at least one woman between the ages of 15 and 49 & having at least child from three strata – rural, urban slum, and urban non-slum over these seven sites. The findings of the study indicate that 43.5 percent reported at least one psychologically abusive behaviour and 40.3 percent reported experiencing at least one form of violent physical behaviour. One out of every four had experienced slapping, kicking, hitting, beating, threat or use of a weapon, or forced sex in the last 12 months.

And also in IIPS and ORC, (2000) The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-2) for the first time attempted to measure the prevalence of violence against women including domestic violence but not limiting it to violence committed by a woman's husband. The all India figures showed that 21 percent of ever married women in India have experienced violence since the age of 15 years. According to the survey 19 percent have been beaten or physically mistreated by husbands 2 percent by in-laws and 3 percent by other persons. Level of violence was reported to be higher in rural areas than in urban areas, nuclear households than in non-nuclear households, working women than in non-working woman, non-educated than in educated and in low standard of living category women than in high standard of living category.

Rao and Bloch, (1993) studied on "Wife beating: Its causes and its implications for nutrition allocation to children: An economic and anthropological case study of a rural South Indian community", studied 170 women by taking 100% sample of potter community in three villages in rural Karnataka. They found that 22% of women report is being assaulted by their husbands, while 12% reported being beaten on the average 2.65 times in last one month. From their informal interviews and ethnographic data, they concluded that prevalence rates are "vastly under-reported". Rao and et. al, (1994) A study of domestic violence in urban middle class families. From the department of psychiatry in the medical college at Mysore studied 230 urban middle and upper class women who were married and had lived with their partner for at least a period of one year. Predominantly in terms of psychological

and emotional violence, the commonest problem reported was ignoring one's feelings (20 percent), refusal to work (14 percent), humiliation in public (13 percent), withholding of affection (12 percent) criticism/shouting (12 percent), ridiculing of her values or beliefs (11 percent), refusal to socialize with her (10 percent), controlling money or decision making (10 percent). Women's dominant reaction to violence was found as seeking permission to spend money and for socialization (33 percent) and watching the mood of husband (31 percent). The main causes for violence given by women included financial problems (65 percent), stress at work (43 percent) and jealousy (40 percent). The authors opine that this study validates the position that 'women victims view their own self esteem as linked with their ability to satisfy the needs and desires of others, and thus see themselves as inadequate or bad if men beat them.'

Poonacha and Pandey, (1999) examines state, collaborative, NGO and community based initiatives addressing domestic violence in the two states of Karnataka and Gujarat. It was felt that both the state and the voluntary sector have actively promoted interventions in a few key areas like public policy, law enforcement, family counselling, shelter and short stay homes and self-help collectives. This study concluded that the government run initiatives are more of a short term nature while those adopted by the NGO sector seek to increase political and preventive and long-term, pursuing consciousness-raising sessions and the economic and social empowerment of women, underscored by the goal of gender equality and the prevention of domestic violence. Similar trends were seen by Mitra in cross sectional survey of various actors involved in intervention on domestic violence in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Mitra (2000) too, found that the NGO community had adopted a multi-pronged approach to domestic violence, spanning preventive, supportive and rehabilitative measures. She has also identified some parameters of best practice, which appear to be critical in evaluating responses to violence against women.

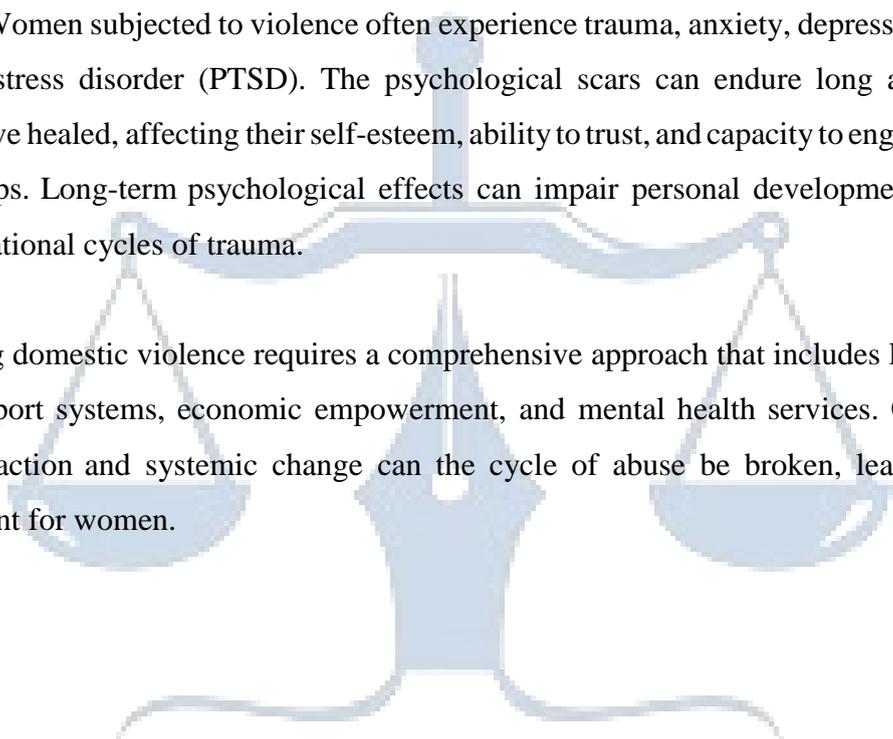
Conclusion

The issue of domestic violence against women is a multifaceted problem that affects individuals and society at large. From a Social perspective, domestic violence perpetuates gender inequality, reinforcing patriarchal structures that marginalize women. Societal norms, cultural beliefs, and family structures often condone or minimize such violence, making it difficult for victims to seek help. Women facing domestic violence frequently encounter social stigma, leading to isolation and marginalization.

From an Economic Perspective, domestic violence has profound consequences for women's financial stability and independence. Victims often face economic abuse, which includes controlling their access to resources, limiting employment opportunities, or forcing them into financial dependency. The economic cost of domestic violence extends beyond the individual, affecting productivity, healthcare, and social services, resulting in significant societal financial burdens.

The Psychological Perspective highlights the severe mental health consequences of domestic violence. Women subjected to violence often experience trauma, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The psychological scars can endure long after physical injuries have healed, affecting their self-esteem, ability to trust, and capacity to engage in healthy relationships. Long-term psychological effects can impair personal development and create intergenerational cycles of trauma.

Addressing domestic violence requires a comprehensive approach that includes legal reforms, social support systems, economic empowerment, and mental health services. Only through collective action and systemic change can the cycle of abuse be broken, leading to safer environment for women.



WHITE BLACK
LEGAL