

Gender Based Violence : Attack on Human Dignity Causes & Remedies

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Abstract

Gender based violence in itself is a question on integrity of Article 14 of the Indian Constitution. GBV marks the differentiation between men and women on grounds of religion race, caste, gender or place of birth etc. Every person has a right to live freely with dignity and no one has a right to refrain people from exercising their fundamental right. Therefore, this article is primarily based on secondary data and literature review that showcases the recent trends and scenario of GBV particularly in the Indian perspective. The main theme of this article is to highlight the causes that are responsible for gender based violence and also to suggest some measures to control it.

Keywords: GBV, Integrity, Right, Recent trends.

Introduction

The existence of violence is not new, it is becoming more and more prevalent day by day. Moreover, the irony is that despite of being much talked about its awareness, the situation is getting worse. The mental or physical trauma could be faced by anyone irrespective of their gender. There could be numerous causes of violence like psychological, behavioural, social etc. Sometimes due to mental pressure at workplaces people tend to become violent. It also has been observed that due to the unfulfillment of desires and dissatisfaction in their careers or personal life people become violent. It is quite common that whenever we talk about violence it is assumed about violence done by men against women. On the contrary, violence by women against men is also a phenomena that happens. It includes economic, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, as well as psychological abuse that harms a person's mental and physical health. Therefore, both men as well as women are victims of gender-based violence. In Indian scenario, which has been male-dominated, people find it very difficult to believe that men can also be victims of domestic violence like women. So, there may be a reason why domestic violence against men is not recognized in any law in India. However, contrary to popular belief, the number of men, being psychologically and physically abused by women is increasing. This belief is mainly due to presumption that, men are always guilty, while women, on the other hand, are always innocent.

Indian scenario- This article focusses on the violence against women in India, as well as the factors responsible for such violence. The patriarchal mindset is so much inculcated in the minds of Indians that it instils the belief that one gender is superior to the other. In a developing nation like ours, occurrence of such incidents are adversely affecting human dignity. Women have power but they aren't aware of it because of reasons like unawareness of their rights, societal pressures, fear of reputation of their family etc.

Causes of Gender based Inequality

Over the period of time we have clearly witnessed that the world has somewhat achieved gender equality. More and more representation of women in different areas is there but still much room is there to achieve. Here are some vital causes of gender inequality.

1. Access to Education is not even- Around the world, women still have less access to education than men. When girls are not educated on the same level as boys, it has a huge effect on their future and the kinds of opportunities they'll get.

2. Employment Equality is lacking - Only 6 countries in the world give women the same legal work rights as men. In fact, most economies give women only $\frac{3}{4}$ the rights of men.

3. Segregation of Jobs - One of the main causes for gender inequality within employment is the division of jobs. In most societies, there's an inherent belief that men are simply better equipped to handle certain jobs.

4. Sluggish Legal protections- According to research from the World Bank, over one billion women don't have legal protection against domestic sexual violence or domestic economic violence. Both have a significant impact on women's ability to thrive and live in freedom. In many countries, there's also a lack of legal protections against harassment in the workplace, at school, and in public. These places become unsafe and without protection, women frequently have to make decisions that compromise and limit their goals.

5. Autonomy over one's own body is absent- Many women around the world do not have authority over their own bodies or when they become parents. Accessing birth control is frequently very difficult. There are various reasons for this such as a lack of options, limited access, and cultural/religious opposition.

6. Medical care facilities not up to the mark- Generally, it has been observed that women receive less medical attention than their male counter parts.

7. Religious freedom is lacking- According to the World Economic Forum, when extremist ideologies (such as ISIS) come into a community and restrict religious freedom, gender inequality gets worse. When there's more religious freedom, an economy becomes more stable thanks to women's participation.

8. Under representations of women in Politics - Despite progress in this area over the years, women are still under represented in government and the political process. Due to this the resultant is that certain issues that female politicians could bring up such as parental leave and childcare, pensions, gender equality are often inadequately represented.

9. Presence of Racism - It would be impossible to talk about gender inequality without talking about racism. It affects what jobs women of colour are able to get and how much they're paid, as well as how they are viewed by legal and healthcare systems.

10. Social stigma- Overall mindset of a society has a significant impact on gender inequality. How society determines the differences and value of men vs. women plays a starring role in every arena, whether it's employment or the legal system or healthcare.

Suggestions for Combating Violence against Women- Here are some of the suggestions that can help to reduce gender based inequality and as a resultant, gender based violence

1. Treating mental illness and mental disorders

Psychiatric illness should be identified and treated promptly. Patients with active symptoms should be kept in a protected environment till substantial improvement takes place.

- ☐ Women with severe mental illness need special attention. Public awareness needs to be created with respect to the following:
- ☐ Women need protection but those with mental illness need more care and protection.
- ☐ The real problem is not mental illness, but the negative attitude toward it.
- ☐ Many medical illnesses create more problems in marriage, than mental illnesses.
- ☐ Good family support is greatly needed.
- ☐ If the husband's family accepts the woman with mental illness, the society will also follow.

2. Restriction on use of alcohol

There should be prohibition of alcohol use in mass gatherings and institutions, in public places like trains and buses. The number of alcohol outlets should be decreased. The age for purchasing alcohol may be raised to 30 years. Special checks on festive occasions are recommended.

3. Control over media

Sexual material on media should be censored. Good themes, which condemn violence and glorify rehabilitation of the victim, should be projected. Ban on pornography should be strictly implemented.

4. Strengthening the institution of marriage

Strong marital bond would act as a deterrent.

5. Law enforcement

Efficient and accountable law enforcement machinery at all levels (administration, government, police and judiciary) is needed.

6. Change in mind set of the judiciary

This is the need of the day. New legislation is needed to provide for granting 'Interim Relief' to a victim of severe crimes.

7. Code of conduct

Code of conduct at work place, school and home, with respect to interaction with persons of opposite gender should be outlined and implemented.

8. Gender sensitization

Gender sensitization by parents and teachers is needed regarding the sensitivities and boundaries of man-woman relationships.

9. Education and employment

Improvement in quality of education and employment opportunities for youth.

10. Imbibe Moral and religious values

Parents and teachers should strive to infuse good moral and religious values in children and serve as role models.

11. Control over Population

Population control measures should be strictly implemented.

Conclusion- Gender-based violence is hence, an attack on human dignity that poses serious threat to society and no nation can ever grow and develop if it's fifty percent of the population is treated with inequality. It is also an extreme manifestation of gender inequity, targeting women and girls because of their subordinate social status in the society. So, first and foremost the mindset of the society must change because when women become insensitive towards other women then least has to be expected from males. Therefore, at last, but not least, if we are sincere towards working and achieving gender equality we will also be witness of no gender-based violence.

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