

Impact of Domestic Violence on Working Life of Females: A Survey of Himachal Pradesh University Shimla

Virender Kaushal

Research Scholar, H.P. University Business School, Summer Hill Shimla, India

Abstract

The domestic violence is slowly becoming a popular topic among media and academicians in developing countries. The domestic violence against women has been considered as a major unsolved, challengeable issue since decades. However women play an important role in the overall development of a nation as they constitute half of the human resources of a country. The affirmative actions by government of India have brought about perceptual changes in the socio-economic condition of women. In Himachal Pradesh workforce participation rate of female in rural sector was highest and it is 43.67 percent (C.S.O.2007) of total work force participation. Violence against working women affects their health as well as organizational health. In spite of their huge contribution in all round development of the country, they are fighting for their existence, fights and existence. A violent environment- within and outside the home discourage women from participating in the social, economic and political life of their communities. According to W.H.O survey in India each incidence of violence against women costs an average of seven working days.

Key words: - Domestic Violence, Working Life, Females.

What is Domestic violence

The general notation of Ardhangini [half of the body] is restricted only in literatures and have never implemented in practical life. Sati system [self immersion of the lady in husband's pyre] that is subject to women only; is a reflection of the history of women's subordinate status. In short, it is always the women who have to be in the tight rope, subject to inequality and looked down as an inferior sex.

Domestic violence that is any act of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, or the threat of such abuse, inflicted against a woman by a person intimately connected to her through marriage, family relation, or acquaintanceship is universal and has its root in the socio-cultural set up of the society. The perpetrators of domestic violence have often been found to be the males and the victims, their sexual partners. Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior used by someone to establish power and control over

another person through fear and intimidation. It happens between people who are, or have been, in an intimate relationship.

Domestic violence often includes the threat or actual use of violence. It happens when one person believes they are entitled to control another. Domestic violence can take many forms. In many cases the behavior amounts to a criminal act. It is also a unique crime because there is usually a pattern of abuse over time, unlike, for example, when a robbery occurs one evening. Domestic violence tends to be repeated with more frequency and more severity.

Domestic violence can include emotional abuse, such as name-calling and put-downs, and economic abuse, when one person uses money and finances to control the other. Internationally, one in three women have been beaten, coerced into sex or abused in their lifetime by a member of her own family. Often an abusive partner may be sexually abusive, use or control the children, or threaten, isolate, or intimidate the other. All of these behaviors are used to maintain fear, intimidation and power.

Review of literature

In view of the prevalence as well as the pervasiveness of domestic violence, many researchers in the past have attempted to assess the situation besides exploring its possible cause and subsequent consequences for society in general and women in particular. persons with lower socialization and responsibility are found to be the enhancers of the problem (Barnett and Hamberger, 1992). Many researchers come out with findings that lifestyle of men such as smoking, alcoholism and drugs promote men to commit domestic violence (Leonard, 1992; McKenry et al., 1995.).

Many studies are of the view that violence by intimate partner most likely undermines the sexual and reproductive health of the women. This extensive violence has significant harmful effects like unwanted pregnancy (Khan et al., 1996), gynecological disorders (Golding and Taylor 1996) and physical injuries to private parts (Starck et al., 1979). Further, as Freedman has written, violence by husbands against wife should not be seen as a break down in the social order rather than an affirmation to patriarchal social order (Travers, 1997).

Similarly, Jejeebhoy (1998) is of the view that not only wife beating is deeply entrenched, but also people justify it. Thus, domestic violence is simply not a personal abnormality but rather it roots in the cultural norms of the family and the society. Again, looking from another angle, it is found

that many of the victims of domestic violence has either refused to name the perpetrator of the assault or attributed the injuries to other reasons (Daga et al., 1999). Inclean (2000), found it as a problem that cuts across age, education, social class and religion in India. The masculinity and domestic violence are closely interlinked (Duvvury and Nayak, 2003 and Hamberger et al., 1997).

Again, many of the commonly associated disorders/problems are found to be inadequately addressed (Mitra, 1999; Visaria, 1999; Dave and Solanki, 2000 and Jaswal, 2000). Another study among Uttar Pradesh men by Gerstein (2000) is of the view that low educational level and poverty are important reasons for domestic violence. Further, marriage at a younger age makes women vulnerable to domestic violence (Mishra, 2000; Hindin, 2002).

Gendered socialization process is what mainly responsible for domestic violence (Sahu, 2003). Besides this, the role of inter spousal relationship, sex of the children, ownership of property, dowry, working status, autonomy, religion and caste of the person can't be ignored (Sahu, 2003). Murthy et al. (2004) is of the view that numbers of family members, type of marriage and husband's education besides menstrual problems have significant influence on domestic violence.

In order to develop effective intervention programme and policy, it is vital to know the attitude and perception of the women towards this issue in-depth. Most of the studies conducted in the past are small in nature and reflects the regional picture that might not be a true picture of the whole country. In view of the above discussion, it seems essential to understand the women's viewpoint besides the assessment of the problem and its correlates at national level. Further, in the present world, where gender equality and justice have become the buzz words, examining the domestic violence in the largest democracy of the world appears worthy for the betterment of half of its citizens.

In this survey, an attempt has been made to study whether this domestic violence has any impact on the working capacity of women employees or not. The survey reveals that intimate partner violence against women has serious consequences for maternal morality and child survival. The prevailing laws and policies designed to protect women from violence are not adequately or properly implemented. There is lack of pertinent research and data on crimes and violence against women. There are also

delay in passing of amendments and new laws, such as with the law on sexual harassment at work places. Involvement of women's groups and networks in the process of drafting of new legislation is essential. There is a need to stay and analysis, why attempts to deal with violence against women do not succeed.

Objectives of the Survey

1. To study the impact of domestic violence on the working environment of the women.
2. To study the level of awareness regarding legal provision against domestic violence.

Data collection

The Primary Data for the purpose of this survey has been collected through self designed questionnaire and secondary data has been cited from different magazines, journals published and the online journals. The sampling frame was women employees of Himachal Pradesh University. The convenience sampling technique was used to collect the data and finally the collected data has been analyzed with the help of percentage method.

Findings

After analyzing the data collected, it has been concluded that majority of the women employees are younger in age. 71 percent of the women employees are post graduate and almost all the women employees have enough job experience. Majority of the women employees have more than ten years of working experience in Himachal Pradesh University. Majority of the employees got promotions as per the rules specified in the memorandum of the University. Majority of respondents have knowledge regarding domestic violence i.e. they are aware about the meaning, impact and reasons of the domestic violence.

Many inferences can be drawn from this survey. Majority of the respondents are facing restriction at their homes, they are not allowed to meet or interact with friends or in some cases it is found that they are not allowed to meet with family members also. But in rest of matters like money handling, buying decisions etc., they are free to take decisions regarding these matters and they are feeling happy. It means they are enjoying autonomy in some cases. The responses regarding extra marital affairs, insult, insult in front of others, relative's interference, physical harm, threatening, all have neutral responses and it means that the women

employees do not want to disclose such issues. Also it was not disclosed that why it has been happened?

Majority of the respondents know about their legal rights, but they do not have any legal procedural knowledge, like Domestic Violence Act, 2005 etc. In spite of these critical encounters, they are enjoying their work and jobs. The females feel that men should made contributions in household tasks also such as washing dishes and doing laundry work etc. They know very well how to maintain a balance between working life and family life. In some cases it has been found that family members call during office hours.

Majority of respondents remember all the incidents happened with them during working time. They generally feel annoyed and most of the time their work remains pending on their table. They are not able to concentrate on their work, which affects their enthusiasm and ultimately decrease their potential and efficiency. Because of these reasons sometime the women employees think that it is better to leave the job. Majority of the respondents take leave if any such problem is there. But most of the respondents think that office environment is very supportive and their superior understands their problem very well. It shows that whatever happens in the houses employees have supportive hands in the office which give then support in such critical situations.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be concluded that domestic violence affects working environment and reduces the potential of the employees and increase the rate of absenteeism from their work. This situation disturbs the whole working environment of an organization. From this survey it is also found that majority of the women employees are well educated, even than they are facing such problems and situations at home as well as at workplace. Why it happens with them and why they are not revolting against such situations, it remains hidden during whole survey. But it was found that it may be due to lack of legal education and due to lack of legal rights. Now every woman has to realize their role and contribution in this society. It is true that Gone are the days when gender equality is an issue, women are exceeding in every aspect and in every field.

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