

A study on awareness of women regarding legal provision towards domestic violence**Dr. Rickey Rani Boruah, Assistant Professor,****Deptt. of Textiles and Apparel Designing, Faculty of Home Science**

Abstract: Domestic violence includes physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse. Domestic violence in simple terms is an act or acts of violence taking place within the domestic or household set up. Violence against women is one of the most pervasive forms of human rights violation, denying women the equality, security, dignity, self worth and their right to enjoy fundamental freedoms. Many countries have strong laws to protect women from violence but fail to implement them because of lack of awareness of women regarding legal provision. The study was done to assess the awareness of women regarding legal provision toward domestic violence. The lower part of Lakhimpur district of Assam was selected for the study and seventy five women were selected as sample respondents. A self prepared interview schedule was used for collecting the data regarding awareness of women.

Key words: Violence, awareness, legal provision, human right, women

Introduction: Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior which involves violence or other abuse by one person against another in a domestic setting. Domestic violence can take place in heterosexual or same-sex relationships, and sometimes also involves violence against the children in the family. Domestic violence can take a number of forms including physical, verbal, emotional, economic and sexual abuse, which can range from subtle, coercive forms to marital rape and to violent physical abuse that results in disfigurement or death. There are certain myths related to domestic violence. It is presumed to happen only to the poor and uneducated woman but in reality it is not restricted with the education or economic condition as such incident are happening in poor as well as influential households.

In 2005 the Indian Parliament passed Protection of Women against Domestic Violence Act, 2005 which is proactive and has wider application and implication. Under the Act women is given protection from various forms of violence which includes not only physical, verbal and psychological abuse but also economic abuse. Under this Act order can be given to police to provide protection to any victim and the police are bound to follow it.

Objectives: The main objective of the study was to assess the awareness of women regarding legal provision toward domestic violence.

Methodology: Both primary as well as secondary data were collected. The primary data were collected directly from 75 women from three different categories i.e. based on the education qualification. For this purpose an interview schedule was prepared for obtaining necessary information. The secondary data relating to domestic violence were collected from the books, articles, journals and internet. The collected data were tabulated and analyzed properly in accordance with the objectives of the study.

Results and Discussion

1. Profile of selected women

Table 1 shows the Profile of selected women:

Sl. No.	Criteria	Education Qualification (N=75)		
		Below 10 th (n=25)	10 th passed to Graduate (n=25)	Post Graduate and above (n=25)
1.	Age(18-30yrs.)	25(100)	25(100)	25(100)
2	Family	Nuclear	Nuclear	Nuclear
3	No. of family members			
	Below 4	15(60)	15(60)	19(76)
	5to 7	10(40)	10(40)	15(60)
	8 and above	-	-	-
4	Victim of domestic violence			
	Yes	5(20)	10(40)	15(60)
	No	20(80)	15(60)	10(40)

Figures in parenthesis indicating percentage

2. Violence faced by the women at home

Table 2 shows the type of violence faced by the women

Sl.No.	Criteria	Education Qualification (N=75)		
		Below 10 th (n=25)	10 th passed to Graduate (n=25)	Post Graduate and above (n=25)
1	Division of labour and responsibilities based on sex	25(100)	25(100)	25(100)
2	Treat you badly in front of family and friends	20(80)	3(12)	5(20)
3	Sexual harassment	5(20)	-	3(12)
4	Dowry related harassment	10(40)	3(12)	-
5	Involvement in decision making	10(40)	20(80)	20(80)
6	Medical care taken by husband	20(80)	25(100)	20(80)
7	Not fulfilling the basic requirements such as fabric, cosmetics etc	9(36)	3(12)	3(12)

Figures in parenthesis indicating percentage

3. Awareness about the legal provision toward domestic violence

Table 3 shows the awareness about the legal provision toward domestic violence

Sl.No.	Criteria	Education Qualification (N=75)		
		Below 10 th (n=25)	10 th passed to Graduate(n=25)	Post Graduate and above (n=25)
1	Yes	10(40)	20(80)	25(100)
2	No	15(60)	5(20)	-

Figures in parenthesis indicating percentage

4. Source of Awareness:

Books, movie, Magazine, Television programme,

5. Awareness of women regarding rights to Domestic Violence Act

Table 4 shows the Awareness of women regarding rights to Domestic Violence Act

Sl.No.	Criteria	Education Qualification (N=75)		
		Below 10 th (n=25)	10 th passed to Graduate (n=25)	Post Graduate and above (n=25)
1	Right to complain of abuse	10(40)	20(80)	25(100)
2	Right to complain against health risk due to domestic violence	10(40)	20(80)	25(100)
3	Right to maintenance from spouse on expulsion	5(20)	20(80)	25(100)

Figures in parenthesis indicating percentage

6. Awareness regarding provisions in the Domestic Violence Act for victims

Table 5 awareness regarding Provisions in the Domestic Violence Act for victims

Sl.No.	Criteria	Education Qualification (N=75)		
		Below 10 th (n=25)	10 th passed to Graduate (n=25)	Post Graduate and above (n=25)
1	Free medical care	3(12)	10(40)	20(80)
2	Alternative accommodation	-	-	5(20)
3	Custody of children	-	-	10(40)
4	Counseling support	3(12)	18(72)	20(80)

Figures in parenthesis indicating percentage

7. Awareness about provision of penalty for offenders in Domestic Violence Act

Table 6 shows the awareness of provision of penalty for offenders in Domestic Violence Act

Sl.No.	Criteria	Education Qualification (N=75)		
		Below 10 th (n=25)	10 th passed to Graduate (n=25)	Post Graduate and above (n=25)
1	Jail	10(40)	18(72)	25(100)
2	Fine	10(40)	18(72)	25(100)
3	Both jail and fine	10(40)	18(72)	25(100)

Figures in parenthesis indicating percentage

Conclusion: Domestic violence against women in India is an age- old phenomenon. Lack of confidence and education level may be the causes of unawareness of this provision. As a result, most of the women were not reporting in the police station against domestic violence. This also shows the lack of awareness regarding domestic violence meted out on them.

The reason is very obvious lack of proper education, economic dependency, family pressure, societal pressure, etc. Better educated women or those belonging to better- off families who experience violence are least likely to share their experiences or seek support from others.

For every woman who complains, there is at least one woman who suffers in silence. Most women don't even talk to friends or colleagues if they are being abused by their husbands. They do not want to admit that they are victims or tell people what's going on their home. Action from courts and police will not sufficient if the community opposed to change. But the biggest responsibility will be that of the women themselves.

There are certain myths related to domestic violence. It is presumed to happen only to the poor and uneducated woman but in reality it is not restricted with the education or economic condition as such incident are happening in poor as well as influential households. The role of the parents to educate their child make them self dependent, the role of educational institutions to formulate the curriculum regarding the respect of women and her rights, the role of media in making people aware of the existing legislations for the protection of women and the most important the role of society to change their mind- set with respect to women are of vital importance to bring women out of the hazard of the domestic violence.

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