

Preface

The general feeling was, and still is that “Why a women is beaten up and why she is regarded as inferior to men”. A woman is always told by her family members that her husband is just like *God*. She should always be ready to serve him. The main reason for undertaking this study was “how a human being can hurt the other human being. Women are always advised to tolerate violence at the hands of their husband and in-laws. Women are always said to take care of their family reputa and prestige. Domestic violence is a big social problem not only in India but across the world. Women are educated, working on good positions but still they have to tolerate violence at the hands of their husbands and other male members of society. Violence against women is a worldwide phenomenon yet still it is a hidden problem. Violence against women and domestic violence continue to be one of the most pervasive human rights violation. Despite significant progress in legislation and policies, many gaps remain when it comes to effectively protecting its victims and bringing perpetrators to justice. Domestic violence is one of the crimes against women which is linked to their disadvantageous position in the society. Domestic violence refers to violence against women especially in patriarchal societies. Domestic violence is also recognized as the significant barrier of the empowerment of women, with consequences of women’s health and health-seeking behavior and their adoption of small family norm. In view of prevalence as well as the pervasiveness of domestic violence very few attempts have been done in the past to check this form of violence. It is a problem which cut across age, education, social class and religion in India. 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. Generally it is said that one in three women have been beaten, coerced into sex or abused in their lifetime by a member of her own family. Domestic violence starting from *Vedic age* to the twenty first century, women in India perhaps have never experienced equal rights and freedom compared to their male counterparts. The concept of *Ardhangini* seems to be restricted only in literatures and have never implemented in practical life. In addition extracts from *Ramcharitamanas of Tulsidas like Dhol, Gauwnaar, shudar, Pashu, Nari Sakal Tadan ka Adhikari they all are fit for beating*. The subordinate status of women combined with socio cultural norms that are inclined towards Patriarchy and Masculinity can be considered as an important factor determining the domestic violence.

Domestic violence is about using brute force to establish power relations in the family whereby women are taught and conditioned to accept a subservient status for themselves. Domestic violence is about telling women that they better learn to live at men's mercy. It is about men with low self-esteem destroying a woman's sense of self worth because they feel inadequate to cope with a woman who thinks and acts as a free human being with a mind of her own. Like rape, wife battering to the common predicament of women across nations, castes, classes, regions and religions. Even those who practice the giving and taking of dowry is also one of the cause of domestic violence.

The present study is mainly designed to find out the factors responsible for giving rise to domestic violence. Abusers choose to behave violently to get what they want and gain control. Is domestic violence seen in the context of power relations?, Is domestic violence a consequence of things such as stress? Why do people only blame the victim for the violence, putting the family before the safety of women? Women are even told by her own parents to tolerate violence and not seek for help and treating domestic violence as a "*private matter*". This study is an attempt to find out the important causes which are responsible for domestic violence against women. We are, however, still ignorant about the problems faced by women and take it very lightly. To answer these and many other related questions I took up domestic violence against women as my research topic, being fully aware of its sensitive nature.

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