

WOMEN VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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Abstract

Domestic violence is any act committed by a member of the family against another member in a manner that directly or indirectly adversely affects or can be inferred to adversely affect the family. Accordingly, it is a huge social problem that women are subjected to violence in the family based on sexuality and gender. Domestic violence disrupts family corporations. However, family disorganization cannot be seen in the selected study area, and there is no significant improvement related to the family corporation. This research is done to study whether there is domestic violence related to rural family corporations and, if domestic violence exists, the effects of domestic violence on rural women and their nature. If domestic violence exists in rural areas, the impact it has on rural women, its nature, the factors affecting domestic violence, the strategies used by rural women to get rid of domestic violence, as well as the preparation of recommendations to prevent domestic violence are carried out through this research. Accordingly, out of the 31 Grama Niladhari Divisions (GND) of Welimada police jurisdiction, which is a rural area, the 03 GN Divisions of Puhulpola, Katakella, and Malpotha representing the Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslim races have been selected as the study area of this research. In the research methodology, 68 women out of 100 women have selected as the sampling methods using simple random sampling & snowball sampling. Questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, observations, etc., have been used as primary sources for data collection, and books, newspapers, previous research articles, police reports, GND reports, and the internet have been used as secondary sources. Through these methods, the data has been analyzed under quantitative and qualitative analysis. The analysis, through research findings, it was revealed that there is domestic violence in Welimada, according to police jurisdiction, which is a rural area. According to the research results, all 68 respondents of the entire sample have been victimized due to long-term and short-term physical and psychological effects caused by domestic violence. The number of respondents who have suffered short-term & long-term social impact due to domestic violence is 87.1%, and the number of respondents who have no short-term & long-term social impact is 12.9%. The practical importance of the research was able to achieve unique objectives and identify the impacts of domestic violence faced by rural women through recommendations to prevent domestic violence to block the impacts. It can be used as an essential plan to create a family corporation free of domestic violence.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Rural women, Victimization

Introduction

It is the supreme woman who gives life to any human being born in this world. Her blood will be transformed into milk as the beautiful

Laiyamadala overflows with baby love. According to Maxim Gorky, the world was created from the rays of the sun and the milk of the mother. It is woman who gives unlimited

strength to a man with unlimited love. She is also the one who gives birth to the next generation that determines the existence of the human race. In an era where the current social context is crying out for its women's liberation, this paper will help to inquire with a third eye about the gender relations and the female victims created by domestic violence.

Femininity and Masculinity are based on the concept of gender, and the roles played by women and men in society are represented through it. This is a concept developed since the **1970s**. The terms **gender** and **sex** are used synonymously. But sex (gender discrimination) simply means the difference in human sexuality that is determined by birth. According to the World Development Report, gender is defined as the socially constructed norms and ideologies that determine the behavior and actions of men and women. Accordingly, sex (gender discrimination) as a biological concept and gender as a social and psychological concept have different meanings.

The term gender was first used in psychiatry. **Robert Stollen**, in his **1968** study of psychoanalysis, used the term gender to describe human behavior regardless of gender. But the term gender in the modern sense was widely used by feminists. But the use of the term gender society in a broad and precise sense seems to have taken place since the beginning of feminism in the 1970s and 1980s.

“The social relationship that has been formally created by society over a period of time can simply be called gender”(Liyanage & Walakuluge,2006).

Accordingly, gender is the social and cultural status that has been created by society and assigned to men and women, with different

characteristics, identities, behavior patterns, roles and occupations for men and women. For a long time, the society has created different social conditions for these two parties based on the biological difference between male and female. This division has been made by society and culture and this division is seen in the giving of every social institution. Men are believed to be physically and mentally strong, bold, quick to make decisions, intelligent and rational with leadership. But woman is considered as a childish, beautiful, dependent on a man, kind, sensitive part. Women are naturally endowed with the function of reproduction and all household tasks are assigned to women by society. In the past social system, women were entrusted with domestic tasks such as nurturing children, taking care of them, housework, children's education, taking care of elders etc. But in focusing on the current complex social system, it is possible to recognize how the role of women in the family corporation has expanded. In addition to the tasks assigned to women in the past, the task of uplifting the family's economy is also performed by women today. Compared to men, women play a significant role in building the family corporation.

No matter how much work is done by women for the family corporation, it is a big social problem that women become victims of violence within the home.

Gender-based violence

Gender-based violence is an unavoidable topic when discussing gender. **The United Nations** defines gender-based violence in the following way:

“The definition of discrimination includes gender based violence, that is, violence that is directed against a woman because she is a

woman or that affects women disproportionately. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty.”

Using these as a basis, there are five types of violence based on gender,

- Physical violence
- Verbal violence (including hate speech)
- Psychological violence
- Sexual violence
- Socio-economic violence.

There are also two other categories of violence, domestic violence and (sexual) harassment, both of which may be a combination of all five types of violence mentioned above. In reality, some or many forms of violence can be present at the same time, particularly in abusive relationships. All forms can occur both in the private sphere (in families and intimate relationships) and in the public sphere, committed by (unknown) individuals in public space, or by organizations, institutions and states. Various writers, thinkers and philosophers have expressed different views on domestic violence against women using different media. Published in 2009, poet Danielle's poem "**Forever Changed**" speaks out to the entire society about how she was abused by her father and thus became a victim of domestic violence.

I heard the footsteps coming and I knew this would be another long night,
And something inside me screamed this time it really isn't right.
The words he was saying were ruthless and cruel,
And each time he hit me, I sat there and obeyed each and every rule.
I sat there blank faced and scared knowing that I couldn't cry,

For I knew what would happen if he saw the tears in my eyes.

Each and every swing felt worse and worse,
And then all I wanted was to be dead in a hearse.

He got real close and whispered, "Bitch, I wish you weren't alive,"

And all I was thinking was you're right, I wish I wouldn't survive.

He threw me against the wall then proceeded to pin me to the ground.

He hit me again, covered my mouth, not letting me make a sound.

I started to struggle and tried to release myself of his forceful grip.

Then the next thing I heard was a loud, horrifying rip.

His hands were cold and I cringed at first touch.

I don't understand how a father could hate his daughter so much.

I froze, and I couldn't believe that this was really going on.

I just kept looking at the clock, wanting him to be gone.

I tried so badly not to think of the sharp pain,
And this wasn't part of his usual game.

I closed my eyes, wishing the time would just pass by,

And that next time I opened them I would be up in the sky.

He pushed harder and harder and excruciating pain was all I felt.

The next thing I heard was the unbuckling of his belt.

Something happened inside of me that I cannot explain.

I got this surge of energy and said, "F you and your reign."

Somehow, somehow I got out just in time.

But what he had already done will never get out of my mind.

From then on my life has been forever changed.

It was like all I knew had been rearranged.

I hate him with everything I have in me and so much more,

And one day I want to end this war.

Further focusing on this, it is clear that the woman who was subjected to violence has been affected sexually, physically and mentally. And the victimized poet has further stated that the effect lasts throughout life. However, there were occasional reports of violence against women in ancient societies, women were held in high esteem in ancient times. The worship of the goddess in the Indus Valley Civilization at that time signified respect for women. In this way, the importance given to women in the society of that time is confirmed. But with the gradual development of the society, the dignity of women in the society can be seen to be lost. With the change in society, the role of women has also changed and violence against her has been created as she has neglected her duties, responsibilities and the duties of children. When a woman is abused by men in her own home, she loses her independence in the home, which is a place where freedom should be maximized. This condition can lead to physical and mental distress. Violence against women is on the rise in today's society and is recognized as one of the saddest and most unfortunate situations facing women not only in Sri Lanka but all over the world.

Gender and Family Corporation

In the consideration of gender in the family, the feminine occupies a minor position. The man has the dominant power in the family. In any society, regardless of race, caste or class,

women have less power. When a family is taken, women have less freedom, less privileges, less rights, less property, less fame and less power. The man has more power and more dominance. Because of this, unequal distribution of power is based on gender. Women are assigned the task of reproduction by nature itself. Because of this, since ancient times, she was entrusted not only with giving birth to children, but also with nurturing them and taking care of them. The responsibility of performing other household tasks such as cleaning the door, cooking food and taking care of the sick and elderly in the family were considered to belong to women. On the basis of gender, a man has a different role in the family compared to a woman. Society has accepted that the man rules the family based on his physical characteristics as well as all other factors.

The division of their roles on the basis of gender is also illogical. The woman is seen as a weak person in the family and her sexuality has made her easily abused by men. Although in the past social system, women were limited to doing household tasks, nowadays women perform many tasks that were traditionally assigned to men. Although traditional gender roles are changing in the modern family, related beliefs and ideologies still remain largely intact in society. Even if the woman is engaged in an income-generating job, the feeling that priority should be given to the affairs of the family corporation and children is also strong. A woman cannot work in a competitive situation like a man. The reason for this is that she cannot act independently because of the responsibility of her family and children.

In the family, women must depend on the protection of men. The man is the breadwinner

or the dependent of the family and the woman should be dependent on him. The man who has the dominant power and strength makes the decisions and makes the decisions and the woman must obey those decisions. A lot of beliefs that were established in the society such as a woman should obey her father and elder brothers at a young age, her husband at a young age, and male children at an old age, etc., still remain unchanged. Because of this, she who acted away from traditional roles, always has the feeling that she is less important than the man.

Not only in traditional societies but even in modern developed Western societies, women have a lower status than men in the family. Still, the birth of a male child to a family is often considered auspicious. It is accepted that a male child can carry forward the family name, reputation and family property. Male children are also entitled to inherit the family name from generation to generation. There are also cases where the birth of a girl child is considered a burden to a family. The main reason for this is that the family has many additional responsibilities like protecting her, providing dowry, and keeping her locked up to protect her virginity. And in most traditional families, the first and best part of the food is reserved for the father and the male members, and the rest is divided between the mother and the female members.

Gender differences are strongly considered in marriage. A wealthy, educated man must provide a dowry, often in the form of money, property, or other resources, in order to marry off a girl child. The woman is also subjected to traditional persecution such as virginity testing the day after the wedding ceremony. If the husband and wife in a family are childless for some physical reason, the woman is

stigmatized as barren. Controlling the sexuality and reproduction of female members in the family is also done by men. A woman is not free to have sex like a man. Violent acts such as beating, assault are used by men to control women in the family. Connell and Mackinon (1989) have shown that rape and domestic violence are illegitimate social control methods used by men to control women.

In the complex social context, the role assigned to women has been transformed into a dual role and now it has developed into a multifaceted role. Although women contribute in various ways to the production work in the family, it is given less value. Thus, due to the gender consciousness in the family, in many cases, the female has an unimportant position. The man is considered to be the dominant one in the family. This unequal distribution of power is based on gender, which places the woman in a disadvantaged and dominant position in the family over the man. Hence, in the family, the woman has become less privileged, more oppressed and exploited.

It is also important to focus on domestic violence and equilibrium of family institution in the study of gender & family corporation. The role played by the family corporation as the basic building block that plays a very important and decisive role in the social structure and organization that can be seen from the beginning of human civilization is important. The family is a universal social institution. The definition of it as a functional unit states that its chain of work is a confirmation of the existence of the entire society. Due to certain conditions created in the family, disorganization is developing in modern times. The simplest definition that can be given to family disorganization is the breakdown of the family corporation.

There can be various reasons for the disease of family disorganization. Especially gender can be identified as a main reason here. Focusing on current events, it is clear that domestic violence has a direct impact on the breakdown of family functions. Domestic violence in the family does not only happen to women, but also to men and children, and all of that ultimately affects the disorganization of the family.

Another interpretation of family disorganization is a breakdown of the family system that threatens the existence of social organization. Due to disorganization based on neglect, abuse, etc., conflicts in the family lead to divorces, criminal behavior, suicides, various mental disorders etc. Domestic violence has a major impact on family disorganization and thus breaks down the family corporation.

Gender and domestic violence

Women becoming victims of gender-based violence in the home is a major social problem. Women from all walks of life are victims of domestic violence, both in developed and developing countries. This condition is a common social phenomenon in all countries like India, Australia, America, England, Africa, Papua New Guinea etc. Therefore, it is recognized as a serious social problem as well as a common mistake in almost all countries of the world. Domestic violence is defined as any act by a family member against a family member based on gender.

According to the sociologist **Pagelow's** definition in 1984, **"Domestic violence against women is any act or omission by family members that interferes with family members and results in deprivation of liberty."** Common to aggravated assaults,

threats, verbal abuse, coercion, persistent harassment, humiliation, destruction of property, sexual violence, marital rape, sexual violence, female genital mutilation, use as prostitutes, sexual violence against domestic workers and such acts and threats fall under domestic violence. Violence against women in the family cannot be measured. Violence in the family can occur in any form based on gender. Patriarchy can be identified as a major factor influencing gender-based domestic violence.

When the concept of masculinity is analyzed on the basis of Patriarchy, it refers to the centering of power, dominance and control over men. This concept of masculinity exists among the human race as well as among other animals and this can be seen in a lesser way in different human societies in the consideration of human society. However, this concept of patriarchy is known as a common condition in every human society. From the very beginning of gender identity, it was evident that it was an anti-patriarchal concept. It is difficult to identify exactly which concept of patriarchy originated in which social system. It is explained by examining the historical ideologies of the concept of patriarchy that a patriarchal society built a pattern of dominance over men. In addition, archaeologists such as Prof. Mortimo Wheeler and Dikshit have recognized that the concept of mother goddess existed in Mohondajaro and Harappa civilizations. Accordingly, they are believed to be a female-led social system that operated before patriarchal social systems. Razan Eisler, who analyzed feminism from an innovative perspective in a time when many new ideologies were spread in the world, interprets in his analysis that the concept of feminism has not been justified through Christianity or on earth as a religion that

teaches love and forgiveness. Eisler is of the opinion that in the concept of the creation of the world in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible, the woman has been given a dual role. As the patriarchal social system became more and more stable, the woman's position evolved from mother goddess to the face of a utility commodity. Patriarchy is a structural force that influences power relations, whether they are abusive or not. Power sets the agenda for patriarchy. Also, domestic violence is raised by the man turning to drugs. Men are more likely to use drugs than women, resulting in more domestic violence against women. Being a victim of gender-based violence is perceived in many societies as shameful and weak, with **many women still being considered guilty** of attracting violence against themselves through their behaviour. **This partly accounts for enduring low levels of reporting and investigation.** Until recently, the law in some countries still differentiated between the public and private spaces, which left women **particularly vulnerable to domestic violence.**

Due to the power and authority that men have based on gender, the nature of domestic violence against women can be stated as follows.

Assault, Assault with weapons, Injuring, burning scolding threatening Intimidation, Loss of freedom, blasphemy Imprisonment, Destruction of property, Expropriation of property, Non-delivery of food and money, Assault after sex, Engaging in unwanted sex

It is clear that domestic violence based on gender is a serious social disaster and the damage caused to the family corporation and the entire society in domestic violence cannot be measured to this extent. In this very serious social issue, women are strongly stressed. Sexual violence, economic violence, physical violence also occur, i.e. it must be said that all forms of oppression unfold in domestic violence.

A Theoretical Analysis of domestic Violence

Social learning theory	People learn to be violent by being immediately rewarded or punished after they commit violent behavior, through what is called reinforcement and by watching the experiences of others, called modeling. According to some experts, there is a correlation between people who witness abusive behavior in their earlier lives and those who commit domestic violence later.
<i>Feminist theory</i>	Domestic violence emanates from a “patriarchal” school system which assigns men the responsibility for controlling and managing female partners. Under this theory, domestic violence is attributed to a flaw in societal structure rather than to any specific individual male pathology.
<i>Ecological framework theory</i>	<i>Ecological framework theory</i> , in contending that no single theory can be used in explaining or predicting domestic violence, proposes risk factors for domestic violence and interventions to address it at three levels—the micro level (e.g.

	batterer programs), the meso level (e.g. police and the courts), and the macro level (e.g. a coordinated community approach).
<i>Social exchange theory</i>	Human interaction is driven by pursuing rewards and avoiding punishments and costs. domestic violence occurs when costs do not outweigh rewards. Costs in this context include the potential for defensive physical action by the victim, potential of being arrested and imprisoned, loss of personal status, and dissolution of the domestic arrangement.

A timely analysis of the covid epidemic and domestic violence

There have been many studies on the causes of domestic violence and it is expected that a timely analysis of women becoming victims of domestic violence will be important in the wake of the Covid pandemic.

It is important to study the temporal distribution of domestic violence based on gender in the Sri Lankan context. In 2020, 1938 hotline received 1215 complaints related to domestic violence. 1227 domestic violence complaints received in first five months of 2021. Accordingly, it is clear that many women have been subjected to domestic violence during the quarantine period of 2020 and 2021. Unfortunately, the home that they thought was safe has become a place where some women are confined to their homes due to movement restrictions and girls are victims of various sexual assaults, assaults and injuries.

When curfews are suddenly imposed in countries around the world due to Covid, domestic violence has increased not only in Sri Lanka. While domestic violence is increasing from 10% - 30% worldwide, in some countries the number of calls made by victims of domestic violence to 'Help Line' has increased from 10% to 50%. According to newspaper reports, 92,000 complaints related to child abuse incidents were received by one 'Help Line' for children in India.

According to rights activists, about 35% of women in the world experience physical, mental and sexual abuse from their partner or intimate partner during their lifetime. The most secure place for any person is his home. But every day, 135 women around the world are killed by a family member in the home where they thought they were most safe.

With the beginning of the Covid epidemic, 1779 (one thousand seven hundred and seventy-nine) incidents of rape of girls and women in Sri Lanka had been reported. The 'secluded environment' in the home creates more opportunities for the predator looking for victims to fulfill his desires. When curfews were imposed from time to time due to the Covid epidemic, among the women who were stuck at home when movement restrictions were imposed, women belonging to one social class were not the only ones who faced domestic violence.

The distance between husband and wife due to domestic violence, family disputes, etc. directly affects children's mental breakdowns and disruption of education. In a recent inquiry in Ratnapura district, it was revealed that the school education of 1430 children of school age is in a precarious condition. Among the factors affecting the breakdown of children's education are broken family environment, economic problems, and children being

engaged in the service profession, which can be seen in many cases.

During the period from January 2020 to May 2021, the number of complaints received on 1938 'Help Line' about domestic violence is 2442. The number of family disputes is 1119. The number of complaints of child abuse incidents is 13. Although at first glance it seems that there is a huge number of complaints received, the reality is that many incidents are still hidden. Especially not having the space to confidentially inform about the difficulty they are facing due to being confined to the house, as well as the violence faced by women, about the services that can be contacted over the phone to help her in incidents of violence, as well as counseling services, drug and alcohol addicts as well as mobile phone addicts. The 'ignorance' of many people about counseling services for behavioral addictions is also a reason why many such cases go undetected and suppressed. Also, some women who have been subjected to domestic violence cling to the myth that "it is their fault" and that there is no escape from it. But it is foolish to cling to such myths and throw away opportunities to get rid of the 'mental trauma' faced due to violence as well as to get rid of injustice.

Conclusion

It can be pointed out that gender is a concept that affects the evolution of society and the composition of society. Accordingly, gender can be simply defined as a range of characteristics related to the defined as a range of characteristics related to the distinction between masculinity and femininity. Many factors including patriarchy influence domestic violence and nature of domestic violence can also be identified as changing from time to time. Accordingly, women become a victims of gender based domestic violence, which remains a hidden crime within the family corporation.

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