

Domestic violence conclusion essay



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Domestic violence against women is prevalent in almost all the societies in the world. It is an issue which was not even recognised as a crime 40 years ago and is still not recognized as a crime by many societies. Women suffer from violence, including physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological violence by strangers and their partners all over the world (Kaya, 2010). Even though it is a worldwide occurrence, there are some women who face more intense and frequent violence depending on their culture, country, religion, economic status, ethnicity, age and education. This essay will examine how and why these factors play a role in violence against women and what can be done to reduce this abuse.

Empowerment of women and socio-economic status Research shows that there are many factors that affect domestic violence against women. One of them is empowerment of women. “ Empowerment of women refers to the process of women’s participation in modern societies as independent individuals through employment, education, and acquirement of equal status with men”(Kaya, 2010). He finds that in most countries, employed women suffer the least violence and those women who are financially dependent on their husbands suffer from violence and are ‘ trapped’ in these marriages because their husbands financially support them and their children.

Kaya also explores that there has been a link between education of both male and female with domestic violence, with higher education of both partners decreases domestic violence. This could be because education makes them less ignorant. It is agreed upon that formal learning improves moral values and character and in many cases teaches respect and importance of women which reduces the event of domestic violence. Also

higher levels of education may secure a respectful position for males and they would be deeply embarrassed if their peers found out they were wife beaters. Educated women also know their rights and would more likely know where to turn for assistance and support and are more likely to support themselves financially if they leave the relationship.

Therefore a shift from patriarchy to an egalitarian state can be achieved through education. Socio-economic status of women plays a major role in determining if she will experience domestic violence. According to B. R. Sharma(2005) it is shown that the more financially dependent a woman is on her husband, the more violence she would face. However, there is an interesting find which states that violence and dowry related crimes are more widespread in richer belts of India.

However it could be because of women in these areas having greater access to justice than women living in poorer conditions. There is more media coverage in richer areas which can expose more of these crimes giving an impression that it is more widespread. Also, richer areas do not always mean that people living here are wealthier. Many people immigrate to these areas as they have more jobs and industries but these people are poor and less educated, and lower education and fewer resources have been linked to higher incidences of domestic violence. In the study by Neil Andersson et al. (2010) it has been found that in Pakistan the situation is same when it comes to socio-economic status of women and its link to domestic violence.

Almost all women interviewed were victims of some sort of violence and 30% of them suffered from severe beatings. This was closely related to them not

been employed or access to any resources. Women who were financially dependent on their husbands suffered the most intense abuse. They were not able to exit these marriages because they had no family or government support.

Having some formal education was related to being able to exit the marriage in some cases if her education was enough to get a job that would pay enough to support her. However in many cases women even with some formal education stayed in the marriage because of fear of stigmatization, losing her children, and negative attitudes towards employing a female in the labour market. It was interesting to note that many women who had some formal education suffered from more intense violence. It could be because these women are more aware of their rights and are more likely to question their husbands' behaviour. This could be seen as defiant and disrespectful to the husband which would result in abuse of greater intensity. This could also be confirmed by the fact that younger girls who are likely to have a higher level of education and awareness than the older generation face greater violence because they criticize this culture of violence instead of quietly accepting it as a norm.

Another journal article focusing on differences in domestic violence in Canada and Quebec by Douglas A. Brownridge(2002) has an interesting result in relation to occurrence of domestic violence and socio-economic status and education. It compares results collected from Quebec and rest of Canada. It finds that women with higher education experienced lower violence in Quebec but women with higher education experienced higher violence in the rest of Canada. This might be because of the notion of liberal

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views held in Quebec by males, and therefore would feel less threatened by highly educated women. This could also be because of the man is financially dependent on the woman or the woman is financially independent and would leave the relationship in the event of violence.

The rest of Canada has the same result as one would find almost anywhere else: that the violence increases as woman is more educated. This is mainly due to the fact that many males in most of the world have deep rooted superiority complex and feel threatened by a superior woman, so possibly to show the dominance they would demean women by domestic violence. In countries like Canada the media perpetuates the idea of male superiority by showing that the fact that a woman is better than a man at something is shameful and emasculating for him so to prove his ‘ masculinity’ he chooses physical strength to dominate her. In her study, Melvina Sumter(2006) points out that women of ethnic minorities experience more domestic violence compared to White Americans.

This was due to the fact that they were less educated and had lower paying jobs and employment opportunities. Indeed it was found that a woman with annual income of less than or equal to \$7000 would be more than twice likely to experience domestic violence as compared to higher income earners. Culture, religion and government support Culture plays a huge part in domestic violence. In the research by Neil Andersson et al (2010) it was found out that many women believed that men had the ‘ right’ to abuse them and it was considered normal and were expected to quietly endure these violent acts. Even if women criticized this culture, they said that they had no government or social support and if they complained they would be

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ridiculed by society and be harassed by the police. It was considered proper to remain silent because if they didn't they would go through harsher treatments, lose their children and 'bring shame to the family'.

Going back to their parents is not an option due to the belief that once they are married they must stay with that person. Many girls are married off at ages as young as 4 years old and don't have the option of education or employment. Their husbands know this and take advantage of their wives' entrapment. Even some of their religious leaders were against the rights of women and distorted Quran (the Holy book of Muslims) to advocate that suppressing women was acceptable and practice the same themselves. Many abused women say that they can't change their situation because of no or limited social assistance but it was found by Melvina Sumter(2006) that in USA many women from ethnic minorities did not report their abuse to the authorities because they have cultural and religious values which make them stay with their husbands no matter what and they feel it would be shameful for their families if they exited. This kind of mindset only perpetuates patriarchal culture and men keep battering their wives knowing they would face no social consequences due to their wives' beliefs.

Many immigrant women are not aware of their rights and resources in USA. This might be because of language and cultural differences. The women also might be scared of being sent back to their own country so they remain silent. In the research by Kaya (2010) comparing 40 developed and developing countries, it is found that Islamic and Catholic societies, which promote women's submission and obedience to men, have higher rates of violence.

These religions also believe that suffering is will of God and there might be something better in store for them in the afterlife which makes these accept violence in the name of religion. However there is conflicting data available and this research may not be reliable or valid due to its small sample. They also found that developed countries with more social support for abused women had significantly lower violence rate as compared to developing countries with no or little social support and laws against perpetrators of domestic violence. In the study by Douglas A. Brownridge on comparison between Quebec and the rest of Canada he found that violence was actually lower in Catholic household in Quebec but was higher in Catholic households in the rest of Canada. This could be explained by the notion saying that Quebec was more liberal after the Quiet revolution, freeing itself from the control of the Catholic Church, therefore has lower violence.

Therefore it can be concluded that religion is not a factor of domestic violence, but what the religious authorities tell you to do and what they support. In the journal on domestic violence in India by B. R. Sharma(2005) notices the role of dowry being extremely important in relation to domestic violence.

He blames ignorance, religion, customs and extreme gender inequality to be the factors putting females in this inferior position. Dowry related deaths have increased so much over the last quarter of the 20th century that the India that the government has to pass laws against dowry related deaths but this has had little effect. The research finds that most deaths occurred in the younger age group and those with lower socio-economic status. This could be because younger girls might be easy to oppress and have little time to

get emotionally attached to the husband, and ones with lower monetary means may find it harder to fulfil material requests of her in-laws and husband. Wife battering is on the rise in India and studies have shown that it is correlated to poverty, childhood abuse, alcoholism and unemployment. In India most marriages are arranged with little chance of emotional development between the spouses therefore there is rarely any feeling of love involved which makes it that much easier for husbands to beat and, in many cases, kill their wives for numerous reasons including dowry.

If they are not killed they are forced to commit suicide by the in-laws and husband so they don't get in trouble with the authorities. The most frequent way of suicide is by self-immolation, which is a cultural phenomenon in the Hindu culture which relates to the goddess of fire, which shows how the culture takes part in this cruel practice. B. R.

Sharma, he finds that Hindu religion in India plays a significant role in domestic violence. They believe women to be inferior to men and to be submissive towards them, putting men in a favourable and higher position. There are also no government or any kind of social assistance for abused women and this makes them trapped in these situations. There have recently been laws passed which punish men who abuse their wives yet the numbers in battered women continue to rise.

This could be because of the fact that there is more social awareness and now that they know they have rights many women who previously did not report the abuse to the authorities are now coming forward. Conclusion The only factor consistent with all the articles is that societies that have

patriarchal views have the highest rates of violence. These deep rooted beliefs in their society of men being superior to women make these men keep up with their behaviour and normally face no consequence. People living in egalitarian societies are the ones that experience least violence therefore it is safe to say that the biggest factor in domestic violence is patriarchy.

This could be achieved by encouraging female education and employment so they know about their rights and are at least able to support themselves. Female support groups should be organized so the women have somewhere to go in the event of violence. Religious leaders should also be advised to condemn domestic violence. It has also been found that domestic violence is generally on the rise in most parts of the world.

However higher numbers could be seen because of greater level of reporting these crimes due to greater importance placed on this issue and the victims more aware and critical of domestic violence as well as support being offered for the victims can give them a sense of security and may have encouraged greater women to report.