



## Violence against Women in India: A Review

Allu Radha Krishna, Research Scholar, Department of Politics,  
Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur, A.P

### Abstract:

The present paper tries to analyze the violence against women in India. The rate of crime has increased marginally from 18.0 in the year 2010 to 18.9 during the year 2011. 24,270 victims of rape were girls under 14 years of age, while 19.0 per cent of (4,646) victims were teenage girls. About 54.7 per cent were women in the age group of 18-30 years. 15.0 per cent of victims were in the age group of 30-50 years while 0.6 per cent was over 50 years of age.

**Keywords:** Aadipara Shakthi, Mahalakshmi, victim

### Introduction

"Yathra Narayasthu Poojyanthe Ramanthe Tathra Devatha". It means respect to women is respect to god. Where the women are respected there God feels happy. It is our Indian's Culture and tradition. Women are given a holy place in Indian tradition. They are considered as 'Aadipara Shakthi' and 'Mahalakshmi' the mother and perpetuating angle of man-kind, but unfortunately now they are considered as unwanted persons and second rate citizens. With advance of material prosperity and easy money, sex and violence have become the order of the day. This violence against women affects her status in this society at the larger extent. Even though they form half of the population in the country they have always been ill-treated and deprived of their right to life and personal liberty as provided under the constitution of India.

The problem of violence against women is not new, it is a common feature since ancient period. Now-a-days it is more prevalent and became a social challenge. Women in the Indian Society have been victims of humiliation, torture and exploitation etc. Women are being gradually recognized as important, powerful and meaningful contributors to the life of men ; but till a few decades back, their condition was pitiable.

Ideologies, institutional practices and the existing norms in society have contributed much to their harassment. Some of these behavioural practices thrive even today. In spite of the legislative measures adopted in favour of women in our society after Independence, countless women still continue to be victims of violence. They are beaten, kidnapped, raped, burnt and murdered.

### Defining the term violence:

The United Nations General Assembly defines "Violence against women" as "any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or in private life. The 1993 declaration of the elimination of violence against women noted that violence could be prepared by assailants of either gender family members or even the state itself. It is important to clarify here the concept of "violence" against women. The term 'violence' has been described by Gelles as "an act of striking a person with the intent of causing harm or injury but not actually causing it." "Trauss has described a violent act as "an act where there is the high potential of causing injury". The operational definition of violence may be given as "force whether



overt or covert, used to wrest from an individual (a woman) something that she does not want to give of her own free will and which causes her either physical injury or emotional trauma or both". Thus rape, kidnapping, murder, wife-battering, sexual abuse, eve-teasing are all examples of violence against women.

***Nature of Violence against women:***

Violence against women may be categorized as:

- 1) Criminal Violence: Rape, abduction, murder, etc.....
- 2) Domestic violence: Dowry-deaths, wife battering, sexual abuse, maltreatment of widows and or elderly women ....
- 3) Social Violence: Forcing the wife/daughter-in-law to go for female foeticide, eve-teasing, refusing to give a share to women in property, forcing a young widow to commit sati, harassing the daughter-in-law to bring more dowry, etc.

India has been ranked at a poor 115 by a global survey which looked into the level of economical empowerment of women in 128 countries. The list was topped by Australia and followed by three Scandi anavian countries – Norway, Sweden and Finland. At the bottom of the list were Yeman, Pakistan, Sudan and Chad.

The research done by an international consulting and management firm Booz & Company ranked India at 115 and noted that with the second largest population in the world, India generates 14 per cent of the global talent pool, among which are the 5.5 million women entering India's work

force each year, all over whelming driven to succeed.

The National Crime Records Bureau has reported a total of 2, 28,650 incidents of crime against women in the country during the year 2011. The rate of crime has increased marginally from 18.0 in the year 2010 to 18.9 during the year 2011. 24,270 victims of rape were girls under 14 years of age, while 19.0per cent of (4,646) victims were teenage girls. 54.7per cent were women in the age group of 18-30 years. 15.0per cent of victims were in the age group of 30-50 years while 0.6per cent was over 50 years of age. Offenders are known to the victims in as many as in 22,549 (94.2per cent) cases. Parents / close family members were involved in 1.2per cent of these cases, neighbors were involved in 34.7per cent cases and relatives are involved in 6.9per cent cases. Hence, it is of no surprise that the National Crime Record Bureau reported higher growth rate of crimes against women.

The country has anti-discrimination legislation in place designed to protect women, yet implementation has a long way to go. Each year approximately 1,000 "honour killings" are perpetrated against Indian Women. "Along with female foeticide and infanticide, acid attacks, rape and sexual harassment, honour killings are both the symptoms of and catalysts for women's disempowerment." 45 percent of women believe that they are treated unfairly at work because of their gender; many others struggle to rejoin the work force after giving birth. More than 50 per cent of women report safety concerns related to commuting. It underlined that if India is to sustain its rate of growth, it will have to break down these sizable



barriers to women's empowerment both in the private sector work-force and in the entrepreneurial landscape. The report is based on the country's performance in terms of primary, secondary and tertiary education, equal pay for equal work, non-discrimination policies, access to child care, property ownership rights and abilities to access credit. It also looks at whether wages are equal, the number of women in work compared with men and whether there is equality in the number of female managers, senior business leaders and politicians.

#### **In Andhra Pradesh:**

According to NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) 2008, respect for women seems to be the worst in Andhra Pradesh, which accounted for 83.5 percent of cases under Indecent Representation of Women Act of total cases across the country.

R.Raghu, the CPM, Krishna District Secretary, said that the state of Andhra Pradesh had attained notoriety in crime against women. On an average, four women were being raped ever day in the state, he said, adding that the role of women was vital for development of the society. But the crime against women like rape, harassment, eve-teasing were rising by the day. 2.28 lakh cases were registered against attacks on women in the country according to NCRB Statistics in 2011. However, 75 percent of the accused in these cases had escaped punishment. Stern action should be taken against the officials misusing their powers in implementing the laws on protection of women.

The leaders, instead of thinking about permanent solution to these

problems, are finding fault with women. "It is very sad to hear from former C.M. of Haryana, Choutala that child marriages were the only solution to curb crime against women. Though being a woman, West Bengal CM, Mamata Benarji has said that "the extreme behaviour of women is leading to crime."

In India, the problem of violence against women is the result of a long standing power imbalance between men and women. Men have control over access to property and resources. There is also sexual division of labour in India that results in female exploitation – physically, mentally and commercially.

***Honour Killings:*** Honor killings are quite common in Haryana and Tamil Nadu when young girls marry somebody outside their caste and clan against her family's wishes.

***Women as Property:*** Dowry is demanded from the husband's side (in-laws) when younger women get married. Newly married women become subject to verbal and physical abuse. In many cases, young brides are burnt to death by her in-laws if her parents fail to meet the requisite dowry demanded.

***Role of Media:*** Media that includes television, radio and newspapers can play a positive role in creating awareness about the pitfalls of violence against women. Mass media's power should not be undermined by our policy makers.

#### ***Conclusions:***

The promotion of gender equality is an essential part of violence prevention. A range of school, community and media interventions aim to promote gender equality and non-violent



relationships by addressing gender stereotypes that allow men more power and control over women. Violence is, however, preventable. Although no silver bullet will eliminate it, a combination of efforts that address income, education, health, laws and infrastructure can significantly reduce violence and its tragic consequences. First and foremost, abusive behaviour towards women must be viewed as unacceptable. Communities need to have an important role in defining solutions to violence and providing support to victims. If the world does not address the issue, it stands to suppress the enormous potential of women and girls. When they feel safe, when they are empowered, women and girls can be game changers.