

PATRIARCHY AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN SOUTH

ASIA: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The term violence against women is not novel to us. Violence has been the analogous to human progression and growth. As civilizations moved ahead and human population surged, violence became a useful means for asserting and securing control over the restricted resources the world had to offer. The human mind has a slant towards classifying information; therefore, one finds numerous lists on everything. The professionals of the modern world call it organization. This classification has often come up as segregation of humanity; us versus them; whites and blacks; Germans and Jews and so on. All these categories cropped up because of difference, what we call diversity today to appear polite and correct. The biggest difference that humanity witnessed was being born different, what was a biological difference became a social one because men and women have different bodies and added to it that women gestate pregnancies. To man civilization is superior to nature, rational over emotional, so women were delegated to the natural sphere. Their world became the one where male domination played out. This system we call patriarchy. In South Asia the violence perpetrated against women paints a gory picture. Patriarchy is so dominant that it isn't repulsive to the minds that practice it- they even go to the extent of making women parade around naked or get women gang raped to avenge or any other pretext that they conceive as convenient.

KEYWORDS: Patriarchy, Violence, Women, South Asia, Domestic Violence, Oppression

INTRODUCTION

Women and gender issues have more and more become very central in Asia in precognition of the fact that progress of the people of the country must unavoidably include development strategies related to women, who make up almost half of the population. With the appreciation of this fact, a variety of programmes and schemes explicitly related to women and gender issues have been undertaken by both government and non-government institutions. It has also been globally proved that women should not be beleaguered to imprison to some specific activities only. They can play equally a considerable role side by side with man in various fields or professions contributing to nation building and welfare activities for human advancement. Most of the South Asian countries like Bangladesh; the women are still in the clutch of socio-economic, cultural, politico-religious stigma and could not play an assertive role in the activities beginning from family to state. Rather their effective participation in the all phases of life has been distracted by socioeconomic and cultural factors. The women are still treated as weaker segment of population of the society or historically disadvantaged sections of society and they have been made subject various social, domestic repressive measures. Very often we hear and press reveals how the women folk in urban and rural areas are being persecuted or injured physically and mentally both. To man civilization is superior to nature, rational over emotional, so women were delegated to the natural sphere.¹ Around the

world one sees a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women.² Men decide not just how women dress, talk, walk, their inheritance-if at all, the everyday mundane but also what women think. Right from the time women are born they are indoctrinated with the thoughts of the patriarchal system. Patriarchy makes women a tool for furthering itself and continuing the domination. Women become not beings but objects to the patriarchal mind, to be owned, to be used, to be subject to the whims of the dominance of men.

Looking at international figures, one finds that at least 1 in 3 women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Every year, violence in the home and the community devastates the lives of millions of women. Violence against women is rooted in a global culture of discrimination which denies women equal rights with men and which legitimizes the appropriation of women's bodies for individual gratification or political ends. Violence against women feeds off discrimination and serves to reinforce it. States have the obligation to prevent, protect against, and punish violence against women whether perpetrated by private or public actors.³ Violence against women is a human right abuse. Even in 2015, most states treat women like second class citizens. They aren't adequately represented in the government. Very few nations have had women leaders not because women are incompetent but because they haven't been provided the opportunity to or the accessibility to be out there. Many countries still keep women out of the political system and where women are allowed the road is really tough to get to decision making positions. The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights states that "*everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.*" (Article 2)⁴

Violence against Women in South Asian Countries

In South Asia the violence perpetrated against women paints a gruesome picture. One in every two women experiences violence in her daily life. Social, cultural, political, economic, and legal factors in the region combine to leave women vulnerable to community-sanctioned violence. Patriarchy is so dominant that it isn't revolting to the minds that practice it- they even go to the extent of making women parade around naked or get women gang raped to avenge or any other pretext that they conceive as convenient. Violence against women is endemic in the region, with culture specific variations. It begins at the stage of conception; sex-selective abortions are frequent. One in six deaths of a female infant in India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan is due to neglect and discrimination. Culture-specific forms of violence include domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment, incest, trafficking, honour killings, acid attacks, public mutilation, stove-burnings, and forced temple prostitution. In South Asian countries it is religion traditions have shaped the personalities of women and determined their social status. Rigid cultures and patriarchal attitudes which devalue the role of women, result in the wide spread occurrence of violence against women. The family structure, in which the man is the unquestionable decision maker of the household, and activities within the family are seen as personal, allows violent behavior to occur at home. As well as traditional forms of violence such as wife-battering and sexual assault, women in these countries are also bare to dowry crimes such as bride burning, kidnapping for the purposes of prostitution, and "honour killings". Laws permit discrimination against women and discourage reporting of violent acts. Efforts to remedy this situation must include changes in local laws as well as assistance from the United Nations and the international community. violence by family members, strangers and violence through state apparatus; domestic violence including spousal slay; being burned, flawed with acid, beaten and threatened; ritual honour killings; and custodial abuse and torment. Cultural norms around violence, gender and sexual relationships are not only manifested at the individual level, but are also re-enforced or not by the

family, the community and within the broader social context, including the media. Dobash et al. (1992) have shown how historically, husbands' domination over wives, including the use of violence, has been sanctioned by cultural beliefs.

In India and Pakistan, women are for the most part regarded as treated as second class citizens and wives are battered for misconduct or minor mistakes. In India, nearly 25% of women experiences the ill effects of physical mishandle (Yoshihama, 1999). In another study, 18 to 45 percent of of wedded men in five regions of Uttar Pradesh, (a vast state in northern India,) recognized that they physically mishandled their spouses (Narayana, 1996). A study in 1999 by Fikree and Bhatti, showed that 34% of women are physically abused, 15% had been physically abused whilst pregnant and 72% of physically abused women were depressed. Statistical evidence on the actual prevalence of domestic violence in India is scant. However the few studies available indicate that physical abuse of Indian women is quite high, ranging from 22 percent to 60 percent of women surveyed (Rao, 1997; Mahajan, 1990).

A report published by UN WOMEN in April, 2014 titled, "Violence against Women in Politics: a Study conducted in India, Nepal and Pakistan", revealed violence against women in politics is rampant in South Asia. Insufficient implementation of laws, lack of support from police and judiciary, the socio-economic divide and current power structures were listed as the major reasons for violence, which are all rooted in patriarchy.⁶ Another report entitled, "Violence Against Women and Girls: Lessons from South Asia" delves into the three aspects of violence against women: the prevalence of violence, causes of violence, and the efficacy of interventions against violence against women. This report finds that when only one or two (i.e., few) women are educated and educated just a little; they may actually be at a greater risk of violence. The more women study, the more likely they are to disclose their experience of violence.⁷

MAJOR TYPES OF VIOLENCE COMMITTED AGAINST WOMEN

Acid Throwing and Dowry Deaths

Women's enslavement to men is unavoidable in the political, common, social, social, and monetary circles of numerous nations of the South Asian region. Women every now and again get to be casualties of a brutal type of requital in the event that they turn down suitors or don't coexist with in-laws. Corrosive is tossed to bring about physical torment as well as mental injury, which smashes the self regard of the casualty and limits their life decisions and openings. It causes disfigurement, blinding and deadly severely charred areas. In India the courts have guided the legislature to manage the offer of corrosive and the administration has found a way to guarantee it yet it is an instance of close to nothing. Ladies are dealt with as property and this prompts to settlement related passings. Women that can't coordinate up to the endowment requests are heartlessly scorched by the in-laws and spouses. A study by Kumari (1989) of dowry abuse revealed that one out of every four dowry victims was driven to suicide. Five hundred women in Pakistan are believed to have killed themselves during the year 2000 (HRCP, 2000g). In two cases, women killed themselves and their small children because of the deprivation they saw the children endure as a result of economic hardship. Most of the deaths were due to "domestic disputes" quite often due to adverse economic circumstances. In a relatively new phenomenon, three teenage girls killed themselves by an overdose of poisonous pills after they failed their Matric (High School Exam), fearing they will not be allowed to study, and instead be married off. Acid throwing is another form of violence against women, which are increasing at alarming women, which are increasing at an alarming rate. The young and teenaged girls fell victim of acid burn because of refusal of marriage and rejection of love proposal given by young man. Acid burns also taken as measures of personal revenge, family quarrel and quarrel in couple and also feuds between two families, kinship. Although laws have been made against such cruelty, the offenders are practicing very often in the society. Acid throwing is another form of

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Violence Against Women in Custody

Detained women are largely imperceptible to the general population eye, little is done when the punishment of detained is exacerbated with that of assault, rape, grabbing amid body looks, and shackling amid childbirth. In India, with the growing media, it has become visible how ladies have been assaulted inside police headquarters, at times even minors. The law here commands that ladies are to be captured by ladies police however in the hinterlands and faraway from the city this barely converts into practice. Women are also killed for other motives, often linked to disputes involving their families. Over 2,000 women are estimated to have been killed over the year across Pakistan (HRCP, 2000f). In January 2001, about 130 cases of physical abuse occurred as a result of which 68 women were brutally killed. In Bangladesh, 50% of wives were killed by their husbands (Stewart, 1989). A New Delhi study on violence showed that in almost 94% of cases, the victims and the offender were members of the same family. In nine out of ten cases, husbands murdered their wives (Action Aid India, 1994). The incidents of abuse of women detained by police and the involvement of policemen engaged in the rape of women during imprisonment are reported commonly. Incidents of the rape of women in police custody are also reported very commonly. From January 1999 to November 1999, about forty-one women faced custodial violence. Only six cases of these were of minor type, while 21 were gang-raped and 14 were physically abused. In the year 2000, at least three incidents of deaths of women resulting from maltreatment or grave abuse at the hands of law enforcers were reported

“Honour” Killings

Honour killings (Karo Kari) are carried out by men who assume that their wives, daughters, sisters have, in some way, violated norms relating to the behavior of women, which damages a man’s honour (Dawood, 1999). There is nothing honorable about these killings. Women are looked upon as agents of the respect of the family. They aren’t offered chances to choose for themselves. When they state their choices they are executed by their family to bring disrespect to their family. They are executed by others to look for reprisal and convey shame to her family. Open stoning happen. Khap panchayats arrange their murdering. According to a report by Amnesty International on June 15, 2000 several hundred women and girls die each year in so-called “honour killings” in Pakistan. In its “Dimensions of Violence” report released in January 2000 (HRCP, 2000e), the HRCP found that in 11-month period, at least 266 women had been victims of “honour killing” in and around Lahore. According to the reports by HRCP in the year 1999, the ratio of women who faced such kind of violence was highest in Punjab and 266 women were killed. In the year 2000 about 672 women were killed in Punjab but only 128 cases were recorded by the police station while the relatives of others refused to take action against the murders. In Sindh, from January 2000 to April 2000, about 93 women were killed which was attributed to “Karo Kari”. Hundreds of “honour killings”, especially in tribal areas of the North are believed to go unreported each year as a result of social connivance, often involving district administration, which results in failure to report such murders to the police (HRCP, 2000e).

Domestic Violence

Without exception, a woman's greatest risk of violence is from someone she knows. Domestic violence is a violation of a woman's right to physical integrity, to liberty, and all too often, to her right to life itself.⁵

Child Marriage

Though many South Asian nations have laws enacted against child marriage, it still occurs. It not just curtails the life choices of girls but also leads to health complications resulting from early pregnancies.

- Female infanticide and Female Feticides
- **Psychological Torture:** Women are also sufferers of silent psychological torture. Apart from corporal torment they are made subject to psychological torture both at home and outside. Even at their work place they are after ignored, ridiculed, deprived of financial benefits. Socially derided and arrogant young boys also often tease the school and college going girls. The acid victims become mentally depressed and pass their days under fearful mental agony.
- Bearing a child is very complicated task and causes a lot of physical sprain. For the growth and development of the newborn and is normal and easy birth a woman requires sufficient food, leisure which are often denied or not taken into notice in most case of joint poor family she is deprived of regular medical checkup and not getting proper medicine for keeping the baby healthy and alive. Denials of all these facilities are nothing but a strain for the women to endure to deliver the baby.
- On many alleged reason and temptation the girl are abducted and forced to live a life of sex workers and those who control them or manage them. They are also great exploiters. They enjoy a greater share of money earned by the sex worker and on the other hand the latter is reduced to a life of bare necessities.
- Murder is the cruelest form of women violence. The murder of women by their husband and in laws is related to escalation of dowry demands and with more general harassment and severe beating of women. Women are murdered secretly as well as openly by the gunshot by the hired terrorists. Sometimes on a very trifling cause or neglected issue or of sudden rise of anger beyond control, kill wife and children. In an ACD Report it is found that in the year 2001, 590 women murdered on different causes.

This is a barefaced manhandle of the privilege to life where a girl child type is killed either upon birth or in the womb. Laws and obstructions have not by any means helped as the sex proportion in South Asia continues lessening.

Factors Contributing to Increased Violence against Women

As of late the episodes of women brutality have expanded altogether in South Asia. There are diverse financial, political, social and religious parts which have added to the expanded weakness of ladies to male viciousness are as under:

- As a male commanded society men in every aspect of their presence oversee the women of Indian subcontinent. In her life cycle a ladies relies on upon father, sibling, spouse and in conclusion their children. In addition, they are oppressed and abused in each portion by the male individuals. Because of such subjugation, the male individuals visualize that they generally straight ladies and all administrations ought to be focused to the consideration of the male. Furthermore, the general public's essential hesitance to profoundly change patriarchal approaches and practices, which propagate male predominance over women (Islam, 2004; 127). Thus, from time

immemorial the male individuals consider women as a product of satisfaction.

- The obstruction in the customary provincial monetary example realized by evolving financial procedures effectsly affects ladies. Both financially and socially powerless in the general public. Conventional socio-social practices, social obliges, absence of business opportunity, and low nourishing and wellbeing status and so on are a portion of the elements in charge of holding low social and monetary status, unemployment have expanded the push and strain in male-female connection in poor family units and offered ascend to renunciation, separation and brutality.
- Irrespective of across the country opulence or level of advancement, ladies are defenseless against abuse, mistreatment and every single other kind of unequivocal brutality from men in all social orders where social standards, custom and lawful framework endorse ladies' subordination to men.
- Socio-efficient conditions like destitution, unemployment and so on and political distress tend to constrain youngsters to be required in psychological warfare, tranquilize habit, commandeering, ill-conceived sex and other standoffish exercises. Along these lines disjoined shape moral strength they jump at the chance to perk up additional by happening assault viciousness as excite and experience (Islam, 2004).
- Besides these, other persuasive parts are in charge of the assault event in the nation, absence of instruction and mindfulness if there should be an occurrence of ladies, sex difference, routine of force, land debate, unlawful relationship, forswearing of affection and marriage, restricting second marriage, development of political amazingness in the particular region and others, are straightforwardly or by implication connected with criminal exercises including ladies savagery.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the course of the most recent two decades, viciousness against women has gotten to be a standout amongst the most noticeable and verbalized social issues in south Asian nations. Today all the segment of the general public is worried about the issue and developments: tumult's and legitimate changes are being made against women persecution. However, the rate of change is not observable. It is resultant of a considerable measure of reasons as negative socialization of our ladies, recorded arrangement of patriarchy, monetary reliance of the women, and acknowledgment of savagery in the general public et cetera. Indeed, even the women themselves likewise are not ready to understand the circumstance. They once in a while acknowledge viciousness against them of course. Then again, security offices have turned into the rearing ground of viciousness. Police authority is thought to be more shaky place for a casualty. Disregarding much unsettling and challenges and activities by government and nongovernment associations with worldwide territory: the malicious perseveres and is irritating.

Governments ought to likewise sanction local benchmarks which secure the human privileges of ladies and young lady youngsters. Governments who have officially endorsed these instruments ought to look at any constraining reservations, with a view to pulling back them. This is especially essential on account of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, where the dedication of numerous administrations is truly undermined by the degree of their reservations. Governments ought to assess non-bargain instruments, for example, the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Governments ought to guarantee that reports to settlement observing bodies incorporate nitty gritty data on the circumstance of ladies and young lady youngsters.

Governments ought to perceive that oppression ladies, including lesbians and young lady youngsters, is a key contributory variable to human rights manhandle, for example, torment, including assault and different types of custodial viciousness. Governments ought to start an arrangement of activity against such segregation. Governments ought to guarantee that ladies are dealt with similarly in law; a lady's confirmation ought to have an indistinguishable weight from a man's in every legal continuing and ladies ought not get harsher punishments than a man would for a similar offense. Where it is asserted that segregation in the organization of equity adds to human rights infringement against ladies an autonomous commission ought to be named to research and make suggestions to amend the circumstance.

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