

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**Ms. Kavita Narendra Hedao**

*Research Scholar, JJTU, Rajasthan*

### **Abstract**

*Various international Declaration and Conventions assures the equality of man and woman in this world. But the society which has been turned into a patriarchal pattern has not given such status to a certain section of the world community. Women's equality is a dream even today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Women's discrimination and her subordination start from the first important unit of human society. The discrimination and subordinate position result in violence against women from their family members. Such violence is committed inside the home, a private space. Hence, society neglects such violence on the basis that it is a family private matter. Hence, much domestic violence remains unreported because women do not understand what constitutes domestic violence. It is not the duty of the state and police only to take measures to mitigate domestic violence. It is the duty of every person whether artificial or natural not to play the role of spectator and take steps to destroy this menace. The corporate institution can play a major role in the protection of women from domestic violence. Different measures can be taken to give relief to women through Corporate Social Responsibility. Knowledge and empowerment can be treated as a weapon to confront domestic violence. This Research paper discusses domestic violence and its form, consequences and what a corporate body can do to mitigate the violence.*

### **Keywords-**

*domestic violence, CSR, empowerment of women.*

### **INTRODUCTION-**

Art. 1 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Here all human being includes both men and women. According to this Article, women should be equal to a man as far as rights are concerned. Equality means here the contribution made in family and society even though different, are of equal values.<sup>1</sup> But any society doesn't treat its men and women equally. Gender inequality has been deeply rooted in

society factually and psychologically. Hence, achieving an equality path is difficult as there are many obstacles to it. The dominating character of man accepted by society, patriarchal world, subordination of women, poverty, illiteracy etc can be listed out as obstacles. Such deep-rooted obstacles are the main cause of violence against women in our society.

The normal form of violence which occur in rural as well as in urban society is domestic violence. Domestic violence is the violence that occurs in four walls of the house and considers a private affair. Even though domestic violence can be committed against wife and husband, but in most cases, the victim is a woman only. Hence, it can be said that domestic violence is gender-based violence. It can be committed by a husband, ex-husband, boyfriend with whom a woman is in a relationship.

### **OBJECTS OF PAPER-**

1. To study the meaning of domestic violence
2. To study forms, causes, consequences of domestic violence
3. To study measures to prevent domestic violence through CSR
4. To study different projects launched by a corporate body

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY-**

This paper is doctrinal. To gather information books, various articles, journals are used.

### **MEANING OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-**

The US Office on Violence against Women defines "domestic violence as a pattern of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner." The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 defines violence as – "any act, omission or commission of respondent which harms, injures or endangers the health, safety, life, limb or well-being of an aggrieved person." The definition includes physical, sexual, verbal, economic, emotional abuse and also includes any harm or injury caused to meet by unlawful demand of any dowry or property or valuable.<sup>2</sup>

### **FORMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-**

<sup>1</sup> Mary Robinson, The Principle of Equality, published in the book The world of Gender Justice, Har Anand Publication, 2006. Pg. 22

<sup>2</sup> S.3 of Act.

Domestic violence takes place in many forms including physical, sexual, economic, psychological abuse. In such violence use of physical force, hitting, kicking, biting, punching on walls, throwing objects, taunting, forced sex, insult, humiliation, isolation, economic restraint are utilized to inflict injury upon the victim.

**CAUSES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-**

There are different causes of domestic violence. Patriarchal social order, the notion of masculinity is reasons for domestic violence. Similarly, stress, poverty, social learning, family learning, alcoholism, dowry, the desire for power and control etc., are reasons for domestic violence. Researchers have proved that in cases of domestic violence, the husband or intimate partner uses force or abuse the aggrieved party, but still, women live in a relationship because of economical dependency upon the abuser. Many women continue in such violent relationships due to the care of children. Illiteracy among women is also one of the causes to continue in the relationship. Illiteracy creates many challenges to lead further life free from the husband.

**CONSEQUENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-**

Domestic violence is a violation of the fundamental and human rights of women. It deprives women's right to live with dignity. Consequences of domestic violence depend upon the form used by abuse. Whenever an abuser uses physical violence, a woman receives such injuries which require emergency treatment. It may result in grave injuries, fractures of bones and sometimes death. Psychologically, a woman remains in shock, depression, stress. A woman lost her self-esteem and self-confidence. Economic abuse impacts negatively women's progress in their employment. Economic violence impacts women's ability to work. When the husband has control over the money of the victim, the victim doesn't receive sufficient money for her journey up to work or to purchase suitable clothing for work. Hence, due to physical injury, depression women may miss work or perform below their potential. The effect of domestic violence on the workplace ultimately affects the national economy.

**DATA ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-**

According to Global Estimates Report published by the World Health Organisation (2021), 736 million women almost- one in three women experience domestic violence. Most violence against women is perpetrated by current or former husbands or intimate partners and 38% of murders of women are committed by male intimate partners

worldwide.<sup>3</sup> In 2018, an estimated one in seven had experienced physical or sexual violence or both violence from intimate partner or husband in past 12 months.<sup>4</sup>

During the lockdown of Covid-19, incidences of domestic violence hiked in the world. In India, National Commission for Women data shows that there is 2.5 times increase in domestic violence during the first four months of lockdown. In the year 2021 also National Commission for Women has received more than 2,300 domestic violence complaints between January and May 2021. It is the highest rate since the year 2000.<sup>5</sup>

**HOW TO PREVENT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE-**

Prevention of domestic violence is not possible till the patriarchal pattern in society along with the notion of masculinity continues. Laws have been enacted by state or central government to prevent domestic violence and to safeguard women. Civil and criminal remedies are available. With intend to provide immediate and quick relief; The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act has been passed in the year 2005. Different orders like protection order, residence order, monetary relief, a custody order can be obtained.

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL – 5 AND CSR ROLE-**

Domestic violence is a social evil. Every individual or entity has to stand against domestic violence. To achieve the Goal of Sustainable Development by 2030, it is necessary to eliminate causes of discrimination in the private and public spheres. Hence, for the achievement of SDG-5, active actions by government, non-government organizations, business establishments, and corporate bodies are required. Corporate bodies can take initiative to eliminate or reduce the menace of domestic violence from Indian society. Apart from the ordinary course of business, being part of society, corporate bodies are socially accountable. Corporate Social Responsibility obligates companies to ensure that their business is for the benefit and welfare of society and the environment. The Company Act, 2013 made CSR a compulsory act. Under S.135 of the new Act, CSR is compulsory for all government or private companies if the net worth of a company is Rs. 500 crore /more or annual turnover of a company is Rs.1000 crore/more or the annual net profit of

<sup>3</sup> www.unwomen.org retrieved on 29/9/21

<sup>4</sup> ibid

<sup>5</sup> www.Thehindu.com dated June 24, 2021, retrieved on 29/9/2021

the company is at least Rs. 5 crores immediately preceding financial year. CSR mandates such companies to spend 2% of average net profits immediately preceding three years on CSR activities listed in Schedule VII. Clause (iii) of the Schedule listed the activity for the promotion of gender equality, empowerment of women. The prevention and eradication of domestic violence is the step towards gender equality. Various programs can be arranged to deal with domestic violence under the umbrella of CSR. Such programs can be as follows-

**1. Awareness Programs for Women-**

Most domestic violence cases remained unreported because women do not know whether a particular act of husband is or is not domestic violence. Women are not aware of reliefs and authorities which can be claimed or approached. Therefore, awareness programs can be conducted by corporate bodies. For awareness assistance from social workers, lawyers, police authorities and NGO's can be taken.

**2. Self-defence Programs-**

Physical attack by abuser may handicap or incapacitate women permanently. In such a situation, women are to be trained in self-defence. Self-defence training programs will capacitate women to defend self-body. When men are aware of the defending capacity of women, they would think thousand times before causing injury or attack to women.

**3. Men's Awareness Programs-**

Patriarchy and men's notion of power are the main reasons for domestic violence. Hence, awareness among men's to render knowledge about human rights of women like women's right to be treated equally, right to dignified life etc, can be conducted. Counselling to men of orthodox tendency can change their notion about the status of women and that may lead to mitigate such domestic violence. Awareness campaigns in particular locality physically, through media can be arranged. To attract men towards such programs remain a challenge, but different tactics like gifts to attend programs, prizes to express best views, lucky draws among participants at the end of programs can be arranged.

**4. Women Empowerment-**

The economic dependency of women compels her to continue in a violent relationship. In such a situation husband thinks that whatever injury he may cause to his wife, she would not leave him. Her economic dependency is considered as a license for domestic violence. If women financially become independent, it may reduce

incidences of domestic violence. Various programs can be arranged through CSR to train women in particular skills or art. Some kind of employment can be provided to women.

**5. Medical Health Centers-**

When domestic violence results in severe injury, quick medical assistance is required. A victim of domestic violence may hesitate to go to government hospitals specifically when she desires to live along with kids with the abuser and does not wish to file any police complaint. Such women still live such relation to giving further chance to the abuser to improve the relationship. Therefore, for such women, medical health centres can be established to provide quick medical assistance.

**6. Shelter Home Facility-**

After the incidence of violence, the abuser may evict the victim from home. In such a situation shelter homes can provide her temporary shelter. Shelter home may provide her with more security and support during such unbearable conditions. Hence shelter homes with basic amenities can be run through CSR.

**7. Legal Aid and Advice Center-**

In some cases, women may seek legal remedy. In such cases, legal advice is needed. Hence, centres for legal aid and advice can also be established which can be treated as a good support system for aggrieved women.

**CSR CONTRIBUTORS TO DEAL WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN INDIA-**

Some of the notable programs by some companies are as follows-

**1. STAINLESS ASHIYANA PROJECT-**

Jindal Stainless Foundation and Women of Element Trust launched a project "Stainless Ashiyana" to help the victim of domestic violence in India in October 2020. A free helpline number- 9310283304 has been set to counsel and suggest legal recourse to the victim. Legal awareness session on domestic violence in Delhi and Haryana along with pro-bono legal support to people from the low-income group also planned to be provided.<sup>6</sup>

**2. DHWANI-**

Dhwani is a national domestic helpline number (044 -43111143/18001027282), which has been set up by Verizon India, an IT company along with International Foundation for Crime Prevention and Victim Care, a charitable trust. This helpline number is being run by

<sup>6</sup> www.psuwatch.com retrieved on 28/9/2021

volunteers and staff of trust. This helpline number provides crises intervention services to victims. A trained counsellor, emergency intervention, safety planning, legal and medical referrals, and support in filing cases are provided by this number.<sup>7</sup>

**3. MYAMBAR-**

Vodafone Idea Foundation, the CSR arm of Vodafone Idea Ltd, in partnership with NASSCOM Foundation, Safety Trust, and UN Women has launched a new app for women. The app has been designed and developed for the safety and empowerment of women in India. This app contains a directory of important helpline numbers and service providers across the country. Risk assessment tools and further recommendations are notable features of the app. The contents of the app are available in audio format also.<sup>8</sup>

**4. WIPRO GE-**

Since May 2020, Wipro has been working in the field of the socio-global problem of domestic violence. Under this project, nutrition kits are being provided to the survival of domestic violence. This kit contains rice, sugar, Rava, oil etc. counselling support thought PCVC is also provided to the victim of domestic violence. Similarly, wound kits to the injured women of domestic violence are also being provided to the victim. This kit contains ointment, cotton, and a bandage.

**5. MERI SANGINI-**

Meri Sangini, Meri Margdarshika project is launched by Adani Electricity Mumbai Limited in association with Meri Sangini. Sangini works on social issues like domestic violence and acts as a bridge to connect people with government agencies and schemes.<sup>9</sup>

**6. PROJECT SHAKTI-**

This project is a CSR initiative of Hindustan Unilever Ltd, having the aim to financially empower women and to provide livelihood opportunities to women in rural areas. This program help women to gain selling skill, self-confident, improve self-esteem and learn communication. Such projects of women empowerment help to mitigate domestic violence by making women economically independent.

**CONCLUSION-**

Domestic violence even though, deeply rooted practice in Indian society, but prevention and eradication can be possible by the collective efforts of government departments, NGO's, corporate bodies. More corporate contribution towards the achievement of gender justice through CSR is required. It is the need of the day that more and more corporate bodies shall come forward and arrange the programs to mitigate domestic violence. CSR portal maintained by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs shows that there are a total of 22,155 companies, which have spent 24063 crore rupees on CSR on a total of 34,291 CSR projects in the financial year 2019-2020. The report by United Nations Development Programme India (2019) shows that the top 100 forms in the country spent a mere 4% of their CSR on women's economic empowerment. Hence, there is scope to enhancing the focus on the development of women and gender justice. Therefore, it is the need of the day that more and more corporate bodies must utilize CSR funds for gender justice.

**REFERENCES-**

1. Har Anand, The World of Gender Justice
2. The Protection of Women Against Domestic Violence Act, 2005- bare Act
3. [www.unwomen.org](http://www.unwomen.org)
4. [www.Thehindu.com](http://www.Thehindu.com)
5. [www.psuwatch.com](http://www.psuwatch.com)
6. [www.csrbox.org/india-csr-news](http://www.csrbox.org/india-csr-news)
7. [www.Thehindubusinessline.com](http://www.Thehindubusinessline.com)
8. [www.adanitransmission.com](http://www.adanitransmission.com)

<sup>7</sup> [www.csrbox.org/india-csr-news](http://www.csrbox.org/india-csr-news) retrieved on 28/9/2021

<sup>8</sup> [www.Thehindubusinessline.com](http://www.Thehindubusinessline.com) October 23, 2020, retrieved on 28/9/2021

<sup>9</sup> [www.adanitransmission.com](http://www.adanitransmission.com) retrieved on 29/9/2021.