

Q:- What is gender-based violence? What forms of gender-based violence are given in "Punjab protection of women against gender-based violence act 2016?" What are consequences of gender-based violence on women?

1) Introduction:-

One of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world is gender-based violence. It knows no social, economic or national boundaries. It undermines the health, dignity, security and autonomy of survivors. Mostly women are the victims of the gender-based violence. In Pakistan, mostly women face gender-based violence in different forms either physically or mentally. This type of violence can exist at domestic level or also in the form of workplace harassment. It leads to severe consequences on women and overall on society. So, effective policies must be planned and

implemented to control it.

2) Gender-based violence:-

The violence directed against a person because of their gender. This phenomenon is deeply rooted in gender inequality, and continues to be one of the most notable human rights violations within all societies. Both women and men experience gender-based violence but majority of victims are women and girls.

(European Institute for Gender Equality)

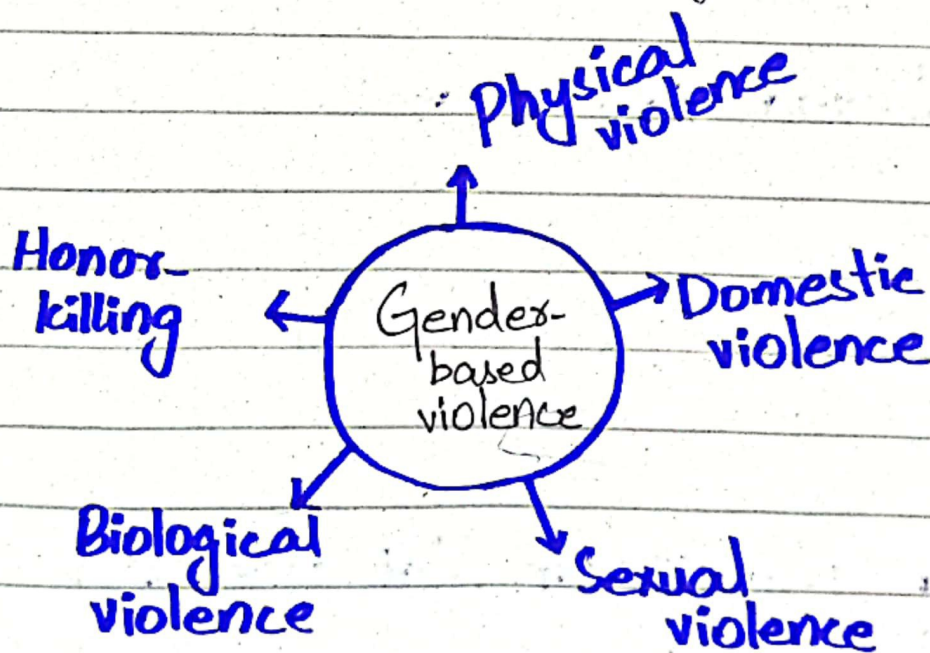
3) Gender-based violence against women:-

According to World Bank, it is the global pandemic affects 1 in 3 women in their lifetime. United Nations defines it as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely

to result in physical, sexual or mental harm" suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life."

4) Forms of gender-based violence:-

According to "Punjab protection of women against gender-based violence act 2016", following are the forms of gender-based violence against women:-



i) Physical violence:-

It includes any act which causes physical harm by using any unlawful physical force including beating, slapping, arm twisting, choking, burning etc.

e.g. Noor Musaddam case-2002

She was 27-years old, daughter of a former diplomat, Shaikat Musaddam.

She was murdered by a person who proposed her to marry but she refused. The suspect was Zahid Jaffer who was sentenced to death in Feb, 2022.

ii) Sexual violence:-

It involves any sexual act which is performed on an individual without their consent. It can be in the form of rape or sexual assault.

e.g. Mukhtaran Mai case-2002

She was sexually assaulted and gang-raped by one of the clans of her village (Mastoi clan). She was

raped as punishment due to his brother's alleged relationship with woman of that clan.

(iii) Physical violence:-

iii) Psychological violence:-

Any act which causes psychological harm to an individual. It can be in the form of coercion, defamation, verbal insult or harassment.

e.g. Asma Aziz case - 2019

Asma was psychologically and physically tortured by her husband. She was beaten by her husband besides shaving her head for not dancing in front of her husband's friends.

iv) Domestic violence:-

It includes the violent or aggressive behaviours within the home, typically involving the violent abuse of a

Spouse or partner.

e.g., Madiha Case - 2020

Madiha, a 22-year old girl was put to death after she was doused with petrol and then set on fire. Her only crime was that she was unable to provide the motorcycle to her husband in dowry.

v) Honor - killing :-

Crimes committed for honor are so distinct because they take place in a social surroundings. Honor killing means unlawful killing for her actual perceived morally or mentally unclean or impure behaviour.

e.g., Gandeel Baloch case - 2016

On July 15, 2016, she was asphyxiated by her brother Waseem and put to death after strangling in Multan in the name of honor.

All these are forms of violence against women.

5) Consequences of gender-based violence against women

Gender-based violence against women has serious consequences on women:-

a) Physical and Mental Health impact:-

Domestic violence may result in physical injuries or mental stress.

e.g. victim may develop bruises or fractures and mental health conditions like PTSD.

b) Economic consequences:-

Workplace harassment can result in loss of income and financial instability. Because survivors of sexual harassment may have to need money for medical care.

c) Social isolation:-

Victims may become increasingly isolated from their support networks.

d) Impact on families:-

Children who witnessed domestic violence may exhibit behavioural issues or emotional distress. They are more likely to develop anxiety, depression and low academic performance.

e) Community effects:-

High rates of gender-based violence increase fear, leading to a lack of community cohesion. People may feel unsafe and avoid going out.

6) Conclusion:-

Gender-based violence mostly inflicted on women at different levels in various forms. It leads to serious consequences on the individuals, families and communities.