

DATE: ___/___/___

Define gender based violence.

Explain various forms of violence against women in Pakistan and devise some practical strategies which can be helpful in the eradication of GBV from our society.

1) Introduction:-

Gender based violence has its roots in the power differential between gender which leads to its manifestation in various forms. In Pakistan, this violence is exhibited in the form of physical, psychological, economic, verbal and structural abuse. Obviously, owing to this wide spectrum of abuses, the elimination strategies also need to be aligned with the various causes of violence and must address the causes at all levels of society.

2) Defining Gender Based Violence:

Gender based violence has been defined by various experts and feminist organizations at various instances. Owing to the multidimensional nature of the problem, it is difficult to define it comprehensively. However, the main factors that most definitions cover are a gender dichotomies

- power differences
- subjugation of women

According to Asia Pacific Forum
on Women, Law and Development
APWLD, 1990 :-

"Gender based violence is
an act involving the use of
force or coercion with an
intent of perpetuating/promoting
hierarchical gender relations."

In her book Freedom from
Violence, Margaret Schuler
describes GBV as

"Violent acts perpetrated
against women because they
are women."

Lastly, UN Convention on
Elimination of All forms of
Discriminations Against Women
(CEDAW) defined GBV in
1992 as :-

"Violence directed against
a woman ~~as~~ because she
is a woman or violence that
affects women disproportionately."

3) Forms of Violence Faced by Women In Pakistan:-

GBV manifest in various forms in Pakistan. Given below is an overview of these forms.

a) Physical Violence

This form strictly has physical dimensions and may or may not cause bodily injury to the battered person. This form includes acts like spitting, choking, burning and use of weapons.

Manifestations of Physical Violence are

i) Domestic Violence

According to HRCP's State of Human Rights Report (2025), 1641 women were murdered and 3385 cases of beatings were reported due to Domestic Violence.

ii) Acid Attacks

This form of violence often occurs in South Asia where acid throwing is considered a right response by men of the society to punish women who reject their proposal or marry someone else.

b) Sexual Violence

Sexual violence manifests itself in the form of rapes, gang rapes, forced marriages, forced pregnancies, forced abortions, sterilization, virginity test and marital rape.

Example :-

The recent ^{death} killing of Shanti Maheshwari in Sindh after marital rape is a case in point here.

c) Psychological Abuse

This includes emotional violence that causes women to suffer PTSD, postpartum depression or general anxiety due to violence that she faces due to her sex from family, community and society.

According to NIH, $\frac{2}{3}$ rd of the ~~the~~ psychiatry patients in Pakistan are women.

d) Economic Abuse

This refers to the lack of free will or control over economic resources in the family or community or the national economy at large.

According to Hari Welfare Association,
99% of women in rural Sindh
do not own land.

e) Cultural and Structural Violence

This form of violence occurs due to the cultural and institutional perceptions of gender that are embedded in the structure of the society at large. Its forms include

- Honour Killing
- Workplace Harassment
- Restrictions on Mobility
- Restricted Access to Resources
- Customs like Sati, Marriage to Quran

4) Strategies for Eradication of GBV.-

In her work, Freedom from Violence, Margaret Schuler devises strategies for combatting GBV at the locus from where violence originates. According to her a multidimensional approach that considers local and cultural contexts is required.

• Subjects & Strategies Derived by Margaret Schuler

Subject →	Individual	Community	Institution
Strategies	Legal aid, Help and Protection of Potential victims	Changing attitudes & Rights awareness	Formulation of Laws and their Implementation

Other strategies/actions to focus on are:-

i) Research to Under Problem at its Core:-

This is crucial to understand the GBV and its root causes in Pakistan. Research can include studying of underlying causes and collection data. In this regard Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is doing a commendable job.

ii) To deter GBV:-

At this level formulating strict laws and sanctioning respect for women be a great step.

iii) To Root Out GBV:-

At this level, bringing

this is the 2nd part of the answer. discuss it in more detail by giving multiple subheadings.

attitudinal change within the community and making institutions strong will do the trick. Professional like civil servants, doctors, police and lawyers need to be made aware of the dynamics of the problem too.

5) Conclusion - GBU is a malaise of Pakistani society. It appears in various shapes and forms. And so, countering this problem also requires a multidimensional approach at individual, community and state level.