

Topic: Domestic Violence and its Social acceptance

Outline

1. Introduction

Thesis Statement: The social acceptance of domestic violence is an outcome of centuries old perpetuation of violent misogynist norms. It provides men with the license to manipulate, torture, and even kill women. There is a strong need to revisit gender norms, implementation of gender related laws, addressing traumas and discourage misogynist behaviours to curb the menace of domestic violence.

2. Correlation between domestic violence and its social acceptance

3- Why domestic violence is socially acceptable?

- a) Cultural norms justifies domestic violence in the name of honor
- b) Patriarchy reinforces the sexist attitudes which promotes domestic violence
- c) The myth of submissiveness demands women to endure domestic violence
- d) Ineffective legal support acts as a shield to nurture domestic violence
- e) Wrong interpretation of religion validates abusive behaviours
- f) Media glorifies the domestic violence in the name of romanticism

4- Acceptance of domestic violence and its influence on society

- a) Projecting guilt羞辱 on the survivors inculcates frustration
- b) Increase in crimes against women due to social validation
- c) Increase in crimes against men as a resistance against domestic

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- d) Women tend to challenge domestic violence through economic empowerment
- e) ~~Increase~~ in physical and mental fatigue due to multitasking results in domestic violence
- f) Declining trust in the institution of marriage as an outcome of domestic violence
- g) Radical feminism perceives men as a problem by ignoring men's own plight

5. Remedies to discourage social acceptance of domestic violence

- a) Rewriting social norms to form an equitable society
- b) Strong implementation of the violence related laws
- c) Affordable family counseling facilities to address cycles of trauma
- d) Strong check against misogyny and extremist behaviours

(Case Study: UK)

6. Conclusion

In the 21st century, social scientists have attempted to trace the origin of domestic violence in a modern society. The conflict perspective of the structural functionalism posits that both men and women are in conflict to hold power within a resource scarce society. Men, being the powerful gender exploits and subjugate women to maintain their power. In a patriarchal society, women are subjugated in several ways. Especially, those living in the developing countries are at the greater risk of domestic violence. Domestic violence is a way to assert dominance over the weaker gender by the powerful gender. There are two dimensions of domestic violence; direct and indirect. The direct violence is further divided into physical, sexual, psychological and financial violence. On the other hand, the indirect form of violence refers to the mental conditioning which results in the continuous cycle of suppression. The direct violence includes beating,

lashing, rape, denial of food and money, and even killing. However, the direct form of violence is just like a tip of the iceberg. The indirect form of violence holds a great amount of torture and persecution which is being tolerated by the weaker genders for the centuries. The society inculcates the sense of superiority in the strong gender i.e.: men; to subjugate women in the manner of their desire. The license to persecute women include reproductive, economic, mental and physical torture. In other words, the social acceptance of domestic violence is an outcome of centuries-old perpetuation of violent misogynist norms. It provides men with the license to manipulate, torture, and even kill women. There is a strong need to revisit gender norms, & implementation of gender related laws, addressing traumas and discourage misogynist behaviours to curb the menace of domestic violence.

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The correlation between the domestic violence and its social acceptance is centuries-old. A society functions on the social codes related to an individual, community and their bilateral relationships. A patriarchal society demands women to compromise their comfort at the cost of their physical and mental peace. "The cult of domesticity" perceives piety and submissive women as symbols of purity. The women with even a hint of self autonomy are considered rude and sly. To control women against exercising their autonomy and opinion, domestic violence is considered as a tool to subjugate them. Thus, domestic violence is a social product which is widely accepted by the very society to suppress women's authority.

There are various reasons behind the social acceptance of the domestic violence. First of all, cultural norms justify domestic violence in the name

of honor. The ~~strong~~ honor culture is very much prevalent in the parochial societies. It subdues the worth of a human being over inorganic structures of honor. In third world countries, women are considered as objects to be protected to save one's honor. The objectification of women have rarely reduced them to some cheap labour. This ~~evolved~~ modern system of slavery refrains women to exercise their opinions. The Oscar

Award winning documentaries of Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy named "Saving Face" and "A girl in the river: The price of forgiveness" speaks volume about the rotten honor culture and adjointed domestic violence.

This is why, when cultural norms intersect with women's autonomy, the domestic violence prevails.

Secondly, reinforcement of the sexist attitudes is flamed by patriarchy and resulted in domestic violence. The notion of "The man of the house" deprives women from all kind of

decision making. In regressive societies like South Asia, men are considered as sole bread earner of the family. The financial dependence of women on men, incarcerate ^{them} women within the four walls of the house. Here, starts the nature versus nurture debate. The home making, nurturing, and caregiving functions of the women mark an end to their productive opinions. functioning. The lack of exposure to the outside world limit their thought process. By and by, they become a subject to monotonous life. The frustration boiling within results ⁱⁿ domestic clashes. Resultantly, the women remain at the losing edge when society justifies the violent behaviours of men mainly due to their bread-winning function.

Thirdly, women are expected to endure domestic violence in the name of compromise. The myth of submissiveness demands women to ~~compromise~~ their self respect to save their relationships. The one dimensional compromise from

women's side, inculcates the sense of legitimacy to the men's abusive behaviours. In such cases, women are deprived of emotional support even from their maternal homes. Women are subjected to endure physical and psychological violence because that's what pious women do. According to the **Global Gender Gap Report 2025**, Pakistan ranks 148 out of 148 countries in terms of gender parity. The myth of submissiveness and the unrestrained domestic violence are the leading factors behind this sad state of affairs. Thus, laxity of women regarding their self respect in the name of compromise, is a leading factor behind domestic violence.

In addition to this, ineffective legal support acts as a shield to nurture domestic violence. The over-codification of laws without effective implementation system does not provide protection against domestic violence. A great number of victims hesitate to consult

legal experts to express their grievances. Those who seek legal action against the offenders are pressurized to reconcile by the law enforcement agencies. Those who remained adamant to file a case against the offender, are subjected to victim blaming. The famous **Qandeel Baloch Case**, which was hyped up by the media; is a prime example of victim blaming. Thus, the victims like Qandeel Baloch remained a conflicting figure even after cold blooded murder. This is mainly due to the patronage of domestic violence by the society.

Furthermore, the wrong interpretation of religion validates abusive behaviours. As, almost all of the religions supports patriarchy; it is difficult for a woman to stop men, using religion for their own benefits. For instance, in Islam men are declared as the protectors of women. It mandates men to protect women from dangers of the society. But some men interpret this responsibility

as a leverage to exploit women and act as their masters. Especially, in the regions of low literacy; this clause of Quran is misinterpreted. Similarly, Islam's approval of polygamy is used as a threatening tool against women.

In Islam, marriage is a ~~secular~~ sacred alliance which demands both parties to fulfil their rights and duties. But some men use this approval of polygamy to cheat on their partners alongwith a threat to leave divorce. So, it is a form of psychological violence which emanates from the wrong interpretation of the religion, for self-interest.

Moreover, media glorifies the domestic violence in the name of romanticism. The first sight love, stalking, and kidnapping are romanticized; with the heroine eventually fall in love with her harasser. The romanticization of the **Stockhome Syndrome**.

a syndrome where a hostage fall in love with the captor; is a ^{blatant} validation of gender based violence. The Pakistani

drama serial "Kesi Teri Khud Gharzi" was widely criticized for promoting Stockholm Syndrome by the educated masses. The portrayal of abuse as love, captivates the naive youth; which who adopt these behaviours in their relationships. In many instances, even mature people are seen defended abuse because they were programmed to by media to think so. Thus, like many social institutions; media is also responsible for the acceptance of domestic violence.

Apart from the factors which make domestic violence acceptable; the influence of this acceptance holds a great influence on the society. The first and the foremost influence, is the projection of guilt and shame on the survivors. It inculcates frustration within the society. The cycle of traumas are inherited into future generations. The female segment of the society starts perceiving themselves as the victim of violence with a dint of self doubt. By and by, this self

doubt starts inculcating a sense of justification about all the abuse and violence; a woman endured. The self justification of domestic violence molds the psychology of the entire society into a belief that domestic violence is justified. Thus, domestic violence not only affect the current victims but it also laid the foundation of abuse in the future with different offenders and victims.

Secondly, the acceptance of domestic violence lays the foundation of crimes against women. A psychological violence may be transformed into economic and then physical or sexual; if remained unaddressed. For instance, in Pakistan; the psychological form of violence is not considered even a violence. In case of

Muktara Mai, the violence was started from psychological agony when Mukhtara Mai was ordered by the village council to present in front of the Mastoi tribe to beg for forgiveness. She was presented before the culprits Abdul Khalique and other

men of his tribe for a crime she did not even commit. But she was defiled and gang raped brutally. In this case, psychological agony turned into both sexual and physical violence. Conclusively, the case of Mukhtara Mai is a result of centuries old abusive system which gives man a right over women's body.

Thirdly, owing to social patronage of domestic violence; a rise in crime against men has been experienced. These crimes emanated mostly from the flaws of criminal justice system. In Pakistan, the conviction rate for crime against women is at 2.5%, according to the reports of UNFPA. The crimes against men cannot be justified in any way but it is they are perceived as a sign of resistance by the suppressed women community. The most common forms of crimes against men include honey trapping, assaulting, beating, plundering and killings, etc. Thus, the menace of

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domestic violence is not only proving disastrous for women but it is not sparing the men also.

Besides this, women tend to challenge patriarchal norms through economic empowerment. Many women have realized that ^{their} financial dependence on men is a root cause of domestic violence. The concept of males being the sole bread winner of the family compelled women to endure years of physical and psychological violence. Therefore, women are participating handsomely to contribute financially in the household. According to the Pakistan's first ever Economic Census 2025; about 10 million households engaged in small-scale businesses in Pakistan; mostly run by women. Additionally, according to the results of Pakistan's Competitive Examinations 2024; about 48% of women have been allocated into various groups. Although, these are the small examples of women empowerment, but these instances will surely help in minimizing

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Social and legal patronage of domestic violence.

Undoubtedly, financial independence of women marked a way towards the reduction of domestic violence.

However, it did not ~~entire~~ women from their domestic and reproductive duties. The multitasking has added undue pressure to ~~women's~~ lives.

It is resulting in mental sickness and physical fatigue. The ~~multi-fold~~ pressure often results in domestic clashes and another form of domestic violence prevails. Even, the educated and financially independent women fall a victim to domestic violence. According to Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, about 90% of women in Pakistan experienced domestic violence once in their lives. So, unarguably domestic violence is not limited to uneducated and financially dependent women.

As a result, ^{many} people have started losing their interest in the institution of marriage. Those who are

still interested to get married are scared of having abusing partner.

A 2024, UN Report revealed that about 10 million women above the age of 35 years are unmarried.

The social media reacted negatively to this report. However, one of the major reasons to not get married is a fear of domestic violence. The social and legal acceptance of domestic violence made this fear even valid. So, it can be argued that domestic violence is a threat to the social, moral, and religious fabric of the society.

Most importantly, domestic violence has given rise to radical feminism which perceives men as the major problem. It remains unable to understand the working of a social fabric. It ignores the fact that in a patriarchal society, men are not a problem but a part of the ^{much bigger} ~~seab~~ problem. Men suffers a lot by the expectations and demands of associated to them in a patriarchal

Society. Toxic masculinity is perceived as a medal for a man in a patriarchal society. Emotional fragility, physical weakness, and financial insecurity inculcates the sense of sham masculinity. A society where men are not allowed to cry validates domestic violence to fan the flames of narcissistic egoism within men.

Nevertheless, domestic violence is an inorganic social product and it can only be discouraged by the society. The social acceptance of the domestic violence should be discouraged. For this, there is a need to rewrite social norms to form a more equitable society. There is a strong need to revisit gender roles. The social awareness campaigns should be launched to promote critical thinking among the masses. The gender should not be limited to the centuries-old gender roles. The educational curriculum needs to be updated accordingly. A gender neutral

approach should be adopted in daily interactions through language and symbols.

In addition to this, social and legal patronage of the domestic violence must be put to an end.

There is no effective legal codes exist to address different forms of violence.

Physical violence is considered only major form of violence in the legal circles.

Although, legal codes do exist regarding different forms of violence but it is difficult to prove them

before the court of law. **The**

Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2012 is limited to

Islamabad - foreign territory only. Similar laws are needed throughout the country with strong implementation process.

Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA), must monitor the digital content to prevent the romanticization of abuse and violence.

Furthermore, affordable family counselling facilities should be established through public - private partnership to address abuse and

violence. The survivors of the domestic violence should not feel guilty. For this, telemedicine services should be launched. There should be no doubt about the criminality of the domestic violence. The offenders should be ^{sent} ~~send~~ to mental health care centres to prevent abuse in the future. In other words, every possible step should be taken to break the chain of domestic violence, self guilt, trauma, and reprojection.

Last but not the least, it is a ~~the~~ need of the hour to keep a strong check against misogynist tendencies. Misogyny is not limited to men, some women can also fall a victim to misogyny because of mental conditioning. An efficient system should be introduced in educational institutes and at workplaces to determine the misogyny. For instance, In **United Kingdom** teachers will be given training to spot and tackle misogyny in the

classroom. The high risk pupils will be sent to on behavioural courses as a part of government long awaited strategy to halve violence against women and girls (VAWG).

To sum up, it is safe to say that ^{domestic} violence has social acceptance. Especially, in the developing and third world countries, domestic violence is considered as a tool to assert male dominance over weaker genders. "The cult of domesticity" and "the myth of Submissiveness" play a vital role in promoting domestic violence. The illiteracy, financial dependence, and social conditioning are the main factors responsible for domestic violence. However, even the most educated, financially independent, urban - raised women are not safe from domestic violence. As domestic violence is an outcome of centuries - old patriarchal system, it can only be reduced through / readdressing social norms. Strong implementation of laws alongwith psychological help can

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prove fruitful in curbing the
menace of domestic violence