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Research Article

IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS ON WOMEN SUFFERING FROM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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ABSTRACT

The harassment of women is a very serious issue that affects every corner of the world. The most common type of harassment experienced by women is sexual harassment, but there are other types as well. These include psychological harassment, sexual orientation harassment, cyber harassment and workplace harassment. But now-a-days violence affects the lives of millions of women and girls in all socio-economic classes around the world.

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INTRODUCTION

The psychological consequences of sexual trauma among women survivors have been widely studied, but research investigations continue, in part, because rates of violence against girls and women remain high. The National Violence against Women Survey found that 18% of women reported experiencing a completed or attempted rape during their lifetime. More than half (54.0 %) of the rape survivors that responded to the survey were younger than age 18 when they experienced their first attempted or completed rape. Ongoing research attention to mental health outcomes is also driven by evidence that survivors' responses are largely complex and unique to each individual. Some individuals experience severe symptoms or long-term distress, whereas others do not. The diversity in outcomes may be attributed to characteristics of the violent acts, environmental conditions, survivor attributes, and availability of social support and resources.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Kanpur district. All zones of Kanpur district were selected in this study. 50 females were selected from different zones. Total 300 sample size was drawn from the study area. Dependent and independent variables such as age, education, caste, occupation, security causes, harassment etc. were observed. The statistical tools such as mean, rank, knowledge, 't' test, Cr were used.

RESULTS

Table 1 Distribution of women according to religion
N=300

Sl.No.	Religion	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Hindu	210	70.0
2.	Muslim	60	20.0
3.	Sikh	18	6.0
4.	Christian	12	4.0
	Total	300	100.0

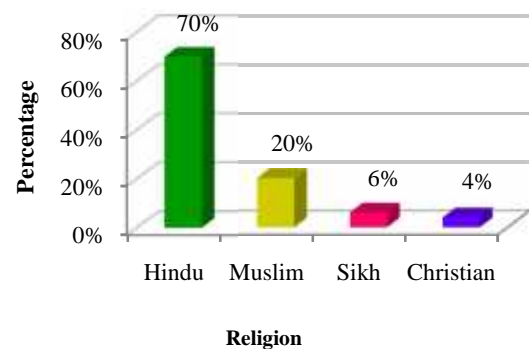


Fig. 1 Distribution of women according to religion

By religion, Buddhist and Jain women reported the lowest prevalence of sexual violence in their lifetime (3 and 4 %), while 5 per cent of Sikh women, 6 per cent of Christian women and 8.0 per cent of Hindu women reported experiencing sexual violence. The highest prevalence rate (11%) of lifetime sexual violence was reported by Muslim women (Wikipedia 2016).

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Muslims were considered weak because they were illiterate and landless and mostly lived in small groups.

Table 2 Distribution of women according to the level of knowledge about types of harassment

Sl. No.	Type of harassment	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Sexual harassment	240	80.0
2.	Psychological harassment	120	40.0
3.	Cyber harassment	45	15.0
4.	Other type of harassment		
	(a) Drug related violence	45	15.0
	(b) Rape and custodial rape	210	70.0
	(c) Dowry related violence	180	60.0
	(d) Domestic violence	45	15.0
	(e) Dating violence	120	40.0
	(f) Emotional abuse	180	60.0
	(g) Human trafficking	210	70.0
	(h) Same sex relationship violence	30	10.0
	(i) Sexual assault and abuse	30	10.0
	(j) Stalking	15	5.0
	(k) Violence against immigrant and refugee women	15	5.0
	(l) Violence against women at work	120	40.0
	(m) Violence against women with disabilities	45	15.0
	(n) Economic abuse	60	20.0
	(o) Political violence	75	25.0
	(p) Elder abuse	30	10.0
	(q) Acid throwing	120	40.0

Harassment is a form of discrimination. It involves any unwanted physical or verbal behaviour that offends or humiliates him. Generally, harassment is a behaviour that persists over time. Serious one-time incidents can also sometimes be considered harassment. The causes and forms of harassment are wide-ranging and complex. The same behaviour may be inoffensive to one person and deeply offensive and intimidating to another. Unintentional or misinterpreted behaviour may cause feelings of harassment.

Table 3 Psychological factors affecting the women being harassed

Sl. No.	Psychological factors	Always	Sometimes	Never	Mean score	Rank
1.	Depression	210 (70.0)	30 (10.0)	60 (20.0)	2.50	I
2.	Post traumatic stress disorder	140 (46.7)	45 (15.0)	115 (38.3)	2.08	V
3.	Blood pressure	175 (58.3)	40 (13.3)	85 (28.3)	2.30	III
4.	Sleep problems	30 (10.0)	50 (16.7)	220 (73.3)	1.37	VI
5.	Attempt to suicide	25 (8.3)	55 (18.3)	220 (73.3)	1.35	VII
6.	Feeling of isolation	180 (60.0)	35 (11.7)	85 (28.3)	2.32	II
7.	Dropout colleges and offices	145 (48.3)	40 (13.3)	115 (38.3)	2.10	IV

(Figures in parentheses denotes the percentage of respective values)

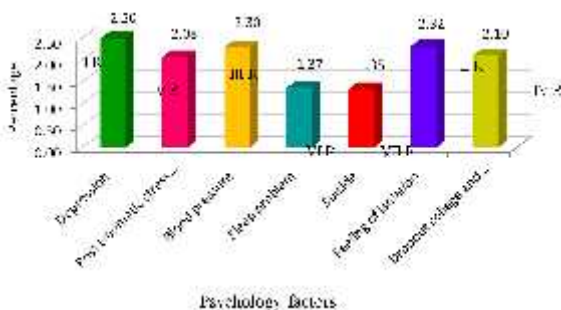


Fig. 2 Distribution of psychological factors of the women

Women who have been harassed repeatedly reported that their behaviour and confidence was affected, and they experienced distress and anxiety, yet society continues to focus on the actions of victims and not on the perpetrators. Each individual victim of sexual assault has their own personal and private

experience. The way they respond to the assault is determined by a multitude of factors. However, just as there are common patterns of sexual assault, there are common responses to sexual assault. These responses were experienced by most respondents at some point in time. Survivors of sexual assault experience a wide range of reactions. Some respondents said that after the assault their emotions went up and down or from one extreme to another.

Table 4 Remedies to reduce female sexual harassment at domestic level

Sl. No.	Remedies	Yes	No	Mean score	Rank
1.	Being aware of past facts and figures	75 (25.0)	225 (75.0)	1.25	III
2.	Need for stringent laws	30 (10.0)	270 (90.0)	1.10	IV
3.	Support from NGO's	175 (58.3)	125 (41.7)	1.58	I
4.	Support from police and health care agencies	150 (50.0)	150 (50.0)	1.50	II

(Figures in parentheses denotes the percentage of respective values)

Women who fall victims of sexual harassment at domestic level are more like to face severe health issues as they are often captured at home and not allowed to go out of their homes. In such cases, police officials should take immediate action on the complaints of neighbours and other family members even on the grounds of suspicious. Health care agencies should take major steps in addressing to the problems of those women who are psychologically and mentally tortured and even physically abused.

CONCLUSION

Most women victims suffer from some form of debilitating mental and emotional aftershocks. Once these dissipate, the victims often feel like they've gotten past the worst part of the aftermath and try to carry on with their lives as usual.

The longer lasting effects of sexual violence then begin to manifest a little at a time; unless the victims seek ongoing help from sexual assault counseling groups and mental health professionals who specialize in helping victims overcome any potential long-term effect of sexual assault.

Recommendations

1. Introduction of women friendly public transport systems.
2. Aid to complainants through women's cells, forums.
3. Separate nodal body to address issues which are not addressed by company's committee.

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