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ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

VIOLATION AGAINST WOMEN AND ITS EFFECT ON WORK LIFE BALANCE ON WORKING WOMEN IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Most of the women of Indian society experiences violence – either physical or mental or both. It is a deadly fact of life for millions of women and girls. The women placed themselves within the boundary of the four walls of their house before, but now they have stepped forward to share the financial responsibilities equally with the men – may be due to the pressure created by the family members, may be due to financial crisis or may be to acquire the equal position with men. Whatever may be the fact she has to look after her family as well as her work place efficiently. Such women when faces violence either at her family or at workplace, becomes mentally and physically stressed and it disturbs her Work Life Balance (WLB). Work Life Balance is the proper prioritization between “Work Life” and “personal life” so that a person experiences a better fit both at family as well as her work place WLB is essential to combat stress. Study with the secondary data is performed to see the violation against women and its effect on WLB of a working woman.

KEYWORDS— Violence, Work Life Balance (WLB), Work-Life, Personal Life

1. INTRODUCTION

Our constitution mentions about the equality of men and women in the society. But practically we observe that this is not observed in many of the families of our country. A great discrimination is observed between the male members and the female members of the family. The cream of the milk is distributed among the male members and the female members go without food to bed. Even now-a-days, when a male child is born, blowing of conch, distribution of sweets occur to mark the auspicious birth of the male child. But when a girl child is born, the members bursts into tears and curse the mother for giving birth to the girl child. This is prevailing in almost all classes of the society – rich, poor, upper middle class and lower middle class in almost all the states of India. According to a news on ‘The Telegraph, Calcutta dated 26th May, 2016, a news topic

‘Gender bias in seeking heart treatment’ published states that several parents in northern India seeking treatment for children with congenital heart disorders appear to favour boys over girls, a team of cardiologists reported today, corroborating earlier findings that gender bias may be denying even life-saving health care to girls (Journal – Heart Asia). The AIIMS doctor had five years ago questioned parents about their decisions and found that concerns about future matrimonial prospects of girls and lack of social support were among factors to delay or avoid the surgeries prescribed for congenital heart disorders. The women in our society experiences violence – either physical or mental or both; either at the work-place or at her family or at both the places. The female members of our society are generally looked down upon and face multiple forms of violence including domestic

violence, rape, dowry deaths, sexual harassment, suicide, forced marriage at a tender age, trafficking and other forms of psychological and financial oppression. Violence against women has become one of the most burning issues in India.

Previously women were confined within the boundary of the four walls of her family. There she performed all her household activities, looked after her children and elderly members, reared the cattles, fetched water from distant places but were not given enough food or enough rest. In spite of their hard works, she suffered beating, physical torture as well as psychological sufferings. There was financial crisis for which she had to suffer more. But now, women have stepped forward to share the financial responsibilities equally along with her husband or other male members of the family. May be she has stepped forward after feeling the stress due to financial crisis or may be due to fulfill the wish to be in the same floor as that of the men as she has received equal educational qualifications along with the male. Whatever may be the fact, the women has to play a dual role now – a role of being a mother, wife, daughter, sister etc. in the family and the role of a bread-earner in the work place. As a mother, she has to look after her children's nutrition, their health along with vaccination, their studies, their mental development and other developmental spheres of life. She has to look after the elderly persons in her family and do all the household works. Moreover the increasing demands of the organization under present market forces and strict competitiveness have overburdened the life of the women employees. The employment rate of women has increased by 3.6% per year from 1991 to 2001. The Joint Family System are now being replaced by the unit family system; thus the responsibility of the functional head of the family is shifted to the responsibility which has to be borne by the husband and wife. Since the role of a woman in family is of more priority than the role of a man, the woman experiences overburdening of work both in the work field and family. Thus arose the question of Work Life Balance of a working woman.

Work Life Balance is not a matter which can be weighed by a spring balance or a common balance. Work Life Balance is the proper prioritizing between 'work life' and 'personal life' so that a person experiences a better fit between their professional and personal life. It is essential to combat stress, ensuring both individual and organization success.

Kapur (1979) shows that "the twin roles of women (family functioning and work life) cause tension and conflict due to her social structure which is still more dominant." Locke (1979) in his study stated that "a cause-effect relationship is available between family functioning and work life, this cause-effect relationship could work in both directions, that is, work attitudes could effect family attitudes and vice versa." Chandrika (1982) in her study stated that "in the last decade of the 20th century, the spot-light fell on various specific issues of women, these include multiple feminine identity, gender and sexuality, feminization of poverty, environment and sustainable development, planning and power globalization, sexual harassment at work place, women's right as human rights". Our society is considered to be a male dominating society. In the Indian society, working women faces lot of problems just by virtue of being a woman. Violence and abuse to working women introduces a sedentary life style which aggravates things like, anxiety, depression, malnutrition, health break down due to faulty eating and lack of sleep or poor sleep. Thus individual and organizational benefits of such provision include work family conflict (Thomas and Ganster, 1995), increased job satisfaction (Thompson and Prottas, 2005) and organizational citizenship behaviour (Lambert, 2005).

AREA OF STUDY:

Violence and Abuse of women is a common problem of India. But I have focused the study on Indian Working Women where the violation and abuse has affected their Work Life Balance. Work Life Balance is required for every working women because it is the maintenance of a balance between responsibilities at work and at home with a

saturated satisfactory level. The violence and abuse is a hindrance for women to acquire work-life balance.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

- To find the cause & nature of violence and abuse a woman faces in family.
- To find the cause and nature of violence and abuse a woman faces in her work place.
- To find out the determinants of health connecting social abuse.
- The rules made by the government to protect the woman from the violence and abuse.
- The effect of violence on Work Life Balance on a working woman.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study is based on Secondary Data Collection. The secondary data is collected from different journals, discussion papers, literature review, periodicals, newspaper, government sources and online resources.

FINDINGS:

- The causes and nature of violence, abuse and harassment a woman faces in family:

A woman, especially married woman often are abused or tortured by their husband and in-laws. Our country has a patriarchal society where women and girls are looked down upon. The gender bias against women in our society puts women's lives at risk.

A recent G20 survey ranked India as the worst place to be a woman (Baldwin 2012). Female foeticide, domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, dowry related trafficking, forced prostitution, forced suicide and even murder occurs. The rate of reported violent acts against women has risen consistently and at an alarming rate. Nationally, 8% of married women have been subject to sexual violence like forced sex, 31% of married women have been physically abused in a way which is defined as 'less severe' like slapping or punching, while 10% have suffered 'severe domestic violence' such as burning or attack with a weapon. Analysis of data from NFHS-3 and NCRB indicate that for the most parts, instances of domestic violence reported by women in national survey never make it to the police or the courts. Top eight states ranked according to increase in crimes against women over the past decade:

State	No. of crimes against women (2011)	Annual growth rate of crimes against women (2001-2011)	Rate of Crime against women (2011)
West Bengal	29,133	16.06%	31.9
Meghalaya	269	15.09%	9.1
Tripura	1358	11.98%	37
Assam	11,503	10.49%	36.9
Sikkim	55	8.65%	9
Delhi	5234	8.61%	31.2
Kerala	11288	7.55%	33.8
Bihar	10231	6.69%	9.9

But according to the 2009 NCRB figures, the states with the highest rates of dowry deaths per 100,000 people are – Bihar (1.4), Haryana & Madhya Pradesh (1.2 each) & U.P. (1.1). Exposure to domestic violence is the indicator of quality of life. The secondary study reveals that

women in Southern and North-eastern India having advances in lifestyles over their counterparts, is eroding. Above average levels of violence are reported in Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur. Jeanne Vickers (1981) in their book stated that

violence against women exists in various forms in every day life in all societies as women are beaten, mutilated, burned, sexually abused and raped. Such violence is a major obstacle to the achievement of peace. When peace is not achieved, work life balance of a working woman automatically comes to the negative.

Women are given lesser facility than the male members. Even while imparting education, the girls receive less education and their literacy rate is far below the literacy rate of the boys. The Literacy Rates in Post Independent India is shown as below:

Table 2: Literacy Rate in Post-Independent India

Year	Rural			Urban		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
1951	04.87	19.02	12.10	22.33	45.60	34.59
1961	10.10	34.30	22.50	40.50	66.00	54.40
1971	15.50	48.60	27.90	48.80	69.80	60.20
1981	21.70	49.60	36.00	56.30	76.70	67.20
1991	30.17	56.96	36.00	64.05	81.09	67.20
2001	46.70	71.40	59.40	73.20	86.70	80.30
2011	58.75	78.57	67.80	79.92	89.67	84.10
% increase in 2011 over 2001	26%	10%	14%	9%	3%	5%

Source: Census of India, Office of Registrar General, India.

The practice of dowry demand has emerged as a major social evil in all classes of Indian society. Prospective grooms and their families demand dowry from the bride's home. This has mainly occurred due to the rising unemployment problem where the dowry demand is a source of income. When the bride's family fails to meet the deadlines, the in-laws verbally and physically abuse her. The abuses are also coarse in nature like throwing acid on her face or severely beaten and in some cases even murder her. India reports the highest total number of dowry deaths with 8391 such cases reported in 2010, i.e. 14 deaths per 100,000 women. A women's freedom of choice regarding their sexual life, birth control, pregnancy, parental care and abortion restricted. If the husband dislikes birth-control, the wife has no way of protecting herself from unwanted pregnancy. As a result, the number of offspring increases and hence arises the requirement of the women to bear financial responsibilities. It even occurs that the husband does not earn and consumes liquor at the cost of his wife's earning.

Trafficking of women is a significant problem observed. But a victimized woman usually tries to avoid the legal process as she becomes more stigmatized. The police also sometimes do not want to take their complaints unless they are pressurized from a higher authority. The existing legal process is elaborate, time consuming, expensive and it makes it very hard for the poor, illiterate and disadvantaged rural women to get the legal help. So the figure we get is not the total crime occurred. It even happens that the bride faces death before reporting it to the police.

● **Nature of abusement on a working woman in her work place:**

Harassment includes all types of offensive behavior which is intended to upset or show disgrace to another individual. Any unwanted behavior of a person, a group of people, colleagues, neighbor and even the boss or supervisor are also included in harassment and all these are punishable offence. In India there are several strict bullying in the workplace laws and regulations levied by the legal system. These

laws are supposed to address all types of workplace harassment including sexual harassment, discrimination and psychological irritation caused by the employees or the employer. Sexual harassment in the workplace refers to a verbal or physical act with a sexual nature, performed during recruitment or after recruitment in the workplace by a boss, manager, employee, client or customer of a working unit, that is unwelcomed by the person receiving it and has caused the person to feel violated, insulted and being in an unbearable hostile environment (ILO, December 2010).

The different form of sexual harassment in the work place includes:

(1) Discrimination:

Discrimination is possibly the commonest form of harassment that most office goers have suffered at least once in their professional life. Discrimination can be made on the basis of complexion, religion, age, gender and origin. Mostly women suffer from sexual harassment which can be as fatal as affecting their physical and psychological health.

Though our constitution guarantees gender, racial and religious equality as the 'Fundamental Rights' of the residents of the country India in Part III, Articles 14, 15, 16, yet this is violated and discrimination is noticed in the workplace where women feels a sense of isolation psychologically.

(2) Verbal, physical, visual and psychological harassment:

It includes joking or teasing with a sexual motive, continuous invitation to dinner or date despite of rejection, intentional dissemination of hearsay with a sexual nature, enquiring for or sharing sexual experience, spreading and displaying a nude image, spreading an image with sexual contents, request for sexual intercourse, unnecessary physical contact, etc.

(3) Quid pro quo sexual harassment

Quid pro quo sexual harassment mean one party forces the women to offer sex in return for recruitment, promotion or salary raise, and threatens the women employee to demote or cut

the salary or even dismiss the women employee if she rejects him.

(4) Hostile environment sexual harassment

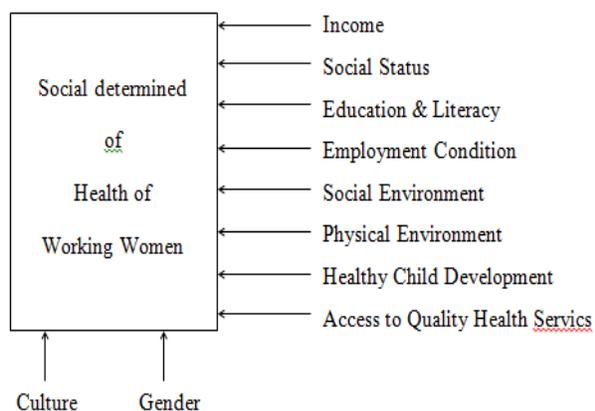
Hostile environment sexual harassment means when one party interferes with the work performance of the women victim in an unreasonable manner or intentionally leaves the victim in an intimidated or hostile work environment or exposes the victim to be rude, lewd and uncomfortable work environment, it constitutes a hostile environment sexual harassment.

(5) Male Chauvinism

If we turn on the dailies in the morning, we read some hair-raising instances of male 'Chauvinism' travelling in 'sexism, racism, violence and poverty to women representing the masculine mystique belief in his superiority over women and inevitability of violence against women. From standing at the bus stop to the place of their work, they are exposed to the vulture eyes of males of all ages and all classes. The journey from home to office is nothing short of to avail.

● Determinants of Health connecting social abuse:

Studying woman abuse through focus on the social determinants of health helps us to understand that many social initiative like housing, income support or child care might have the potential to reduce abuse and improve health. Factors like education, employment, income, physical environment, social environment influence, our health which may lead a difference to the Work Life Balance of a woman employee. Thus the determinants of health are shown by a diagrammatic figure:-



Source: Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada (2005).

While analyzing these factors, we say that income & social status, as a determinant of health speaks that people with higher incomes generally enjoy better health and live longer than people with lower income. Higher income helps us to provide a secure safe housing, capacity to buy higher quality food and thus enjoy a greater quality life circumstances. British researchers have recently stated that low income people have higher risk of heart disease. Higher the income is, higher is the social status and higher is the rate of enjoying better health.

Social environment includes social support networks as determinants of health. People when they feel they are safe, can trust their family members; when they can rely on their friends, neighbors and other members of the community, enjoy better health. For a woman, social support is extremely required during pregnancy, neonatal care, to bring up the child and others. When a person feel that she is well supported and can rely on the society as well as her own family, feels protected & overcome the stress in her.

Education is considered as a determinant of health because the health status improves positively with level of education which of course is associated with the income and social status. Education helps us to get better jobs, income security and employment satisfaction which keeps a woman healthy and can avoid certain behaviour which causes illness and

engage in other activities like physical exercise, swimming, walking, etc.

When employment condition is considered as a health determinants, we can easily say that a job is generally positive for health while unemployment has a negative effect on both physical & mental health. A secured job provides a healthy mind to a working woman. She feels safe at her workplace and grow as an individual with a maximum output of her work.

When we consider 'gender' as the determinant of health, we find that the males are more healthy than women. Since women and girls are neglected, they even do not get the balanced diet required for them to lead a healthy and fruitful life. The cream of milk is enjoyed by the male members. This social discrepancy develops a poor health of the women. "While women live longer than men, they are more like to suffer depression, stress overload (often due to efforts to balance work and family life), chronic conditions such as arthritis and allergies, injuries and death resulting from family violence" – (Federal, Provincial and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health, 1999).

Speaking of culture as a determinant of health includes language and religion. The belief acquired through socialization regarding health & illness affects Health services and the type of services sought.

Thus there are other factors too which are considered as health determinants and they include income support, justice, housing, education, transportation, community service and social service. If these areas are neglected, then there will be a negative effect on Health. A negative effort of health leads to social abuses in women which ultimately hampers the Work Life Balance of a working woman.

- **The rules made by the government to protect the woman from the violence and abuse and what to do about sexual harassment in daily working life.**

Our government has framed many laws to protect the women & their rights against abuse, violence at home and as well as harassment and abuse at the workplace.

Taking cognizance of domestic violence, the Parliament of India passed Section 498A in 1983. This was the first time domestic violence was recognized as a specific criminal offence. This section deals with cruelty by a husband or his family towards a married woman.

Under IPC Section 498A, 4 types of cruelties are protected –

- i) conduct that is likely to drive a woman to suicide;
- ii) conduct which is likely to cause grave injury to the life, limb or health of the woman;
- iii) harassment with the purpose of forcing the woman or her relatives to give some property;
- iv) Harassment because the woman or her relative is unable to yield to demands for more money or does not give some property. The law under Section 498A covers dowry-related harassment as well.

There is a specific provision under Section 304B that talks about dowry death.

The Parliament of India also passed the 'Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005' to protect women from domestic violence. The law was brought into force by the Indian Government from October 26th, 2006 and as of November 2007, it has been ratified by 4 of 28 state governments in India, viz. Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha.

Thus we find that the most notable ones protecting women from violence are Section 498A, 304B, 406 of the Indian Penal Code, and Section 113A of the Indian Evidence Act. The Indian Penal Code was amended twice – first in 1983 and again in 1986 – to define special categories of crimes dealing with marital violence and abuse. Amendments to the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961, enacted in 1984 & 1986, made dowry giving and dowry receiving a cognizable offence. Section 406 prescribes

imprisonment of up to 3 years for criminal breach of trust. This provision of Indian Penal Code is supposed to be involved by women to file cases against their husbands and in-laws for retrieval of their dowry. Furthermore Section 304B was added to the Indian Penal Code to deal yet another, new category of crime called 'dowry death'. The person held for 'dowry death' shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 7 years but which may extend to imprisonment for life.

Laws and Procedures to prevent Sexual Harassment in the work place:

It is to be noted that the present civil and penal laws in India do not adequately provide for specific protection of women from sexual harassment in work places and that enactment of such legislation will take considerable time.

It is necessary for employers in work places as well as other responsible persons or institutions to observe certain guidelines to ensure the prevention of sexual harassment of women.

1. It is the duty of the employer or other responsible persons in work places and other institutions to prevent or deter the commission of acts of sexual harassment and to provide the procedures for the resolution, settlement or prosecution of acts, of sexual harassment by taking all steps required.
2. All employers or persons in charge of the workplace whether in public or private sector express prohibition of sexual harassment at work place, should be notified, published and circulated in appropriate ways.
3. The Rules/Regulations of government and public sector bodies relating to conduct and discipline should include rules & regulations prohibiting sexual harassment and provide for appropriate penalties in such rules against the offender.
4. As regards private employers, steps should be taken to include the aforesaid prohibition in the standing orders under the Industrial Employment Act, 1947.

5. Awareness of the rights of female employees in this regard should be created in particular by prominently notifying the guidelines in a suitable manner.
6. Under Section 34, whoever assaults or uses criminal force on any woman, intending to outrage her modesty or knowing, is likely that he will thereby outrage her modesty, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.
7. Under Section 09, ‘word, gesture or act’ intended to insult the modesty of a woman which is included in Chapter 22 entitled ‘Of Criminal Intimidation, Insult and Annoyance’, is cognizable, billable and triable by any magistrate. It holds, ‘Whoever, intending to insult the modesty of a man, utters any word, makes any sound or gesture, or exhibits any object, intending that such word or sound shall be heard, or that such gesture is seen by such woman, or intrudes upon the privacy of such woman, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.
8. Under the “Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition Act, 1987)”, if an individual harasses another with books, photographs, paintings, films, pamphlets, packages, etc. containing the “indecent representation of women”, they are liable for a minimum sentence of 2 years.

There are some of the laws and ways by which abuse and harassment of women in work place can be stopped to offer better environment to a woman employee.

● **The effect of violence on Work Life Balance of a woman employee:**

Effect of violence on Work Life Balance of a woman employee can be divided into 2 parts –

- i) Effect of family violence on Work Life Balance of the working women.

- ii) Effect of violence of work place on Work Life Balance of the woman employee.

i) Effect of family violence on Work Life Balance (WLB) of the working women:

The effect of family violence has a everlasting impression in the mental condition of the working woman. The woman suffers for depression and other psychological problems. If they are beaten up regularly, along with the psychological problems, they suffer many health problems like heart disease, nervous system disorder and many others. Poor diet and lack of balanced diet make them weak and feeble to bear the torture. According to Gartner, 1990, a risk factor that appears to be associated with interpersonal violence at the societal level is income inequality. Hence from this hypothesis we can say that intimate partner violence might be more likely to occur in relationship where a relatively large income gap exists between the partners. Hence women having low income might not only place women at risk of financial dependence on their partners, but also place them at risk of being victimized by their intimate partners. It has also been noted that while a woman’s participation in the labour force lowers her risk of spousal abuse when her male partner is also employed (MacMillan et al., 1999). As suggested by Johnson (1996), unemployment of the partner may sometimes arise spousal violence. Thus, it seems that employment issues and income levels probably bear some relations with domestic violence. This domestic violence automatically reduces the Work Life Balance of a woman employee. It has also been observed (Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2005), a weak network of support and a situation of relative social isolation can be considered a potential risk factor for domestic violence victimization. This sort of domestic violence decreases the Work Life Balance of a woman employee as she finds difficult to manage the family only relying on self.

ii) Effect of violence on WLB of the women employee:

In the modern age, women play the dual life role in almost all family – the role in the family and the role in the work place. In this regard, it is

very important for every women to balance work and private life as much as possible to acquire a positive Work Life Balance Swift (2002) state Work Life Balance as: juggling, competing, demands is thrilling if not stressful and brings lower productivity, sickness absenteeism, so WLB is an issue for all employees and all organizations. But it is stressed that majority of violence in the workplace is on the psychological side. Verbal threats, intimidation, sexual harassment are those psychological violence which are visualized. But there are certain violence like bullying which is also referred as 'mobbing'. What type of psychological violence may it be, any kind of psychological violence has certain toll on human resources, especially women within organization. Victims have increased livelihood of mental health issues such as mental health issues namely depression, high pressure, insomnia and so on. Thus work place violence has a positive threatening of health causing negative Work Life Balance.

Thus as per the Research hypothesis, it is established that people that have experienced work place violence also report struggling with keeping up their work life balance and people that have experienced work place violence are less satisfied with their work life balance than people that have not experienced work place violence.

3. CONCLUSION

Thus we can conclude that there is psychological effect, as well as physical effect on a working woman who is victimized both at her family and at her workplace. Some authors (Corney, 2008, Pompili et al. 2008) stated that workplace violence even though it is psychological can have effects on health of employees. It is tried to show on the basis of secondary data that violence on working women effects their work life balance. For further research, it is recommended to do the research using primary data with increased focus on effect of work place violence and family violence on physical and mental health.

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