



Prevalence of Crime and Violence in Households

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Abstract

In all areas and places, there exists some or the other kind of wrongdoing or misconduct, either individuals mistakenly perform such kinds of acts or they have the intention to get involved in crime and violence. The main reasons that lead to the prevalence of crime and violence amongst the individuals are the feelings of anger, frustration, and antagonism. When individuals are not able to control their anger, then they always use verbal abusive language and besides this, they get involved into physically hurting or injuring other individual or individuals. In most extreme cases, anger also leads to the murdering of individuals. The main purpose of this research paper is to look into the prevalence of crime and violence in the households. The main areas that have been taken into account are, measurement of domestic violence, reporting of violence against women in India, cases of crime and violence within the households and causes of crime and violence within the households. Crime and violence in the households is also understood by the term domestic violence; it is one of the most common crimes against women, which is indistinguishably connected to the perpetuation of patriarchy. Crimes against women within the household is prevalent because women are not considered to be equal to men and they are not permitted to have any say. Women experience domestic violence not only in the matrimonial homes, but also within the house of their parents. There should be adequate implementation of measures that lead to maintenance of peace, harmony, and agreement amongst the individuals who are residing within the same household.

Keywords: Crime; Violence; Households; Families; Individuals; Conflicts; Disputes

Introduction

Households comprises of families and there are two kinds of families, nuclear and joint. Nuclear families comprises of married couples and their children, on the other hand, joint families consists of two or more nuclear families residing under the common roof. It consists of grandparents, parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins and other unrelated people which includes helpers. In households in rural and urban areas, there has been prevalence of crime and violence amongst the family members, amongst employers and helpers and even with the outside workers who come into the house for doing a temporary job, such as plumbers, electricians, carpenters and so forth. In the present existence, there has been wide increase in the rate of crime and violence amongst the households and the main reasons have been occurrence of disputes, disagreements and conflicts.

There are number of reasons on the basis of which disputes and conflicts occur, such as, marital disputes, disputes over property, wealth, finances, disputes over performance of household activities, health, management, decision making, diet and nutrition and so forth. Hence, there are numerous areas that lead to disputes and conflicts between parents and children, husband and wife, siblings and other family members. These disputes may take forms of conducting of criminal and violent acts, these may include verbal abuse, harassment, physical abuse, beating, pushing, raping and even murdering. The prevalence of crime and violence is more common amongst the households of the individuals belonging to marginalized groups and socio-economically backward sections of the society. Violent crime is more prevalent amongst the households when income is low [1], as when individuals are not able to satisfy their needs, they get involved into criminal and violent acts.

Measurement of domestic violence

The violence that takes place amongst the household is also referred to as domestic violence. When understanding this area, it is vital to collect valid, reliable and ethical information on domestic violence, as it positions particular challenges, the reason being that, what comprises of violence or abuse varies across cultures and individuals. Different societies, communities and individuals have different understanding of the meaning of violence or abuse. Reporting can get affected by the culture of silence that surrounds domestic violence, for instance, there are children who abuse their parents and there is prevalence of domestic violence within the household, but they do not always report against their children as sensible parents do not want to disclose any information and would like to bring solutions to the problems in a peaceful manner. Specific ethical concerns have to be addressed due to the sensitivity of the issue; the issues of domestic violence is sensitive, hence, if parents make a decision that they do not want to maintain any relationships with their abusive children, then they address this issue with decency and ethics [2].

Domestic violence is comprised of violence by the spouse as well as by other family members. There are certain areas that need to be taken under consideration when measuring domestic violence. Information is obtained by interacting with the women or men who have or are experiencing domestic violence, these include married as well as unmarried men and women. Married women are the main individuals who experience domestic violence at the hands of their husbands, in-laws and even children. Unmarried women experience violence at the hands of their parents, siblings or even outsiders. Men who become victims of domestic violence usually include elderly men. The measurement of domestic violence includes deep enquiry and involves questions about what are the major causes that lead to crime and violence acts amongst the households, how have individuals been affected such as what kind of abusive language was used or if they were physically hurt, how they were hurt [2]. The time period of suffering, age, number and occupational categories of the household members are also the factors that are taken into consideration.

Reporting of violence against women in India

Constitutionally, every crime that is occurring whether in public or within a household should be reported, and every person whose rights have been violated has the right to obtain justice. The underprivileged groups in India, including the poverty stricken people,

women, Muslims, Dalits, Adivasis, or residents of certain areas, experience impediments in obtaining justice. These impediments include their low status, unawareness, lack of education and literacy skills, problems experienced in accessing various support providing organizations, their vulnerability and they are usually not able to contact any organizations. Patriarchy, as well as the concepts of dishonour and humiliation are associated with reporting of violence. Women feel that if they will report violence that has been committed against them, then their position and status within the society will get degraded [3].

The various kinds of violent and criminal acts that are conducted against women are rape, kidnapping and abduction, dowry death, cruelty by husbands and other relatives, molestation, sexual harassment, verbal and physical abuse, acid attacks and murder. The women who are subjected to these criminal and violent acts belong to various categories and backgrounds and on the basis of their categories and backgrounds, they are subjected to various kinds of violent and criminal acts. There are young women or girls who belong to underprivileged and poverty stricken families, they usually migrate from rural areas to urban areas in search for employment opportunities to support their families, there have been instances, when these women and girls are subjected to domestic violence, such as, they are verbally and physically abused, made to work long hours, are provided with very less food and sleep and are not given their pay on time.

Married women in households are subjected to abuse and violence by their husbands and other family members. When they are not able to perform the housework in a proper manner, when they are not able to implement other tasks and functions in an appropriate manner, when they do not bring sufficient dowry or in any other matters, they become victims of violence and cruelty. Women in rural areas and amongst the socio-economically backward sections of the society have been discouraged from acquiring any kinds of education and were meant to perform only the household tasks. Unmarried women living with their parents are subjected to abuse and violence by their parents and siblings, in most cases, step mothers inflict extreme pain and torture upon step children out of the feelings of antagonism and hatred. The causes may be numerous, such as any kinds of demands made regarding money, pursuing of educational programs or employment opportunities, or any other demands, or when they do not get along well with their family members and so forth.

Cases of crime and violence within the households

The prevalence of criminal and violent acts within the households involve number of cases, these have been stated as follows:

- **Parents and Children:** The occurrence of crime and violence between parents and children take place due to number of reasons. When children make any kind of demand from their parents, which they are not able to fulfil and which is out of their control, then conflicts takes place or they may take place when parents express unwillingness to fulfil their demands. There are cases when children ask for money from their parents and they are not able to provide, then this may give rise to a violent dispute. Similarly finances, wealth, property and other valuable items are stated to be the major causes of disputes amongst parents and children which lead to the occurrence of criminality and misconduct. There have been cases, when children get involved into the murder of their parents for finances and property.
- **Husbands and Wives:** The prevalence of crime and violence amongst husbands and wives are common. There are numerous reasons for this, when either of the spouse is not able to fulfil the requirements then there may be occurrence of disputes. Gender specific socialization, cultural definitions of appropriate gender roles, expectations of roles within relationships, values that give men rights over women, customs of marriage, underrepresentation of women in power, politics, media, and in legal and medical professions, limited participation of women in the organized political system are the main reasons due to which women become victims of cruelty. Duties of women were recognized as only to get involved in the performance of household chores and bring up the children, they had no involvement in the making of decisions, there was limited access to education and training for women and they were discouraged from getting involved in employment opportunities. Therefore, these issues led to the prevalence of criminal and violent acts [4].
- **Siblings:** The occurrence of conflicts and disputes amongst siblings is usually on the basis of property and wealth. There have been instances, when parents are willing to give more money to either of the children, then the other one turns furious and gets involved into crime and violence with parents and sibling or siblings. When one child behaves in a disrespectful manner towards parents, then too, the other one gets angry at him. For instance, there has been a case when a daughter was extremely disrespectful towards her mother and her brother became so furious on seeing his mother getting insulted that he hammered his sister to death. The siblings belonging to decent and well to do families usually end their communication terms over obtaining of wealth and property. There are several reasons that lead to the occurrence of violent acts amongst siblings.
- **Elderly members of the Household:** The elderly members of the household are in some cases neglected and mistreated. In their old age, they usually possess money, wealth and property, therefore, crime and violence that the elderly people experience is because of the property and money that individuals are willing to acquire from them, these individuals may be family members or in most cases, they are even robbed by outside people. There are family members, who regard elderly individuals are liabilities, which need to be provided with extreme care. When they are considered as liabilities, they are even sent to old age homes and children want them to give them their property. Murder, verbal abuse and physical abuse are regarded as one of the most prevalent violent acts that senior citizens of the country experience.
- **Domestic Help:** The poverty stricken and the disadvantaged families in some cases sent their children to urban areas to work and study in order to sustain their families. In some cases, there have been domestic helps who experience crime and violence in the households by their employers. They are verbally abused, physically abused, mistreated and tortured. These domestic helps usually belong to vulnerable families, they are not able to raise their voice and experience this kind of treatment because for them making money is important. But when the right time arrives, they are rescued by the organizations and either sent back to their parents or they are sent to other places where they are provided with education, and are treated well. The violence against domestic help usually lasts for about several months to a year but finally, it does come to an end.

Causes of crime and violence within the households

There are number of causes that lead to the prevalence of crime and violence within the households.

- **Finances and Property:** Finances are regarded to be imperative areas that are vital for the existence of the individuals. There are some individuals who long for money and property to a great extent, they possess extremely strong desire to obtain finances and wealth, even when they do not need it. For this purpose, they get involved into violent and criminal acts along with their family members, such as parents, siblings, children or spouses. There have been cases of individuals, when they need money for getting involved in delinquent acts and when their parents refuse, they in turn harm them.

- **Anger and Frustration:** The feelings of anger and frustration are normally common, they usually take place amongst all individuals belonging to various categories and backgrounds. But one needs to learn how to control them and not to show their outburst to anybody. There are individuals who get extremely angry and frustrated on trivial and petty issues, therefore, instead of having a peaceful discussion and resolving all the disputes in a peaceful manner, they get involved into violent acts, verbal and physical abuse. The feelings of anger within one's mind-set usually gives rise to occurrence of crime and violence.
- **Employment Opportunities:** All individuals desire to obtain some kind of work or employment opportunity in order to sustain their living. There are individuals, especially women who in some cases have their own business or work within the house; when a woman works a full time job, there have been cases, that she is not able to render a complete participation in the implementation of household functions and activities, hence, she experiences cruelty and abusive language from her husband and other family members. Therefore, feelings of neglect experienced by the family members give rise to crime and violent acts [5].
- **Disadvantaged Conditions:** There are several conditions within the household that gives rise to crime and violence. The prevalence of crime and violence is more amongst the households of the individuals, belonging to poverty stricken, marginalized, underprivileged and socio-economically backward sections of the society. Their low levels of education, unemployment, lack of opportunities, being unsuccessful in meeting the demands and requirements of themselves and their family members and so forth are some of the areas that arouses anger, annoyance, irritation and rage within the mind-sets of these individuals and they get involved into criminal and violent acts. Therefore, it is vital for a person to enhance his basic literacy skills and possess adequate knowledge in order to maintain peaceful relationships with the family members [6].
- **Growth and Development of Children:** When a child is being brought up in a family, it is vital that parents and other family members should always treat him with kindness, affection and provide him fulfilment. Scarcity of these feelings and attitudes towards the child leads him towards the wrong direction. If a child observes violent acts within the household between his parents or other family members, then he too learns to become violent and abusive, hence, since the childhood stage, it is important that an appropriate environment should be created within the house, in which children become accustomed to moral values, norms and cultural traits.
- **Equal Rights and Opportunities:** In rural areas, women were not considered equal to men, they had no say, they were not allowed to give any kinds of suggestions and ideas in the decision making, were discouraged from acquiring education and were mainly considered to be the ones who were meant to perform only the household chores and take care of the family members. When women are not considered to be equal to men, when they are treated as inferior, when they are not given equal opportunities, or share in the property, then these conditions do give rise to various forms of criminal and violent acts. Therefore, men and women should be considered equal, education should be regarded as a significant area both for boys and girls on an equal basis and women should be permitted to have a say, give ideas and suggestions and both men and women should obtain equal share in the property.
- **Other Miscellaneous Issues:** The occurrence of crime and violence amongst the households is on the basis of number of causes, such as performance of household tasks, preparation of meals, unavailability of civic amenities such as water, electricity and so forth. The individuals who belong to the underprivileged families get more involved into crime and violence on the basis of miscellaneous issues occurring within the households. For instance, there has been a case of a 40 year old rickshaw puller, he reached home late in the night and his elderly father did not remember to fill up the water tank, he turned out to be so furious that he beat him to death, hence, petty issues lead to immense occurrence of criminal acts amongst the individuals normally belonging to minority and disadvantaged groups.

Conclusion

The prevalence of crime and violence within the households is most common of all the areas such as educational institutions, training centres, offices, workplaces, public places, roads and so forth. In other areas, there are proper rules and regulations that lead to the restraint of violent acts but within the households, there are not any proper rules or policies. Individuals are required to maintain a control over their anger and communicate with all the members of the household in a respectful and courteous manner. Criminal and violent acts in the households occur between parents and children, husbands and wives, siblings, elderly members of the households and domestic help. There are numerous causes that lead to these acts, these are, finances and property, anger and frustration, employment opportunities, disadvantaged conditions, growth and development of children, equal rights and opportunities and other miscellaneous issues. When individuals feel that their demands and requirements are not being fulfilled, then they get angry and due to extreme anger, they get involved into criminal and violent acts.

There have been implementation of a rule that elderly parents who are above 60 years of age, have the right to evict their abusive children out of their homes and they also have the right to terminate their children from the share in the property. Children normally inflict violent acts against their parents for want of property and money, but if the parents report the acts and inappropriate conduct on the part of their children, then they can be evicted from the house and property belonging to their parents.

It is a vital area to bring about restraints in the prevalence of crime and violence within the households, for achieving this purpose, there are several measures, such as, treating the women of the house with respect, kindness and courtesy, adequately listening to them and allowing them to have a say in all matters, they should be given equal share in property, they should be given the right to education and equal employment opportunities, parents should always be respected by their children, children should always obey their decisions, husbands and wives should regard each other equally and contribute equally in the management of the household, there should be an attitude of care, affection and friendliness between siblings and if a domestic help is employed on a full time basis, then he or she should be treated with kindness, be encouraged to study, and should be provided with proper meals and other needs that are required for sustenance. The adequate implementation of all these measures will lead to the prevalence of peace, happiness and warmth amongst the family members.

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