



# Are The Women Empowered or Economically Abused? -Dilemma For 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

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## Abstract

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**- Women's empowerment can be defined to promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence social change for themselves and others.

It is closely aligned with female empowerment – a fundamental human right that's also key to achieving a more peaceful, prosperous world.

**ECONOMIC ABUSE** is defined as behavior that denies a person economic or financial autonomy according to the *Family Violence Protection Act (2008)* Vic. It is the threatened or actual behavior that is coercive, deceptive or unreasonably controlling of another person's financial independence without that person's consent. Economic abuse often occurs in conjunction with other kinds of physical or emotional abuse. This could include being left with substantial liability and debt, or being excluded from employment.

Economic Abuse may include:

- Controlling a partner's credit cards, bank account and access to money
- Withholding, or threatening to withhold, the financial support necessary to meet a person's reasonable living expenses if that person is dependent on them for financial support to meet those living expenses.
- Stopping someone from holding a job or going to school as a means of controlling their ability to be financially independent.

- Forcing a partner to incur debts in their name or ruin their credit rating
- changing joint mortgages or bank details without one partner's consent

For many people in situations of domestic violence, economic abuse can be used as a way to force them to stay in a physically abusive relationship.

Keywords-Economic abuse,FVP act,Financial stress.

**Objective:** To study the level and impact of Economic abuse on the health and financial wellbeing of victims, but sadly it is understudied and still not discussed openly.

## A CASE

Name: Maninder Kaur

Age: 36 years

Ms. Maninder Kaur is the single child of her parents. She got married to Jatinder Singh 3 years ago. Her daughter, mother-in law and brother in-law were the other members of the family. Her mother in-law is a widow but was retired from the MTNL and has her own handsome pension. Parents of Maninder Kaur are also educated and are quite well-off, they both are retired from Indian Defense Services, they spent lavishly on Maninder's wedding and also gifted her a car as a token of love. Maninder Kaur is also very much educated, she is Assistant professor in one of Delhi's private colleges and pursuing her Ph.D., her husband Jatinder Singh is also educated and working as PGT in a Govt school Of Delhi, her brother in-law runs his own business of readymade garments, so both the families are very educated and have sound financial background. Maninder Kaur and Jatinder also has a daughter who is 1 year old.

While sharing the thoughts with me(investigator), she was very expressive and very open to the questions asked by me(investigator). She said that her mother in-law is very dominating and cunning as well, due to her rude nature her sister in-law left her brother in-law, also her mother in-law is not also very happy with the granddaughter as she always wanted to have a Grandson. Maninder Kaur was very upset with this matter because she was expecting that as her mother in law is educated and being living in 21<sup>st</sup> century she will be an open minded lady but her perception and assumption went wrong and on top of it her husband is also a Mama's Boy(puppet of her mother).While discussing she shared that there is a practice in her house that everyone transfers their salary and earnings to her mother in-law's account and then the old lady gives the money earned by them to them only as a pocket money, which sounds very unusual but Maninder Kaur trying to be a good daughter in law accepting the same norm and following it with the whole heart till the time her daughter was not born but after having daughter her expenses increased so she stopped transferring her salary to her mother in-law account and took the decision by her own without involving her husband into it because she thought that she is a working women and can take her decisions by her own like every working women takes and does which was her assumption as she believes that this is 21<sup>st</sup> century and in

this era every women is empowered to take their on calls but her husband proved her wrong and quarreled with her on this issue as he didn't liked her decision to take care of her own earnings, as he does not want Maninder's involvement in these kinds of financial matter so from here story of economic abuse gets started, Jatinder started forcing her physically as well as mentally to transfer the salary to her mother's account.

Her husband was of suspicious nature and used to grill her for every thing. In spite of a working professional and a mother of very small kid her husband and mother in-law forced her to do the household chores on daily basis and Maninder Kauris also doing the same because she still want peace in the family but her husband banged her on regular basis on one and another issues. Her husband is also not happy with the girl child so he is not affectionate to the baby girl even. Maninder Kaur has no say in any of the decision in the family her husband and mother in-law takes all the decisions, even they withdraw the money from her account without taking her consent and forced her to do the signatures on the cheques and doesn't give her any explanation that where they are withdrawing the money. She also narrated that one day she debited 10,000 Rs from her on account to buy a gold ring for herself but after her husband got to know this, he blocked her debit card and threatened her with domestic abuse. After bearing it for long Maninder Kaur started narrating the things to her parents and was expecting that her parents will surely take some steps to take her out of this pathetic conditions as she has the perception that it's the modern era now and the parents are highly qualified so they will do something but the parents couldn't come forward on the issue and asked Maninder Kaur only to adjust and keep on saying that after certain period everything will be fine, have patience and this shattered her. Maninder Kaur again started adjusting with the issues and started transferring her salary into her mother in-law's account just to maintain harmony in the family as she left with no other option. As she learnt that being female, she has to adopt the system and realized that economic abuse and economic violence is the part of every women life be it be an educated women or the uneducated one, situations for the women remains the same, earlier it was domestic abuse but now a days economic abuse has become part of the system which is still in the native stage as no one knows that this kind of abuse or violence also hampers and questions women empowerment.

**Conclusions:** For women, financial stress and disability were important markers of economic abuse.

## DISCUSSION

To authenticate the information provided by the subject the investigator inquired her husband but he refused to give any statement and only told that no women is satisfied from their in-laws and it's the habit of all daughter in laws to defame their mother in-law. To authenticate the information neighbors were also asked certain questions and they responded that the family of Jatinder is very greedy and wife of Jatinder's brother also left the house due to her mother in-law and the nature of her husband. She suffered the same type of torture in the house

and finally filed a divorce case. From the above case study, it can be interpreted that Maninder Kaur is both emotionally and economically violated. Her demand for economic independence is the cause of violence

against her in the family, dominating attitude of her mother in-law seem to be another reason of her sufferings. Lack of support from husband and his suspicious nature and also no support from parents gives rise to the violence. Cultural practices like preference to son can also be a factor of torture in this case.

### **KEY TAKEAWAY FROM THE CASE**

- 1. Economic abuse faced by Maninder Kaur poses questions on Women Empowerment that is it there in Indian society?**
- 2. Domestic violence has taken a new name now that is Economic Abuse**
- 3. Gender discrimination is still the part of 21<sup>st</sup> century**
- 4. Education plays no role in curbing Gender Inequality.**

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