



# A Study On The Gandhian Alternatives To Violence Against Women In Society

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**Abstract:** Violence against women (VAW) is the term for violent acts in which women or girls are the primary or sole victims. It is also frequently referred to as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) or gender-based violence. Because of their gender, such violence, which can take many various forms, is often considered a form of hate crime against women or girls. Violence against women is an expression of masculine dominance and discrimination against them. Intimate relationship-based gender-based violence can take many forms, including financial, psychological, sexual, and physical abuse. Discrimination against women in law and practice, together with persistent inequalities between men and women, are the causes of violence against women. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the violence against women and its effects, which hinders their progress. This study identifies women's obstacles in society and offers appropriate solutions to lessen violence against them while promoting women's empowerment and education from a Gandhian viewpoint.

**Keywords:** Violence, Discrimination, Women's Empowerment, Education, Gandhiji.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Violence against women (VAW), often referred to as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) or gender-based violence, refers to violent acts in which women or girls are the primary or exclusive victims. Such violence, which can take many different forms, is frequently regarded as a type of hate crime that is done against women or girls just because they are female. Although VAW has a long history, the frequency and severity of these acts of violence have changed over time and still differ among civilizations today. Violence often happens against a subjugated woman, even in interpersonal relationships or in society at large; such violence may result from the perpetrator's violent temperament, particularly against women, or feelings of entitlement, superiority, misogyny, or similar beliefs. Gandhi firmly opined that 'India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of her women.' While narrating about women's position, he thought that just as fundamentally as men and women are, their problems must be one. The soul in both is the same. The two live the same life and have the same feelings. Each is a complement to the other. One cannot live without the other's active help." Gandhi recognized that women were subordinate to men through several social practices, which have conditioned women's thought processes. He writes: "Somehow or other, man has dominated woman from ages past, and so woman has developed an inferiority complex. She believed in the truth of man's interest, teaching that she was inferior to him. However, the seers among men have recognized her equal status." However, Gandhi recognized the essential need for a gender-based division of labor in some regions of social life. To him: "There is no doubt that there is a bifurcation between man and woman at some point.

Whilst both are fundamentally one, it is equally valid that there is a vital difference between the two. Hence, the vocations of the two must also be different. The duty of motherhood, which most women will always undertake, requires qualities that men need not possess. She is passive, and he is active. She is the mistress of the house. He is the breadwinner. She is the keeper and distributor of the bread. She is the caretaker in every sense of the term. Her special and sole prerogative is the art of bringing up the infants of the race. Without her care, the race must become extinct."

The man has specific duties to hold the strength of children. In his opinion, he was humiliated by a man and a woman who had to call his wife or grill to leave the spells, and the shoulder grew for protection. Such an attitude is a return to violence and the beginning of the end. When the man tried to ride the horse, he humiliated himself and her. Sin will be on a man's head to tempt his partner or make him leave his unique calling. It takes as much courage to keep a house in good order and condition as to defend it from outside attacks. By dividing the identified work spheres, men's general qualities and required culture are almost identical.

## II. TYPES OF VIOLENCE

There are several broad categories into which violence against women might fall. These include acts of violence perpetrated by both governments and people. People commit a variety of sorts of violence, including:

### **Domestic Violence**

Couples with marital difficulties may seek therapeutic assistance on their own initiative or at the recommendation of a wise healthcare provider after realizing they have been unhappy in their marriage for a long time. Second, there is a significant amount of violence in the marriage, with the husband "usually battering the wife."

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is hostile, unwanted, and unwelcome sexual activity, usually in a professional or educational setting. It can involve sexually suggestive coercion, bullying, or intimidation, as well as the inappropriate offering of compensation in return for sexual favors. It might be verbal or physical, and it is frequently committed against a subordinate by someone in a position of power.

### **Human trafficking and forced prostitution**

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receiving of individuals through the use of force or other forms of coercion, deception, abduction, fraud, abuse of power or a place of vulnerability, or the receiving or giving of money or benefits in order to gain the consent of someone in a position of control over another individual for exploitation it is referred to as "trafficking in persons."

### **Honor Killings**

In several regions of the world, honor killings are a prevalent kind of violence against women. Some family members, typically spouses, dads, uncles, or brothers, are concerned about the honor killings of their family women who may be degrading the reputation of their family. When the disgraceful woman dies, the family members feel that honor is rejuvenated.

### **Dowry Violence**

Numerous types of violence against women are sparked by the dowry custom, which is widespread in South Asia, particularly in India. Bride burning is a type of violence against women in which the bride's husband or his family kills her at home because he is unhappy with the dowry her family gave her.

### **Forced Marriage**

When one or both of the people are married against their will, it is known as a forced marriage. In South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, forced marriages are not uncommon. This practice is influenced by the dowry and bride price norms that are prevalent throughout the world. Another common cause of forced marriages is family conflict that is "resolved" by transferring a female member from one family to another.

1. Female infanticide; 2. Sex selection during pregnancy; 3. Mob and obstetric violence; 4. Mutilation of female genitalia,

Certain types of violence, like war rape, sexual violence, sexual slavery during a conflict, forced sterilization, forced abortion, assault by the police and other authoritative figures, stoning, and flogging, may be committed or tolerated by the government. Organized crime groups frequently carry out various types of VAW, including forced prostitution and women's trafficking. Historical instances of organized WAV include the early modern era's Witch hunts and the Comfort women's sexual slavery.

## III. GANDHIJI'S VIEWS ON WOMEN

Gandhi claimed that women are the embodiment of Ahimsa or nonviolence and that they are "weak in striking... strong in suffering." She also played a crucial role in his Satyagraha strategy. His goal was to transform her anguish and self-sacrifice into Shakti-power. Women are better suited than men to conduct research and take more daring, nonviolent action. Women should never feel inferior to men or think of themselves as such. If strength is defined as moral power, then women are incomparably superior to males. They are also gifted with equal mental capacity. The future belongs to women if nonviolence is the rule of our existence.

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However, Gandhi recognized the essential need for a gender-based division of labor in some regions of social life. To him: "There is no doubt that there is a bifurcation between man and woman at some point. Whilst both are fundamentally one, it is also equally true that there is a vital difference between the two. Hence, the vocations of the two must also be different. The duty of motherhood, which most women will always undertake, requires qualities that men need not possess. She is passive, and he is active. She is essentially the mistress of the house. He is the breadwinner. She is the keeper and distributor of the bread. She is the caretaker in every sense of the term. Her special and sole prerogative is the art of bringing up the infants of the race. Without her care, the race must become extinct."

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### **Child Marriage**

Gandhi opposed child marriage. He believes it to be a sin and a betrayal of the parents' trust. Gandhiji asked: He is not their owner; he is their defender. Moreover, he loses the protection privilege when he attempts to barter away the ward's freedom. Remarrying his daughter after she gets widowed is the least a parent can do after abusing his trust by marrying a baby to an older man in his golden years or to a guy barely in his teens. These kinds of unions ought to be deemed void right away. He recommended that a female be at least 20 years old to be eligible for marriage. "Even in India, twenty years is early enough," he said. He knows twenty-year-old females who are pure, undefiled, and capable of withstanding any storm that may rage around them. Therefore, it is not the Indian climate to blame but rather us. We should not take that precocity for granted. He recommended that young people defy the caste structure in order to end child marriage. He has made a tremendous effort to use social intervention to address social evils.

### **Dowry system**

The System of Dowries Gandhi opposed the dowry system as a practice. He believes that the caste system is the primary source of this practice. He advocated for the removal of this system. Gandhi opposed the dowry system as well. "It is just the sale of girls," he said. He would firmly exhort them to do away with any caste divisions among themselves, since it was reprehensible that there should be caste even among the lowest ranks. They should also remember the speaker's frequently stated belief that there should be no caste divisions and only one caste—the Bhangis.

### **Divorce**

Gandhi had strong opinions on divorce. "Marriage confirms the right of union between two partners to the exclusion of all others when in their joint opinion such a union is desirable," he said, adding that "it confers no right upon one partner to demand obedience of the other to one's wish for union." A different issue is what to do when one spouse cannot comply with the other's requests for moral or other reasons. Assuming that Gandhiji chose to restrain himself for purely moral reasons, he believed that if divorce were the only option, he should accept it without hesitation rather than halting his moral development.

### **Child Widow and Widow Remarriage**

Gandhi was very troubled by the situation of widows in India. However, this societal ill is ignored by Indian society's conservative viewpoint. Gandhi argued this point with great vigor. "We demand protection for cows in the name of religion, but we deny protection to the girl widow," he notes. Our three lakh girl widows, who are unable to comprehend the significance of the marriage ritual, are forced into widowhood in the name of religion. We Hindus pay a heavy price every day for the cruel crime of forcing young females



into widowhood. The deliberate adoption of voluntary widowhood by a lady who has experienced the partner's love elevates religion, sanctifies the family, and gives life grace and dignity. Widowhood imposed by custom or religion is an intolerable burden that undermines religion and defiles the home with hidden vice.

### **Purdha**

Gandhiji was chastised for the Purdah tradition because he thought it did not protect him from temptation. Even when compelled to do so, he exhorted men to believe their women and remain loyal to themselves. He rejected Purdha as an Indian custom because he thought Sita was essential to Rama's liberation and independence. He advised the Indians to destroy the Purdah with the lord because he thought that if women were kept inside their houses, humanity would suffer.

## **IV. GANDHIJI'S ALTERNATIVE TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN SOCIETY**

### **Women's Education**

Gandhi strongly advocated for compulsory education for boys and girls. Literacy is neither the end nor the beginning of education; by education, he means the holistic development of a child's or man's body, mind, and spirit. It is only a method of education for both men and women. Being literate does not equate to education. Therefore, he would start the child's education by teaching it a practical trade and letting it generate from the movement it learns. Gandhiji believes that such an educational system can lead to the maximum potential growth of the mind and soul. Gandhi suggested free and mandatory education for youngsters of both sexes, aged seven to fourteen, in his 1937 Fundamental National Education Scheme. Gandhi believed that to teach females to be mothers and homemakers, the curriculum should be modified to meet their unique needs. Additionally, most Indian women educators in the early 1900s concurred with Gandhi that women's education needed to adapt to their various societal roles. He is uncertain when women's education should start and whether it should differ from men's.

### **Women Empowerment**

Women are better suited than men to conduct research and take more daring, nonviolent action. Women never have a reason to feel inferior to or subservient to males. Women have equal mental capacity and are men's companions. If moral power is what is meant by strength, then women are incomparably superior to males. If nonviolence is the rule of our existence, then women will rule the future. Women embody selflessness, but regrettably, they are unaware of their enormous advantage over men in the modern world. These are a few of Gandhiji's most well-known statements from his writings and speeches. Gandhiji thought India's women's sacrifice and education were essential to the country's redemption. For him, ideas and goals were worthless if they were not implemented. Therefore, any homage to Mahatma Gandhi, the Great Soul, would be meaningless if we did not draw inspiration for our direction from his words and example. He believed that men and women were equals who complemented one another. Additionally, he considered himself a pragmatic idealist rather than a visionary. Men and women may achieve Ram Rajya, the ideal state, if they collaborate selflessly and genuinely as equals with a faith similar to Gandhi's. Women have traditionally been referred to as abala or weak. "Bala" signifies "strength" in Sanskrit and many other Indian languages. To be abala means to be weak. She should be referred to as sabala, or strong, if we mean strength of character, steadfastness, and endurance rather than brutish strength. At the All India Women's Conference held on December 23, 1936, about 60 years ago, he delivered the following speech: "When woman, whom we call abala, becomes sabala, all those who are helpless will become powerful."

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Women with appropriate knowledge at the proper time can help them overcome fear and develop self-confidence, patience, and tolerance. When a woman recognizes her strength, she can overcome obstacles and make strategic decisions for society, her family, and herself. Empowering women is crucial for a promising future in their families, countries, and the world. Gandhi wrote and expressed his views on various issues affecting humanity in general and Indian culture specifically. Gandhiji promoted coeducation, education, women's rights, and societal gender equality. Gandhi thought women could only be empowered if we shared our material, financial, and intellectual resources. The study's goal is to assess the challenges that women face as well as the violence perpetrated against them. This study highlights the challenges that women face in society and proposes appropriate solutions to reduce violence against them while improving women's empowerment.

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