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Typology Of Violence Against Women In Slum Communities And Its Implications

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Abstract: Violence directed at women is pervasive and has a detrimental effect on their lives. Many research studies have made it clear that violence directed at women is pervasive and it is critical for women to even breathe in their life due to brutality. Slum areas are the place where most of the women get affected as they are highly disadvantaged in respect of economic and social status. Earlier research studies demystified the dreadful consequences of violence on women and very few researchers unfolded the specific types of violence and the related issues that affect them. No research has comprehensively addressed the forms of violence in slum areas and its upshot on women. This research delves deep in examining the issues that has a grave effect on women in the slums of India and put forward the welfare measures that could be mulled over by the government or NGOs.

Index Terms *- Violence, Women, Slum, Government*

I. INTRODUCTION

Urban populations have increased dramatically during the last century, particularly in less developed areas, which are expected to handle the majority of future population increases. Given that these areas frequently lack the infrastructure and services needed to keep up with the growing population, the rapid urbanisation poses significant issues. As a result, slums have grown to house about 1 billion people, and projections indicate that by 2030, there will be 2 billion. Slums have a broad impact on social exclusion, healthcare, and education (Mahabir et al., 2016 a). Slums have developed as a result of the high cost of housing brought on by urban industrialization, which has caused a large influx of people from countryside to city areas in pursuit of work. Slum neighborhoods are defined by a cycle of poverty, unsanitary surroundings, and substandard living circumstances. Slum women, who are often unskilled and illiterate, contribute financially to the family but confront barriers to improving their socioeconomic status(Pawar & Mane, 2013).The power disparity between the sexes, which is ingrained in society systems, is the principal cause of violence targeting women and girls. Women are assigned strict roles by gender standards, such as managing the home and providing care, and any departure from these expectations is frowned upon. Discrimination, unequal treatment, and restricted access to resources make women even more vulnerable to abuse. Every stage of a woman's life is impacted by this inequity, which shows up as various types of abuse. It reveals important areas where women are disempowered and disadvantaged, illustrating a never-ending cycle of disadvantage. Approximately one-third of women are said to have been subject to aggression at any stage of their life. The expanding urban population in India, especially in slums, has led to research highlighting the pervasiveness of violence in these locations (Jungari et al., 2022). A serious violation of human rights, violence against women has far-reaching effects on individuals, families, and communities. It is acknowledged as a public health challenge and a elemental breach of women's rights (Ellsberg et al., 2015). Socioeconomic disadvantages contribute to increased toll of brutality against women in India, which range from 1 percent to 45 percent (Jungari & Chinchore, 2020; Kalokhe et al., 2017). Individual traits like education and drunkenness as well as more general gender-related problems like patriarchy and dowries are some of the factors contributing to this violence (Ahmad et al., 2016). The frequency of women-focused violence in India's urban slums has been brought into focus by researchers in recent years. While social

science research has concentrated on the sociocultural elements that contribute to violence (Begum et al., 2015; Pandey et al., 2009), public health studies have probed the health and birth consequents of violence (Nair et al., 2013; Das et al., 2013). Gender and patriarchy have been identified as important aspects in feminist studies (McIlwaine, 2013). Rural migrants live in slums, which are characterized by poverty, poor sanitation, and overcrowding, all of which fuel stress and violence (Davey, 2017; Mili, 2011). Domestic violence is exacerbated by widespread alcohol misuse (Agarwal et al., 2007; Berg et al., 2010). Women in slums are more vulnerable because they frequently experience gender discrimination, low educational attainment, and limited employment possibilities (Kalokhe et al., 2018). Research indicates that slums experience higher rates of violence than non-slum areas (IIPS, 2017; Sambisa et al., 2011). Violence against women continues despite interventions like self-help groups (Daruwalla et al., 2019). According to Jadhav et al. (2016), stigma and a lack of services are obstacles to getting care. Slums' physical and social conditions provide a special setting for aggressions directed at women. The purpose of this essay is to examine the problem of violence inflicted on women in urban slums, with an emphasis on the causes of this problem and the particular difficulties that these women experience. Urban slums, which are defined by poverty, overcrowding, and inadequate sanitation, offer a hostile setting where tension and stress frequently result in violence. Due to a lack of social support, economic opportunity, and educational prospects, as well as gender discrimination and cultural norms, women in these locations are more susceptible. The next sections go into greater detail about the types of violence directed at women and its effects.

1.1 Objectives

- To fathom the significance of women-focused violence in slum areas.
- To classify and define various forms of women-focused violence, including corporal, emotional, psychological, sexual cohesion, and verbal attacks.
- To analyze the underlying causes and contributing factors of different types of violence across various contexts.
- To demystify existing Government policies, interventions, and support systems aimed at improving the condition of women in slums.
- To recommend strategies for reducing violence and enhancing support for victims across different forms of abuse.

1.2 Methodology

- This study made use of secondary data, which comprises reviewing previous publications from a variety of sources. To gather relevant information, a range of academic publications, research studies, and online journals were examined. Peer-reviewed studies, and research articles that concentrate on gender-based violence, especially among women in slum communities, were accessed through academic platforms including Google Scholar and other databases.

1.3 Growth of slums in India

A slum is regarded as the worst type of human habitation and is defined as an area devoid of basic utilities. Its residents' health, safety, and well-being are at risk because to overpopulation, poor conditions, and a lack of services. Poor housing conditions and poverty are frequently linked to slums (Sharma, 2020). Slums have proliferated in India's cities as a result of widespread migration from rural areas brought on by poverty. The general environment is impacted by these slums' lack of essential amenities like electricity, water, sanitary facilities, and decent housing. Slums were classified as Identified (37.2 percent), Notified (34.3 percent), and Recognized (28.5 percent) in the 2011 Census. Additionally, it stated that slums are present in 63 percent of Indian municipalities, and their population increased between 2001 and 2011. The development of living conditions in these places is hampered by the lack of necessary services (Zaman et al.,2018). Numerous socio-cultural, economic, and physical variables impact the expansion of slums. According to studies, slum inhabitants in places like Pune base their choice of site on factors like the cost of travel, the availability of local public utilities, and personal preferences for the make-up of their neighborhoods. The selection of slum places is also influenced by social relationships, such as shared language and culture. Additionally, because of the poor purchasing power of the locals, slums frequently develop in marginal regions like steep hillsides and riverbanks. These circumstances make it extremely difficult to combat the expansion of slums and guarantee secure living conditions (Mahabir et al., 2016 b)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Domestic violence directed at women in shanty towns

In India, domestic violence is a serious public health concern that can take many different forms, including economic, psychological, bodily harm, sexual intimidation and mental assault, as well as intrusive behaviour and online harassment. While sexual abuse entails compulsion or non-consensual sexual acts, physical abuse encompasses acts such as beating, slapping, and burning. Through humiliation or shame, emotional abuse attacks the victim's sense of self-worth. While psychological abuse entails threats of violence or harm, economic abuse deprives the victim of financial independence. The public must recognize and take action against stalking and cyber stalking since these abuses worsen the victim's emotional misery (Dhaani et al., 2022). Numerous types of domestic aggression directed at women in India, especially in slums of cities, have been the subject of recent studies. According to Das et al. (2013), the occurrence of intimate partner violence (IPV) is prevalent during pregnancy and pose a serious risk on the mother and fetal health. Grover et al. (2009) studied the dynamics of marriages and found that women's experiences with love and arranged weddings in Delhi were influenced by family support. In a population-based study, Kumar et al. (2005) identified psychological and physical aggression as the main types of domestic abuse. Jeyaseelan et al. (2007) investigated risk variables for domestic violence, including childhood exposure to violence and social support. Community mobilization was the main tactic employed by Daruwalla et al. (2018) to lessen violence in Mumbai's slums. In their review of the incidence of violence in urban slums, Jungari et al. (2020) connected it to dowry-related problems, alcohol misuse, and educational inequalities. Often disregarded or rejected, gender-based violence, especially domestic violence, remains a serious human rights concern, particularly when psychological abuse is involved. According to a review of research conducted worldwide, the lifetime cohesive control of spouse as violence ranges from 10 percent to 52 percent. According to the National Family Health Survey, 31 percent of Maharashtra's ever-married women report having experienced domestic abuse. According to research, societal stigma, fear, and shame cause domestic violence to go unreported, hence community-based studies are necessary to better understand its prevalence and contributing variables (Shrivastava P S & Shrivastava S R 2013). These studies highlight how widespread and complex assault on women in settlements is, and how urgently comprehensive measures are needed to combat it.

2.2 Sexual abuses on women in urban slums

Women living in urban slums regularly face sexual harassment, as well as domestic exploitation and assault, making their situations dangerous and uncertain. Such intimidation, rooted in societal norms and gender disparities, worsens their physical and mental health challenges (Intesar & Parvez 2024). Abuse of women that is sexual, psychological in nature, or physical is referred to as domestic violence. The practice of beating their wives has frequently been embedded in family customs in slum regions. Usually, the primary perps are husbands and in-laws (Helal et al., 2017; Sambisa et al., 2011). Due to demands from dowries, sexual misconduct, and monetary challenges, girls in slum areas are frequently expected to get married shortly after they start menstruating. Women who experience violence from their partners may face mental, physical, and sexual health problems, including injuries, disability, and reproductive issues (Plichta & Falik, 2001; Ellsberg et al., 2008). Ravishing women is a serious public health concern. The incidence of physical sexual assault (IPV) varies from 42 percent to 76 percent over a lifetime, with annual rates ranging from 16 percent to 67 percent, according to surveys (Navel et al.,2006, Bates et al., 2004). Fearing the perils of living in such unstable circumstances, families frequently marry off their young daughters early, concerned about sexual harassment, anarchy, and gang warfare. Adolescent females are particularly vulnerable to being persuaded into early marriages because of these social pressures (Rashid, 2006). These studies highlight the mental and physical anguish experienced by women due to sexual harassment in urban slums.

2.3 Economic violence against women in urban slums

Economic violence puts a woman's freedom and financial security at risk by restricting her access to financial resources. It contributes to poverty and socioeconomic inequalities as well as being a result of it. Economic violence in intimate relationships, particularly in rural India, is linked to controlling behaviors by male partners, which restrict women's mobility, decision-making, and economic resources. According to research by Akhter et al. (2022), economically empowered women tend to remain with abusers because of social stigma or a lack of legal privileges like property and child custody. The empowerment of women and wellness are severely impacted by financial abuse in slums, which frequently forces them into low-wage, precarious work in the unorganized sector. In addition to not having access to economic or legal protection,

these women are regularly the targets of exploitative labour practices, in which they are paid less for doing the same work as males. According to Patel (2019), women's restricted rights to utilize to resources, edification, and vocational training aggravates economic vulnerability and limits their capacity to raise their social and economic status. Additionally, as Sharma and Singh (2020) point out, women in these communities frequently experience a gender-based division of labour, with unpaid domestic tasks reinforcing their financial reliance on male counterparts. Their long-term prospects are hampered by this systematic economic aggression in addition to their current financial well-being. A cycle of poverty and dependency is perpetuated by the ongoing financial instability in these settings, which also limits women's access to healthcare and other necessities (Verma, 2021). Other types of violence, such as physical and emotional abuse, are entwined with the economic hardships that women in slums endure. According to Kumar (2018), women who are economically dependent on males are frequently forced to stay in abusive relationships because they lack viable choices due to their limited resources and lack of legal support. Furthermore, Gupta (2020) contends that gender stereotypes and customs in these areas increase women's vulnerability by putting them in conventional, subservient roles that restrict their potential to become economically independent. The lack of legislative safeguards and social security systems compounds the pattern of abuse. According to Reddy (2022), overcoming these obstacles requires a comprehensive strategy that includes legal reforms, economic empowerment, and robust support networks. This approach helps women break free from the cycle of domestic and economic abuse, ensuring the protection of their rights and overall well-being.

2.4. Physical and psychological abuse of women in slums

In contrast to slum and non-slum areas, Sambisa (2010) discovered in his research that interpersonal violence was most common in district municipalities. He also found that beliefs that promote beating their wives, alcohol and drug abuse, low socioeconomic position, and poor psychological wellness are risk factors for intimate spouse aggression. Interpersonal violence coupled with psychological, neurological, and biological health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder as noted by Dutton (2006), while Chandra & Sathyanarayana (2009) discovered that women who endure interpersonal brutality are more likely to suffer from depression and Trauma. According to Varma (2007), post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and physical problems were more prevalent in women who were exposed to abuse during pregnancy. Women those who were exposed to violence reported decreased life satisfaction, and worse mental health was associated with more severe maltreatment. Women's vulnerability is increased by unsafe conditions and inadequate infrastructure, as they are frequently the targets of violence because of competition for scarce resources. Women in slum communities suffer from physical harm as well as chronic emotional distress as a result of these violent experiences (Mageswari & Gowtham, 2020). Emotional abuse is an indirect form of abuse that frequently causes serious harm to the victim's mental health and self-worth, as it seeks to dominate, subdue, or isolate a person via shame or terror. Often occurring in conjunction with physical assault, emotional abuse, sometimes referred to as "symbolic violence," can include acts such as causing property damage or driving recklessly (Paudel,2020). In patriarchal societies, the domineering behaviors of male household members exacerbate emotional abuse, further isolating and silencing women (Gondolf, 2018). Furthermore, studies have shown a strong correlation between emotional and physical abuse (Schumacher & Leonare, 2005; Gondolf et al., 2002)

2.5. Verbal abuse and women in slums

A foremost category among the types of violence directed at women is verbal abuse, which usually consists of using harsh language with an escalated tone of voice to denigrate and humiliate. It can originate from negative feelings like irritation and rage, but it can also be camouflaged as jokes, making it hard for women to tell the difference between abuse and fun. This type of abuse reinforces women's sense of inferiority and causes psychological pain because it is a control mechanism. Withholding, in which females are not provided the option to voice their opinions, and countering, in which their opinions are ignored or contradicted, are frequent examples of verbal abuse. Other types include undermining, condemning, and accusing, which lower women's self-esteem and impede their advancement in both their professional and personal lives. Verbal abuse can sometimes turn into threats, insults, or aggressive rage, which worsens the victim's mental health. These harmful actions frequently take place in environments such as families, schools, or workplaces. Numerous studies have connected socioeconomic factors including age, education, and economic status to verbal abuse, the most prevalent kind of disrespect and abuse that women endure during childbirth (Mukanga et al.,2021).). In impoverished neighborhoods, arguments frequently turn into intense verbal abuse and, occasionally, physical attack. Slum women who are subjected to foul language

while using facilities frequently suffer from emotional anguish and severe verbal abuse might escalate into physical attacks. Particularly in disputes over water, these women, who occasionally commit abuse themselves, also become victims. Women in slums are not the only victims of violence and even men can verbally attack women, sometimes yet turning it into sexual abuse. These incidents demonstrate how physical and verbal abuse can coexist in impoverished environments (Maheshwari & Gowtham, 2020). Due to the scarcity of water in public restrooms, women routinely face verbal abuse and are forced to urinate in dangerous areas where men congregate. Verbal abuse is made worse by caste prejudice, as women from upper castes frequently target those from lower castes (Hazare & Tholiya, 2023). Compared to physical or sexual violence, verbal ill-treatment is frequently the most ubiquitous type of domestic abuse in slum since it can be more challenging to identify and disclose. As a crucial component of the abusive cycle, verbal abuse fosters an atmosphere of power imbalance, fear, and emotional injury, which is why it is also seen as a prelude to physical violence

2.6 Gender-based violence in slums

While all patterns of aggressions inherently involve aspects of gender, gender-based violence is explicitly identified as distinct. When the victim's gender is closely linked to the reason behind the violence, it is referred to as gender-based violence (McIlwaine, 2013 a). Gender-based violence encompasses political, institutional, and economic dimensions in addition to social ones. It often overlaps with "everyday violence," such as crime, theft, and intra-family violence, which are prevalent worldwide (Moser & McIlwaine, 2006). Compared to rural areas, women in shantytowns are more disposed to experience gender-based brutality, especially from non-partners. Vulnerability increases in isolated public settings, such as parks, riverbanks, and locations associated with gangs or drug transactions. Risks are further heightened by lengthy nighttime commutes and inadequate urban infrastructure, such as poor lighting and unhygienic restrooms. Despite growing awareness of violence as an infringement of human rights, few incidents are reported or lead to action. The situation in slum areas is exacerbated by factors such as poverty, violent gangs, and insufficient police presence (McIlwaine, 2013 b). The lack of adequate public toilets and poor infrastructure in Mumbai slums contributes to gender-based assaults, with women often fearing crime more than experiencing it (Belur et al., 2017). Women who experience gender-based aggression are more disposed to feel depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (Rees et al., 2014), and are also at an increased odds of attempting suicide (Devries et al., 2013).

III. GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN IN SLUMS

India has bolstered women’s prosperity and safety by rolling out schemes to enhance their quality of life, especially in areas where they are most vulnerable. Older women can report neglect or abuse as per the ‘Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior persons Act, 2007’, which guarantees senior persons' legal protection and maintenance rights. In order to give women financial stability, financial inclusion programs like ‘Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana’, which was introduced in 2014 for the 20–65 age group, seek to offer reasonably priced access to banking, insurance, and pension services. To encourage universal financial inclusion and provide insurance coverage to economically disadvantaged groups, the government has rolled out three social security programs in the last five years: ‘Atal Pension Yojana’, ‘Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana’, and ‘Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana‘, Additionally, States and Union Territories (UTs) can get central support to meet the housing requirements of Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), including slum residents, through the ‘Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana’, which was introduced in 2015 with the goal of "Housing for All" by 2022. A ‘Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme’ for ‘Low-Income Groups’, ‘Middle-Income Groups’, and other sectors is also part of the program. The ‘Ministry of Women and Child Development’ lists steps to combat violence against women, with a focus on government programs and legislative measures. While certain laws, such as the ‘Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005’, address domestic abuse, constitutional provisions guarantee equality and protection. Along with initiatives to raise awareness of the legal and law enforcement systems, the government also prioritizes support services like shelters and legal help. The National Policy for Empowerment of Women promotes social transformation, legislative reform, and victim rehabilitation, while the National Commission for Women serves a vital function in overseeing women's rights.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study sought to gather insights into the prevalence and repercussions of domestic violence and other forms of trauma experienced by women living in urban informal settlements in India. The research laid emphasis on the types of repression undergone by women and their consequences on both physical and mental health. By examining these issues, policymakers can better attend to the challenges and execute effective measures for improvement. While SHGs and nonprofits are significant in increasing awareness, the government must provide a conducive environment to optimize the program's effects. Targeted initiatives that address economic disadvantage, illiteracy, and gender inequality are necessary for the empowerment of women living in slums. Training in job skills such as sewing, accountancy, and handicrafts can help women become financially independent. Encouraging women in slum to collaborate on community or family decisions advance their respect and social inclusion. Their health and standard of life are to be improved by policies that support healthcare, savings, and vocational training. Non Government agencies and women organisations can plan awareness initiatives in slums to inform women about their rights and the available safeguards against abuse. To stop the violence and the derogatory depiction of women, the media, including television, movies, and the internet, should be strictly regulated. Every government organisation must have special divisions that deal with concerns pertaining to women, such as sexual harassment, exploitation, and discrimination. By taking these steps, slum women would gain the help they need, protected and be empowered.

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