



A Study on Patriarchy as a cause of Gender violence and Suicide among Women

Dr. Akthar parveen
Assistant Professor
Department of Education and Training
MANUU-Hyderabad.

ABSTRACT

Family is a place a beautiful garden of Eden where our life begins. But unfortunately these families have become breeding centers of frustration and violence for women. It became corner stone of women's continuous oppression in our society irrespective of caste creed, region and religion.

No doubt women have gained the freedom to have children and to pursue the careers, but still the society have not adapted to a world where women are in the work place to stay along with men. Strong belief of the people that men are stronger than women (male Biology) men's rights to dominate women (male Psychology) are the major causes of oppression among the women. It appears that oppression of women doesn't disappear as long as men exist.

Main objective of the present paper is to through light on the patriarchal family system of India, role of male persons in the family, and causes of violence and emergence of the feeling of suicide among the girls and women of the family.

Key words:-patriarchy, violence, suicide, women

From the conception till the grave the story of women has innumerable plights; when the baby girl is born her birth make the parents and family members sad and sorrowful when she grows and attains adolescents age and walks through the streets lustful glances of male folk make her conscious. In the society, her physique, her sexuality, psychology in one way or the other reduce her mental capacities and pull her in the mouth of stress, depression, anxiety, worries and even develop suicidal tendency irrespective of caste, creed and religion, region and community.

In many parts of the world women are not supposed to do anything without the consent of approval of men. In some Arabic countries woman are not allowed out of their homes except under the escort of men. women are not allowed to own property, and cannot inherit. They cannot make any significant decision about their lives as far as the law is concerned.

Women are tortured physically, psychologically in the homes, schools, hospitals workplaces, the most harsh and wicked stage comes in the life of a women when she is married forcefully at the early age and a variety of discriminations start in the form of child marriages, forced marriages, polygamy, bride burning,

dowry deaths, divorce, sexual, psychological and emotional violence, inflicted by partners over their life time.

History reveals that violence against women is very common Roman law gives full authority of life of women. English common law of 18th century gave permission to men to discipline the children and wife punishing with stick and whip. Many feminist believe that this is the result of deeply rooted patriarchal culture which encourages and rewards male domination.

Patriarchal structure of the family:-

Joseph Conrad rightly says *"being a woman is a terribly difficult task, since it consists principally in dealing with men"*.

Literary patriarchy means role of father in a male dominated family. Strong belief of the people that men are stronger than women biologically and male psyche boost the patriarchal families. Even social and ideological construct where in men consider themselves superior to women.

According to Sylvia Patriarchy is that in which men dominates women in different ways to exploit women in a social structure it is the system of power domination based on hierarchy, inequality, bias where men try to control women's productivity, sexuality and reproduction. It represents gender stereotypes in society

Characteristics of Patriarchal system:-

1. Father is the head of the family. He controls the wife and the children.
2. Being the head of the family he restricts the mobility of women and burdens the women with the responsibilities of rearing and nurturing the children.
3. The biological factor to bear children is linked to the social position of women's responsibility of motherhood
4. Raising the children, educating them and nurturing is the sole responsibility of women in patriarchal society
5. A boy is welcomed in a grand way than a girl..
6. Son is considered as an inheritor of the family and daughters are considered as *Parayadhan*.
7. Decision making is not allowed by the women in patriarchy/ .

Religious institutions also regard male authority as superior and laws of conduct, regarding family, marriage, divorce and inheritance are linked to patriarchal control against women. All major religions were interpreted and controlled by men by upper and elite class.

Effect of patriarchal setup on women as a wife:-

As soon as women enters into a family after marriage she is expected to play multiple roles

1. Women are expected to be more obedient, and faithful to the husband.
2. Respect in-laws and serve them
3. Beget the children nurture them
4. Do all household work which is worth less in the eyes of men.
5. She cannot question the control and authority. If she does so she is considered as a characterless bitch.
6. Women are expected to have a lot of patience to be an *Adarsha patni*.

Effect of Patriarchal set up on children:-

As son is considered as inheritor of the family in patriarchal family son is the most privileged person enjoying the life. The son learns the lesson of patriarchy, authority and control through the father as a role model. Here family plays important role in creating hierarchical system and mirrors and educates children and reinforces the order. Hence in patriarchal families sons or boys learn to be more dominating and aggressive. They are pampered and their demands were fulfilled immediately compared to the daughters.

Where as the birth of a girl child makes all the family members sad, gloomy. They put restrictions from the child hood and try to control the girls.

Food and Nutrition:-in patriarchal families boys were provided with healthy nutritive food compared to girls as they are the inheritors of the family .while girls stay at home they have to look slim and smart for her marriage.

Freedom provided: -

Boys enjoy all freedom without any restrictions where as girls were restricted. Don't go alone, don't play with boys, don't stand there, now you are grown up are the words we frequently hear in such families.

Gender roles:-

Parents don't have any hesitation to spend money for boys but they hesitate to educate the girls as they think that ,ultimately the girl has to marry and go to other house. Hence spending on her is mere waste according to them. Hence parents expect girls to be caring, loving, submissive, well equipped with all feminine virtues to please families in general. They are supposed to learn all house hold work.

The social constructs of gender stereotypes were internalized in the patriarchal families since childhood. Hence we see gender discrimination, systematic deprivation, violence, rape, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, female feticides, infanticide, sati, dowry deaths, wife beating, high level of female illiteracy, malnutrition, undernourishment, continues sort of insecurity develops and prevails in the women folk.

Women are bound to be at home economically exploited, socially suppressed, and politically passive. They are kept aloof in a strict discipline which is enforced. They are segregated from social, religious and cultural life. They are many don'ts in the life of women and girls since childhood.

Female folk in patriarchal societies lack self confidence; their self esteem is also low. They learn to accept gender stereotypes without questioning. Their mental capabilities, creativity and intelligence are curbed in the family. Unfortunately social practices, social constraints are legitimized by the religious institutions. The one who questions this dominating system are labeled as ill mannered and bad character persons. Girls and women learn to lead life in suppressed family environment which curbs their happy childhood and freedom. Their rights are also suppressed. They make up their minds that if they want to live they have to adjust, if not death is only the solutions. Exploitation, suppression, denial of the rights of women snatches the peace of mind and happiness of life they lead miserable life in such a situation.

Need of change:-

Ours is a country where women were worshiped as goddesses, it is the land where rivers were named as Ganga, Godavari and our country is considered as Bharth maatha .but in reality the status of the women is very low where every day a bride is burnt for dowry, a girl is molested and raped and ill treated.

Hillary Clinton rightly says "I believe that the rights of women and girls are the unfinished business of the 21st century."

It is the time to change our mind set and learn to treat men and women equally liberate women from conservative, biased male dominated society. Even government has taken up many programmes to empower women to enjoy equal privilege in the society.

Malala Yousafzai says "I rise up my voice—not so I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back

Family plays very important role in the upbringing of the children hence we should educate our sons to treat both girls and boys equally, unbiased and rear them in such an atmosphere.

1. Educating the girl child,
2. Empowering them,
3. Respecting the individuality of the girls,
4. Encouraging role shifting,
5. Avoiding gender stereotypes,
6. And providing feeling of security in the family boosts up their self confidence and self esteem to live with freedom and satisfaction.

References:-

1. Sajad Ahmed Khan June –(2013) - IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social sciences –
2. Paul D” Amato – July (2002) Why the family Oppresses women-
3. Wekipedia on Women empowerment
4. Aggrawal (2002) .N Women and Law in India New Delhi.
5. Sen, S (2013) Women rights and empowerment New Delhi Astha publishers.
6. Joseph Conrad – (2013) The Mirror of the Sea: "Being a woman is a terribly difficult task, since it consists principally in dealing with men."
7. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2014/03/07/hillary-clinton-says-equality-for-women-is-the-great-unfinished-business-of-the-21st-century/>
8. <https://malala.org/newsroom/archive/malala-un-speech#:~:text=I%20raise%20up%20my%20voice,to%20be%20treated%20with%20dignity.>