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Women, The victim of Modern forms of Terrorism– An Introspection

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Abstract

Alas! Where gone the days when women held a high place of respect in the society as mentioned in Rigveda and other religious scriptures. Bulk of literature can be written about the status of our women and their heroic deeds from Vedic period to modern times. Terrorism in this part of the world usually means bombs exploding or hotels burning. Our news papers, news channels and T.V. programmes are flooded with the new, more potential, emerging form of terrorism (violence) against the half of the world. This paper makes an attempt to analyze the violence and atrocities against the women or this new emerging form of terrorism. The growing incidence of flinging acid on a woman's face, female foeticide, gang rape, eve-teasing question the Indian sensitivity for women. Of all the rich G20 nations, India has been labeled the worst place for a woman. The question is why such social evils. The traditional and conservative attitude on the part of parents and moral erosion and romantic relationship on the part of young generation have contributed in making India a place of hell for women. Even some religious preachers unfortunately using Religion as a platform have left no stone unturned in making the situation more startling like self- styled Gulzar Peer from crown of India, Kashmir which was once called Resh Waer. Can we afford a society without women? This paper attempts to highlight the deadly consequences of this terrorism and the role of Education, NGO, Religious preachers in developing a global village where women are viewed as equal and valuable partners in society, thereby bringing back the lost status of women.

Keywords: terrorism, flinging acid, gang-rape, moral erosion, global village

Introduction

Nature loves order. No one is inferior or superior before God. The ultimate God has advised widespread and practical steps to be taken for the socio-religious equality of all sexes. God teaches us that both men and women can sit together and equally participate in religious congregations irrespective of caste or social status differences, to eat a common meal in the Institution (common kitchen). Women were never excluded from any specific task. In all the organized religions of the world, women have perhaps the most prominent presence; both visible as well as invisible .All Great religions of the world have given teachings highlighting the status and importance of women for the smooth functioning of society. Numerous schools of Vedic tradition offer homage to women sages during their daily prayers. The superlative epithets used uniformly to denote female deities like Ushas, Sarasvati etc., in the Vedas describe them as sweetly-smiling, the first or foremost of deities to whom worship is offered, the shining ones, splendid and beautiful, possessors of wisdom, teachers of mankind and as powers capable of fulfilling the desires of human beings ¹. The close connection of women with the Vedas, the texts regarded as Divine Revelation(or 'Divine Exhalation') in Hindu Dharma may be judged from the fact that of the 407 Sages associated with the revelation of Rig-Veda, twenty-one⁴ are women. Islamic doctrine, "Paradise lies at the feet of the mother!" clearly highlights the pious and exalted status of women.

When girl child is born, she opens the door of Janna for her parents

When she becomes a wife, she completes the half deen of her husband

When she becomes a mother ,Janna lies at her feet (islamic doctrine)

Sikhism one of the prominent religion states both men and women are considered capable of reaching the highest levels of spirituality ². A particular hymn in the Guru Granth Sahib states:

“In all beings is he himself pervasive,
Himself pervades all forms Male and female”

Guru Granth sahib, Ang. 605.

Leaving religious teachings aside Women have left no stone unturned in reaching highest positions of spiritual prosperity thereby serving as icons for the coming generation. Women as noble queens and as warriors, have protected our faith from disintegrating into extinction. As musicians, dancers and artists, they have been the embodiment of all that is beautiful. As mothers, they have been our first teachers. As wives, they have provided the locus around which family and social life revolves. As daughters, they have taught us compassion. And as our guides, they have made many men into great human beings ³. Women have always played a central role in developing a balanced society, pious politics and religious and healthy families. But Alas! The modern man has turned violent in accepting her as a part of society. Terrorism in this part of the world usually means bombs exploding or hotels burning. Unfortunately our news papers, news channels and T.V. programmes are flooded with the new, more potential, emerging form of terrorism (violence) against the half of the world. Violence against women (VAW) is undeniably endemic the world over, and cuts across all cultures, religions, and nations. There is not a country on the planet where women do not face violence simply because they are women. This type of Terrorism clearly has a very real and direct impact on human rights, with devastating consequences for the enjoyment of the right to life, liberty and physical integrity of victims. In addition to these individual costs, this type of terrorism can destabilize Governments, undermine civil society, jeopardize peace and security, and threaten social and economic development.

Modern Man, Modern Weapon of Terrorism against Women

India having the history of being ruled by great intellectual and powerful women like Indra Gandhi, Pratibha patil, Meira Kumar and Sheila Dekshit indicates the potential of Indian women to serve as icons for the coming generation. But Alas! Of all the G20 nations India has been labeled as the worst place for women ⁴. It is an unflattering irony for a country where women make it to top political positions. Yet there are women deprived of their basic right to be born. Indian Women are subjected to all sorts of harassments, sexual Abuse, coercion, battering, eve teasing, acid attacks. To us Terrorism usually means bombs exploding or hotels burning. But ask women who has been the victim of new and emerging form of terrorism like gang rape, acid attack or domestic violence. The answer will be simple, it would have been better to die then to lead a life of humiliation, isolation and devaluation, seclusion, enforced invisibility and stigmatized because this form of terrorism scars the victim's mind, soul and often body. This new and emerging form of terrorism questions the Indian sensitivity for women.

Crime in India, highlights

According to National Crime Records Bureau ⁵, crime against women is committed after every three minutes, a woman is raped every 29 minutes, a dowry death occurs every 77 minutes and a case of cruelty committed by either husband or relative of the victim occurs every 9 minutes. According to latest National Crime Records Bureau, there has been a continuous increase in the number of crimes during 2003-2007.

Year	No. of Cases
2003	140601
2004	154333
2005	155553
2006	164765
2007	185312

Crime in J&K, highlights

Crime against women has been on rise in J&K with 9634 cases involving rape,molestation,kidnapping and abduction during 2010-2013 ⁶.

Year	Cases
2010	2763
2011	3330
2012	3541

The figures revealed a shocking trend- capital cities of jammu and srinagar are witnessing the highest no. of such cases. Srinagar tops the list with 1189 cases followed by 880 in jammu and 835 in Anantnag.

In Srinagar

Year	Cases
2010	295
2011	422
2012	472

In Jammu

Year	Cases
2010	286
2011	276
2012	318

In Anantnag

Year	Cases
2010	275
2011	354
2012	306

Vitrolage or Acid Attack: - Modern Weapon of Revenge

In India, violence against women is widespread, and acid attacks have become increasingly prevalent, with an attack being reported in the media almost every other day ⁷. Vitriolage or acid attack means an act of throwing acid on the body of a person (which in majority of cases have been women and young girls) with some bad intentions. According to the Home ministry, in India, every third day, a woman becomes a victim of an acid attack and activists estimate that there may be as

many as 1,000 attacks a year. According to a study, 174 cases of acid attacks were reported in India in 2000. State of Karnataka alone reported 35 cases between 1999 and 2004 and this number shot up to 53 at the end of 2006. Women and girls constitute majority of the victims of the vitriolage. Study of Indian news reports determined that 72% of cases reported from January 2002 to October 2010 included female victim's. As per union home ministry, 500 acid attack cases have been reported in past four years. A report in Times of India said that there have been 56 such instances in Delhi alone in three months period.



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Vitrolage/Acid Attack Cases

- a) In Kashmir a school teacher was attacked with acid in Parraypora locality of Hyderpora in Srinagar.
- b) Vinodhini, a B.Tech graduate working in a private firm, faced an acid attack at a bus terminus at Karaikal on November 14 by a construction worker, Suresh, whose overtures she rejected.
- c) Pragya, a post graduate in Fashion Management, was acid-attacked in Delhi on 30th April, 12 days after her wedding - by a jilted lover who was not happy with her marriage.
- d) In Mombay A 25-year old girl Preeti Rethi on her maiden visit to the city was brutally attacked by a 27 year-old man, flung acid at her face as soon as she alighted from the train at Bandra terminus on Thursday.
- e) Four sisters were injured when two men on a motorcycle sprayed acid on them with a spray gun in Utter Pradesh's shamli District on 12 April 2013

Reasons

A careful analysis of these cases indicates that extreme patriarchal attitude, which regards a woman as property/ possession is the root cause of this heinous crime. Any attempt by the woman to assert her will - whether it is by taking up a job or rejecting a Lover or refusal of sexual advances, is perceived as an audacious act of defiance which needs to be punished to teach her a lesson.

Recommendations

Till 2012 acid attack was not a separate offence under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) ⁹. Cases of acid attack were registered under the category of attempt to murder or grievous harm, and no fine was imposed on the perpetrators who often got out on bail, or got mild sentences. Now the IPC has been amended to regard acid attacks as a separate offence, with a stringent punishment ranging from a minimum imprisonment of ten years to life imprisonment and a fine. But the Govt. is failing to act on the problem, with the result the number of acid attacks is growing. To bring this heinous crime under control following suggestion can be followed:-

a. Education and sensitization of national institutions

Government officials, policy-makers, community and religious leaders, judges, police and court officials, medical doctors, NGO leaders, and others need to be challenged about their individual prejudices, and educated about the consequences of acid attack violence and about the need to implement laws and punish perpetrators. Training sessions on ‘changing attitudes and behaviour’ and ‘acid attack violence awareness’ could be useful avenues for disseminating information and challenging discriminatory attitudes and beliefs

b Regulate the sale of acid

- i. Only authorized licensed vendors and only to those who have a government-issued photo identity card should be allowed to sell acid.
- ii. The retailer will have to maintain a record of the buyer’s address, purpose of purchase and the quantity purchased.

c Need for amendment in IPC

- i. The law has made acid attack only a criminal offence. There should be provisions for rehabilitation policy such as specialized medical care for burns and elaborate plastic surgery.

d Monitor and provide support to the families of acid attack victims

Acid attacks cause many deaths in India. Families and partners of victims should be offered psychological support, therapy, and legal advice, and be included in campaigns and focus g

e Women should adopt proper dress code like Hijab

f A value-based education is the need of the hour,

Rape

December 2012 became a black letter day in the history of India ¹⁰. On this day In New Delhi a 23 years old university student has been raped and tortured, then died of her wounds 13 days after the attack. The use of rape as a weapon is one of the most violent and humiliating offences inflicted on the enemy, the brutalization of rape permanently scars the victim’s mind, soul and often body. Victims are shunned by their families and communities and many become pregnant as a result of their rapes. Rape leaves a permanent reminder of war and of the enemy through the birth of a child, which places both the mother and child in continual victimization and isolation. Rape as a weapon of war affects not only the rape victim, but their entire family, village and community. As per data of National Crime Record Bureau, rape cases have shown an increasing trend as presented below:-

Year	No. of Cases
2008	466
2009	469
2010	507
2011	572
2012	706

In last 13 years Delhi records highest number of rape cases i.e.1121 during 2013.

Rape in J&K

The crime of rape has also engulfed the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Since 1989, 5125 rape cases have taken place, 2601 in Kashmir and 2524 in Jammu.

Year	No. of Cases
2010	243
2011	277
2012	303

Rape cases pending

In J&K ,2360 rape cases are lying pending in various courts as depicted below:-

Dist.	No. of cases
Baramulla	412
Kulgam	250
Anantnag	247
Kupwara	196
Pulwama	162
Srinagar	157

In Jammu province, Jammu tops the list, 147 rape cases are lying pending and in Rajouri, 121 cases are pending.

Latest Rape Cases

1. A 13 year old girl was raped by a young man in Rajouri on march 2013, later the victim attempted to kill herself.(The Times of India).
2. On June 2013, three young men raped a girl in Billawar area of Kathua dist.
3. In Kishtwar on July 2013, 15 year old girl was abducted and gang raped by four persons among which was her former teacher.(IBNLIVE).
4. On Sep. 2013, three police officials abducted and raped a minor girl in dist.Reasi.(ZNEWS)
5. In Jammu on Sep.2013, police came to know about a scandal in NGO run home in which mentally challenged girls were raped.(Hindustan Times)
6. In Dec.2013. three girls ,two from dist.Doda and one from Jammu were raped in J&K.
7. In Jan.2014, four men gang raped a 13 year old girl in North Kashmir's Baramulla Dist.(IBNLIVE)

Root Cause

In view of the startling situation one naturally is forced to think what could be the reason of this criminal and barbaric trend in Indian youths .The pace of globalization and westernization has given a strong boost to the ratio of such crimes. Late night party cultures, discos, dating clubs, fashion shows and beauty contests ,cable TV channels, pornography materials both in CDs and on Internet are the root cause of this heinous crime. It is regretful that Indian women have gone far away in following the western culture in terms of nudity, immodesty and fashionable lifestyle. The good and constructive aspects of western culture such as discipline, hard work, dedication, tolerance, transparency, honesty, incorruptness etc are neglected. While on the contrary, the superficial glitters are accepted as a source to climb the zenith of development and intellectualism. The way the daughters are dressed and nurtured is very dangerous for them and ultimately for the society.

Recommendation

One who has an observation of recent social disorder and betrayal from the cultural and religious values is quite sure that the latest increasing trends of sexual violence against women are based on the changing scenario of our social system. It is quite surprising event and one is forced to think when we have a free and open society where men and women are free to make friends, have affairs, go to brothels and enjoy their life as they wish, then why some monsters prey girls to fulfil their lust. In USA, the hub of western culture, a woman is raped every 90 seconds. So, this is a clear proof that the direction to which our social system is headed is leading it to destruction and devastation.

- a. Only legislation and law enforcement agencies cannot bring the situation under control. There is need of social awakening and change in the attitude of masses, so that due respect and equal status is given to women. It's a time when the women need to be given her due. This awakening can be brought by education campaign among youth making them aware of this heinous crime and the means to eradicate same.
- b. The current social systems, which hypocritically ban the consequences such as rape and sexual violence but leave the doors flung open by allowing the causes from where crimes creep in the society. But the need is eradicate the root cause of such evils. Women should cover their body necessarily every time except their face, hands and feet. Women are recommended to wear modest clothes and not reveal their body and structure that may be sexually provocative to the opposite sex.
- c. To get the society free from crimes, the spate of pornographic materials must be strictly banned. The media, TV channels and cinema which present and publish vulgar materials must be censored.
- d. Mass media can play an active role here as in the present days it has reached every corner of the nation. Various NGOs can hold a responsible position here by assigning them with the task of highlighting socio-economic causes leading to such crimes and by disseminating information about their catastrophic effect on the womanhood and the society at large.

Eve Teasing

Eve teasing is the most ubiquitous and insidious because it is considered normal behavior and not an assault to females. Eve teasing is a euphemism used in India for sexual harassment or molestation of women by men ¹¹. It ranges in severity from sexually colored remarks to outright groping. The term eve-teasing is used to refer to sexual harassment of women in public places such as the streets, public transportation, parks, beaches, and cinema halls. This is used as a silent weapon by a lone man or gangs of men to create fear among female generation. This type of crime includes verbal assaults such as making passes or unwelcome sexual jokes; nonverbal assaults such as showing obscene gestures, winking, whistling, and staring; and physical assaults such as pinching, fondling, and rubbing against women in public. The nuisance of Eve-teasing has also left its impact in Jammu and Kashmir ¹². In Dec.2012 police constable Rajandar singh of R.S.Pora was arrested on the charge of eve-teasing, after a college student raised an alarm objecting to his unkind gestures. As per police records, (crime branch IGP'S office) the nuisance of eve-teasing has shown an upward trend.

YEAR	No. of cases
2003	251
2004	156
2005	271
2011	350
2012	377

ROOT CAUSE

The umpteen advertisements shown by the advertisers and various shots in films have a huge impact on the eve teasers who try to imitate such acts in real life. Moreover moral degradation among young generation has given a strong boost to this silent crime. Lack of job opportunities among young generation plays a big hand in increasing the pace of this heinous crime. The unemployed youth have enough time to indulge in such acts.

Recommendations

Certain measures at the family, societal, legal and personal level should be taken to combat this problem.

- a. Socialization and social control at the family and social level should not be gender biased; men should not be given undue freedom and power and a sense of accountability should be inculcated in men.
- b. Strict implementation of regulations, prohibiting overloading on buses and maintenance of separate seats reserved in transport sector for women would be very effective measure for protecting them from physical assault.
- c. The umpteen advertisements shown by the advertisers and various shots in films should be banned because eve teasers try to imitate such acts in real life.
- d. Religious teaching should be inculcated in schools. If religious teachings are followed where men are not even allowed to take a second glance of a woman (which is the most forgotten religious teaching), men would not be able to justify their violence by finding faults with women.
- e. Unemployed should be given various job opportunities..
- f. All state Govt's must depute plain clothed female Police officers in precincts of bus stands, railway stations and tourist gardens.
- g. Install CCTV'S in strategic positions to deter and detect eve-teasing.

Moral policing by Self styled godman, Violence in disguise.

Religion is the Panacea of all social evils. But Alas! some fraudulent persons using religion as a platform have left no stone unturned in making the situation more startling ,like the self styled godman gulzar bhat of Kashmir. This self styled godman used to exploit young women on pretext of purifying them ¹³. The confessional recording of victims reveals that gulzar used to lure young girls and women and later on with the help of cronies assaulted them sexually.

In another case a self styled godman Tara chand in Rajuri raped a 26 year old women on the pretext she would give birth to a male child with his blessings. This scenario of terrorism on the basis of religious practices reflects the deep rooted attitude of young India "Bye to Girl child"

Technology, A tool to perpetrate women violence

The information superhighway is undergoing rapid growth in this new millennium. The Internet and other telecommunications technologies are promoting advances in virtually every aspect of society and every corner of the globe: fostering commerce, improving education and health care, promoting participatory democracy in the developed and developing countries, and facilitating communications among family and friends, whether across the street or around the world. Unfortunately, Some human minds of criminal nature use internet as a tool of crime which is now known as cyber crime committed in cyber space. Many of the attributes of technology - low cost, ease of use, and anonymous nature, among others - make it an attractive medium for fraudulent scams, child sexual exploitation, and increasingly, a new concern known as "cyber stalking" (Attorney General Report, 1999).

a) **Cyber stalking** is the use of the Internet or other electronic means to stalk someone which may be a computer crime or harassment¹⁴. This term is used interchangeably with online harassment and online abuse. A cyber stalker does not present a direct physical threat to a victim, but follows the victim's online activity to gather information and make threats or other forms of verbal intimidation. The anonymity of online interaction reduces the chance of identification and makes cyber stalking more common than physical stalking. Although cyber stalking might seem relatively harmless, it can cause victims psychological and emotional harm, and it may occasionally lead to actual stalking. Cyber stalking is becoming a common tactic in racism, and other expressions of bigotry and hate (National centre for victims of crime, 2003).

Cyber stalkers target and harass their victims via websites, chat rooms, discussion forums, open publishing websites (e.g. blogs and Indymedia) and email. The availability of free email and website space, as well as the anonymity provided by these chatrooms and forums, has contributed to the increase of cyber stalking as a form of harassment. Also contributing is that cyber stalking is as easy as doing a google search for someone's alias, real name, or email address (National centre for victims of crime, 2003).

First stalking case registered in India:

The Delhi Police registered India's First Case of Cyber stalking¹⁵. One Mrs. Ritu Kohli complained to the police against a person who was using her identity to chat over the Internet at the website www.mirc.com, mostly in the Delhi channel for four consecutive days. Mrs. Kohli further complained that the person was chatting on the Net, using her name and giving her address and was talking obscene language. The same person was also deliberately giving her telephone number to other chatters encouraging them to call Ritu Kohli at odd hours. Consequently, Mrs Kohli received almost 40 calls in three days mostly at odd hours from as far away as Kuwait, Cochin, Bombay and Ahmedabad. The said calls created havoc in the personal life and mental peace of Ritu Kohli who decided to report the matter.

In J&K Police on 5 January 2014 arrested a cyber stalker who was harassing a girl by putting objectionable contents on the internet¹⁶. The youth was disseminating obscene material and comments against her in cyberspace. "The youth resides in Srinagar. He was running a fake facebook account under the name "waseemdarokhil@yahoo.com" on yahoo platform.

In J &K every day around 50 women are harassed over internet or via mobile phones, but 90% of sexual crimes get unreported. Most of cases are reported in Jammu ,Rajouri and Srinagar..

B)Malicious distribution

Images of women on the internet or through mobile telephones have often been used by stalkers to denigrate, intimidate and harass on- and off-line .In India, Delhi police note that of all cybercrime cases reported almost half are filed by women who discover their faces morphed onto pornographic images and posted online, usually accompanied by a personal phone number and an invitation for strangers to call.

Case

A14 year old girl in Mumbai committed suicide on 19 nov.2013 after being stalked on facebook by a friend. The boy used to sent disturbing images and offensive content on the girls facebook account

Recommendations

Technology is a queer thing. It brings you great gifts on one side and it stabs you in the back on the other. As the technology advances, risk too advances. We the current generation, need to create a balance between technology and man power in order to mitigate the risk from Technology.

- a) Awareness campaign must be arranged from grassroots levels such as schools and colleges about cyber ethics and probable cyber crimes like economic cheatings, stalking activities, defamatory activities, misusing email and social net working websites etc.
- b) Police, social workers, lawyers and NGOs must be invited to educational institutes, corporate offices, clubs, social awareness - campaigns, workshops and seminars to talk about legalities and illegalities of cyber conduct among adults inclusive of both the genders. Reporting of cyber victimization must be encouraged at all levels directly to police and also to NGOs working for the cause.
- c) Seminars and workshops must be arranged for police personnel for better understanding of such sorts of victimization and prompt responses towards the complainants. Legal and academic experts, NGOs working for this cause etc must be brought in for such seminars and workshops.

Preventive tips

- i. As soon as individuals suspect they are victims of online harassment or cyber stalking, they should start collecting all evidence and document all contact made by the stalker. Save all e-mail, postings, or other communications in both electronic and hard-copy form. If possible, save all of the header information from e-mails and newsgroup postings. Record the dates and times of any contact with the stalker
- ii. Under no circumstances should victims agree to meet with the perpetrator face to face to "work it out," or "talk." No contact should ever be made with the stalker. Meeting a stalker in person can be very dangerous (The National Center for Victims of Crime, 2003).
- iii. Victims should block unwanted messages and communications as many internet service providers offer tools to do the same.

Solution

No matter the Govt. of India is witnessing a huge police strength, but our politicians are using them for their security purposes, thereby the main purpose of police force i.e, Safety of people, remains a dream. According to Times of India, there is one officer for every 200 citizens and about 20 officers for every VIP. Thus the need of the hour is to make the public security the prime motive of police personal.

In India especially in J&K, there is dearth of women police force. The state of Jammu and Kashmir has only two women police stations with 81 women police officers among a total no. of 2185 women personal .It has been found that women folk hesitate to register the cases in male dominated police stations there by leaving open room for the occurrences of such crimes. So to have a control over above mentioned nuisances, more and more women police force should be recruited.

In 1996, a Survey of judges in India indicated that 68% of respondents said that provocative clothing is a initiation to rape. In response to Delhi gang rape, legislator in Rajasthan suggested banning skirts as uniform for girls in private schools citing it as the reason for increased cases of sexual harassment.

Criminal goes unpunished as we have a number of cases lying pending in various courts across the country. In J&K alone 2360 cases are pending. This is because of shortage of judges. The country has about 15 judges for every 1 million people while china has 159. So to have control over various crimes, there is need for creation of more courts so that we could have timely punishment of criminals.

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