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Violence against working women: A Conceptual framework

Abstract

This paper presents that women face several kinds of discrimination, exploitations, violence at work place and these factors adversely affected their working capacity. There are several policies and programs have been implemented by the government for the protection of working women at the workplace. The main aim of this paper is to find the reason and effect of violence against working women and try to give some suggestions in reducing these exploitations.

Key words:- Working women, Violence, Security, legislation & policy, Patriarchy.

Introduction-

In the present scenario we get that there are various types of violence occur with women in general particularly with working women. The life of women is full of struggle in each and every step although in Indian literature, they are considered as goddess however in real world their situation is well known. They have no independent decision making power even they are not able to make their life safe and secure in this complicated world. Generally in Opponent milieu protection and security is always linked to the traditional value placed upon their virginity and chastity. In the present scenario women are entering in every field in this globalised era but on the other hand she is not safe and secure from the violence.

There are various Studies which show that increasing participation of women in work and politics (especially at the grass roots level) is making them more vulnerable to crime. [Rajan 1981; Misra and Arora 1982; Deshpande 1984; Ganguli 1990 and Singh 1990]. The status of women has undergone considerable change as they are going to aware about their social and legal rights such as right in property, equality in public and private places, right to work, but still majority of women are not aware of their rights. In the present arena women have lots of challenges at workplace as sexual harassment, glass ceiling, and burn out. Different laws

made by government for welfare of women are working but not too much profitable for women. According to United Nation's definition of Violence Against Women, "Any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life." Workplace violence is an important and often misunderstood subject. Broadly defined, it concerns any act of violence in which a company employee is involved. Planning efforts must focus on preventing, reporting, surviving and responding to these incidents. The objective of present research paper is to study the impact of government policies and programmes in reducing women's violence at work place. The present study aims to employ a combination of descriptive and analytical approach and based on secondary type of source.

Review of literature:-

Kala Rani in her study (1976) cited three reasons that motivated women to seek jobs outside their traditional roles: economic or monetary gain, social role enhancement and personal reasons. Now India become connected to a fast globalised world therefore the job chances are increasing. Despite the primacy of the mother-housewife role, women are entering the labour market in ever increasing number.

Das1985;Bhatnagar 1987 have examined male attitude towards women and found that male employees generally felt that working women were breaking the norm and hogging jobs thus creating less jobs opportunities for other worthy males. Managerial women, however, showed a more positive

attitude towards fellow working women . Desai (1994) focused that women's studies continued its research driven by an ideology of highlighting the norms of patriarchy and the structural constraints of increasing poverty, oppressive family life, growing fundamentalism and politicisation of religion underlying women 'status in the country.

In the view of (Franzway, Chung & Zufferey 2009; Hunt et al. 2007; Lindquist et al. 2010) women employee those who have exploited by the male counter parts either sexually or mentally have low level of awareness among employers. Intimate partner violence and workplace sexual harassment have common effects on women workers who have been victimised (Bell 2003; Browne, Salomon & Bassuck 1999; Collinsworth et al. 2009; Franzway, Chung & Zufferey 2009; Moe & Bell 2004; Nielsen et al. 2010; Reeves & O'Leary-Kelly 2007; Swanberg & Logan 2005; Tolman & Wang 2005; Willness, Steel & Lee 2007).

According to Chung , Zufferey, Powell(2012) that the primary prevention of violence against women through workplaces necessitates the promotion of equal and respectful relationships between men and women, as well as the development of gender equity across organisations. The focus of this kind of cultural change activity should be 'upstream', increasing women's participation and leadership in the workplace. Further they explain that a range of the prevention interventions focused in the workplace is documented; however, there is limited evaluation of their precise outcomes. There is an imperative to develop further interventions in partnership with workplaces and to evaluate all aspects of implementation and impact.

Various Forms of Violence Against Working Women:-

There are different type of violence occur against women in society for instance- rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, dowry murder, early marriage, feticide, female genital cutting, honour killing etc.

As well some other forms of violence also occur at workplace for instance-Abuse in the workplace can include physical or mental mistreatment and any improper use of power meant to frighten, threaten, intimidate, and gain control over you. Violence is any behaviour or treatment that causes you harms or threatens to because you harm. Violence can be emotional, financial, spiritual, psychological, sexual or physical. Bullying in the workplace is a form of harassment and violence in the workplace. Bullying is any behaviour that is intended to cause, or should be known to cause, fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other forms of harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation or property. Bullying can be direct or indirect, and can take place by written, verbal, physical or electronic means, or any other form of expression. Harassment in the workplace is any unwelcome action or comment by any person that humiliates, insults, or degrades you. It can come from your employer, a representative of your employer, a co-worker, or a visitor to your employer's home. "Unwelcome" or "unwanted" action is any action that the harasser knows or ought reasonably to know is not wanted. Sexual violence in the workplace is any unwanted sexual activity or sexual contact. It ranges from unwanted touching to forcing someone to have sex. Sexual abuse also includes harassment directed at women because they are women and/or because of their sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. The act does not have to result in any physical injury. If someone makes you do something sexual by using force, threats, intimidation, or coercion, it is sexual assault. Gender-based discrimination refers to those behaviours and practices that result in avoidable and unfair inequalities in society on the basis of gender. These inequalities can include differential or unequal access to power, resources or opportunities that in turn results in inequalities in health, social and economic status.

Causes and Consequences of Violence against Women:

Definitely, in the society, gender inequality is visible in many areas, including workplace, politics, religion, media, cultural norms etc. Such types of fundamental inequality creates a rationale for humiliation, intimidation, control, abuse, and even murder to women. There is a vital part of understanding a social problem that violence at workplace particularly and violence in genera places have been become a horrific and thinkable problem. Although realize the full scope of violence against women yet it is necessary to consider some of its component parts. Definitely these forms of violence are all quite different, as are the circumstances that give rise to them. Every forms of violence against women are horrific-as well as criminal-and must be condemned.

Adverse Impact of Violence against working women at work place:-

1. Job loss or having to leave employment and lack of concentration at work.
2. Being employed at a lower level than their capability specially working reduced hours.
3. Increased absenteeism and tardiness and work distraction, work withdrawal or poor performance.
4. Mental health deterioration, particularly post-traumatic stress disorder as well as depression, anxiety and lowered self-confidence.
5. Cannot be able to dealing well with conflict in the workplace.

Legal provision and safeguards to women against violence-

Following sections comes under violence against women identified by Indian Penal code

1. rape (Sec 376 IPC)
2. kidnapping and abduction for different purposes to women and girls (Sec 363-373 IPC)
3. homicide for dowry, dowry deaths or attempts to commit such crimes (Sec 302/304B IPC)
4. torture, both mental and physical (Sec 498-A IPC)
5. molestation (Sec 354 IPC)
6. sexual harassment (Sec 509 IPC)
7. importation of girls (up to 21 years of age, Sec 366-B IPC).
8. Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987;
9. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956;
10. Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
11. Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.
12. Domestic violence act 2005

India has seen very little new legislation to address the changing relations of work and workforce in the country. Notable legislations were passed around the times that have had a special bearing on working women's ability to handle work and family responsibility. These includes the Maternity Benefits act of 1961; the Factories Act of 1948 and the Right to protection from Sexual Harassment at workplace that had existed even before independence (passed in 1869) and revised again in 1997 (Ujvala, Smita, p.120). Now the protection of women against sexual harassment at workplace bill has just got passed in 26 Feb. 2013 by both houses of the parliament ensures a safe environment for women at workplaces, both in public and private sectors whether organised or unorganised. The bill is known in the name of "The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Bill, 2012".

Suggestions and conclusion –

It can be concluded that the all the constitutional and legal provisions should be effectively implemented by the government and concerned institutions. Even women should also be aware about their rights. Several awareness programmes and helpful policies should be run by the government, media (television, newspaper etc.). If women are more economically, politically and socially empowered there will be possibilities in reducing exploitation and violence against them. Gender discrimination in the form of education, health, food should always be reduced. Women generally do not believe to register cases against crime and violence because of social status. This is the reason that most of the cases are not registered. Women should not be fear about violence and move up to take help of police, media, NGOs and etc. For stance The Springboard Women's Development Programme enables women to identify the clear, practical and realistic steps that they want to take to make a better world for themselves at work and home, whilst building the practical skills and confidence to take these steps.

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Gunjan Mishra
Asst. Professor
Department of Sociology
Govt. Arts College
Amirgadh, Gujarat

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