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Partition : Different Aspects of Violence

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Abstract:

The oxford dictionary defines violence in its mild form as an outrage, injury or an act contrary to one's feelings or principles, and in its strong sense as unlawful exercise of physical force. Many definitions of violence are general and not gender specific and they can be applied in the common context of men as well as women. Violence against women has different forms and purposes. Under patriarchy, a woman's whole existence is seen in relation to man. Man inflicts violence on woman to strike terror in her so that she remains subdued as an object, as a piece of property. Man wants complete control over a woman's body and mind, which means crippling her, choking her, thwarting her –

Keywords: women , violence, nation, communal, partition.

Introduction -

The term violence has been defined variously. The oxford dictionary defines violence in its mild form as an outrage, injury or an act contrary to one's feelings or principles, and in its strong sense as unlawful exercise of physical force. Straus (1980) has described a violent act as an act where there is the high potential of causing injury" Geller (1979) defines violence as" an act of striking a person with the intent of causing harm or injury but not actually causing it.

Different Images of Violence -

There are some thinkers who relate violence to Aristotle's concept of 'catharsis' as a release or transformation of emotional pressure or impulse via activity and expression. Catharsis lies in emotions and it becomes essential to release these pent up

emotions either through expression or action to feel normal. Some of the repressed emotions are released in such violent actions that they become dangerous.

Gender Specific Violence -

These definitions of violence are general and not gender specific and they can be applied in the common context of men as well as women. On the contrary violence against women has different forms & purposes. Under patriarchy, a woman's whole existence is seen in relation to man. Man inflicts violence on woman to strike terror in her so that she remains subdued as an object, as an object, as piece of property objectifying a living being is the most pervasive kind of violence done to a woman since it amounts to negating her emotions, desires and thinking. Man wants complete control over a woman's body and mind, which means crippling her, choking her, thwarting her, For a man woman's mind has no value, to him only woman's body is important, that too as it is useful to him. Violence is also useful in keeping man healthily, in that he can release his own tension by pouring out these on woman in violent actions.

Woman Violence -

Woman violence rages from the wish to cause physical pain – for instance, by beating her – to humiliating her putting her in chains, or forcing her to complete obedience in other ways, The force, whether overt or covert, is used to wrest from a woman something that she does not want to give of her own free will and it can take the form of either physical injury or emotional trauma or both inflicted together. Physical violence is a common and most obvious form of violence against woman. The history of human culture is replete with examples of systematic oppression of woman. The practice of female feticide after sex determination test is common in some parts and is having serious consequences for the social health and balance. Oppression of woman through female infanticide was in vogue in the past when in some parts of India the infant girls were killed mercilessly at their birth. Infant daughters were killed either by stepping on the throat of by giving a dose of lethal poison, with a little sugar, causing infant death.

Sociological Violence -

A frequent form of physical violence is wife beating which is not peculiar to any society but is common to patriarchy all over. A husband who is supposed to be a protector and lover of his wife after beats her. It becomes a shattering experience for a woman when she is battered by a man whom she trusts the most. World Health Organisation study shows that one out of every three women experience domestic violence at some point in her life.

Through pornography, prostitution, sexual harassment, rape, woman battering, suttee and witch burning man has controlled woman's sexuality for male pleasure. Man evokes fear in the mind of woman by his superior muscular power and by extreme emotional indifference and callousness that make woman so vulnerable.

Inter community violence; In patriarchy women suffer violence even in peace time but during times of communal riots their suffering is much worse as ghastly crimes are committed against their body and mind. In times of religious hatred women are over and over again singled out specially for humiliating treatment by men of rival community. Women become targets of molestation, abduction, rape, mutilation, forced conversion, marriage and death. The violence inflicted upon them during the partition displayed communal animosity at its peak. Earlier the rioters defiled mosque or temples to express their hatred for the other community and religion. During the partition riots their attention shifted towards women partly to punish their men folk and partly because they are a vulnerable section of society.

Religious & Social Cause -

Physical & Social act of violence are not individual act of aberrations. They are sanctioned socially to keep woman under control and the violence is inflicted not only for the benefit of individual men but also for the larger structure of patriarchy. Woman is also subjected to socio-psychological violence. In a patriarchal culture, what we get is a masculinity definition of ideals and images of woman. The concept of virginity or chastity or 'Izzat' is so deep rooted in our society that it creates problem in the life of woman. Even since the time of Manu woman's chastity mattered much, even after the death of the husband. The social codes are enforced on woman in the name of morality without trying to understand that morality should be concerned with good and evil of

both men & women. Both husband and wife ought to be faithful to one another. Religion and social code make the concept of virginity mandatory for women.

Conclusion -

Due to the concept of 'Izzat' women suffered inter-community as well as intra-community violence during the partition riots. The partition period brought with it violence, humiliation & permanent scars in the lives of women. Men of both the community – the Hindus and the Muslims – were worried about their women not because they loved them but because they feared violence of their chastity which would mean shame and humiliation to the whole community.

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