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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: REVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE

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Abstract:-

Violence against women is widespread, and may affect women of any age, class, race, religion, sexuality, or ability. Factors which may increase women's vulnerability to some types of violence include age, disability, and poverty. Across all forms of violence and abuse, women are most at risk from men they know. The present research paper outlines the research done by the researcher on Domestic Violence against Women.

Keywords:- Women, Domestic Violence, Review of existing literature, abusive Relationship.

Introduction:-

Domestic violence is one of the crimes against women which is linked to their disadvantageous position in the society. Domestic violence refers to violence against women especially in matrimonial homes. Therefore domestic violence is recognized as the significant barriers of the empowerment of women, with consequences of women's health, their health-seeking behavior and their adoption of small family norm. Domestic violence that is any act of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse, or the threat of such abuse, inflicted against a woman by a person intimately connected to her through marriage, family relation, or acquaintanceship is universal and has its root in the socio-cultural set up of the society. Violence in the home is a subject of increasingly public concern. According to Davis in the Encyclopedia of Social Work, "The most affected victims, physically and psychologically, are women, including single and married women and women separated or divorced from their partners" (Davis, 1995, p.789).

Definitions domestic violence:-

Definitions of domestic violence are socially constructed, have developed over time, and reflect prevailing understandings, interests and power distributions (Muehlenhard & Kimes 1999). Feminist understandings shaped by the lived experiences of abused women and by supporting research evidence, have helped to expand conceptualizations of domestic violence as physically injurious assault by highlighting the interrelated range of abusive, coercive, controlling behaviors causing psychological, sexual or physical harm, which often accompany or precede the use or threat of physical force. However, researchers have given considerably less attention to sexual, psychological and other forms of abuse (Bergen 1999, O'Leary 1999, Dekeseredy 2000, Saunders 2002). Some issues of terminology remain actively contested, such as whether domestic violence should be a gender-specific or neutral referent and/or encompass all forms and incidence of abuse in all types of intimate relationships (Muehlenhard & Kimes 1999, Mullender 1996).

Methodology :-

The present research paper is based on secondary data. Which is collected from the books, Journals, news paper, websites, Internet, etc.

Objective:-

- 1) To study the Review of existing literature on Domestic Violence Against Women.
- 2) To trace the reasons for which abused women continue to stay in abusive Relationship.

Review of existing literature on Domestic Violence Against Women:-

In 1970 that scientist in the west started undertaking studies to find out the nature and extent of violence against women within the family. They also conducted research to identify the precipitating factors, which led to domestic violence against women. Based on the findings of these studies, the social scientists could work out the coping mechanism adopted by the victims of domestic violence and the different treatment programmes for the abuser and the abused. In India, however, very few research studies have been conducted in this area and a large majority of these studies are related to the dowry related violence. It was only from 1980's that isolated attempts were made to identify the nature of domestic violence against women. The studies conducted in India and other countries are grouped together for proper understanding. "Wife beating is the most common form of domestic violence around the world" observed David Levinson (1989) after going through the records of human relations records at Yale University. He studied a sample of 90 societies for his research and found that in 74.5 per cent of the societies wife beating occurred occasionally and it very rarely occurred in 15.5 per cent of the societies covered by the study.

The social scientists in United States conducted a number of studies to find out the incidence of domestic violence against women. The results of these studies vary significantly and the incidence of violence ranges from 12 per cent to 60 per cent. Straus (1978 & 1980), Gelles and Steinmentz (1980), Walker (1979), Nisonoff & Bitman (1979), Szinovacz (1983) are the major contributories in this area. In 1980 a representative United States Survey was specifically conducted to measure the incidence of domestic violence with a sample of 3300 families. This survey disclosed that there occurred around 309 million instances of domestic violence annually.

Two other surveys also reported alarming results. The data collected during Second National Family Violence Survey conducted, also in United States, revealed that in 16 per cent of the families some kind of the violence occurred during the year prior to the survey in 1986. Ferguson (1986) studied about 1000 families in New Zealand. He reported that the wife-assault rate ranged between 8.5 per cent and 35 per cent over a period of six years of family life. Zoomer (1983) conducted another study in Netherlands, which indicated that domestic violence against women had become a common feature. This study is, however, silent about the frequency and extent of such violence.

A number of studies highlight that domestic violence against women is more common in the lower classes. This may be due to the poor economic conditions of the families. It has been observed that physical violence against women is normal and socially transmitted behaviour pattern in the lower class families (Davis 1963, Whitehurst 1974).

Dowry related violence against women in the Indian Society is a phenomenon of middle class families. However, women in upper class families are also facing dowry-related violence (Morgolin 1988, Cornell 1990). Violence against women is found to be associated with employment status of the husbands. In families where the husbands are unemployed the wives are abused not only by their husbands but also by their mother-in-laws and father-in laws. Husbands who are working in unskilled occupations are more likely to be abusive than those working in skilled occupations. Domestic Violence against women is also associated with their employment status. Women who stay at home and do not work outside the home as paid worker are at greater risk of being abused. When women have few personal resources severity of violence against them also increases. However, in some studies the situation is differently reported that housewives had a lower risk of violence than employed women. (Fitch and Popantonio 1983, Gaguin 1978, Hornung 1981, Stark 1988, Levinson 1989). A large number of studies indicated that dependency was considered to be positively related with domestic violence against women. Those women who do not have independent source of income run greater risk of being abused as compared to those who are not dependent on their husbands. Lack of any alternative support forces them to continue in the abusive relationship (Levinson 1989, Hodson 1984, Roy 1977, Mahahan 1989, Walker 1978).

A World Health Organization review of 48 international population-based surveys found lifetime domestic violence prevalence rates for women ranging from 10% to 69% (WHO 2002). Comparison of international prevalence findings indicates that at a conservative estimate, 20-25% of all women have experienced physical assault from a partner or ex-partner in their lifetimes, although the top end of this estimate rises to almost 30% when forced sex is included. At least 10% of all women are estimated to have experienced

severe forms of repeated physical abuse, and most of this group are thought to have experienced sexual abuse as well (Romkens 1997).

Reasons to Stay in abusive Relationship:-

Women who have limited support from friends, family, or their communities may find it more difficult to leave abusive relationships (Sullivan et.al, 1994). Women who have received help and support from family and friends report it as being very important in allowing them to leave their abusers (Bowker, 1983). Support can come in both tangible and intangible forms. Close friends and family can provide emotional support in stressful times, which can help reduce the risk of falling ill due to great amounts of stress (Sullivan, et al., 1994). These friends and family members can also provide safe places for women and children to stay, store belongings, and be available to assist abused women in rebuilding their lives after leaving an abuser (Bowker, 1983). Women who do not have that support face even greater obstacles than those who do. Social isolation has been shown to be associated with domestic violence. Severely abused women tend to be extremely socially isolated, and have no one in their limited social network who can provide the types of support listed above.,(Levendosky, Bogat, Theran, Trotter, von Eye, & Davidson, 2004).

Abusive partners may also use a woman's children to coerce her into staying in the relationship. The abusive partner may threaten to harm the children, take them away, or physically hurt the children in front of their mother in order to maintain control of the her (Salber & Taliaferro, 1995).

Economic reasons were the most often reported for why women stay in abusive relationships. If a woman is cut off socially and not allowed to work, her partner may be her only means of financial support (Matthews, 2004; Salber & Taliaferro, 1995). Rural women were mentioned above as facing unique challenges in accessing resources and leaving their abusers. In terms of economic reasons for staying in abusive relationships, rural farm families are often one-income families, most or all of their income coming from the farm. A woman whose family finances are tied up in land and equipment may face the choice of staying in an abusive relationship or leaving with no means of income - or leaving her partner with no means of income, since she may be a key part of the farming business. She may also have strong emotional ties to the farm animals, land and fear that the animals may be neglected or harmed in some way if she leaves them (McCue, 2008; Salber & Taliaferro, 1995)

A research study report on A study of Nature Extend incidence an impact of Domestic violence against women in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujrat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra submitted to planning commission of India by yuganter education society ,Nagpur. The present study was conducted in urban and rural areas of the five adjoining states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujrat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. A random sample of 1250 families was drawn from the universe, selecting 250 families (125 from urban and 125 from rural areas) from each state. The sample drawn from urban and rural areas represented the families from upper class, middle class and lower class, middle class and lower class. While drawing sample from each state, the geographical area of the state was divided into five zones i.e. East, West, North, south and Central. The selection of districts and places was also done on random sampling basis. A sample of 50 families (25 from urban and 25 from rural areas) was also drawn on purposive random sampling basis to give proper representation to families belonging to different socio-economic groups and religions. The research team wanted to know the compulsions under which the victims continued to live with violent families. The data analysis revealed that a majority of about 43 per cent of the victims were compelled to continue living with violent families, as they had no other place to go. About 26 per cent did so for the sake of their children and about 16 per cent were under pressure from parents. Nearly 7 per cent of the victims of domestic violence continued to live in abusive conditions for just protecting the reputation of their parental family. The situation will change for better in future was the hope of about 10 per cent of the victims. The data of the present study support the contention of researchers like Gelles (1976), Martin (1979), Roy (1977), Strube and Barbour (1983) and Strube (1998) that a number of conditions influence the decision of victims of domestic violence to tolerate the violence and they are forced to continue living with abusive families.

Conclusion:-

This literature review of research on domestic violence against women focuses on the cycle of violence within abusive relationships, why women so frequently stay in abusive relationships and what is the most helpful in allowing them to leave. Domestic Violence against women becoming more frequent and is alarmingly on the increase. A heavy responsibility falls on the shoulders of our social workers. But the biggest responsibility will be that of the women themselves. They must organize themselves. They have borne the tyranny of man far too long. The time has come for a crusade.

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