

Theoretical Postulates of Ram Ahuja on Crime against Women and its Implications on Reported cases of Scheduled Tribe Women in Kerala

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Abstract :According to the United Nations, violence against women consist of “any act of gender based violence that result in or likely to result in, or likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering of women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. The theoretical propositions on violence typically encountered, whether violence is normal response of provocation, or whether it involves the acting out of some psychopathology, or whether it acts as an instrument to obtaining some end or reward, or whether it is a response consistent with norms supporting its use, are explained. The global campaign for elimination of violence against women, in the recent years indicates the enormity as well as the seriousness of the atrocities committed against women that are being witnessed the world over. In this paper researcher tries to explain the theoretical propositions put forward by Ram Ahuja, as Causes of violence and Factors of violence with the help of sample selected from reported cases of crime against Scheduled Tribe women in Kerala.

Key words: *crime occurring in community, causes of violence against women, factors of violence against women*

Introduction

Dealing with cruelty against woman, V. Ramkumar J. of Kerala High Court observes as follows “Cruelty against woman, whether she be a grandmother, mother, wife, sister or daughter,

is not a new specifies of crime. Reports indicate that every 20 minutes at least one woman is subjected to domestic violence in India. The modesty of woman continues to be outraged by man who considers himself to be an unquestionable dictator in this field of male chauvinism. Present study is an attempt to explore the theoretical postulates of Ram Ahuja on Explaining crime against women. The phenomenon of violence against women is arises from patriarchal notions of ownership over women's bodies, sexuality, labour, reproductive rights, mobility and level of autonomy. Deep rooted ideas of male superiority enable men to freely exercise unlimited power over women's lives and effectively legitimize it too. Violence thus is a tool that men use constantly to control women as result of highly internalized patriarchal conditioning coupled with legitimacy for coercion to enforce compliance and increasing aspirations, frustration and 'might is right' becoming a legitimate view and increasing need for assertion of individual egos and control. Within this context, several developments serve as a backdrop to the discussion and analysis of increased violence against women. In the wake of liberalization new modes of living are being introduced. Consumerism, unreal aspirations incited by the barrage of the advertising industry and get rich quick schemes have been increasingly influencing the thinking and behaviour .so much so that the remote hilly areas are being affect ted by the market forces and are increasingly adopting the system of dowry, which was virtually nonexistent earlier. An increasingly growing gap is being witnessed between the aspirations and their fulfillment. As per women speak this is reflected in an increased violence in human interactions and increasingly cases are being reported of small differences leading to inexplicably violent reaction. In such a stimulation women have become more vulnerable. (*ManishaJoshi, "A Cry for Justice" in Social Welfare, 2002*)

Statement of the problem

Theories on crime against women are an important area in studying the status of women survivors. Researchers can explain the root causes of violence with the help of Theories and here researcher tries to analyse the importance of the theoretical postulates of Ram Ahuja and tries to explain the causes of violence against Schedule Tribe women in Wynadu district. Researcher tries to narrate the causes of violence as well as the factors of violence with the help of the findings of Ram Ahuja in 1996. It is accepted that while studying violence against women there should be an integrated approach by combining all types of violence together and develop one

theory on ‘intra-family violence as well as ‘violence exogenous to family’ violence against a person is necessarily ‘violence by somebody’ and violence against somebody. As such, violence against women has to be understood as ‘violence by an individual against an individual, in contrast to ‘violence by a group against an individual’ or ‘violence by a group against a group’. In violence by an individual, its origin or form must be determined in the individual himself and the situation around him. In this approach, not only individual’s innate behaviour but also his acquired behaviour has to be taken into account. The ‘Social Bond Approach’ takes into consideration both types of behaviour as well as the social structural conditions.

Review of Literature

Fatima, A hand book on Women and Human Rights- A Guide for Social Sciences- Part II p-623, it is a common mistake to view Rape as a sex crime. This myth is reinforced by certain stereotypes about male sexuality such as men’s alleged inability to control themselves if they are aroused. These are however, false image. Rape is very often an act of violence that use sex as a weapon. Recent research in the field have established that rape is motivated by aggression and by the desire to exert power and humiliate. Very often the intention of the offender is more aggressive than sexual. An average rapist is not one to whom normal sexual outlets are unavailable. While committing the crime he is not, as believed, succumbing to uncontrollable lust, but is providing his own masculinity by degrading the victim. “the rapist derives an eroticized pleasure not through sex act but through an horrendous assault on victim’s body.” Researchers have shown also that mainly rapist come from families in which violence is frequent between parents and between parents and children.

*Study conducted by the Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi for the Police Chief of Kerala, Trivandrum, 2013, p.73*In the simplest form one can say that the crimes against women are mostly due to men’s attitude towards women. Only if this is changed can it be said that women are safe in our society. There are social, political and economic reasons and in our study area most of the crimes are for social reasons. So also one can say that the study areas show mostly direct causes. Indirect causes like anger, jealousy, revenge etc are not seen in Kerala. The reason may be that most of the cases dealt here are not planned crimes and also they are from the lower economic stratum. Here the causes are mainly enjoyment on the part of men and

the poverty conditions. Though there is relationship between crime and factors like income, family background, alcohol, drugs etc it is found out those extreme cases of crimes are committed by alcoholics and drug addicts. Many cases of domestic violence are also the result of alcohol and drugs.

Sampling

For the present study researcher have selected 100 reported cases of Scheduled Tribe women from Wynadu District (largest ST populated district), Kerala and researcher identified different types of crime occurring within community.

Result and Discussion

According to S.L Goel, crime against women can be categorized into two as *crime occurring in the community*, and *crime occurring in the family*; by the concept crime occurring in the community he mean, different kind of crime and its impact make some effect on the social setting; crime occurring because of the changes in the society; crime can be occurred in public as well as private places.

Crime enlisted as **Physical, sexual, and psychological violence occurring in the community** by researcher for the purpose of the present study: *Rape, Molestation, Kidnap / Abduction and Eve-teasing*

Table No:1 Causes of Violence

Type Of Crime	Causes				Total
	Substance Abuse	Previous Enmity With Family Member	Hostility towards women	Others	
Rape	5	0	6	3	14
Kidnap	0	0	0	7	7
Molestation	30	13	10	14	67
Eve-Teasing	2	1	8	1	12
Total	37	14	24	25	100

From the given data it is clear that substance abuse is the main cause of violence against women; hostility toward women and others occupies equal importance in this regard. Substance abuse such as intake of alcohol as well as drugs; gives takes the man from ordinary situation to the world of fantasy and would not know what he is doing or what is going to happen. In this madcap man fail to remember the women e sees; is it mother, wife, daughter, sister, neighboring woman or other, e gets the capacity to harass her. Majority of the accused will acquit from punishment as the incident took place in an intoxicated mood. He will get punishment only for substance intake and a minor fine will be charged. Actual incident will be something else; women will not get justice on behalf of such complaint. More over here social marginalization of ST groups plays an important role in violence against Scheduled Tribe women

Majority of the *Rape* cases and *Eve-teasing* cases were caused by hostile nature of man towards women i.e. men are more aggressive towards women as a result of their personality traits such as extremely suspicious, passionate, dominant, irrational, immoral, easily emotionally upset, jealous, possessive and unjust. The perpetrator with imbalanced traits will consciously attack the women without considering the place where they being.

One among the victim explained her episode of molestation as, she was going to her work place in the morning along the crowded foot path and the man who came from the opposite direction had an awkward look and she slip out of the way as she suspected an attack from him. He grabbed on her on her left thigh; without more ado she attacked him back with her umbrella. He was encircled by the people on the road and given to the police. It was an unexpected attack on a public place without a provocation from the side of the victim and it shows the hostile nature of man towards women to humiliate her in a public place. It is to be noted that he has not taken alcohol or drug at that time. He was charged under section **354 - molestation and 509- eve-teasing**.

Causes of *Molestation* incidents taken place inside one's own home and in the premises of one's own home come under the category of previous enmity with family member another set of such happenings are associated with property issues, issues related to fencing, sand mining, drainage system along road side, fetch water from public wells and public taps and political affiliation of victim etc.

Cheating, false promise, trap etc comes under the category of *Others*; all the kidnap cases are caused by these cases. Lovers are the accused against kidnap cases and complaints were filed

by parents and very limited number of victims have incorporated in the filing stage remaining cases were registered as man-missing. Lovers will offer false promise to have sexual relation with the girl and plan for elopement; most of the cases have occurred in this manner.

(Ram Ahuja, 2009) *Four causes may be indentified in violence against women: victim's provocation, intoxication, hostility towards women and situational urge. **Intoxication** - Some cases of violence occur when the aggressors are intoxicated and in a widely excited and brilliant state of mind. In a few rape cases, the offenders assaulted the victims when they had taken so much alcohol that they were in a state of inebriation and emotional excitement. Their normal restraints had disappeared and their aggressive fantasies were intimately intermingled with sexual lust which then took the shape of irresponsible actions. **Hostility towards women** -Some of the reported cases of violence against women are of nature that no amount of rationalization could convert the aggressors into doing anything other than hostile acts of a cruel kind. A few of them had deeply entrenched feelings of hate and hostility for women that their violent act could be said to be primarily directed towards the humiliation of the victim. **Situational urge** - In this category, those cases may be included were the crime is committed neither because of the victims behaviour nor because of the offender's psychopathological personality but rather because of the chance factors which create such situations which lead to violence. In some cases, the 'offenders' had not planned the violent acts but when they found the situation conducive or provocative, they used violence. Apart from these violent acts, these offenders had not been living a life of deviant behaviour. **Personality traits**- Some identifying traits of the violence – prone personalities are: extremely suspicious, passionate, dominant, irrational, immoral, easily emotionally upset, jealous, possessive and unjust. Traits developed in the early life affect the aggressive behaviour of a person in adulthood; the aggressor having being abused as a child, and /or his exposure to violence during childhood therefore must be examined to delve into his violent behaviour.*

Factors of violence against women

(Ram Ahuja, Sociological Criminology, 1996:193-195) Causes of violence against women are found to be related mainly to five factors; **(1) structure of the situation in which violence is committed, (2) situational facilities which enable the use of violence, (3) precipitating factors, (4) strains experienced by the perpetrator of violence, i.e, his individual**

problems and (5) victims behaviour with the user of violence much before violence is used against her. A holistic approach to the combination of these factors alone will give us the correct causes of use of violence against women.

Specifically, three factors seem to play a major role in prompting a man to use violence against a woman: (1) **perpetrator’s history of abuse as a child** (unhappy up-bringing, physical beating by parents, and emotional rejection); (2) **stressful situation in the family**; (3) **status frustrations**. The first factor points out that the perpetrator’s violent behaviour is mostly learnt from childhood and adolescence experiences of emotional stresses. This posits the “Generational Theory” that growing up in a violent home increases the likelihood of an individual becoming violent as an adult.

The fact that a very large number of offenders (78%) in the study conducted by **Ram Ahuja** on “**Crimes Against Women**”, were the victims of violence in childhood. The data also support the ‘**Social Learning Theory**’ according to which including in violence (deviant) behaviour as a method of conflict resolution or as a coping mechanism is learnt behaviour. Women’s tolerance of violence explained in terms of “**Learned Helplessness Theory**” and “**Traditional Socialization Theory**” the latter theory refers to women’s imbibing traditional values and “sex role ideology” through socialization process that man is superior to women and that some events occur in a woman’s life with sufficient regularity because of which she acquires the feeling of depression, helplessness and poor self-image and comes to believe that she cannot escape abuse.

Table No. 2 Factors of violence

Factors of Violence	Cooperating Factors	Percentage
Structure of Situation	Perpetrator (known)	67.96%
Situational Facilities	Place of Occurrence (familiar place)	70.09%
Precipitating Factors	Substance abuse	74.17%
Individual Problems	Incorporation of perpetrator in similar cases	49.09%
Victims' Behaviour	Timid/Helpless/Weak	74.56%

Given table is about the **factors of violence against women** are compared with cooperating factors and the result shows that, here I factor **structure of situation** is compared with perpetrator and it is found that 67.96% perpetrators are known to the respondents. It can be attributed that, the perpetrators of Rape, Molestation, Kidnap, eve-teasing are known to the survivors and the acquaintance with the survivors has been manipulated by the perpetrators. II factor **Situational Facilities** is compared with Place of occurrence; from the primary data it is found that, 70.09% of place occurrence is familiar to the complainants. In Rape case, their familiarity in between and a known place may be purposefully planned by the perpetrators. There are cases of own home, neighboring home, common place in hamlet, etc were the places of occurrence and this familiarity wont led to a misunderstanding to the victims. Situational facilities according to Ram Ahuja play an important role in crime against women, especially tribal women. III factor, **Precipitating Factors** is compared with substance abuse, and it is found that, in Police record as well as in the statement of victims the perpetrators have taken substances i.e. 74.17%. In one case the victim also was drunk forcefully. IV factor **Individual Problems** is compared with **Incorporation of perpetrator in similar cases** i.e. 49.09% of perpetrators were condemned for same or similar cases. Two of the perpetrators were arrested and they are waiting for the trial in rape case. V factor, **Victim’s Behaviour** is compared with **Timid/Helpless/Weak** and present study shows 74.56% of victims were helpless or weak or nervous. It also helped the perpetrator to commit the crime.

Table No. 3. Subjective Perception and its indicators

Subjective Perception of Victim		Indicators	Valid Percentage
social background	Age	between 11-40	85.63%
	Education	Up to high school level education	75.82%
	Occupation	Unemployed / daily wage	83.59%
level of support (parents, peers)		helped to complaint	40.29%
expectation of others (parents, children, kin, working colleague)		No changes in the attitude of people around the survivors	38.88%
economic base (low & middle)		belong to low and middle class	93.09%
self image	timid/helpless/weak	Leave out previous residence	32.56%
	strong/ bold	Continuing previous employment / education	41.65%

Holistic approach proposed by **Ram Ahuja** have theoretical postulation; it explains the link between a women's (victim's) personality traits and social environment in which she lives and functions. Theory assumes **rape, Kidnap, Molestation, Eve-teasing** are the result of interaction between a woman's personality (including imbibed feelings of helplessness, timidity etc) and her environment. Each victim has their own social environment of different persons with varied perceptions and expectations. Women's victimization depends upon her subjective perception of her status and role and her will, ability, and efforts to challenge it (exploitation) with courage. In the present study the subjective perception of victim and its indicators can be articulated as follows:

I aspect of subjective perception is **Social background**, for the present study, age, education and job were selected as the indicators. Women with an age group of 21-40 seen as majority in victims and it seems 85.63%. With regard to education, it is found that, they are 75.82% educated at high school level. Students, unemployed, daily waged comes in the category of occupation. II aspect of subjective perception is **Level of support** from parents and peers to file complaint comes in this category, it is clear from the table that, 40.29% of respondents got help from familiar persons. It also affect the time of complaint, getting legal and medical support. Timely report of incidents will also help in collecting evidences as well as the procedures in court. III indicator is **Expectation of others**, the changes in the attitude of people around the victim can be interpreted here. 38.88% of respondents felt some sort of changes in the attitude of people around them. Negative response and attitude from parents and familiar people will result in changing the mindset of victims and family members, hostility towards victims or victim's family lead to shift in residence, school, or place of work etc. IV indicator is **Economic base**, economic status of family shows that, 93.09% respondents belong to lower or middle class families. V indicator is **Self Image**, timid, helpless, weak victims have to leave out their previous residence, as they are not capable to face the transformed situations 32.56% of respondents have to leave their residence immediately after the case. Another aspect of self image is their strength and boldness; it shows 41.65% of victims are not able to continue their studies.

So the theoretical postulation of Ram Ahuja can be apply in this context of victimization of women and subjective perception of her status and role and her will, ability, and efforts to challenge it (exploitation) with courage.

Conclusion

In conclusion it is seemed that there are direct and indirect causes of violence against women in Kerala as the causes include social causes as well as other causes. Apart from substance abuse there are instances of previous enmity with victim as well as family member, traps, false promises, immoral traits of men. Substance abuse only can exempt from a conscious attack but it has its own importance as a one among the causes violence against.

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