

Crime Against Women In Manipur Society: Main Obstacle To Women Empowerment

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Abstract:

Crime against women is becoming an endemic part of our society, and is getting dangerously institutionalized. They are increasingly unsafe, whether within or outside their homes. The waves of shocking atrocities on women that have hit the headlines in recent years indicate only the tip of the iceberg. The scale of violent crimes against women, the frightening regularity with which they occur, the huge increase in sexual crimes being reported from every corner of the nation are pointers to an alarming trend. Crimes against women in Manipur are also showing a significant increase in almost all categories. Under the IPC, which includes violent crimes like rape, molestation, kidnapping and abduction, there has been a steady increase every year. These are the registered cases – many cases do not get reported at all. The overall incidence of crimes against children also went up. The disturbing regularity with which women and young girls in Manipur society are subjected to violence and abuse is alarming. Gang-rape, abduction, physical and mental abuse, torture of various kinds, threats of killing and contributed to the growing number of rape are not isolated incidents. Instead, they are a part of the larger systemic problem. The blind consumerist cultures produced by globalization has also reliably sexual attacks on women, child sexual abuse, sex rackets, incidents of sexual blackmailing and so on. With all pervading consumer values promoted through globalization policies there is an increasing trend in the media of commodification of women and there is a spread of serials and films etc. that portray women in a demeaning and degrading way. Domestic violence, including wife beating, murder, mental and physical torture is also growing enormously in recent years. An and domestic violence in particular with a special reference to Manipur Society.

Keywords: Globalization, domestic violence, NFHS, Manipur. attempt has been made in my paper to highlight some of the shocking accounts of crime and violence against women in general.

Introduction

A recent NFHS-5 rated Manipur as one of the worst places to be a married woman. The findings show that Manipur recorded one of the highest states as far as the incidence of Violence Against Women (VAW) is concerned where more than 39 percent of all married women reported being victims of spousal violence. Sikkim appears to offer the safest homes for married women.

Decision making: Manipur

Currently married women were asked who makes decisions about their own health care, major household purchases, and visits to their own family or relatives. Women are somewhat more likely to participate in decisions about their own health care (88%) than decisions about visits to their own family and relatives (90%). Eighty-four percent of women participate in decisions about major household purchases. Overall, 78 percent of currently married women participate in making all three of these decisions, and 5 percent do not participate in making any of the three decisions. Participation in all three decisions varies most by age, increasing sharply from 70 percent among women age 20-24 to 85 percent among women age 40-49. Currently married men, they are much more likely than women to report that they alone or jointly with their wives participate in making decisions about their own health care (95%) and 96 percent participate in decisions about major household purchases. Only 1 percent of men do not participate in making either of these decisions. Other indicators of women's empowerment In Manipur, 40 percent of women have money that they can decide how to use. The proportion of women who have money that they can decide how to use is equal among urban and rural (40% each) women, much higher among women with 12 or more years of schooling (46%), and is highest among women who are employed for cash (56%) than any other group of women.

Gender-role attitudes: Manipur

Sixty-six percent of women agree that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one specified reason or under some circumstances. For instance, women are most likely to agree that wife beating is justified if a woman shows disrespect for her in-laws (53%), followed by if she neglects the house or children (41%), and if he suspects her of being unfaithful (17%). 32 Men are less likely to agree than women; 57 percent say that wife beating is justified in some circumstances, especially if the wife shows disrespect for in-laws (47%) or if she neglects the house or children (30%) and if she argues with him (21%).

Despite higher level of decision-making power of married women, the violence against women is getting dangerously institutionalized in the state. Women are increasingly unsafe, whether within or outside their homes. The scale of violent crimes against women, the frightening regularity with which they occur, and the huge increase in sexual crimes being reported from every corner of the state are pointers to an alarming trend. Gender-based violence stems from the failure of governments and societies to recognize the human rights of women. It is rooted in an overall culture of discrimination that denies women equal rights with men and which legitimizes the appropriation of women's bodies for individual gratification or political ends. Every day women face gender-specific persecution including sexual harassment, prostitution, and domestic violence. Violence against women feeds off discrimination and serves to reinforce it. Violence against women is compounded by discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, sexual identity, social status, class, and age. Such multiple forms of discrimination further restrict women's choices, increase their vulnerability to violence, and make it even harder for women to obtain justice. It is a well-known fact that where there is growing crimes and violence in a society then the main burden of it is taken by women. Again when economic vulnerability increases, the degree of crime and violence against women also increases.

Living free from violence is a human right, yet millions of women and girls in the country suffer disproportionately from violence. The State has the obligation to prevent, protect against, and punish violence against women whether perpetrated by private or public actors. They have a responsibility to uphold standards of due diligence and take steps to fulfill its responsibility to protect

individuals from human rights abuses. Yet such violence is often ignored and rarely punished. Too often no one is held accountable for these crimes. Eliminating all forms of violence against women requires political will. An organized and planned effort by the government and civil society is the need of the hour

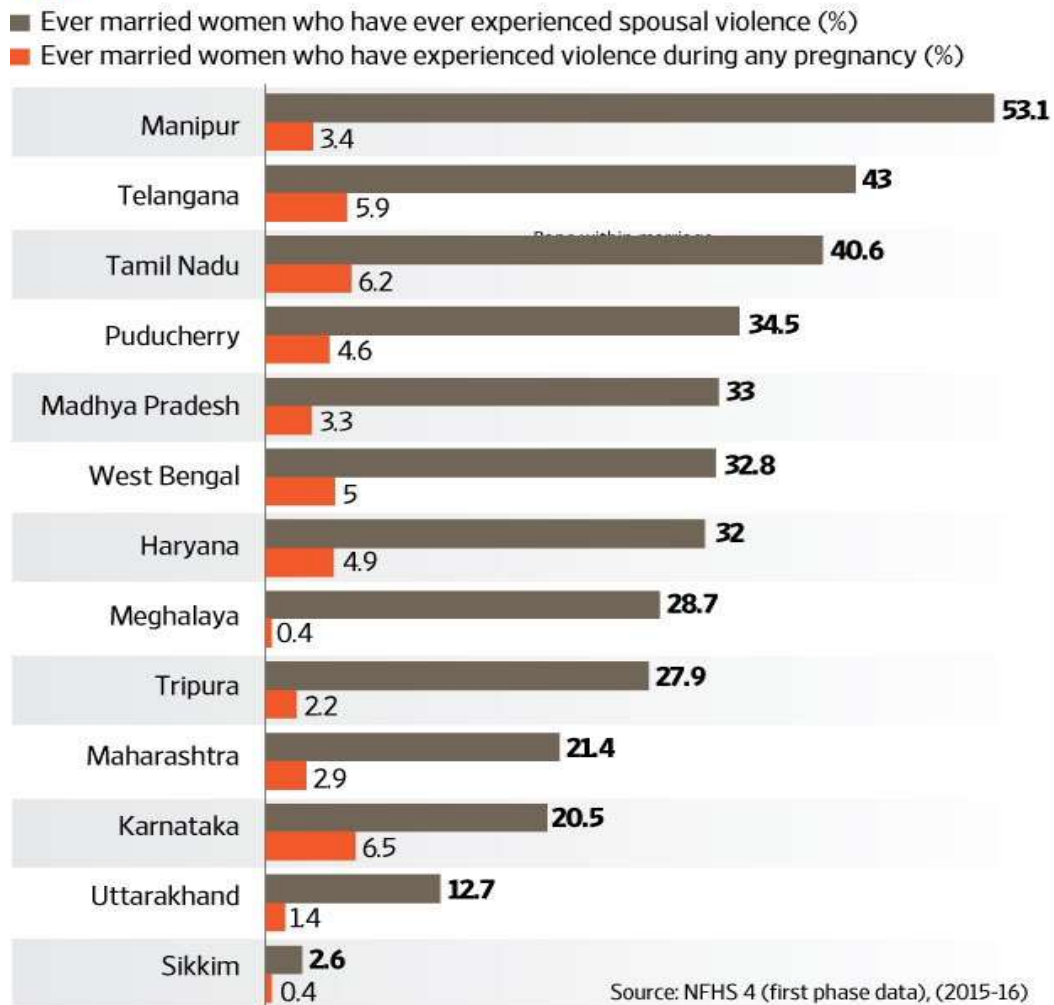
1. In order to take up the challenge of domestic violence, plans of action have to be taken up in many sectors such as the state, society, legal and media and for this purpose, this paper placed the following proposals for a sustained campaign:
 - Awareness has to be created across the various government departments, including police department, about the laws which ensure gender equality.
 - Under the prevention of domestic violence act, officers are being posted only at the district level to take up the cases. Such officers should be posted at taluk and further down local levels.
 - Text books should contain ideas of gender equality and the gist of the laws enacted on this issue.
 - The government should periodically discuss with all types of media about gender equality and make necessary arrangements to ensure that media is reflecting those views in a genuine way.
 - The visual media should be advised to put up a statutory warning in any scene of domestic violence, if at all it is essential to the storyline of the film or serials.
 - The government should ensure adequate advertisements are published in different kinds of media about gender equality, laws related to such equality, sharing the burden of domestic duties etc.
 - A special session of the assembly should be convened to exclusively discuss the measures to be taken up to end domestic violence prevailing in the society.
 - The State should ensure that women are getting higher education, employment and proper salary. It also should

ensure supportive measures such as crèche at the working areas.

- Strict measures should be taken up against infanticide, child marriage etc after undertaking a wider consultation on such crucial issues.
- As alcoholism is one of the crucial factors for domestic violence, the government should regulate production, marketing and consumption of alcohol to wean away the addicts.

With these goals, the paper called upon the people to undertake a widespread campaign with the slogan “prevent violence and build equality in the family”

1A: A HIGH INCIDENCE OF SPOUSAL VIOLENCE



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