

ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS OF YOUNG MEN TOWARDS MALE VIOLENCE AGAINST WIVES

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Abstract

According to the National Crime Record Bureau report 2018, domestic violence is the most highly committed crime among other forms of violence against women in India. It is prevalent in all cultures and communities, even where women are financially independent, and are aware of their rights. Studies have shown that patriarchy, misogyny, and strict adherence to gender norms are the major causes of male violence against women. Despite that, the understanding of power dynamics of gender, and the hostile attitude towards women, remains scarcely discussed. The majority of perpetrators are men, yet the essential role of men and masculinity is ignored while tackling the issue on the ground. This study aims to explore the attitudes of male youth towards gender equality, male violence against wives, and ideas around masculinity.

The present research highlights the importance of viewing violence against women primarily through the lens of gender, and as a result of traditional masculinity, systemic oppression, and power relations. The findings reveal the significance of involving young men in violence prevention to identify the faulty beliefs and attitudes they carry, and design strategies to modify them. Comparatively, very few studies in India have explored the role of male socialization, traditional masculinity, and the influence of the patriarchal belief system on domestic violence, and even fewer have engaged men in the conversation.

Key Words: domestic violence, power, the role of men, systemic oppression, traditional masculinity

Attitudes and Beliefs of Young Men towards Male Violence Against Wives

Violence against women, especially domestic violence is a concern all over the world. According to NFHS-4 (National Family Health Survey), every third woman in India since the age of 15 has faced domestic violence of various forms. According to the National Crime Record Bureau report 2018, “Out of total crimes registered under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) against

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women, majority of the cases were registered under the ‘cruelty by husband or his relatives’”. Domestic violence is the most highly committed crime among other forms of violence against women in India as of 2018 ("Domestic violence tops crime against women in 2018: NCRB", 2020).

According to the legal definition in India, “domestic violence includes causing any harm or injury to the safety, life, health or well-being of the aggrieved by committing any physical, sexual, verbal abuse, or threatening to do so” (Singh, 2018). The definition specifies four categories of abuse namely: physical, emotional or psychological, sexual, and economic. Domestic violence is also referred to as family violence that can occur against women, children, parents, or the elderly, by any member of the family. But for the scope of this research, domestic violence would only pertain to violence against wives committed by husbands. The report would also omit discussion around sexual abuse, which is a major part of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) since the subject is sensitive and such research requires more time.

Going by the legal definitions in India, physical abuse is defined as “any act or conduct which causes bodily pain, harm, or danger to life, limb, or health or impair the health or development of the aggrieved person. It also includes assault, criminal intimidation, and criminal force” (Singh, 2018).

The NFHS-4 study mentioned above reported that one of the major reasons for increasing domestic violence against women is the 'patriarchal attitudes' deeply entrenched in the minds of people, which are reflected in "discriminatory attitudes towards girls and women, and a view of women largely through a reproductive role". Cross-cultural research shows that violence against women is considerably high in societies with strong ideologies of male dominance. It suggests that hostile and violent attitude towards women develops where men strongly adhere to sexist and patriarchal beliefs (Zakar et al., 2013).

I. Objective of the Study

This research aims to study the attitudes and beliefs of young men towards male violence against wives. Based on previous research literature, this study takes three factors to measure the above, firstly, the awareness levels and beliefs of young men around gender equality and domestic violence, secondly, the role of gender norms in influencing young men’s attitudes towards women and domestic violence, and thirdly, the degree of acceptance and justifiability towards domestic violence.

II. Rationale

Many studies have shown that patriarchy, misogyny, and strict adherence to gender norms are the major causes of male violence against women. Despite that, the understanding of power dynamics of gender and hostile attitude towards women remains scarcely discussed. This perspective towards the problem is also evident in the intervention strategies used against domestic violence. Most intervention strategies are reactionary and ad hoc. While empowering women through law and ensuring their safety is extremely important, tackling the origin of domestic violence must hold equal importance. The majority of perpetrators are men, yet the essential role of men and masculinity is ignored while tackling the issue. Thus, to bring notable change from within the society, we need intervention strategies that engage men in the prevention of violence.

III. Literature Review

a) Gendering Violence

The study 'Gendering Violence: Masculinity and Power in Men's Accounts of Domestic Violence' recorded the experiences, views, and beliefs of domestically violent heterosexual men. The findings showed that these men justified their actions using gender norms and biological differences between the sexes, and presented themselves as nonviolent, capable, and rational persons. They claimed to be the actual victims; blaming the female partners for the violence in their relationship (Anderson & Umberson, 2001). Similar results were found in a study done in Pakistan regarding the attitudes and beliefs of men towards violence against women. Here, the respondents said that since women cry more often, they are emotionally unstable, thus short-tempered and short-sighted. Moreover, if women of their house are damaging family honor by violating cultural norms, it is acceptable to beat them because ultimately "women are men's responsibility" (Zakar et al., 2013). In a study done in Puerto Rico, both the male and female respondents believed testosterone levels of men to be the main cause of their aggression, which makes them lose control and leads to violence (Perez-Jimenez et al., 2017).

Countering the above opinion of the respondents of the mentioned study, a Puerto Rican study on violence perfectly explains gender and its relation to biological differences: "Gender, in other words, can be understood as the social organization of sexual difference. Although biological distinctions create female and male humans, society interprets these differences and gives us "feminine" and "masculine" people" (Perez-Jimenez et al., 2017).

b) Masculinity and the Performance of Gender

Masculinity and femininity are a set of gender norms or attributes associated with being a man and a woman. In most societies, the sexes are expected to follow these norms for which they either receive an acceptance or face repercussions. The American Psychological Association (APA) mentions several domains of male gender role or masculinity namely “success, power, competition (a disproportionate emphasis on personal achievement and control or being in positions of power); and restrictive emotionality (discomfort in expressing and experiencing vulnerable emotions)”.

The APA Guidelines 2018 explains how boys since childhood are socialized to strictly adhere to these norms and are made aware of the negative consequences for deviating from the same. It does not mean that all attributes associated with masculinity are essentially harmful; attributes like ambition, perseverance, independence, physical strength, and so on, are not problematic in themselves. The problem occurs when boys from a young age are pressured to fit into these norms and are made to experience extreme shame and guilt on deviating. Moreover, they are taught that attributes associated with femininity such as emotionality and sensitivity are inferior, and shameful for men to experience. The kind of masculinity that is harmful to men and the society, champions physically and mentally violent behaviors, illegitimate power, the need for control and domination, unhealthy competition, and emotions of aggression and apathy. This form of masculinity is called ‘traditional masculinity’.

Research shows a close linkage between traditional masculinity and male violence against women. Men who strictly adhere to these traditionally masculine norms are “more likely to aggress towards males or females who do not follow their respective norms, those men are also more likely to commit higher levels of intimate partner and sexual violence towards women” (American Psychological Association, Boys and Men Guidelines Group, 2018).

It is due to the gendered socialization of men that they struggle in expressing emotions other than anger, thus are unable to solve interpersonal conflicts sans violence or aggression. A study called ‘Man enough? Masculine discrepancy stress and intimate partner violence’ researched on the effects of masculine discrepancy stress. “Masculine discrepancy stress is a form of stress that occurs when one fails to live up to the ideal manhood derived from societal mandates of masculine gender roles” (Reidy et al., 2014). According to the findings, men that scored high on discrepancy stress, also scored in high on ‘hostility towards women’. The research found that men who have

a higher degree of discrepancy stress are more likely to act “traditionally masculine” in some areas to compensate for the lack in others. For instance, men have a huge pressure by gender norms to be the sole breadwinner of the family; evidence from an African study shows that “men’s loss of status as ‘providers’ in the context of increasing globalization was connected with their violence against women” (Duvvury & Nayak, 2003).

c) Normalization of Violence

Broader attitude in the society towards violence also contributes towards domestic violence. It has been found that societies that are in general more violent, have a higher rate of violence against women as well. Research that studied women’s experiences of intimate partner violence in detail, mentioned how women described the violence inflicted by their partners as “just a negative part of their personality”. Justifying it by saying that it is just a vice of their partner, among their many good qualities. The violence is so normalized and socially accepted that for many women it no longer remains non-negotiable in a relationship (Boonzaier & Rey, 2003).

Methodology

The study employed a mixed-methods approach which included both qualitative and quantitative techniques for data collection. The research was conducted in Delwara, a small town about 26 km away from Udaipur. The location was chosen based on Seva Mandir’s work in the village, and the high rate of violence against women reported in that area.

The subjects of the research were unmarried men between the ages of 14 to 25 years. The sample size was 56 for surveys, and 10 for in-depth interviews. All the surveys and interviews were based on the informed consent of the respondents.

• Quantitative Methods

A quantitative method of data collection was used to gather information about the two areas of study: the respondents’ beliefs on gender equality, and their attitude towards domestic violence. Thus, the respondents were asked to fill out two sets of close-ended questionnaires. A pilot study was conducted in the form of interactive sessions and group discussions with young girls and boys of Delwara school. The surveys consisted of statements to be responded to using a 5-point Likert scale⁵. The details of each survey are as follows:

Survey I: Gender Equality

This survey consisted of 48 items divided into three sections. The first section consisted of statements assessing respondents' beliefs on gender equality in terms of basic rights. The second section looked at their views on gender roles and gender stereotypes, and the third section examined their attitudes towards women.

Survey II: Domestic Violence

This survey consisted of 59 items divided into three sections. The first section consisted of statements assessing respondents' awareness levels around domestic violence. The second section assessed their acceptance and tolerance towards domestic violence, and the third section assessed the 'justifiability' of domestic violence for the respondents in different circumstances.

- Qualitative methods

The Qualitative methods were used to get deeper insights into the same areas covered in the surveys. We conducted in-depth interviews of 10 respondents using an open-ended questionnaire. Each interview was about 30 to 40 minutes long. Audio recordings of the interviews were done based on the consent of the respondent.

- Process of Analysis

For the analysis of the data, recurrent themes and patterns from the interviews were identified. Then, the selected themes were substantiated through the survey results and presented with relevant quotes extracted from the interviews to add context to the analysis.

Findings

Part I. Attitude towards Gender

A. Access to basic rights of women

- 1) Families should spend an equal amount of money on the education of daughters and sons 66% of respondents strongly agreed, and 20% agreed
- 2) Families should provide daughters with as much inheritance as sons 45% of respondents strongly agreed, and 30% agreed
- 3) Families should spend less money on the education of daughters as compared to sons 41% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 30% disagreed
- 4) The husband should have primary responsibility for contributing to the family income 33.3% of respondents strongly agreed, and 46.3% agreed

Analysis & Discussion

In terms of basic rights, the majority of the respondents believed that women should have access to education, healthcare, inheritance, freedom to work, and so on. However, as seen in the fourth statement, about 70% of respondents also believed that men should be the ultimate breadwinners of the family.

This shows how the patriarchal family structure deprives women of their right to work and have financial independence in implicit ways. Moreover, puts the responsibility of being the sole earning member of the family on men, an idea closely related to ‘masculinity’. As discussed in the literature review, studies show that men who are unable to fulfill these demands of masculinity experience an extreme form of shame and embarrassment. Then they often try to overcompensate that lack of masculinity by fulfilling other demands such as practicing authority and violence on women or children or getting involved in substance abuse.

B. Gender Roles and Stereotypes

1) Men are better suited than women to work outside of the house

29% of respondents strongly agreed and 40% agreed

2) Human beings evolved in such a manner that men are the head of the family 52% of respondents agreed

Analysis & Discussion

The idea that men are better suited for the outside world was consistent during the surveys as well as the interviews. The respondents justified their beliefs using reasons such as women’s safety and family honor. Six out of 10 respondents mentioned that if women work outside, people will make ‘unfavorable comments’, thus, it is better for them to perform household duties, and work only if financially necessary. While by law, women have all the rights that a man does, the societal pressure continues to bring down women.

This also shows how important it is to work with youth on the matters of gender, honor, and masculinity. As long as society continues to think about women in terms of their notion of ‘honor’, the justifications such as ‘unfavorable’ comments will continue to be made.

Regarding the second statement, the respondents believed that biologically, men and women are a certain way that makes men more suitable to be the head of the house. During the interviews, eight out of 10 boys attributed biology as one of the major causes for the differences in the behaviors of men and women. They associated qualities like leadership, and emotions such as anger to be something that is natural to the nature of men. Some quotes from the respondents are as follows:

Men are not able to control their anger” -(R1)

“It (anger, violence) is in men’s nature” -(R2)

While it is true that there are biological differences between men and women, it is not true that men carry a genetic predisposition towards violence; it is believed so because patriarchal ideologies exaggerate biological differences. Young men having beliefs like this is a big concern, and rather dangerous because when something is thought of as a result of biology, it leaves no scope for change or improvement. Moreover, such beliefs help in legitimizing violence against women through arguments such as “men lose control because they are naturally aggressive”. The biological argument is also used to legitimize women’s position as victims since patriarchy defines women as all-enduring, motherly, and nurturing beings.

C. Attitude towards Women

1) It is okay if men are unfaithful sometimes, women should never cheat on their husbands 75% of respondents agreed

Analysis & Discussion

The result of the above statement shows how similar actions have completely different consequences for men and women in society. Unfaithfulness is often attributed as a characteristic of being a “man”, implying that men are biologically incapable of controlling their sexual urges. The cost of being unfaithful is very different for both sexes. Infidelity is considered to be the ultimate crime for women. Even respondents that were completely opposed to violence against women, justified it in such a circumstance. The role of traditional masculinity is crucial here. An unfaithful female partner is a testament for a male partner to have failed at being a “man”

What would or should be the consequence of a wife committing infidelity in your community?

“If he gets angry, he hits her a little bit, then he’ll ask her parents to take her back, telling them that these are the kind of things your wife is doing, in such a situation it is right to beat her.” – (R2)

“They won’t worship her if she is getting involved with other men, right? Will beat her only” - (R6)

Eight out of 10 respondents believed that if the wife is unfaithful to her husband, it is okay to beat her.

2) Women need to be disciplined and controlled

In the survey, more than 50% of respondents, and in the interview six out of 10 men agreed to the statement.

Should women be controlled?

“Yes, it’s very important to keep them in control” -(R5)

“They should be so that they don’t stray to wrong paths” -(R3)

“50% of the time, yes. The world outside is different, or she should always inform where she has been, otherwise when other people come and tell you about it, that is not right” -(R1)

“Women shouldn’t be given too much freedom, there should be some fear of the husband. Now, if the husband comes back home in the evening, he is making rotis and she is sitting with her friends, enjoying, so of course, he will get angry” -(R4)

Here, analyzing our attitude towards women is important. The kind of disciplining the respondents have advised for women shows the inherent difference of power between husband and wife that young men and women have internalized through their surroundings.

The infantilization of women exists at all levels in society. For instance, the view that women are incapable of being the head of the house exists because they are considered of an inferior mind and disposition. As mentioned in the literature review, abusive men in several studies have called themselves more rational and wiser than women to justify beating their wives. This mindset is also a tool to legitimize violence against women, similar to how we justify beating children at home and school, claiming that “it’s for their own good”. These factors show why and how violence against women begins to become acceptable.

Part II. Attitude towards Domestic Violence

A. Awareness levels around Domestic Violence

- 1) Many women are beaten up by their husbands 48% of respondents agreed
- 2) Domestic violence only happens in poor households 56% of respondents disagreed

Analysis & Discussion

The majority of the respondents were aware of domestic violence and the issues around it. Many of them considered it a common problem. They were aware that it happens throughout the world, and that majority of the perpetrators are men. Each respondent could narrate at least one incident of violence against women that they had either witnessed or heard about in their town.

B. Acceptance towards Domestic Violence

- 1) It is not okay to severely injure your wife, but sometimes a slap or two is fine 58% of respondents disagreed
- 2) It is okay for men to slap their wives if she disobeys him about 40% of men agreed

While the majority of respondents disagreed with the first statement, when the statements got more specific, and the reasons to beat the wife were stated, the responses changed for some. This pattern was observed during the interviews as well. In the beginning, the men condemned wife-beating completely, but when they were probed further, and given different situations, the answers changed considerably. This shows that while they are all aware of the vices of domestic violence, there are deep-seated values and social norms that make it acceptable for a husband to beat his wife.

Some of the responses of the interviews are stated below.

How much beating is okay?

*“So, like a slap sometimes, shaking her completely, threatening her sometimes is okay- (R4)
telling her something like ‘stay in your place, be quiet and let me do my work’- (R2)*

What should the husband do if the wife is not listening to him at all?

“He should make her understand, first with love, but if she still doesn’t understand, she will get hit. There is a point till one can show patience, but if one still doesn’t understand, then he will naturally get angry and may hit then”- (R1)

“If she doesn’t understand, and makes the same mistake again and again, then he is provoked to hit her”- (R5)

These responses speak greatly of the acceptance of domestic violence against women among young men. They reflect on their surroundings. This throws light on the culture of violence because of which physical violence is not considered a big deal, and the respondents talk about it like a common thing.

C. Justifiability of Violence

1) Women are also responsible for getting beaten up by their husbands 49% of respondents agreed

Victim-blaming is a common phenomenon especially in the cases of violence against women. It goes back to the beliefs around how ‘aggression’ is natural and uncontrollable for men. Moreover, it tells us how we think about women, the following questions and responses throw further light on the same.

In what condition, for a husband, do you think it is okay to beat a wife?

“Sometimes it happens, as he has just come home exhausted from his job, on one side his children are disturbing him, on the other end his mother is pestering him about something that happened in the day, then his wife has demands of her own, and he is already troubled, so he gets frustrated and annoyed”- (R1)

“If she goes out too much, talks to other men ” -(R5)

“Now, what happens is that he is working so hard and getting the money and she sends it to her parents then fights happen [Is it okay then to beat her?] In such a situation, yes”- (R7)

Do you think women provoke men? Is it okay to beat her in those situations?

“Sometimes, the man is exhausted when he comes home after work, and the wife is continuously badgering him like “Dinner? Dinner? Dinner? When will you have dinner?”, so, he bursts out in anger, being irritated by the same question again and again, in that irritation he beats her sometimes”- (R2)

How do women provoke men?

“By verbally abusing him, saying too much, or saying something wrong. So, if she has said something wrong and he beat her for it, then it’s not just the husband’s fault, right? It is also her fault for saying something wrong in the first place”- (R7)

Again, the idea of ‘provocation’ is a way to shift the blame of violence committed by a man on a woman.

2) It is okay to hit women sometimes because husbands have a right over their wives 50% of respondents disagreed, and more than 37% agreed

The thoughts on men having “the right” i.e. the authority over their women also came out during the interviews. Many respondents in the interview as well as the surveys cited alcohol as the major reason for violence. When the respondents were probed further and asked about the violence that takes place without the influence of substances, and why is it that he only beats his wife when he is drunk? The responses were as follows:

“Because the wife is his personal she is his she is his partner, equal to him, so he can beat her ”-(R9)

“Because the wife is his own, can’t pick fights outside the home with random people, right? If he beats his wife, the wife wouldn’t mind that much because he is her husband” -(R9)

“Because he believes his wife to be his property, they think this is my wife, so who are you to tell me what to do, I can do anything in my house, who are you to come from outside and meddle into it?... [Where do you think men learn that women are their property?] as soon as they get married, they believe that she is mine” -(R7)

“Because he knows, that in the end he can go home and his wife will take care of him no matter what. Even if you beat her, she will take care of you, even if you are lying somewhere drunk, she is going to pick you and get you home” -(R1)

In most cultures in India, since childhood, the boys get the message that as they get older, their elders will find a suitable wife who will take complete care of them, and the girls are given the message that as they get older, they will be “given away” to a man whose care must be her utmost priority. A man is taught that his wife would fulfill all his needs like cooking, washing, child-rearing, and so on. Comments like “Oh, wait till your wife comes, then your mother would be free of all the duties” are thrown around in communities belonging to all socio-economic strata. These are the messages that young men receive, that a wife is “theirs”, like other objects they possess. And the message women get is “that a good wife endures” whether it be oppression or violence. Neither of them is taught to treat each other as human beings, while one is taught to treat their partner like God, the other is taught to treat them like an object.

Masculinity

What does it mean to be a man? / What are men like?

“For men, their biggest thing is they do outside work mostly, women do outside work less, then the way they make their hair lifestyle and the difference in behavior, that men talk less, this is a huge quality in men, talking less and working more, like doing proper work” –(R9)

“A man hmm there’s a sir that lives near my house, he talks to his wife very nicely, they live together happily” –(R7)

“To protect one’s family, wife, kids, parents, other people” –(R1)

“To be a man is man is the one who is powerful in anything they do, like if they are working in police, giving exams for physical strength they are powerful” –(R7)

“They say that men understand everything, they are wise” –(R7)

“One who respects their elders respects all women” –(R5)

Most respondents talked about power and physical strength while describing men. Some of them also described how they think men ‘should be’, ideas that they had also acquired from their surroundings. For instance, the second quote shows the importance of having good male role models.

The respondents were then asked if being powerful and violent always works in men’s favor. Most of them agreed that a certain version of masculinity harms men as well, one of them said:

“I mean, if someone is beating their wife, then they must be in such grief themselves, crying on the inside. Like, if they are drunk, and he beats someone because he was drunk, later on, he must be regretting and feeling so bad about himself”- (R2)

Conclusion

I. Summary of the Findings

In terms of gender equality, the majority of respondents believed in access to basic rights for women such as education, healthcare, inheritance, and so on. They also believed that women should only work if it is financially necessary, and men must be the household heads and the ultimate breadwinners. The idea that gender is biological, and that men and women are born with certain inherent characteristics was also strongly held. The respondents’ attitude was highly influenced by negative gender stereotypes around women. Some believed that, to an extent, women should be disciplined and controlled.

In terms of acceptance, while all boys believed that domestic violence is morally wrong, when the situations got specific, their answers varied. Many of them justified beating a wife if she has been unfaithful to her husband, or if she has provoked him by not listening to him or irritating him in some way, and so on. Violence against wives became acceptable for them in certain situations due to the belief that men are inherently aggressive. The respondents also understood and discussed how husbands are socially given the 'right' over their wives once they are married, citing it as one of the reasons for domestic violence.

The findings further confirm what previous studies have shown about the attitudes and beliefs of men as discussed in the literature review. In this study too, there was a considerable amount of acceptance and justifiability of violence. The views around control and disciplining of women were similarly based on faulty perceptions of sex and gender, prejudice against women, and the assumed superiority of men. These findings have important implications for the design of preventive interventions. They reveal the significance of involving men in studies to identify such beliefs and design strategies to modify them.

II. The Way Forward

This research highlights the importance of viewing violence against women primarily through the lens of gender, as a result of traditional masculinity, systemic oppression, and power relations, and thus, supporting interventions in the same direction. Thus, a gender transformative approach is crucial. It involves "challenging gender roles and critically questioning both the influence of socio-cultural, community and institutional factors as well as individual beliefs and attitudes" (Carlson et al., 2015). We require measures such as engaging men in violence prevention through education and workshops conducted at all institutional levels starting from school, college, universities, workspace, and so on. Special emphasis should be on the youth because gendered ideas are embedded deeply when we are young, and they become too concrete to alter later. If young boys have men around them that redefine masculinity to be about patience and not anger, internal strength and not just physical strength, emotions and not suppression, treating wives as equals and not as their subordinates, this is what the young boys will grow up to be like. Having good role models can go a long way.

Comparatively, very few studies in India have explored the role of male socialization, traditional masculinity, and the influence of the patriarchal belief system on domestic violence, and even fewer have engaged men in the

conversation. This also reflects on the ad hoc nature of intervention strategies adopted by the government as well as most social welfare organizations. The idea is to focus equally on intervening before the crime has been committed.

III. Reflections

Every child in India studies the great non-violence movement during the nationalist struggle. However, what they read in textbooks is rarely in sync with their surroundings. Home is the first site where children learn the differences in the treatment of men and women. From toddlerhood to teenage, at home, in school, a child experiences and witnesses violence everywhere. In my experience in Delwara, I met students from age 13 to 18, and the boys were hit senselessly by the teachers. Our culture considers beating an essential part of parenting and disciplining children without realizing that the children embody these experiences, and there is no place where they can unlearn or learn any differently. Any encounter with something like ‘women’s studies’ only happens at the graduate level, which is not even considered worthy of study by most students, especially men. It is astounding that children are not taught about feminism at the school level when half the population of the country goes through some form of male violence every single day. This shows our lack of commitment to end violence against women. Schools can be the place where children can rectify all the faulty beliefs about masculinity, femininity, violence against women, and learn about the history of female oppression. We lose out on the critical age when a child is questioning everything in trying to understand the world around them. By the time they grow up, violence is normalized, and the distinct perception of men and women is deeply internalized. Then as a society, we are “shocked” how some men can commit such heinous crimes on women. The answer is, men do not become criminals in a day, it is a process. Even issues that seem petty compared to crimes like rape and murder, like gender roles for young boys and girls of the same age at home, where girls do housework along with schoolwork while the boys have all the freedom, play a part in forming the overall of belief system. The answer lies at every stage where women are made to feel inferior and smaller to men. Everything counts, and adds to the final crime. So, the question is not ‘how to stop male violence against women?’ the question is ‘how to raise men that do not commit violence against women?’ and ‘how to raise women that reject discrimination at the most basic levels?’.

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Appendix

Questionnaire I: Assessing views on Gender Equality

ROLL NUMBER:

CLASS:

Age:

Gender:

Father's Occupation:

Mother's Occupation:

No. of members in family:

No. of Siblings: Brother: Sister:

Hamlet:

Village:

Please select the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below:

PART I (Assessing views on Gender equality)

- 1) Sons education must be prioritized over daughters
- 2) Families should spend equal amount of money in the education of daughters and sons
- 3) Families should provide more medical care to daughters than to sons.
- 4) Families should provide daughters with as much inheritance as sons
- 5) Boys should be given more freedom than the girls their age and maturity level
- 6) Men and women should be equally censured for disloyalty
- 7) The wife should have primary responsibility for child care
- 8) Son's medical care is more important than daughters
- 9) The husband and wife should have equal responsibility to contribute to the family income by working.
- 10) Families should spend less money on the education of daughters as compared to sons

- 11) The responsibility of taking care of infants should be equally divided between husband and wife
- 12) Men and women should share equally in housework such as cooking, washing dishes, and housecleaning.
- 13) Families should provide equal medical care to daughters and sons
- 14) There is no need of giving daughters a part of the family inheritance
- 15) The husband should have primary responsibility for contributing to the family income by working.
- 16) In children, girls and boys of the same age and maturity level should be given equal freedom

PART II (Popular beliefs and stereotypes)

- 1) Human beings evolved in a way for women to work at home and men to work outside
- 2) Human beings evolved in such a manner that men are the head of the family
- 3) Girls are better suited for humanities
- 4) Men are better suited for higher education than women
- 5) People can be both aggressive and nurturing regardless of sex
- 6) Men have a more technical mind than women
- 7) Girls and boys, both are suitable for all fields
- 8) Physically demanding works are not appropriate for women
- 9) Women are not capable of being head of the family
- 10) Mothers should work only if necessary
- 11) Only some types of work are appropriate for both men and women
- 12) Men are better suited than women to work outside of the house
- 13) Women are kinder than men
- 14) It is okay for men to drink and smoke but not women
- 15) Biologically, men are more aggressive than women
- 16) People can do all kinds of work, regardless of their sex

- 17) Boys are better suited for science
- 18) It is okay for men to be homemakers and women to be employed outside of home
- 19) Girls are expected to show more responsibility towards their house than boys
- 20) Women in the military should be kept out of certain combat roles
- 21) Boys are better at sports than girls

PART III (attitude towards women)

- 1) Most of the times, women cause fights between men
- 2) Women need to be disciplined and controlled
- 3) Widowed women bring bad fortune for the family
- 4) Women who bring good dowry should be respected more than other women
- 5) Women who bear sons should be respected more than women who only bear daughters
- 6) Women must give birth until she has a son
- 7) Wives should give their husbands the status of God
- 8) After marriage, the woman should rarely go to her mayeka (Girls' parent's home)
- 9) A wife should never earn more than her husband
- 10) A wife should give all the money she earns to her in laws and husband
- 11) A wife should never question her husband about his earnings
- 12) After marriage, a woman should stop all communication with her mayeka
- 13) Women are their own biggest enemy
- 14) Women who drink and smoke are low in character
- 15) Mostly women are responsible for breaking up the family
- 16) It is okay if men are disloyal sometimes, women should never cheat their husbands

Questionnaire II: Assessing views towards Domestic Violence

ROLL NUMBER:

CLASS:

Age:

Gender:

Father's Occupation:

Mother's Occupation:

No. of members in family:

No. of Siblings:

Brother:

Sister:

Hamlet:

Village:

Please select the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements below:

Part I: Awareness levels

I.1) Meaning and Prevalence of Domestic Violence

- 1) Domestic violence is a common issue worldwide
- 2) Domestic violence only happens in India
- 3) Women are safe inside their homes
- 4) Only a handful of men beat their wives
- 5) Denial of female inheritance is violence
- 6) Many women are beaten up by their in-laws
- 7) Cursing, yelling and insulting women is violence
- 8) Many women are beaten up by their husbands
- 9) Depriving women of education is violence
- 10) Forcing women to conceive is violence
- 11) Violence is not just physical; it is also verbal, emotional and psychological
- 12) It is against the law for a husband to hit his wife/partner

I.2) Causes and effects of domestic violence

- 13) Domestic violence only happens when the husband is drunk
- 14) Alcohol abuse is the major cause of domestic violence
- 15) Domestic violence only happens in poor households
- 16) Domestic violence only happens in households where the husband is unemployed
- 17) The need for power and control in men is a cause of domestic violence
- 18) Women experiencing domestic violence do not separate for the sake of family and children
- 19) Domestic violence does not happen in educated families
- 20) Domestic violence affects children of the family
- 21) The issue of violence against women is a threat to the entire community
- 22) Often, domestic violence creates severe health problems for women
- 23) Domestic violence is not caused or provoked by the action or inactions of the women
- 24) Domestic violence can cause low self-esteem in women
- 25) Gender disparity is the major cause of domestic violence
- 26) Domestic violence is not a cultural problem, it is an individual problem
- 27) One of the reasons for the persistence of domestic violence is the shame and fear in talking about it
- 28) Men beat women because they consider women inferior and physically weak
- 29) Domestic violence is only a health problem

Part II: Acceptance and Tolerance

- 1) Husbands should not beat their wives, but it is okay to sometimes threaten her
- 2) Beating wives is also a way of showing love
- 3) Wives like getting beaten up by their husbands
- 4) Wives should endure the beating for the sake of children
- 5) Wives should endure the beating to maintain family peace

- 6) Wives should endure the beating to respect her husband
- 7) Women should endure violence to safeguard traditions and culture
- 8) Husband and wife both are equally responsible when the wife gets beaten
Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never
- 9) It is not okay to severely injure your wife, but sometimes a slap or two is fine
- 10) Beating women is a sign of masculinity
- 11) Domestic violence is a crime requiring official intervention
- 12) For the sake of their children, women should not report violent behavior of their husbands to the authorities such as police, panchayat etc.
- 13) Women should only seek help within the family
- 14) Women who seek help outside the family ruin family name
- 15) Settlement between two parties is the best solution for domestic violence
- 16) Domestic violence is a private family matter and outside parties should not interfere
- 17) To control women, it is necessary to beat them

Part III: Justifiability

- 1) Men can hit their wives if she is unfaithful
- 2) Sometimes, it is important to beat the wife if she is being lazy
- 3) It is okay to beat the wife if she does not do household chores
- 4) It is okay for men to slap their wives if she disobeys him
- 5) It is not the man's fault if he beats his wife when he is drunk
- 6) Men should be excused for beating if they were angered by the wife
- 7) Men should be excused for beating their wives if they are frustrated due to unemployment
- 8) Men should be excused for beating their wives if they apologize immediately
- 9) Men should be excused for beating their wives because they are the breadwinners of the family
- 10) Women are responsible for getting beaten up by their husbands

11) It is okay to hit them sometimes because husbands have right over their wives

12) If a woman is hit by her husband, she must have done something to provoke him

Tick the possible causes of domestic violence

- Economic instability
- Alcohol
- Husband's suspicious nature
- Wife not attending to kids
- Wife not taking care of the household chores
- Wife disobeying husband
- Wife disobeying in laws
- Lack of education
- Unemployment
- The need for power and control in men
- Dowry
- Interference of relatives



