

CHAPTER- SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Violence against women is a serious problem which is widespread due to the unequal relationship between men and women that continues to exist since ages. The acts of violent behavior against women perpetuate and institutionalize the subordination of women within the sphere of family and society at large. This problem is not only a women's issue but a structural issue, which should be handled effectively. It concerns all of us as it violates the dignity and rights of a woman. It is a form of crime and those women who are suffering it are not only the victims of abuse but they are the victims of indifference and abandonment within their own home. Violence against women within the family has been a focus of enquiry in so many areas of study because family is considered as functional to its individual members as it serves important functions such as protection, shelter and security of its members. This normal and accepted tendency has undergone drastic changes thereby increasing more conflict and violence within the families. No doubt in such a state, the conditions of violent behavior will give rise to a number of problems within the family settings like breaking the bond of trust and love, rising stress, indifferences, detachment in relations and so on. Therefore, the present study was an attempt to understand the prevalence of violence against women within the family along with the subjective experiences of victims.

Discrimination against women begins from her parental home. In fact parents consider the girls as someone's property and as a result treat them as a possession of someone from the birth only, which is kept in safe custody by the parents until the in-laws come to claim her. The decisions regarding their marriage like whom to marry and when to marry are also strictly controlled by the elders. But marriage is considered as an important practice which has a crucial religious compulsion and no women can escape so easily from the web of relations that originates through the medium of marriage. The life of a woman is accomplished in her successful roles as a wife and a mother. This is the reason that women are trained to be submissive from the early childhood. Moreover parents teach them to be patient in every phase of life.

At the time of marriage also, parents and other family members teaches her not to seek separation from the spouse and emphasize her responsibility of running a successful married life that completely lies on the shoulders of women only. Under the influence of such a practice, it becomes very difficult for women to end the marital relationship even though it is violent. Besides this women is dependent upon her husband economically and socially and sometimes for the sake of her children, she prefer to suffer the abuse and violence of husband and in-laws rather than to go for divorce.

The stigma of violence against women within the homes especially from husbands and the shame of being as a victim somewhere prevent them from disclosing the information to outsiders. It was observed in the present study that a culture of silence exists around the topic of domestic violence especially among the rich upper class. This silence had made the collection of data on this sensitive topic particularly a challenging task. An attempt was made to understand the types, causes and frequency of violence committed against rural women within the family. Another emphasis was laid on to analyze the perception of abused women regarding the problem of domestic violence along with gender roles and also to find out the reasons due to which these rural women continue to stay in the abusive relationship. Structural factors responsible for the continuities of violent patterns against women in contemporary Punjab were also identified. The socio economic characteristics of the respondents like their current age, age at the time of marriage, age difference between spouses, marital status, and level of education, income, type of family, caste group, religion, family income and property were also acknowledged. Though violent behavior against women exists in every economic group but in the present study, such cases were visible mainly in lower class groups. It was found that majority of higher class women tried to hide the truth because of their higher social standing within the society. Findings had revealed that lower class women having fewer or no resources mainly feel no sense of humiliation and therefore rely mostly upon the public agencies for help and support. On the other hand, upper class women were seen hiding the incidents of violent behavior due to the fear of social embarrassment. Other reasons like fear of tarnishing family honor, fear of divorce and availability of more

resources to deal with the abuse such as surplus money to employ a counselor or private doctor were some other reasons to hide the episodes of domestic violence. In this way violence among the wealthy women was observed behind the veil of silence and fear only.

In our study, majority of the perpetrators of violence were husbands of the victims, thereby making spouse abuse the most common type of violence. Out of three hundred women, 214 women had experienced severe physical violence from their husband. Beatings through slapping or knocking the women's head against the wall were reported as the most common act of physical violence. The other popular form of violence was observed in the form of emotional abuse that was done mainly to insult the respondents or to make them feel bad about themselves. Making fun of the women and their family among the community members and giving harsh threats to kill them were seen as the few techniques often employed by the in-laws to harass their daughter-in-law. Forced sexual intercourse was also mentioned by few respondents. The proportions of such informants who reported sexual abuse from their husband was highest in Sri Muktsar Sahib as compared to other two districts. In all the three districts, data on various forms of violence illustrated that victims were mostly subjected to physical violence than the other forms of violence and their combinations. The most common cause of violence cited by the respondents was alcohol usage and the second most common reason was interference of in-law especially by the mother-in-law. Majority of rural women were found disturbed in their families due to their husband problem of drinking. Actually alcohol has been ruining not only their relations but their family's economic condition to a great extent. The effect of alcohol and violence was highlighted by many respondents in their injuries and terrible stories of violence. In-laws role in causing, perpetuating and even perpetrating violence was also noticed in many families. Out of 300 cases, 45 cases were such where victims reported to have been beaten by their husbands at some point in their married life due to the instigation by their mother-in-law. Some victims had also narrated their horrible stories and in few cases, the mother-in-law was seen enjoying their beatings and they even helped the son in finding a stick and other such tools in order to aggravate the beatings. The number of women suffering from

physical abuse by in-laws was almost similar in district Mansa and district Ferozepur but the number of such women was lowest in district Sri Muktsar Sahib. In this way, apart from alcohol usage, the next important factor in violence against women was the crucial role of in-laws especially of mother-in-law in such typical Punjabi societies. Large number of women who were found living with their mother-in-law revealed that their home seems to be a prison to them. Having no decision-making power within the family and the burden of household chores along with regular humiliation were seen as the general problems of these rural women. Some women had also mentioned that they never reveal their problems to their parents or in public. This approach of these rural women shows that violence within closed doors has just remained their ultimate fate. In this way violence has become an integral part of these women's everyday life. The dialogues of some battered women had revealed us their strong urge to live in a nuclear family rather than the joint family because of the extent of severe wife-battering in the joint families.

Our study shows that violence directly causes severe negative health consequences for women who suffer such abuse. Many victims had frequently explained the several immediate physical consequences in the study. Majority of the victims had made an effort to bring into light their pathetic health, bruises and aches that resulted from various incidents of domestic violence. In all the three districts, many women had discussed how their husband every other day without any cause regularly hits them and such a program of hitting if starts once, then it would normally take 3 to 4 hours till the husband gets tired. A large number of women had reported unbearable pain in their joints, muscles and neck. Whereas the occurrence of black-blue marks on the different parts of body was also marked by many victims of physical violence. Various reasons of beatings were given by the rural women and the most common cause was alcohol usage generally followed by the interference of mother-in-law. Whereas other reasons like the perceived failure of a woman to bring enough dowry for the husband and the failure to fulfill her household duties properly by being humble and obedient towards the husband and sometimes the problem of poverty and male frustration were also illustrated by the respondents. Overall 44 percent of respondents reported that they had experienced frequent violence through

their husband and in-laws in the past one year. According to them, violent behavior took place practically every day, occasionally and at time suddenly and some women had also reported being physically abused during their pregnancy also.

In our present study, a large number of respondents had left their home in reaction to their families' violent behavior against them. One of the most commonly cited reason for leaving the home was badly injured by the husband and in-laws and the immediate need of seeking a doctor and proper care had actually forced them to leave the violent home immediately. Amongst these respondents, a significant number of respondents had again returned back to their husband and one of the main reasons for returning back to an abusive husband was husband threatened to kill the respondent and her family. It was seen that majority of women in all the three districts in spite of being educated and employed have left with no choice rather than to stay in abusive relationships. The dominating structure of patriarchy that defines male superiority over women was illustrated as the major reason behind rural women's silence. Victims had also revealed their inability in taking a divorce from the husband because in this region honor matters a lot to people that is, what people will say if a daughter returns back to her parental home with a tag of divorce. Victims had actually no support system available and that's the main reason for their silence in this region. A number of women had reported that they have been threatened continuously by the husband and the fear for their own safety or their children's wellbeing was the main reason to stay in the abusive relationship. Fear of police and counselors were also reported by many victims. Cost of help-seeking, lack of information and fear about what others might think were also fairly frequently endorsed by the informants. Actually the fear of divorce and more violent reactions has made these rural women more frightened. Some of the women had also disclosed that a woman will either be murdered or seriously injured if she attempts to leave her partner. Even if she leaves, she knows that she may be forced to return to the relationship. While many victims were seen holding a belief that violence is somewhere the right of a husband and a woman is not even able to construct her identity without the company of her husband. Such a mindset has made them dependent upon their husband and on the other hand, their dependency is fully exploited by their partner.

Three hypotheses were advanced. All of these have been supported by facts. The first hypothesis stating that wife-battering is more prominent in comparison to other types of violence against women is supported by facts in our present study. Our findings highlighted that women were more prone to physical violence only than the other types of violence. Approximately 71 percent of the respondents had reported physical violence as the major form of violence in their day to day life and the proportion of such victims of physical violence was highest in district Ferozepur, followed by district Mansa and district Muktsar. Hitting was mostly done with the use of hands or by striking women's head against the wall. Out of the total sample, 17 percent of victims had described the nature of assault potentially fatal, as they were threatened by the use of gun or axe also. Some victims had explained in detail how the physically stronger sex uses their vigor on the weaker sex and how they also tried to control the life and actions of their wives by employing different violent acts against them. After physical violence, physical violence along with emotional violence was emphasized as the second most common form of violence. Approximately 51 percent victims had reported experiencing frequent violence in the past one year in district Ferozepur. Around 42 percent informants had reported frequent violence in district Mansa and about 38 percent reported in district Sri Muktsar Sahib. Among victims who had experienced violence in the past one year, frequent violence was more common among women in all the three districts as compared to infrequent violence.

The second hypothesis that alcohol usage by male members within the family is the major cause of violence against women is also borne out by facts. In the present study, highest number (19.3 percent) of the respondents had asserted alcohol for causing violence within their family. It was found that majority of men who belong to the lower segments of the society beats their partner almost daily. The fact that came into light by interviewing so many victims is that, under the influence of liquor when the husband return home drunk in the evening, their demands of food and sex are not tolerated by the wife and when the wife tries to mould the husband's behavior as they have been wasting money on drinks, the wife either refuse husbands demand or criticize him badly. Wife's unwillingness somewhere infuriates the husband, who then

gets revenge with physical violence. On the other hand, it was also found that men who belong to well-off families also hit their wives and they drink usually to have a socially acceptable excuse for violent behavior. Majority of rural women had revealed their incidents of violence created by their husband under the influence of alcohol. In this way alcoholism was the major cause of violence within the families of all income groups.

Approximately eleven percent of respondents had correlated the problem of sexual violence with that of physical violence. In this context, many respondents had even linked it with the drinking problem of their husband. Some women had also revealed how their drunken husband forces them to have sex in horrible ways and how he throw away the wife like a waste product right after his own gratification. Few victims had also described their feelings like how the whole experience seems like a rape to them in which a cruel person by the use of kicks and punches tries to control their feelings and hurt them the most. It can be assumed from such illustrations that so many rural women are worried in their life because alcohol has really spoiled the relationship between the couples as well as the whole atmosphere of their family. This hypothesis is directly linked to the resource theory. We have seen that when drunken husband return home by wasting all the money on drinks, greater frustration and bitterness results on both sides of the relationship between husband and wife leads to violent actions within the family. Resource theory also holds that violence is used as a resource when other resources are lacking; thus a family member that has little prestige, money and power suffers greater disappointment and anger and resorts to more violence (Goode, 1971).

The third proposition that patriarchy operates in such a way as it gives no choice to women than to stay in the relationship has also been supported by facts. A large number of women who had never left home despite husband and in-laws severe acts of violence were found staying silently in the abusive relationships. Such respondents were highest in district Sri Muktsar Sahib as compared to other two districts. In all the districts, rural women had explained their silence by a range of factors, among which the most frequently cited reason was the dominating state of patriarchal structures that exists in every part of society. Victims were the targets of

not only domestic violence but also of the attitude of other institutions like state. Several victims had claimed that whenever a women approach for help in the police station, they sometimes expand the problem more for them by allowing the structures of patriarchy to redefine the issues of women victimization that mostly results in victim blaming. As a result, women have stopped reporting the abuse related to domestic violence. In this way, patriarchal systems are obstacles not only in creating violence against women but in spreading this societal problem at a wider scale. This structure not only stress on socializing boys and girls to accept the dominance of men throughout life but it also perpetuates and normalizes violence as an acceptable or tolerable means of asserting power and resolving conflict among the sexes. Hence violence is seen as a manifestation of male superiority. And the ideology related to this structure enforces distinct gender roles and hierarchy within the family and society at large through the punishment of transgressions. All of this demonstrates that the status, value and power of women are always lower as compared to men.

It was found that parental pressure in combination with social pressure usually forces a woman to stay in abusive relationship. In such a scenario, husband fully exploits his wife because he knows that his violent behavior would not be challenged by anyone and in this confidence along with societal approval, he continue to exploit his partner to the fullest. One of the important reasons why violence against women persists more in rural parts is the lack of choices amongst the victims. The structure of patriarchy has divided the power between the sexes whereby the powerful controls the weaker sex. The weaker one has actually left with no choice rather than to stick to their gender roles which are prescribed by the structure itself. And it emphasizes the dominance of men and submissive attitude of women. As a result, victims not only experience violence but they feel guilt in themselves for maintaining the poor quality of the relationship with their family. In such cases generally, parents also refuse to keep the daughters' at their place. That's why victims commonly believe that it is better to suffer in silence and they keep hoping for improvement. But it is usually observed in cases of violence that without support and proper aid, violence gets only worse and worse. Hence we can say that a large number of women are living in an environment where violence is considered as the women's fortune and the husband's

true right. Our study describes rural women's absolute helplessness in the phase of ongoing abuse that is, her inability that she cannot plan for her wellbeing within the in-laws family and she cannot even unravel herself from her relationship with the abuser. This hypothesis is directly linked to the patriarchal theory. Our study shows that the patriarchal structures are deeply rooted in this region and this practice is merely a selfish act whereby motivation is being given to the individuals in employing the comprehensive and instrumental use of violence to achieve a desired social end that is to control the women. Honor is attached with a woman in order to maintain status and social standing within the society. If a woman violates any norm, violence is used as a corrective force for sustaining social order generated by patriarchal structures. By looking at the information we can say that violence against women is a consequence of patriarchy and a part of systematic venture in keeping male domination within family as well as society. Hence the patriarchal setup of this rural region of Punjab could not allow a woman to find a place for herself. Similarly, Dobash and Dobash (1979) argue that the cause of violence against wives and others who are powerless and feeble in the family stems from the subordinate positions they occupy in relation to men. The power differentials are especially confronted, maintained and reinforced within the intimate relationships of a patriarchal family system.

In the present research, perceptions of abused women towards violence and gender roles were also examined. Findings had revealed that 58 percent of women did not approve violence in any manner. Majority of the women in all the districts believe that a woman must fight back against the violence in order to save their lives. Whereas 48 percent of respondents had accepted violence and they also justified the violent behavior of their husband on various grounds. This trend was mainly highest in Mansa district as compared to other two districts of Malwa region. Illiteracy was more in district Mansa as compared to other two districts and therefore rural women living in the villages of district Mansa were found holding the old religious values that deem husband as being superior to wife and retaliating against him considered as the biggest sin. Few informants who have been suffering severe violence were found perceiving their husband equal to god. So these rural women had expressed their

strong urge to submit to their husband's authority in their arguments. On the other hand, some informants in district Muktsar and Ferozepur had expressed their slight high levels of agreement that a woman has somewhere a right to express her judgments even if she disagrees with her partner.

Violence was measured as a tool, often employed by the men to correct the women's actions within the family settings. Moreover this tool was seen having a strong association with men's sense of entitlement to certain masculine rights and these entitlements range from having domestic tasks carried out for them to having dowry given to them and to their families according to their choice and so forth. Domestic violence related to rural women for not cooking meals properly was seen linked with men's sense of entitlement to meals cooked by his wife in accordance with the taste, style and time that he prefers essentially. On the other side, failure in performing the tasks properly forces the men to punish the wife. Hence many informants in the study had claimed the use of violent behavior in different familial situations. And the abuse was reported to be more fatal under the perpetrator's intake of alcohol or other drugs. Findings suggest that majority of women in all the three districts believe that if woman experiences violence in a relationship, it will usually happen again however those women who fight back against the abusers, the situations at times get improved. Overall in all the districts, women believe that violence is usually fuelled when the wife argues or acts in a way which is perceived to challenge the husband's power. And the main reason of violence which was quite common in all the districts was when the women were seen with any other men, and it leads to severe beatings. In this region, husband who found his wife committing adultery could kill her. On the other hand, husband who cheated his wife were found having no such legal threat. This point shows that wives who somehow violate the norms and brings dishonor to the husband, they deserve to be assaulted, even fatally. Majority of women did not agree that physical violence between couples is a secretive matter that should be handled within the family. Such respondents had also rejected the notion that it is always a woman's duty to surrender to her partner. Nearly one among five of those surveyed, had strongly agreed that physical violence that occurs between couples should be handled within the family only. Findings suggest that in district

Mansa where the respondents had less education with no work opportunities believe that husband could beat his wife because of his right over the partner and secondly to control the women.

It is clear from the present study that violence and illiteracy are significantly correlated with each other. Among these Punjabi societies, illiteracy is a contributive factor to women's predisposition to violent behavior. It was seen that ignorant women here holds a very isolated style of life – with no means of employment in hand being uneducated and all the time doing tough labor within the four walls of home that often goes unpaid and unrecognized. And those women who were employed somewhere in all the districts also possess very low status job because of the kind of opportunity structure available to them in these villages of Malwa region. Majority of the respondents (47.3 percent) had their own income less than five thousand rupees, so low income and resultant poverty did not provide them much help in dealing with violent situations. Around 54 percent of the respondents were from joint families and the data shows that violence is more in joint families as compared to other structures of the family because of the greater demand of adjustment in joint families. Many victims of severe violence had highlighted the idea that living together of so many women beneath one roof invites quarrel on petty issues due to their different tastes, demands and linkages with dissimilar family backgrounds.

Attempts were made to assess the structural factors responsible for the continuities of violence patterns in contemporary Punjab. In order to gather the perception of rural women on the structural factors, in-depth interviews were done by selecting 8-10 women belonging to different villages of Malwa region. Discussion with these women had demonstrated various factors like patriarchal structures, rising drug abuse, son preference over girls, problem of high dowry demands and the low decision-making power of the women within the family. In the state of Punjab, patriarchal structure dominates the life and situation of rural women. Findings also suggest that the socialization given to daughters by their parents teaches them strict discipline. The message conveyed by the parents clearly stresses the accomplishment that is to make the girl obey immediately, without questioning and without any argument. Therefore parents who make their daughter learn living in a strict

obedience do a big favor to their future son-in-law. This type of rigid patriarchal teachings provides men virtually rampant power with little or no power to the women on the other side. And these types of patriarchal teachings are in fact responsible to compel the women in accepting abuse. In such a scenario, the treatment of a daughter-in-law in the matrimonial home centers mainly upon the size of dowry given before, during or after the marriage. The feasible effects of these problems are evident in the region as the number of suicides and dowry deaths have gone up than the past times. The numbers of reported cases are still low because the victims of violence who are suffering this menace have a very scarce understanding about their rights. Moreover the rising rates of drug abuse in the state have also putting its harmful effect on the families and its structure. In such circumstances, where the young generation is floating in the sea of alcohol and drugs, resultant poverty along with old and harmful practices generate the conditions of fear and violence for women within the family settings. Efforts have been made to portray the condition of victims of how they are facing abuse and violence right after their delivery as the culture does not permit them to give birth to a female child. Findings in the study drew our attention to the stories of many victims who were given torture and humiliations both by the husband and in-laws on this account and it was found that many rural women were subjected to abuse and extreme beatings, as well as substantially deprived of good health and proper standard of life. Social conservativeness, ignorance and less or no education and to the larger degree, poverty plays a significant role in generating such an atmosphere in these villages where women on giving birth to a baby-girl experience violence from their own family members.

Besides the hypotheses which were tested, a few other facts also emerged from the study. Like in many villages, children belonging to lower class took active part in the interview as they were describing their mother's situation from their point of view. Some of the respondents had even marked their children's familiarity with their incidents of domestic violence. It was seen that a large number of rural woman are not themselves aware in this region, so they are conveying the same message to the next generation also. And the people's stress is not to overcome the problem and their way of thinking lags quite behind the views of contemporary world. Few small

children described those situations when they were used and manipulated by the abuser to hurt their mother more. Some of these children had described the atmosphere of their home as completely unpredictable due to the ongoing stress and nervousness created by the perpetrator all the time within the family. Some of them had described their incapacities in providing relief to their mother but they keep on estimating when it might occur next so that they could try again to defend their mother. Findings of the present study show that children living in such violent conditions suffer from emotional and psychological distress because the atmosphere of such families is dominated predominantly by tension and horror. These children will usually see their mother threatened, demeaned or physically or sexually assaulted by their father or by any other member in the family unit. Instead of experiencing emotionally and physically safe and sound environment, these children are forced by their own family members to keep worrying all the time about the safety and life of their loved ones. Such children hardly gets the time for leisure, relaxation or planning for the future, which is essential at that age for the development of their personality and for their better future.

Our study shows that violence is a learnt behavior. Children who participated in the interviews did not express any sense of horror but took the issues of violence normally. Since boys in Punjabi society have grown up seeing violence in their homes, so they do not think that they are doing anything against the norm by beating their wives. It was also found that girls who have experienced violence in their parents' relationship were more likely to accept it in their life as a right of the husband over the wife. Many victims in the study had accepted the notion that violence is the right of their partner. In this way people have the mindset in rural villages that violence is a customary part of married life. However, the extent to which they accept violence differed. The theory of social learning holds the same belief that parental violence is related to spousal aggression. The theory of social learning has been presented in the work of Gayford (1975), Roy (1977), Schulman (1979), Straus et al (1980), Pagelow (1981), Rosenbaum and O' Leary (1981) Fagan et al (1983).

Though the change in rural areas is slow but nowadays the traditional perception of Punjabi women as patient, forgiving and inferior has in fact begun to

change in few families with one in which she can strongly fight for achieving equal opportunities and can also protect her rights. In addition, parents are also providing more support to the girls and their thinking for the girls has undergone drastic change. And due to this reason, the divorce rates have also gone up in the villages. Earlier parents used to tell their girls during time of departure that your husband house is your only house and only your dead body will come out of those doors but now day's parents do not suggest such code of conduct to their girls. Some respondents had revealed their stories how the support of their parents and brothers rendered a great help to them during their bad days. Few women spoke about the help of their family members in getting divorce from the cruel husband and only a few of them get happily adjust again with their second partner.

Very few women have been given support and assistance by their families in their circumstances to cope up with stress but there are more than thousands of women in this region who are suffering the same abuse in silence. They do not have any knowledge, support and even hope left in their life. The conditions of fear and violence within their family have made them insensitive alike slaves. To bring improvement in the conditions of these rural women, a modification in our deep-rooted mind-set and ethics is the most important requisite. The present research had also revealed that early marriage of the girls within the villages has its own drawbacks. It is essential that parents must change their attitude towards their daughters and a girl should be married at a suitable age only when she attain physical and mental maturity so that she can successfully fulfill her responsibilities of married life. A girl has to adjust more after marriage because she has been assigned not only the complex role of a wife but many other roles within the new family, that is of a daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt and so on and such roles demand extra care and responsibility, which can only be promising if the person is mature enough. So marriage at higher age would enable the women not only to fulfill their obligations but also to resolve their marital conflict and to seek suitable help when needed. Many cases have been brought to the notice where women have been misbehaved with or even tortured by their mother-in-law for dowry or other reasons. Many victims had brought into notice the birth of a female child within the family to be the reason

behind their torture by their own husband as well as by the mother-in-law. Data shows that such a prevailing ideology has been creating problems in the families and the result is severe violence against women especially when a woman tries to control and manipulate the life of another woman. People should be given counseling as well as knowledge by the help of lectures or through documentary films that a daughter-in-law is not a scapegoat for all kinds of chaos that happens in their family. She is also a human being and someone's daughter. Sooner or later, they would eventually have to face up the consequences of their actions. They will reap whatever they sow, so it's better that they should change their attitude towards their daughter-in-law, otherwise in their old age, the cycle of abuse may attack them also.

Among Punjabis, it is always the elder members of the family who make selection of the bridegroom for their girl. So girls normally express their feelings to the family through the help of songs like 'Devin ve babla us ghare' (Send me only to such a house, father). This famous song is related to the feelings of a Punjabi girl where she is expressing her desire to go into a family where the mother-in-law will be kind and virtuous and the father-in-law would also hold a well-regarded position in the society. The girl further says that the mother-in-law would have many sons so that she will always remain busy in celebrating marriages and that family will also have many buffaloes in abundance and the girl will always be busy in churning curd and making butter. The evidence of such songs in our culture shows the subjugating position of women in her parental house. On the other hand, the problem of wife-battering is also well marked in folk songs of Punjab. Women folk at the time of celebrating rituals and ceremonies like marriage commonly dance and try to create fun in their groups on the beats of folk songs like - 'Mainu bada kuteya, te mein bada royi. Raati dengad dengad hoyi' (A woman cries out her unhappiness in this verse. She says that last night her husband beat her very badly and she cried a lot. She also tells that there were a lot of loud noises coming out when the husband was beating her). Indirectly, songs also prepare these women to accept that subjugation and oppressive situations for women are normal in the Punjabi society. Violence is generally a learned behavior rather than biologically determined behavior. The patterns of violence that are shown to the audience through mass media need to be

reduced so that it can efficiently transmit only positive thoughts among people. Only with the help of ideal programs on television, everyone will recognize the problem of violence against women and its resulting consequences and only then people will appreciate the immediate need of taking corrective steps within the families. It is therefore suggested that for bringing awareness in rural villages on the issue of violence against women, an effective media strategy should be planned and implemented by the government of India as soon as possible.

The core cause for violence against women within this region is illiteracy. Education can play a key role in transforming a society's discriminatory attitudes and gender roles. Increased access to education is the main key for the empowerment of women and girls which reduces their vulnerability to gender-based violence. Therefore more girls' school and colleges should be established for girls at every district headquarters and towns. Implementing primary prevention programs such as life skills training program, gender sensitization and sex education in all schools and colleges will go a long way. And the trend of taking and giving dowry that takes place by and large in this region cannot be discouraged by law alone but by imparting moral education within the schools to young minds. Moreover legal knowledge should be imparted to women within the villages and backward areas and for this purpose literacy camps should be conducted by the voluntary organizations from time to time. At village level, voluntary organizations should establish pre-marital counseling program in order to help people to learn new ways of building strong and happy relationships after their marriage.

In our study, all helpless women who have been at the receiving end of an insensitive husband and in-laws reported that they lack knowledge about their rights as well as regarding the acts made by the government. And even police and other professionals attached with the services of providing relief to the victims have very little knowledge about such acts. Majority of victims in the study had shown their disappointment as there are no facilities like victim relief centers or self help groups in order to provide help and aid to women in their stressful situations. Among them, many victims had discussed their problems in lodging complaints as they do not trust the policemen. There is an urgent need to set up support facilities in police stations to

make certain that the complaints lodged by victims of violence with the police are taken sincerely as well as effectively. There should be women police available at these police stations to help and assist the victims. The training programs for all these professionals who may end up dealing with victims facing violent behavior in their families must be strengthened so that the victims are met with the proper care and respect. There should be women cells and shelter homes available for deprived women in resolving the situations of trauma and strain in their life. Some helpline number should also be launched in order to trace the victims and by giving proper representation to these women in the formation of active welfare committees at village level would also prove fruitful. Violence against women should actually be tackled only with strict laws and their practical implementation. The active role of women rights organizations along with free or inexpensive delivery of education and medical facilities especially to the poor women is also an important step in achieving the desired goal. The state government should also carry out the implementation of comprehensive strategies addressing violence against women that are sensitive to the requirements and safety of the victims and hold offenders accountable for their crimes. The coordinated efforts of different sectors such as legal, educational and medical are important to combat violence against women in this region.

No doubt in this contemporary world, women's organizations have put violence against women on public agendas but they have not achieved the goal of eliminating it. Data in the study shows that men are the majority of perpetrators of violence against women, so there is a need to involve men. Their roles in preventing and combating violence against women would definitely prove beneficial in the long run. Both men and women would be engaged together in order to transform the unequal gender relations that exists within the society. There is an urgent need to break the silence in such backward areas where nobody reaches to hear and feel their plight. Violence against women is not just a woman's issue but primarily a political, social, economic and cultural issue that concerns men as well should be highlighted widely. People in rural areas should be taught that the endorsement of respectful and nonviolent relationships among men and women is not only the responsibility of partners for their personal as well familial growth but also for the development of the

communities and societies in which they live. It is also essential to keep on addressing the new modified ideas and messages so that the beliefs and attitudes that are already deep rooted in our social structures which generate a social climate that ignores violence against women would be changed. Another strategy that will work in this region involves engaging village elders or those who are in respected and responsible positions like a teacher, sarpanch, doctor or any other higher grade officer of the village. This strategy will definitely help in the modification of social norms. By intervening at the places where violence against women actually occurs, the extent of this abuse can be stopped as there are arrays of opportunities in which people that belong to different privileged fields can demonstrate that violence will not be tolerated within the community. There is a need to raise a voice against the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that support or condone violence against women – such as culture and media that reflects the practice of violence against women. So the involvement of more active, educated and aware personalities could change the perception of the public. The elimination of violence from the family is a prerequisite for a civilized society, application of effective strategies combined with the capacity to implement them will surely make a difference within the present society.