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**SOCIO-CULTURAL CAUSES OF INCREASING POLYGyny,
EXPLOITATION AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A CASE
STUDY OF A VILLAGE BAIG SOUTH PUNJAB**

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Abstract:

Specific cultural traditions determine exploitation that leads to violence against women. The community has had been prisoned by the cultural conventions for a long period of time and these conventions encourage the male members of the village to commit violence against their wives, sisters and even their mothers. This study aims to identify the specific traditions of polygamous marriages and domestic violence. Further it was to identify the violence behavior of male's members in terms of cultural phenomenon. For this qualitative study purposive sampling technique was applied for data collection. Moreover, in-depth interviews were conducted from targeted population. This research

study shows the socio-cultural tradition of polygamy that is encouraging the violent behavior of the male members of the village. Wata Satta (exchange marriage) is most common phenomenon found in the village that leads towards domestic violence. The study was conducted in Basti Baig, Tehsil and District Dera Ghazi Khan. Civil Society Organizations with the assistance of local government can engage the native religious clerics, lawyers, teachers, and local political as well as community leaders to eradicate the domestic violence.

Introduction:

Internalization of specific cultural traditions is the part and parcel component of socialization in the community. In the patriarchal society, each and every act of males is legitimized throughout the socialization adventures (Michael, 2004). The socialization in terms of violence as male socialization is a socialization to the legitimacy of violence. Such patriarchal socialization to the legitimacy of violence against women leads the males to be able to have right to beat the women as violence is thus the tool that use constantly to control women as a result of highly internalized patriarchal conditioning which accords men the right to beat their wives (Subadra, 1999). Considering the rights to commit violence against women, males have been internalized that the exploitation as well as violence become the part of daily activities as the problem of violence against women in Ghana is a real one, and in determining how Ghanaians could have been socialized into accepting wife beating as part of the day –to-day activities of life (King, 2006).

Violence against women is a world-wide problem (Robinson, 2003), but the existing patterns of violence, as well as its causes are culturally unique because attitudes towards violence against women may differ across and within the socio-cultural groups because of different influences of structural factors, such as gender and nationality (Nayak, 2003). To commit violence against women on the specific cultural event means to disguise the prevalence of patriarchal patterns in the community as in the Somali community members indicate that physical violence is viewed as an unacceptable means of conflict resolution; it is viewed as an acceptable means of maintaining the patriarchal structure of the family (Pan, 2006). Cultural variations determine the incidences of violence against women accordant to its particular unique social environment as a large body of literature documents variations in the incidence of violence against women, which suggest that there are culturally unique factors. The specific cultural causes of violence can be tackled through particular socio-cultural techniques as Nayak says that violence prevention and intervention strategies must address the culture-specific factors that support continued violence against women.

Table No. 1: Demographic Data of the Village.

Age	Gender		Literate	Illiterate
1-5	Male	141	0	141
	Female	162	0	162

5-12	Male	132	125	7
	Female	143	39	104
13-30	Male	102	55	47
	Female	102	11	91
31-49	Male	89	18	71
	Female	85	4	81
50 and Above	Male	6	3	3
	Female	11	0	11

Source: Field Data

Literature Reviews:

The current society is considered as patriarchal society in which male dominancy is conceded. Male domination leads towards violence and exploitation of women in every sphere of life. When we discuss the violent behavior of men, it means every sort of violence that is committed by males categorically. There are particular cultural forms of violence in the society but the American define that domestic violence occurs between domestic partners and encompass verbal, physical, emotional, sexual and financial abuse (Pan, 2006). The specific cultural forms of violence is prevailing in the various communities but the domestic violence is suffered by women on a regular basis in the form of psychological or physical abuse (Visaria, 2000).

Exploitation and violence against women are not a particular issue of an Asian community but a lot of case studies have been reported from entire glob. Male domination is visible in the whole universe that is why social scientists like Nayak argues that violence against women has been well established as a universal phenomenon (Nayak, 2003). Violence against women is worldwide problem that has devastating effects o women’s physical and mental health. (Mouelhy, 2004).

Since centuries, continuous repetitive behavior is internalized in the community and that digested attitude becomes the tradition of the community. Particularly in Asian community, women have not been considered as significant as men and exploitation and violence against women is the culture specific custom of the community. The violent behavior of males is never being taken as problem for the community. The social scientists who are working on the gender domains like King states that he very quickly realized at the time that he was going against the grain of tradition. He was of the view that he was dealing with a problem that was “not a problem”. In many presentations, he has described this phenomenon as interfering with tradition (King, 2006).

Andocentric approach has always been the problem for women in the patriarchal society because in such a situation woman have to live as subordinate. So, the women considered as controlled segment of the society. In the suppressed environment, a little bit mistake

from women leads to face exploitation and as well as violence that can interfere with women's ability to work and may result in loss of welfare benefits and poorer economic outcomes (Tolman & Wang, 2005).

Through the entitlements of masculinity and femininity, the identification of men and women is possible but the dilemma of the society is that masculinity is symbol of famous, strong and privileged position in the community. So, the identification mechanism is being used by the males for their own benefits. In this scenario, of course, in a male dominant gender system, men are more likely to adhere to such beliefs and apply them to their own behavior, as they are more likely to be in a privileged position to act on and receive the entitlements of masculinity than women are (Brush, 2005). Despite differences in race, cultures, religion and income, a common theme emerges i.e., gender-based violence is a learned behavior linked to male power, privilege and dominance in the family and in the society (Robinson, 2003). Violence has long been understood as the best way to ensure that others publicly recognize one's manhood (Kimmel, 2004).

The possession of privacy is the worldwide concept and everyone has one's own intelligentsia as well as confidentialities. Disclosure of such secrets is problems for every person. The concept of privacy is also applied on the societal level. In the Asian community, violence against women within the family may be farmed as a private event (Tower, 2006). Feminists are focusing on the women rights particularly in Asia but generally on global level. Women rights activists are playing vital roles to eradicate violence against women. Different kinds of avenues to diminish the violent attitude of the males in Asian community but Bhanot and Senn suggested that from a prevention perspective, the findings suggest that preventive efforts should be focused on changing the traditional gender role attitudes in South Asian men. An initial step may be to conduct educational workshops or interventions that highlight the importance of gender equality (Bhanot., & Senn, 2007). Promoting the eradication of elements in traditional norms and religious beliefs, practices and stereotypes which legitimize and exacerbate the persistence and tolerance of violence against women, and children (Review of African political economy, 999).

Introducing and supporting gender sensitization and public awareness programs aimed at eradicating violence against women and children. Education at all levels is required to change attitudes which perpetuate violence despite laws which forbid it (Robinson, 2003). It is false perception that every male member has same violent behavior whereas most of males have no any kind of aggressive attitude. So, in the prevention perspective, Cermele says that non-perpetrating men can be involved in preventing violence and supporting victims and surveyors (Cermele, 2007). The law enforcing machineries have an important role to play in the checking of the phenomenon of violence against women (Subadra, 1999). Few laws are on the books protecting women from partner abuse and even when laws exist, the male dominated police and judicial system do not enforce them and often participate in further abuse and exploitation.

Male dominating society has authorized men to make women as dependent socially, psychologically and more over economically. So, the dependent class of the society has to face any kind attitude of dominating part of the community. Through the aggression of

the males, females are victimized as Chamberland and Laporte focused that the domestic violence scenarios to which respondents were exposed show men as aggressors and women as victims (Chamberland, Fortin, & Laporte, 2007). The dependent as well as subordinate class of the society should have to adhere to all kinds of orders by the authorized class i.e., men. Physical violence, as well as less explicit forms of aggression is used as methods to ensure obedience (Karlekar, 1998).

Social environment determines the behavior of the people in the community. It can never be said that violent attitude of the male is just an individual problem but violent behavior is inherited by the older members of the society through socialization process. So, social environment and socialization is playing a significant role to build violent habits of the men. Cermele steers that Men's violence against women, broadly defined remains a serious individual, social and cultural problem (Cermele, 2007).

Economy of an individual as well as society has crucial role to build the image of that individual and society. Healthy economic condition indicates the prosperity and peace of the community. Fights, contentions and disputes are the product of poor economic situation. So, social activists who are working to curtail the poverty argue that the primary cause of violence is poverty in any kind of community as Riger and Krieglstein said that advocates for the poor are likely to see intimate violence as product of poverty (Riger & krieglstein, 2000). Unemployment or low socio-economic status has consistently been found the contribution to family violence (Tsun & Lui Tsang, 2005).

Various theories are prevailing regarding violence against women as some of the social scientists highlights that just male members of the society are not responsible about their aggression and violent behavior. They argue that women also create such environment that leads rude attitude of males towards their women. In this dimension of the violent mind set of the males, women should have to be careful regarding the reaction of the masculinity. Some critics argue that theories of intimate violence implicate women in the causation of their own abuse (Riger & krieglstein, 2000).

In his study (Norsworthy, 20003) has focused the status of women in the andocentric approach because the following comment shows the insignificant women in the society. Men are like the rice grain, you throw it and it will grow, women are like the husk it would not grow so you toss it away. Human rights activists should have restructured the above mentioned idea regarding the women position in the community.

Methodology:

This research was conducted in the gender sensitive area where gender segregation is on full swim due to the social, cultural and religious barriers of interaction among women and men in the community. Through key informants, it was impossible to collect authentic information regarding violence against women. The field work was conducted from December 2020 to March 2021 in Basti Baig. Gender wise strata were selected for interviews from the target population. There were selected key informants through purposive sampling technique for collection of qualitative information including two women and one man. There were 503 women of all age groups from a total population of 973 in the village. There were selected 25 men and women respondents through

purposive sampling. There were conducted 15 in-depth interviews from women and 10 from men respondents. For this purpose, a semi-structures interview guide was used as a tool to collective required information.

Discussion and Analysis:

Each society has culture of its own and within that circle of culture individuals have to adopt the traditions of prevalent culture. The tradition of Watta Satta marriages (exchange marriages) is the major cause of exploitation of women in the village. This research has indicated that a vast majority of the marriages are arranged as exchange marriages having purposes to protect women against exploitation and violence from male members of the community. It found int the study that if one man is committing violence against his wife, his sister or any other relative member also being exploited and are victimized by her husband, who has been married through the custom of exchange marriage. The phenomenon is that in the exchange marriage, if one man is non violent having polite nature who do not want to exploit his wife but in the other side his sister or relative who has been exploited and victimized. In this scenario, the non-violent persons have been forced particularly by their parent to exploit and commit violence against his wife. But, generally the whole family expects to revenge. In this complicated situation, this research has focused that the helpless women who faced victimization, exploitation and violence. A miner conflict in the family can cause violence against women.

Further, endogamous marriages are the other form of traditional marriages in the village. After Watta Sata marriages (exchange marriages), the tradition of endogamous marriages are preferred in the village. In such sort of marriages, parallel and cross-cousin marriages are arranged. The rationale behind endogamy is the security of females from exploitation and violence. But this research has indicated that three cases of exogamous marriages were reported and the couples were more pleased and felt convenient than that of endogamy married couples in the village. In spite of these cases, the villagers were still primordial in practicing the endogamous marriages particularly because of tradition of forefathers and generally fear of insecurity of the girl. Such forced endogamous marriages were leading not only towards exploitation and violent behavior of the male members of the village but also these were cause of conflicts among families and such conflicts force the villages towards polygamous marriages. After the second marriage, the male has no more concerns with the prior wife except. The recent tendency of polygamous marriages is the alarming condition for the females of the villages. In the last two years, four persons have arranged the second marriages due to the conflicts and their prior wives have been deprived of even the basic necessities of life.

The respondents stated that the inter-village marriages were not preferred. The rationale of the endogamous marriages and intra-village marriage preferences are same having protection of the girls from domestic violence. After the such marriage, parents considered that their daughters were no more insecure but with the passage of time, when males exploit and commit violence against their wives and such kind of behavior of the males create new conflict that leads more violence against women because after marriages, husbands do not have to face any kind of threat from his wife's family against his violent behavior. In the condition, parents call their daughter to their home and make their stay possible at their parent's home that can cause a prolonged conflict among the families

which leads toward polygamous marriages. In such cases, females are facing a profile of exploitation of violence as females prolonged their stay at their parents' home without divorce. In this transitional phase of life, females are helpless in doing something and they have to face some sort of abusive language not only from their brothers, sisters, and brothers' wives and even from her parents as well as neighbors.

Taunting behavior of the villagers is also the traditional factor which forces the males to exploit and violence against women. Some specific terms are used and jokes are cracked against those males who have none violent behavior towards women. Such particular terms have been internalized through socialization process. The following local penetrated terms and their meanings, Run da Mureed (Servant Of wife), Run da Dalla (Inferior from wife), Nak Kapiya (without Nose because nose is symbol of honor in the village). The above-mentioned local terms are playing a vital role to push the males to commit violence against women because each and every member of the community have to be more conscious about back biting of the people using these terms.

There is common tradition of early marriage in the village. In such case most commonly the age of girl is around 14 and the boy around 18 years. The tradition of early marriages causes the polygamous marriages in the village. Polygamous marriages are making cause of violence against women because men have started to keep two wives and prior wife is left helpless with her children. She is deprived of every kind of necessities particularly sexual rights. This research has indicated 11 cases in which women are leading their life in much pathetic conditions. Their husbands are enjoying their life with their second wives leaving their prior wife helpless.

In spite all kinds of exploitation and violence against women, divorce rate is zero in the village because it is unacceptable behavior in the village. The major cause of zero rate of divorce is that the divorced woman has nothing opportunity to get second marriage within the village particularly but generally in the outside the village. In this scenario, women have been internalized and socialized to face all sorts of exploitation and violence from their husbands. In this kind of socialization process, the mother of the girl is playing a major role because she herself has also been gone through the bitter experiences. This the reasons that the mother of bride advices here daughter to bear any kind of violent behavior of her husband.

Through in-depth interviews married females indicated that their husbands demanded them to be more beautiful and decorative but without money it is impossible to do so. They also said that when their husbands give nothing, they cannot fulfill this kind of demand of their husbands. Then they have to face a lot of violent behavior from their husbands. There is another tradition in the village that widow cannot get her second marriage. She has to lead her rest of life without husband in the community and also she has to face expenses of the children. Even they have opportunity to get marriage but fear of tradition, they cannot do so. There are 15 cases of such widows in the community who are leading unbearable life facing expenses of the children.

The factor of literacy plays a vital role in the prevalence of tradition. Lesser the formal education, more the custom and tradition of violence against women prevail in the

village. The described picture of school education is that only one government primary school for girls was working in the village. This primary school consisted of just two rooms with a sitting capacity of up to 40 girls. There were only two teachers appointed in the school, who had to travel around 18 kilometers round trip for reaching to school. The qualification of the teachers was just intermediated. In the final exams of fifth class, teachers try to make such arrangements through which students may copy from other school students to pass the exams. This research indicates that a vast majority of enrolled girls in the school stop their education after fifth class exam. The interesting thing is that mothers have to bear the expenses of education of their daughters because the fathers do not consider their responsibility to face the daughters, educational expenses.

Due to the early marriages, according to field data there are a lot of myths and stereotypes prevailing regarding family planning programs. It has also been observed that most of the females have faith on those prevailing myths regarding the family planning programs and males believe in the speeches of local mullah. There are countless irrational stories regarding family planning program. As a female respondent narrated her story that one night a woman who was using the contraceptives dreamt that she heard a voice of children from the well (indigenous water pool for irrigation of the barren land) and those children were saying that they were of her children whom yet to come in the world. They were also requesting to her not to use contraceptives so that they may come in the world. Such kind of mythical stories are the major hindrances towards practicing the family planning programs.

There is not a single institution working for the welfare of women in the village. Due to the privacy and gender sensitivity, the people of the village have no acceptance of the external institutions. Therefore, the fear of private does not permit any kind of institutional intervention in the community. There have never been observed even conducting the research survey in the village from any kind of Local, National, and International NGO.

The aptitude of the male members of the community is to work either in the village or within other adjacent villages. They do not want to go outside district to earn their livelihood even in the unemployment circumstances. Such a specific mentality of the males pushes to live within the village for a long time and the permanent residence in the homes make possible more interaction between husband and wife. The long stay of the husbands within the village is also factor of exploitation as well as violence against women. The specific tradition of the village is that males have access to the electronic as well as print media but there are only 10 to 12 households who have TVs in their homes. The access of females towards newspaper is impossible because of high illiteracy rate among females of the community. It is also a cultural tradition that there is not a single male member who brings newspaper to home. Lack of access to the media, the educated segment of female population has no exposure regarding the external environment.

Due to the high illiteracy rate, there is not a single woman who knows about the legal obligation against violence. During the research, it was told that there was no case of domestic violence submitted to the judiciary yet now. This research has indicated that commonly villagers tried their level best to get their earnings either in the native areas of

the village or in their union council. This is the reason that males prefer to live within the village for a long period of time and they do not want to go outside of the village. Having to lead the whole life in the very same village, they lack the external exposure; lack the confidence to interact with other people of the community. So, due to the lack of external exposure, most of the males are adhering the traditions, conventions as well as indigenous regulations in which they have been socialized. Moreover, fear of privacy in the non-violent individuals in the community; increasing tendency of sexual exploitation of women from their idle husbands; lack of awareness in the community; and mother-in-law and daughter-in-law (Saas Bahu) conflict.

Conclusion:

Village (Basti) Baig has its own cultural conventions and traditions as well. Men' violence against women, broadly defined remains a serious individual, social and cultural problem (Cermele, 2007). These traditions are prevailing for a long period of time in the community. Such traditions can be broken down through unique techniques as suggested by the female respondents of the community. A vast majority of the women respondents were of the view that myths related educated girls can be vanished through provision of higher education in the community. For the persuasion towards education, educated girls of community should be offered teaching related government jobs. "Knowledge is power", the development of community education programs focusing on the women rights, income generation methods, and social change, contribute to raising women's status in society (Norsworthy, 2003). Education and knowledge are seen as a key to the obliteration of the social ills (Tower, 2006). Education at all levels is required to change attitudes which perpetuate violence despite laws which forbid it (Robinson, 2003). Violence of males against women is considered a private as well as domestic issue in the community. Violence within the family may be farmed as a private event (Tower, 2006). Civil society organizations should intervene in the community to run a campaign of awareness regarding the women rights and these organizations can sensitize the governmental institutions as well as affluent people of the community to come forward to eradicate the issue as soon as possible. NGOs can play a fundamental role through their awareness raising campaigns, advocacy activities, out-reach preventions programs and through providing assistance and shelters to victims (Mouelhy, 2004). Introducing and supporting gender sensitization and public awareness programs aimed at eradicating violence against women and children (Review of African political economy, 1999). Exposure visits for the males particularly and generally for the females should be arranged by the civil society organizations. The non-violent people of the community should be involved to solve that issue. In the prevention perspective, Cermele says that non-perpetrating men can be involved in preventing violence and supporting victims and surveyors (Cermele 2007).

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