

Survivor To Her Savior

Manju Arya

Research Scholar from Centre for the Study of Social Systems (CSSS),
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Abstract: The paper attempts to give a clear picture of how patriarchy exists in the society. The conversation between the mother and the daughter both of them being a domestic violence survivor gives the sociological insight about how women negotiate with domestic violence in their everyday lives. In the patriarchal structure where gender inequality has always been the norm amidst the pandemic in 2020 it gained visibility and gained serious attention to combat it and provide a safe and healthy environment for women.

From the fields of urban site of Lucknow, my hometown where I spent 32 years of my life, I got the opportunity to cover a bold story of a woman in the city. The story touched upon the women's life experiences they prefer to keep secret from the rest of the society. It was a challenge for me to cover highly sensitive experiences of domestic violence and canvassing it to give a color of their subjective meaning of those bitter yet secret moments of the shero of the story.

... Knock! Knock! It was 00:00 hours and domestic violence knocked at the door of my respondent when she was in her teens.

Yes mom...after a long silence mom replied, "Your father hit me". "All happened just because of you", her father hit the mom again while uttering those words. Not the new scene to be witnessed by and experienced by both the women, domestic violence survivors.

The very secret conversation between mom and daughter continued... "Why don't you take divorce from the abusive man", daughter asked. "Nowhere to go...society won't accept a divorced woman, daughter without father's name...I do nothing, no economic security...after a deep sigh mom completed, he will kill us". The night went in sharing of her brutal experiences with daughter.

Daughter couldn't sleep that night deciding her own future. No I can't be like my mom. I don't want to live my mom's life. I can't be slave of any man in my life...

And that night daughter dreamt of free and liberated life. She just wanted to break the cage of patriarchy. Till the date her struggle to liberate herself is not at an end.

METHODOLOGY

The paper is inspired by the domestic violence survivor's real life incident. After conducting the survey on women's life experiences and their subjective meaning of domestic violence in their everyday life, in February 2020, the author received the phone call from the respondent in April 2020. The author conducted the telephonic interview and recorded the narrative given by the respondent, domestic violence survivor. Site of field study was urban block of Lucknow district, Uttar Pradesh, India. Respondent gave her informed consent to cover her narrative. The privacy of her identity is maintained.