Gender- Based Violence in Morocco: Domestic Violence as Case in Point

Hayat Naciri

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Definition of domestic violence

Domestic violence or family violence can be best defined as an act of harmful, coercive treatment or behavior that takes place within the home wherein women together with children are always the potential victims of such maltreatment.

It is one of the most pervasive of human rights violations denying women self-esteem, equality, dignity and freedom.
Types of Domestic Violence against Women
Physical violence

It is an aggressive behavior that targets the body of the victim. It encloses the act of beating, kicking, pushing, pulling, slapping, punching and the like...
It is an attempt to control, intimidate and dominate another person’s behavior and thinking. This form of violence is extremely detrimental to the emotional mental well-being of the assaulted woman. A man may accomplish this as a means of keeping his partner regularly intimidated. When she is paralyzed with fear, he can feel in control.
Economic violence
Sexual violence

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Causes of Domestic Violence Against Women
Some of the men who batter their wives use alcohol and other drugs. They become violent while under the influence of these substances. This could lead one to believe that there is a strong relationship between alcohol and other drugs use and violence.
Societal Factors

Violence is often institutionalized, or formalized in societal structures, for instance in traditional laws and customs that permit husbands to physically punish their wives.
Socio-economic factors

Domestic violence in Morocco stems from the fact that women are economically dependent on men as providers for their families.
Effects of Domestic Violence against Women
Physical Outcomes of Domestic Violence

• Though it represents only one of other forms of violence, physical violence is among the most visible forms. Assaults result in injuries ranging from fractures, bruises to chronic disabilities such as partial or total loss of hearing or vision, and burns may lead to disfigurement.
• 62.8% of women in Morocco of ages 18-64 had been victims of some form of violence during the year preceding the study and 48% have been subjected to psychological abuse.

• This same study found that 55% of these acts of violence were committed by the victim’s husband, and the violence was reported by the wife in only 3% of such cases.
Psychological Outcomes of Domestic Violence

• The result of violence directed against women is dehumanization, derision, and humiliation of women and this engenders a sense of insecurity and fear in female victims.

• It prevents women from leading independent lives and prevents them from fully participating in the life of a family, community and society at large.
Impact of Domestic Violence on Children

It was proved that many of these children who have witnessed domestic violence or have themselves been battered often exhibit health and behavior problems, including frustration, instability, confusion and anger.
Approaches to Curb Domestic Violence against Women
Legislative Approach

• narrowing the judicial gap is inevitably a drastic measure that should be taken by Moroccan authorities to effectively curb the phenomenon and provide women with the independence and stability they deserve.
• to curb this social phenomenon, the Moroccan government should implement a Violence Against Women Law. This law should criminalize wife perpetration and punish the perpetrators.
• There should be a real cooperation between government and the civil society.
Religious Approach

- Moroccan people should work on the modification of social and cultural patterns of conduct that violate women’s human rights in the name of Islam.

- A significant step toward recognition of the rights of women as such is impossible without making reference to Islam.
Awareness-raising approach

• These mistreatments and violence can be avoided and stopped by information, education, and sensibilization.

• Women need to be empowered through employment opportunities.

• They also need to be provided with information about domestic violence and promote their rights and gender equality.

• build a culture of non-violence, and increase women’s control of their lives.

• strengthen women’s social networks.
• public awareness campaigns should use mass media to challenge gender norms and attitudes.
• raise awareness throughout society of violent behavior towards women and how to prevent it.
• Media interventions should use television, radio, newspapers, the internet, magazines and other printed publications to reach a wide range of people and affect change within society by altering social norms and values through public discussion and social interaction.
This wide-spreading phenomenon will not be eased until men, governments, and civil society organizations address the issue seriously. Women have a right to state protection even within the confines of the family home. Violence against women is perpetrated when legislation, law enforcement and judicial systems condone or do not recognize domestic violence as a crime. (UN)
Thank You