

ISSN : 2347-503X

Research Chronicler

International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

Vol II Issue I : January 2014

Editor-In-Chief

Prof. K. N. Shelke

www.research-chronicler.com

Research Chronicler

A Peer-Reviewed Refereed and Indexed International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

Volume II Issue I: January – 2014

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Spousal Violence: A Woman's Destiny**Dr. Archana & Dr. Pooja Singh***BBD NITM, Lucknow, (U.P.) India***Abstract**

Spousal violence and all related topics have been at the center of many an 'art' and commercial films, and may be a clear put-off for a majority of the audience. Be that as it may, it is one of the striking features of such films that they spend time on elaborating upon the little things that we do, to give a true-to-life depiction of life. It could be the small talk, or the mundane details that illustrate the psyche of the characters, even as they deal with larger issues. But it is often the bane of these films that the directors try to straddle the parameters governing two completely different approaches, churning out rather muddled projects.

Taking in account the two films *Abâ Bas!* And *Film Star*, Adler's psychological theory on inferiority complex is fit where he explains how a person suffering from inferiority complex tries to convert his inferiority into superiority by hiding his weaknesses therefore this theory of Adler goes with the concept of spousal violence where a husband tries to hide his weaknesses of extra marital relationships, inferiority and suspicious psychology with male chauvinism and thus converting his inferiorities into pre-eminence.

Key words: Spousal violence, inferiority, superiority, subjugation.

Spousal violence was recognized as a criminal offence in India in 1983. The offence chargeable under section 498-A of the Indian Penal Code that relates to Spousal violence is any act of cruelty by a husband (or his family) towards his wife. However, until recently, there was no separate civil law addressing the specific complexities associated with spousal violence, including the embedded nature of violence within familial networks, the need for protection and maintenance of abused women, and the fact that punishment and imprisonment for the husband may not be the best resolution in every case. Accordingly, after a decade-long process of consultations and revisions, a comprehensive Spousal

violence law, known as the Protection of Women from Spousal violence Act 2005, took effect in 2006. Key elements of the law include the prohibition of marital rape and the provision of protection and maintenance orders against husbands and partners who are emotionally, physically, or economically abusive.

International research has shown that spousal violence is one of the most common forms of violence experienced by women. Hence, violence perpetrated by the husband is measured in more detail than violence by other perpetrators. Specifically, violence by husbands is measured by using a greatly shortened and modified Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) (Strauss, 1990). The CTS has been found

to be effective in measuring Spousal violence and can be easily adapted for use in different cultural situations. In NFHS-3, spousal physical and sexual violence is measured using the following set of questions: (Does/did) your (last) husband ever do any of the following things to you:

- a) Slap you?
- b) Twist your arm or pull your hair?
- c) Push you, shake you, or throw something at you?
- d) Punch you with his fist or with something that could hurt you?
- e) Kick you, drag you or beat you up?
- f) Try to choke you or burn you on purpose?
- g) Threaten or attack you with a knife, gun, or any other weapon?
- h) Physically force you to have sexual intercourse with him even when you did not want to?
- i) Force you to perform any sexual acts you did not want to?

Emotional violence among ever-married women was measured in a similar way, using the following set of questions: (Does/did) your (last) husband ever:

- a) Say or do something to humiliate you in front of others?
- b) Threaten to hurt or harm you or someone close to you?
- c) Insult you or make you feel bad about yourself?

The questions were asked with reference to the current husband for women currently married and with reference to the most recent husband for women formerly but not currently married.

Women could respond 'yes' or 'no' to each item. In each instance of a 'yes' response, women were asked about the frequency of the act in the 12 months preceding the survey. A 'yes' response to one or more of items (a) to (g) above constitutes evidence of physical violence, while a 'yes' response to items (h) or (i) constitutes evidence of sexual violence. Note that widowed women, like other ever-married women were asked the questions related to the ever experience of spousal violence; however, unlike other ever-married women, they were excluded from the questions on violence in the past 12 months. Asking widows questions about recent experience of violence was thought to be unnecessary, since most current widows would not have had a living husband for some or all of the 12 month period preceding the survey.

Spousal violence and all related topics have been at the center of many an 'art' and commercial films, and may be a clear put-off for a majority of the audience. Be that as it may, it is one of the striking features of such films that they spend time on elaborating upon the little things that we do, to give a true-to-life depiction of life. It could be the small talk, or the mundane details that illustrate the psyche of the characters, even as they deal with larger issues. But it is often the bane of these films that the directors try to straddle the parameters governing two completely different approaches, churning out rather muddled projects.

In the movie *Abâ Bas!* Soumya [Diana Hayden] wins a beauty pageant and has the guys mesmerized by her looks. But shies away from marriage and thinks guys are not to be taken seriously. Karan [Shawar Ali], a tycoon, also present at the

pageant, is completely smitten by Soumya. Karan's attitude and respect for women have Soumya floored in no time. Karan wins Soumya's heart by taking resort to drama. He impresses her by rescuing her from a café-hoodlum's advances. On finding out later that the hoodlum was but Karan's friend and the two had set the small incident up to gain Soumya's confidence, she says, "Kitna bewakoof thi main." The inevitable happens and the two get married.

Soumya delivers a baby girl and they lead a happy life. Everything comes to an end when Soumya discovers that Karan is indulging in extra-marital affairs. Thereafter, the story takes a dramatic turn as Soumya comes to know of Karan's flings and decides to leave him. Failing to put up with a now-overtly-possessive Karan, she flees with daughter Sara. This is when the real trauma begins.

Initially Karan reacts with humbleness and offers an apology. But he continues to cheat her and Soumya gets enraged. She keeps on questioning him and at one stage Karan gets physical. He threatens her with dire consequences. Each time her husband 'tries' to be intimate with her, she closes her eyes; somewhere refusing to see herself belittled by her debauch husband.

Finally putting in all her courage Soumya decides to walk out and even asks for divorce, but Karan is paying heed. Soumya escapes with her kid and try to live on her own. But Karan follows her wherever she goes. Soumya's pains continue and she decides to give it back.

The plot bears an uncanny similarity with *Sleeping with the Enemy* and its Indian counterpart *Agnisakshi* in

which Nana Patekar and Manisha Koirala played the lead role.

Abâ Bas! is said to be a women oriented film and a social thriller. It also has the credit of being Diana Hayden's first full-fledged leading role (she made her debut in Khalid Mohammed's *Tehzeeb*).

The woman in Hindi cinema during the 1970s and 1980s, used to tolerate everything without uttering a word. The woman underwent the pains silently when her husband was indulging in adultery, or when he abused her physically. Everything is changed. Today's woman in Hindi cinema is no longer a mute spectator. She has given up her submissiveness and determined to fight for her rights. She is ready to give back. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.

AB... BAS! Tells you the story of one such girl who dares to stand up and say enough is enough when her husband crosses the limit. Though the film has some titillating scenes, it is not a film based on sex theme. It is a film about a wife who walks out on her cruel husband and decides to fight for her rights. And has the audacity enough to say *Ab Bas!* Enough is enough.

In the movie *Film Star* the subjugated doesn't raise her voice against the evil done to her but Hira initiates not to support Leela but out of selfish reasons, though later she turns emotive for Leela as well as for her daughter. Mahima Chaudhary plays the arrogant and self-centred actress Hira Pundit, who was ignored at the latest award ceremonies. She finds solace and advice in her drunkard friend and silent lover Digambar Puri (Priyanshu Chatterjee). He tells her to

make a movie that will make the whole world realize how great a star and actress Heera Pundit is. Film Star has the potential to be an in depth and powerful character study of Heera's round character. The movie is a character study—a look into the transformation of Heera Pundit. Mahima Chaudhary's character morphs from a selfish brat to a caring individual, and with every passing moment she gets better. The story of the movie is of a once-loved actress struggling to regain her fame.

Hira Pandit is an actress who is nothing if not full of herself. Arrogant and thriving on only one thing - people adoring her unabashedly, and without stopping, just loving her! So naturally when this adoration starts to wane, she can't take it. Her vanity can't bear the fact that her popularity is slipping, that she's not getting nominated for awards that her films simply aren't working like they used to. And at this fragile juncture of her life she runs into Digambar an old friend, whom she used to lovingly call Digs.

Somewhere along the way, their lives had traveled down different paths. He's a drunkard, an ex-lawyer now very much out of work, who makes a living, singing in a cheap bar. He's counted the days and months and year since they last met but on this night when they accidentally meet he makes the one mistake that he shouldn't have...he criticizes Hira. He tells her that she needs to reinvent herself, do new work, and be less predictable on screen. This sends her into a tizzy, but it also sends her towards events that change her life forever.

Hira finds herself the bona-fide drama, a real-life one, one that will surely take her back to the top! It's the story of a

loving, traditional wife, the murder of her husband, a father-in-law who heads a non-political but powerful organization and the secrets that lie behind the closed doors of his "bhavan". A volatile world, which she enters purely to exploit for her own ends - is also the one that soon takes over her whole life. She begins to get attached to the women whose juicy story she had wanted just for film. She begins to see the strength in her lawyer friend whom she had merely considered a failure till now.

She decides to film the real-life story of Leela Sharma (Vasundhara Das), the bahu of a prominent religious leader who willfully murdered her abusive and torturous husband Abhishek (Aryan Vaid). Hearing Leela's dreadful story and portraying her on film teaches Heera to become sensitive and caring individual. But Leela's sasur provides the necessary obstacles to prevent Heera's movie from being made and exposing his son's tyranny.

As celluloid clashes with reality, it changes her forever. An inmate's (Vasundhara Das) past with her husband (Aryan Vaid) becomes the present of this actress and threatens to destroy her future. The actress, the drunk, the widow, the violent party-head...these lives get enmeshed with each other as Hira struggles to become successful not just in the movies, but also in life. And this isn't easy she finds out...as she realizes...that life...is much more than films.

Taking in account the above mentioned films, Adler a famous psychologist has given a psychological theory on inferiority complex. And he explains in his theory that how a person suffering from inferiority complex tries to

convert his inferiority into superiority by hiding his weaknesses therefore this theory of Adler goes with the concept of spousal violence where a husband tries to hide his weaknesses of extra marital relationships, inferiority and suspicious psychology with male chauvinism and thus converting his inferiorities into pre-eminence in feminist perspective this is known as Virtuso quality.

According to Adler, each individual has a weak area in his or her body--organ inferiority, which tends to be the area where illness occurs, such as the stomach, head, heart, back, lungs, etc. Adler said that to some degree every emotion finds expression in the body. From his understanding of organ inferiority, Adler began to see each individual as having a feeling of inferiority. Adler wrote to be a human being means to feel oneself inferior. The child comes into the world as a helpless little creature surrounded by powerful adults. A child is motivated by feelings of inferiority to strive for greater things. Those feelings of inferiority activate a person to strive upward so that normal feelings of inferiority impel the human being to solve his or her problems successfully, whereas the inferiority complex impedes or prevents one from doing so.

The healthy individual will strive to overcome his or her inferiority through involvement with society. One is concerned about the welfare of others as well as oneself and develops good feelings of self-worth and self-assurance. On the other hand, some are more concerned with selfishness than with social interest. They may express this selfishness in a need to dominate, to refuse to cooperate, wanting

to take and not to give. From these unhealthy responses, the person develops an inferiority complex or a superiority complex. A superiority complex is a cover up for an inferiority complex. They are different sides of the same coin. The person with the superiority complex has hidden doubts about his or her abilities.

Adler developed a theory of personality based upon:

- Inferiority feelings and inferiority complex,
- Striving for superiority
- Style of life
- Social interest
- Family constellation
- Fictional finalism
- The creative self
- Masculine protest
- The interpretation of dreams
- Theory of psychotherapy.

According to Adler, when we feel encouraged, we feel capable and appreciated and will generally act in a connected and cooperative way. When we are discouraged, we may act in unhealthy ways by competing, withdrawing, or giving up. It is in finding ways of expressing and accepting encouragement, respect, and social interest that help us feel fulfilled and optimistic.

Classical Adlerian psychology makes a distinction between primary and secondary inferiority feelings.

- A primary inferiority feeling is said to be rooted in the young child's original experience of weakness, helplessness and dependency. It

can then be intensified by comparisons to siblings, romantic partners, and adults.

- A secondary inferiority feeling relates to an adult's experience of being unable to reach a subconscious, fictional final goal of subjective security and success to compensate for the inferiority feelings. The perceived distance from that goal would lead to a negative/depressed feeling that could then prompt the recall of the original inferiority feeling; this composite of inferiority feelings could be experienced as overwhelming. The goal invented to relieve the original, primary feeling of inferiority which actually causes the secondary feeling of inferiority is the "catch-22" of this dilemma. This vicious cycle is common in neurotic lifestyles.

Feeling inferior is often viewed as being inferior to another person, but this is not always the case in the Adlerian view. One often feels incompetent to perform a task, such as a test in school.

According to Adler's theory, each of us is born into the world with a sense of inferiority. We start as a weak and helpless child and strive to overcome these deficiencies by become superior to those around us. He called this struggle a *striving for superiority*, and like Freud's Eros and Thanatos, he saw this as the driving force behind all human thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

For those of us who strive to be accomplished writers, powerful business people, or influential politicians, it is because of our feelings of inferiority and a

strong need to overcome this negative part of us according to Adler. This excessive feeling of inferiority can also have the opposite effect. As it becomes overwhelming and without the needed successes, we can develop an inferiority complex. This belief leaves us with feeling incredibly less important and deserving than others, helpless, hopeless, and unmotivated to strive for the superiority that would make us complete.

Parenting Styles, Adler did agree with Freud on some major issues relating to the parenting of children and the long term effects of improper or inefficient child rearing. He identified two parental styles that he argued will cause almost certain problems in adulthood. The first was pampering, referring to a parent overprotecting a child, giving him too much attention, and sheltering him from the negative realities of life. As this child grows older, he will be ill equipped to deal with these realities, may doubt his own abilities or decision making skills, and may seek out others to replace the safety he once enjoyed as a child.

On the other extreme is what Adler called neglect. A neglected child is one who is not protected at all from the world and is forced to face life's struggles alone. This child may grow up to fear the world, have a strong sense of mistrust for others and she may have a difficult time forming intimate relationships.

The best approach, according to this theory, is to protect children from the evils of the world but not shelter them from it. In more practical terms, it means allowing them to hear or see the negative aspects of the world while still feeling the safety of parental influence. In other

words, don't immediately go to the school principal if your child is getting bullied, but rather teach your child how to respond or take care of herself at school.

Though Soumya and Leela are aptly awarded justice in the end; but somewhere women themselves have to realize that there is a limit to bear. In fact no husband has a right to exercise violence and subjugate his wife. To quote Dainik Jagran, November, 2013: “physical violence, attempt to murder, murder, not letting a woman wear, eat, drink, see people, of her choice, pass taunts, threaten to hurt her, or the ones she care for, all come in the ambit of spousal violence. It even includes mental harassment, not letting her go out, take up a job, and have suspicions against her.

It should not be forgotten that a wife is a human who leaves behind all the ones she loves and cares for with a faith that she will be respected and loved, not to

be beaten up like a ragged doll. The physical injury cures but the mental trauma and emotional pain she undergoes can't be put in words. She needs to be treated as an equal not a *zar khareed ghulaam*. One must not forget that even in Vedas it has been said that, “Yatra naryastu puhyante ramante tatra Devata, yatra itaastu na puhyante sarvaastatrafalaah kriyaah.” (Manusmriti 3.56) It means that, “Women Are Honored Where, Divinity Blossoms There; and where they are dishonored, all action remains unfruitful.” On one track women are making remarkable progress in different fields and on other track there is this pathetic state of women; respect happens to be a sentiment not made for woman though ironically enough she is the honor, probable reason for these atrocities is pathetic mindset of some men about women. Instead of telling our daughters what to do and what not to do, we can simply teach our sons to respect the woman in his life.

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