

## **Domestic Violence and Women Empowerment among Low Income Communities in Coimbatore City**

### **Abstract**

Discrimination against women is one of the most systemic and pervasive violations across culture, religion, class, and ethnicity, happening in every region, affecting families, societies, and reinforcing inequality and discrimination. Many gender and development studies have concluded that women could reduce their risk of spousal abuse by empowering women through occupations. National Family Health Survey, 2015-2016 reported that domestic violence against women is a pervasive social problem in Tamil Nadu that fundamentally threatens women's physical and mental health, preventing them from participating fully in social and cultural life. Hence, there is a burning need to resolve domestic violence by developing and implementing appropriate policies and programmes aimed at empowering women. The current study's main objective was to analyse the interrelationship between dimensions of women empowerment and the occurrence of domestic violence, prevalence, and forms of domestic violence. The location of the study was confined to low income communities living in Coimbatore city. A proportionate sampling technique was adopted, and 500 respondents were selected for the task. The study confirms that the level of violence experienced was high and pervasive among the low income communities in Coimbatore's urban slums. Women are constantly facing physical, psychological, and economic abuse for a long time in their marital house but still don't ask for support. The basic reason is socio-cultural and economic, illiteracy and ignorance, about rights and remedies. The other reasons for not opting out of domestic violence are fear of being socially isolated, lack of alternative means of economic support, concern for the children, and emotional dependence. Living in a violent relationship affects the sense of self-esteem of a woman and her willingness to engage in society and contribute to the economy's growth. Though vocational training, job opportunities, and support network programmes help women to empower themselves there is a need to recognise the possible negative effects such as an increased risk of domestic violence. Therefore, appropriate approaches and policies that can help effectively reduce domestic violence need to be created.

**Keywords:** Domestic violence, intimate partner violence, women empowerment, harassment, women and development, violent relationship.