

Title: Theory of Victimization of Educated Women in India: Understanding Expert's perception of a cognitive shift. Dissertation, submitted by Bhakti Shah, eDiss, Göttingen state and University Library (SUB), 2019

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Summary

In India, presently, gender-based violence is increasing at an alarming rate but at the same time due to state's effort female literacy rate rising too. In the light of such scenario, the theory of victimization of educated women provides an overall analysis of causes of violence, impact of education on women empowerment and changing nature of gender-based violence in modern India.

To make the thesis all-inclusive, the broader definition of education is being used. Here education includes informal education, which is analysed through the role of media. Non-formal education for which the role of religious preacher is being analysed and the role of institutional teaching is also analysed. Thus, the theory includes all literate as well as illiterate population.

The theory is formulated using the data collected from the expert interview method and the Biographical narrative interview method. The expert's perspective is discussed with cognitive discourse. The theory is divided into the four phases. First one is the "way of living" which is central to the theory. The experts discussed the "way of living" as a cause of violence. 'way of living' is the patriarchal belief system which is the cause of gender-based violence and the women's 'subjugation'. While discussing the status of women's empowerment in the modern India, the experts discussed the "interfering" factors such as role of media, religious preachers and formal education on women. The third phase is the consequences 'changing', which explains an impact of "interfering" factors on the "way of living". 'Changing' explains how due to the knowledge the "way of living" is changing. By integrating these three factors a grounded theory 'the theory of victimization of educated women in India' is formulated. The theory answers that due to awareness and knowledge whether women are dealing or tolerating a violence on them. Does knowledge empowered men and women to challenge the patriarchal setting? It also explains in the contemporary times victimization and empowerment of women go hand in hand

To expand the understanding of the thesis beyond its original area of gender discourse, the researcher weaves the emergent substantive grounded theory to the cognitive discourse. Various cognitive concepts from cognitive sociology and psychology are used to illustrate the theory. The substantive grounded theory of the “victimizing educated women” is explained using cognitive psychology to explain a cognitive shift (changing nature of the way of living) of the Indian thought community. The research engaged cross disciplinary approaches to analyse experts’ perception of the status of women in Indian society. The discovered grounded theory in future will be the foundation for the future research on gender, education and empowerment and will also be helpful for policy makers of India.

Key words: women empowerment, gender-based violence, patriarchy, status, education, media, religion, knowledge, cognition.

