

A Study on Right of Self Defense for Women - Step towards Empowerment of Women

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Abstract:

Women form one-half of our Indian society but the dark part of it is that they are always targeted, victimized, tortured since ages. Women are not safe at home and work place. Today we are living in 21st century but the crimes against the women have remained the same but the crimes such as eve-teasing, molestation, kidnapping, immoral trafficking, rape, acid attack, sexual harassment etc., are increasing at an alarming rate which completely destroys the women physically, emotionally, their self-confidence is shattered which leave them helpless. There is a need to develop awareness for self-defence among varsity girls. Every woman must know her right of self-defense, safety devices and in the age of technology certain mobile apps that are designed for women’s safety. On the part of the Government also various help lines are available for women’s safety. It is the essential that women’s must safeguard themselves against violence committed against them. If they are able to protect themselves then they can protect their children. The Researcher has adopted doctrinal method of the research due to paucity of time. The secondary data has been used and it is assimilated from use of books, articles etc. In this research paper the researcher has made an attempt to create awareness about different types of crimes against women, concept of self-defense incorporated in Indian Laws, the right of self-defense available to woman, to provide knowledge about safety guidelines and different self-defense techniques thereby to empower women

Key words: Self-defense, crimes, violence, safety devices, empowerment

INTRODUCTION:

Every day in newspapers we read about rape, dowry harassment etc., some are reported to the police machinery and some are kept under the wraps due to many reasons. The constant study and research had observed that women are easily targeted because they are unaware of their surroundings. The women become victims of rape, molestation, eve-teasing, acid attack along with sexual harassment at workplace, at home etc., the list is endless. It is right to say that when a girl takes control of her life then a woman really comes into existence. Ironically if we observe that rate of women literacy has increased, there is no arena where the women have not showcased their excellence. But when we see or hear the crimes against the women

then we realize that the women are not safe and secure.¹ The crimes against the women completely destroys them physically, emotionally, their self-confidence is shattered which leaves them helpless. Need of hour is that every woman must be acquainted with right of self-defense, safety devices, certain mobile apps which specifically designed for women's safety.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Review of literature makes it lucid to understand the area of research with the help of statements uttered by the ones who are well versed in that area.

(i) **Ashwin Mohan, a martial arts trainer, who runs Savage Fighting Arts, at Bengaluru** he stated that “the over protection does not enable the woman to have control of her life. If woman is really interested in having control of her life then it's important for her to set aside veil of over-protection by learning the art of self-defense”

(ii) **Franklin Joseph, a social entrepreneur and self-defense trainer, located at Bengaluru runs Power to women** agrees that “It is advisable every female should make herself aware about the different crimes against them, failing which they fall prey to heinous crimes.”

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY:

- (1) To understand the meaning of self-defense.
- (2) To elucidate the need of self-defense for women.
- (3) To provide knowledge about safety guidelines and different self-defense techniques.
- (4) Contribution of different NGO's, schools, colleges to create awareness about self-defense techniques.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

The researcher has adopted doctrinal method of the research due to paucity of time. The secondary data has been used. The same had been collected from books, articles etc.

RESULTS AND DISSCUSSIONS:

The purpose of the said research paper is to understand the meaning of self-defense, it is importance. It is necessary to create awareness and train women with self-defense techniques so that they can protect themselves not only at home but anywhere and everywhere. This will not only help them to protect themselves but also boost their self-esteem and ultimately it is step towards the women empowerment.

¹ Women and the Law – Dr. Nuzhat Parveen Khan

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS:

A single research paper may not cover all the necessary aspects in detail. This article is basically limited to the meaning of self-defense, need of self-defense for women and its importance, safety guidelines and different self-defense techniques for women.

MEANING OF SELF-DEFENSE:

The meaning of self-defense can be summarized as use of reasonable force to protect oneself or the members of one's family where the defender has reason to believe that his or her life or his dear and near one's life is in danger. The force used in self-defense must be sufficient to protect oneself not to settle scores with someone under the disguise of self-defense.

Under the Indian Penal Code 1860 (IPC) the use of expression 'private defense in preference to self-defense is considered under **Section 97**. According to criminal law 'Self-help' is the basic rule. It is an inherent right in a man to protect one's life, property. The use of force is regulated under the legal rules and regulations to avoid the unnecessarily use of force under the veil of self-defense. The right of self-defense can be interpreted when in certain cases when there is no time to take the help of police machinery then in such situation power is given to person to protect his body or property. Self-defense also means taking your own responsibility.

Section 100 (4)²Under Indian Penal Code 1860, states that the right of private defense of body extends even to cause the death of the attacker where he does an act of throwing or administering acid which is likely to cause the apprehension that grievous hurt can be caused. The right granted under section 100 provides that in certain situations the death of the person against whom the right of self-defense is being used can be caused.

Section 97 of IPC grants the right of private defense to everyone defend his own body or property or the body or property of any other person. Accordingly, the right granted under section 100 is exercisable by the person who is being attacked or by another person on his behalf.

According to the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 new offences like acid attack, sexual harassment, voyeurism, stalking have been incorporated along with their punishment in India Penal Code. In many cases the women ignore the instances of eve-teasing, stalking etc., fail to realize that instances flare up into heinous crime and therefore it is the need of the hour to learn self-defense techniques.

NEED OF SELF DEFENSE FOR WOMEN:

Self-defence and self-protection is important because it is observed that women of all age group get easily targeted and become victims of violent crime. Learning or most aptly taking self-defence training is beneficial to every woman in the following ways:

² Inserted by the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 (13 of 2013) Section 2 (effective from 3.2.2013)

(i) **It builds confidence:** Self-defense helps to develop self-confidence, a basic requirement to shape one's personality and make the person able to face any unwanted situation fearlessly and boldly.

(ii) **It helps to learn self-balance and develop self-discipline:-** Self-defense techniques help to improve your balance, whereby increases the power of concentration. Self-defense techniques teach and equip one-self to focus on the target along with the control of body. A self-defense technique also aims to teach self-discipline which is possible if one is motivated and dedicated to attend the self-defense classes regularly.

(iii) **It helps to improve one's physical training:** Self-defense aims at making the trainee physically fit and subsequently imparts physical training. Such trainings work on one's reactions and increase awareness of an attack. The person should be mentally and physically focused while carrying out the self-defense. If one is prepared, then the dangerous situation can also be handled efficiently.

(iv) **It improves the street awareness:** Self-defense classes will make the one aware of the surroundings which makes one ready all the times to face any untoward situation with vigour and confidence.

GUIDELINES OR BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR LEARNING SELF-DEFENSE:

Learning of self-defense techniques help the women to protect herself. It is possible only when the women are careful in everything they do and wherever they go.

(i) Whenever one is attacked it is advisable to be passive at a time which will make the attacker at ease and then fight back with much vigour. Passiveness can be showed by acting as suffered with an asthmatic attack, heart attack etc.,

(ii) One of the important basic technique is to use the distraction techniques like yelling, throwing chilli powder, spray and call someone for help etc., which will distract the attacker and you can gain time for implementing your next move.

(iii) While using public transport avoid wearing too much jewelry. If any female is travelling late at night by a cab, note down the registration number of the cab and send it to her relatives.

(iv) To avoid unavoidable circumstances it is advisable to pay attention to one's surroundings. One of the safety rules is to walk on the right side of the road to avoid unavoidable situation. Avoid high heeled footwear especially while walking.

(v) One should be physically fit to run fast to avoid unescapable situation.

(vi) Don't mingle with unknown person. Never share your personal information with everyone.

(vii) To face unexpected threatening situation it is not feasible to collect weapons, in such situation woman can use her elbow, fist, knee, foot, and nails etc. in attacking the attacker

especially his body parts such as eyes, nose, throat, forearm, groin, chin, knee and foot, the sensitive areas of one's body whereby he will lose his control

(viii) The aforesaid basic principles of self-defense can be better implemented if they are practiced on regular basis and with determination to learn the art of protecting oneself.

TECHNIQUES OF SELF-DEFENSE:

(1) Physical

Physical self-defense involves the use of physical force. The physical force can be with weapons or without weapons. The use of physical force depends upon the mental and physical preparedness of defender.

(2) Unarmed

There are different forms of martial arts used in self-defense training. Martial arts teach a person to face the situation by escaping the situation or it trains how to attack. Most of the martial arts schools adopt the combination of these two techniques. Seeing the capability of the learners the martial arts schools plan the self-defense techniques accordingly.

(3) Armed

Taking into consideration legal implications, use of weapons is not involved in self-defense training programmes. In self-defense training the learners are taught to use the easily available objects such as flashlights, baseball bats, newspapers, kitchen utensils, pepper spray, ballpoint pen, knives and umbrellas to save oneself from an unexpected situation.

(4) Avoidance

One of the useful techniques of self-defense is when the person becomes aware of dangerous situation it is intelligence to move away from such situation.

(5) Reduction

Verbal self-defense means the use of words to save or reduce an unexpected situation. But the use of the words must be done in such a way that attacker should not get embarrassed, aggressive and situation gets worsened.

(6) Personal Alarms

There is a device which is used in self-defense training, a personal alarm. It is a small device which produces strong, loud sounds on a press of a button to frighten the attackers and seek the attention of passersby.

VARIOUS SELF-DEFENSE PROGRAMS IN INDIA:

(1) **Dare Program: 'Defense against Assault Rape or Eve Teasing'**. It comprises of personal security and safety programs.

It focuses its training on the following:

- (i) When attack with an assault what is to be done
- (ii) Adoption of non-violent strategies during assault
- (iii) To learn physical tactics during assault.

(2) **Karate India training program:** Nowadays the special self-defense training programs organized especially for women. These classes are combination of martial art, karate, Judo, Kenpo, Tai Chi, and Taekwondo.

(3) In cases of emergency the women can dial **1091, 103. 112 India APP** has been launched by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India and State police in collaboration with Ministry of Electronics Information and Technology and CDAC. This APP is available on Android and IOS. Apart from these helplines, Himmat APP, FIR app has been launched for the protection of the women.

(4) **Jasmeen Patheja** founded '**Blank Noise**' for women. With the help of the social media channels for helping women fight street violence. Online events for the safety of the women are conducted. Through the medium of street plays, demonstrations, awareness is spread to the women about the increasing rate of violence against the women. It is a step not only to make the women acquainted with the different types of violence but at the same time make them informed about the safety rules.

(5) In remote area of Uttar Pradesh, **Sampath Pal Devi** started '**Gulabi Gang**' or "rose gang". This movement was started to take steps against the police officers who give a deaf ear to crime against women. Being bribed they refused to register the genuine complaints of the women victims. This movement aims on providing self-defense training

(6) Young girls and women in large number attended the self-defense workshop organized by Smile Foundation, Delhi. The Delhi police helped in organizing such workshop.

It is necessary that **Women Development Cell (WDC)** in every college and at University level should organize workshops on self-defense for female students on regular basis. The workshop should be headed by a person well trained in self-defense training. The training should be two-fold, creating awareness about the violence women are facing at home, workplace, public places and techniques of self-defense. Generally such training should make use of the objects easily available in the surroundings by women. This will surely make the female students understand the need of self-defense training and will arouse and interest for getting equipped with such training.

CONCLSUION:

It is necessary for all the women around the globe to accept the reality that no doubt we live in dangerous world but it is more dangerous for women. The time has come that women should accept the responsibility not only for themselves but also of their loved ones to keep them safe and secured. Women living in the metro cities are having access to various workshops on self-defense, avail facilities for the direct contact with the police control room, train themselves with the self-defense techniques. But the problem is faced by the women staying in rural areas where such things are not available. NGOS's should consider this as their prime responsibility to reach to rural women, create awareness of different types of violence against the women and train them to protect themselves.

Crimes against women can be prevented if strong steps are taken by all three organs of the Government. But by equipping our young girls, women we can surely make them self-sufficient to protect themselves from any unwanted and unexpected situation.

Our Heritage

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“Women Empowerment will definitely be said in real terms when the women are so strong physically, mentally and psychological that they become in-charge of their life and able to save themselves, their family and others from any kind of violence”.

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