Blaming the Victim: Violence against Women in Bangladesh[1]

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Abstract

The present study explored the current status of blaming the Bangladeshi women by understanding the blaming motives and identifying major domineers behind blaming. The study had purposively taken into consideration of two categories of crimes, including rape and sexual harassment. Primary data were collected using the case study method and eleven severe cases were selected from twenty-nine cases of Tangail district purposively. Four types of data sources were Tangail Police Station, Tangail Court Police, several NGOs (local and nationals), and local and national newspapers. The study found that gender with power and money were significant blaming motives in the context. Most of the respondents were victimized and further blamed and repeatedly victimized by their relatives rather than strangers. Moreover, patriarchy and public attitudes were prime domineers behind blaming. Consequently, the victim had to suffer and face anger, self-blame, disability, trauma, losing life, isolation, detention, defamation, threats and verbal assault, bullying or slangs, etc.

Keywords: Blaming the victim, Rape, Sexual harassment, Patriarchy, Public attitudes, Self-blame

Introduction

Despite the rapid development of education and empowerment today, social conventions control and manipulate women's lives directly or indirectly. These traditions and restrictions have marred them by all sorts of unanticipated and undesirable consequences (Karmen, 1984:68 and Waghamode et al., 2013:34). Every woman and girl, including children and adolescents, are victims of violence mainly because they are women. WHO (2005) found that 24-53% of women faced physical abuse in their lifetime, mostly by their intimate partners (Valor-Segura et al., 2011:196).

Crime is the intentional violation of criminal law or penal code (Bohm and Haley, 2005:31). Gordon Liddy accorded that 'crime pays, or there would be no crime'. Akin to him, it will be a myth to believe in a crime-free society; thus, crime victims have to pay and suffer. The intensity of suffering and payment is too acute to describe if those victims are women. Victim-oriented Victimology (coined by Benjamin Mendelson in 1947) as a discipline, has been evolved in this regard (Karmen, 1984:23). Consequently, victim-oriented issues like victim blaming, victim defending, etc., are profoundly apparent in such disciplines. Out of these, blaming the victim (Ryan, 1971) is social behavior; the possibility of shared responsibility for harm done is assigned to the victim rather than the troublemaker (Karmen, 1984:95, and Kent, 2003:59).

Victims are those whom the wrong people victimize. Although they are the sufferer of the incidents who need the compensation badly, are not the law enforcement agencies' headache and are often blamed as such that they are the people of the wrong place at the wrong time (Siegel, 1998:77). In these cases, they were viewed as the passive receptors of a criminal's anger, greed, or frustration (Siegel, 1998: 85-86). Empirically, it is noticeable that victim blaming culture facilitates gender violence directly or indirectly. Gracia (2014) found that when attribution of the causes of violence is on the victims, incidents assume to be highlighted, and blaming is to be deserved (03). Societal norms and values legitimize intra-family violence paradoxically: the myth of family non-violence (in a good sense) and legitimate violence (in a bad sense) (Straus, 1977:545). Hence, these norms enhance the victim blaming culture through which a victim is victimized repeatedly, which further promotes gender violence. These perceptions shape the public's mind that women are justifiable victims of violence (Gracia, 2014:03). Crimes against women are not a recent problem, having deep roots inserted for a few decades in a male-female relationship within the family, state, and society. Men view blaming women as a demonstration of their masculinity so that they can identify themselves in a macho way in the presence of other men (Waghamode et al., 2013:35). Andrew Karmen (1984) identified rape, sexual harassment, and wife battering as the most common categories of crimes against women (17). Siegel (1998) viewed sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination (80).

Although victim blaming, nowadays, is a prevalent concept, but still needs to explore as victim blaming is very pervasive and rampant, and different typical forms of studies have been done on this concept differently in the

whole world. In contrast, Bangladesh does not have enough scholarly ground of research.

The phrase "blaming the victim" is first coined by Ryan (1971) in his book 'Blaming the Victim'. He described victim blaming as an ideology used to rationalize racism and social injustice. A form of secondary victimization in the "just world" is blaming the victim (Karmen, 1984:97). Blaming the victim means, devaluing acts at which victims are held entirely or partially responsible for their victimization by perpetrators. Karmen (1984) has used the term 'psychological process' but did not emphasize the effect of victim blaming culture on gender violence (97). Straus (1977) had shown that sexual inequality and cultural norms legitimize wife-beating but have no specific discussion about the relationship between victim blaming culture and wife-beating (545-546). Renowned organizations, like UNFPA have conducted various studies for changing attitudes about child marriage, domestic violence, patriarchal traditions, etc. Gracier (2014) highlighted victim blaming attitudes, and Julian Churchil learned victim blaming as a new term for old trends. In Bangladesh, no study so far has been conducted yet on victim blaming and crimes against women. Indeed, there is no comprehensive work on this concept herein Bangladesh.

Lastly, from the discussion as mentioned earlier, it is found that there is no comprehensive academic study on victim blaming, specifically in Bangladesh. The study was exploratory, which explores victim motives, reasons, and consequences of victim blaming thematically in Bangladesh, especially in rape and sexual harassment cases. The study answered some questions which were the primary basis of the study: What are the motives of victim blaming in Bangladesh? What are the main reasons behind blaming women? What are the consequences?

Objectives of the Study

The study's primary intent was to explore blaming of rape and sexually harassed women in Bangladesh. With this view in mind, the additional objectives of the study were as follows:

- To represent the socio-demographic status of victims and its relationship with the blaming in Bangladesh.

- To find out the causes of victim blaming in Bangladesh.

- To identify the consequences of victim blaming.

Methodology of the Study

The research was conducted using qualitative and exploratory research approaches to gather pertinent information from the purposively selected rape, and sexual harassment victims of Tangail district covering both rural and urban areas like *Ghatail, Bashail, Nagarpur, Tangail Sadar Upazila,* etc. from January 2012 to January 2014. The study also conducted a rapid background document and literature review.

Tangail district was the study area with both *modernized* and *agrarian* culture, which had mostly played a significant role in provoking victim blaming culture. Besides, the brutal gang rape committed during study time was an evident enthusiasm for studying Tangail district. Women who were victims of rape and sexual harassment between January 2012 to January 2014 were the studied respondents.

The study used fourfold data sources to identify victims: *first*, local and national newspapers; *second*, local and national NGOs; *third*, Tangail court police and *fourth*, police statistics of Tangail police station. In terms of collecting data from NGOs, the study used several national NGOs like BLAST, BRAC, *Bangladesh Manobadhikar Bastobaion Shangstha,* and local NGOs like Democracy Watch, *Shupra*, *Shebak,* and RPDO. In terms of collecting data from newspapers, the study used several national newspapers like Daily Pratham Alo, Daily Ittefaq and local newspapers like *Doinik Pragatir Alo, Doinik Ajker Telegram,* and *Doinik Purbakash.* From these sources, 29 case studies were conducted initially. Lastly, the study took 11 cases into considerations purposively to fulfill study objectives. The research was qualitative and exploratory and used descriptive thematic writings as a data analysis technique.

The research collected study-related data and information through case studies by using guidelines from the studied respondents. The study's guide questionnaire was loosely structured, covering socio-demographic criteria, incident-related information, nature, causes, and consequences of victim blaming. The duration of the interview process was forty-five minutes to two hours, wherein the study had considered ethical issues. As there was no hypothesis, so descriptive thematic writing was used for analyzing data in this qualitative study. Special considerations for conducting the study are following:

- For keeping confidentiality and reducing vulnerability, the study used pseudonyms of respondents.

- Pauses and non-verbal reactions of research respondents were highlighted symbolically (…).

- In the case of a child or immature victim, the study took her mother's expressions into considerations.

- Statements of victims were presented in the direct words of respondents.

- For a clear understanding, blamers' statements were presented in the direct words of the research respondents.

Although the study achieved the targeted objectives, there were a few unavoidable limitations: first, difficulties of data identification; second, excessive time and money because of distortion of data; third, difficulties in case of rapport building with victims of severe cases; and fourth, difficulties in case of child victims and taking considerations of their guardian's perception.

Findings and Discussions
Socio-demographic Characteristics
The study found five research respondents (Rony Sutrodhar, Moni, Ripa, Mala Akter, and Bithi Akter) who were rape victims, and six research respondents (Kanta, Shikha Akter, Rikta Islam Rima, Pratima Das, Shahida Akter, and Sumona Akter) that were victims of sexual harassment. Various studies also identified similar findings in accord with the National Crime Record Bureau (2004), 4 molestation cases and 42 rape cases were occurred per hour in India. Among total recorded gender violence, torture (29%), molestation (22%), rape (10%), and sexual harassment (6%) were most common (UNFPA, 2004). BBS (2016) found that women during their lifetime faced sexual violence by both partners and non-partners. Data revealed in the Bangladesh Police Statistics shows that 16253 FIRs were lodged on women and child repression cases in 2018 (Bangladesh Police, 2019).

Moni, Mala, and Ripa, who were only 7, 9, and 10 years, were rape victims. At that age when they had no idea about carnal knowledge but were blamed heinously for that. Likely as Moni, Mala, and Ripa, other rape victims, Rony and Bithi, also fell within the age group of 5 to 15, while only two respondents (Pratima Das and Shikha Akter) were in the age group of 25 to more than 35. It is noticeable that only Pratima Das, a sexually harassed victim, belonged in the older age group, but most of the sexually harassed women were from 16 to 26. Previous criminological and victimological

literature established similar outcomes. Mostly, Andrew Karmen (1984) accorded that younger people, especially teenagers, and adults were the targets of criminal attacks more often than older people, as they were the most reluctant to notify the authorities (54). Larry J. Siegel (1998) opined that young women are affected mostly as victims due to their passivity and seductiveness (65).

The study revealed that excluding Pratima Das, Rikta Islam Rima, and Sumona Akter, all unmarried respondents were victims of rape and sexual harassment. The noted three married participants were harassed very exceptionally by the most trusted- authoritative personnel: by the vice-principal of the college at which Pratima is a lecturer and perpetrators who were like a father to Rima and Sumona. Their relationship with the perpetrators contributed strongly in terms of blaming them. And the rest married women were victimized by battering.

In the case of religion, the majority was Muslim, excluding Pratima Das and Rony Sutrodhor. Rony was from the lowest level in terms of the Hindu caste system. Her marginalized position in society did not allow her to get justice, instead blamed severely. In terms of education, only Shikha Akter was illiterate. Respondents (Kanta, Rikta Islam Rima, Rony Sutrodhor, Shahida Akter, Sumona Akter, and Bithi Akter) studied up to secondary level bears the six numbers. The other three respondents (Mala Akter, Moni, and Ripa) were children who studied up to primary level and Pratima Das, the rest of respondent studied up to post-graduate level.

In the case of profession excluding Shikha Akter (Health worker), Pratima Das (lecturer), and Shahida Akter (homeo doctor), the other eight respondents worked and stayed at home. In terms of residence, excluding Shahida Akter, Rikta Islam Rima, and Pratima Das, the rest eight respondents lived in the remote area of Tangail district. Geographically, the marginalized position of them also contributed to their blaming.

However, the study primarily found that there were no such similar criteria, relatively few among all studied respondents. Supporting this, Andrew Karmen (1984) opined that victims have very little in common and differ in age, sex, race, class, and other vital factors apart from the misfortune (54). According to national crime surveys, 38% of rape cases were committed by strangers. Still, the study revealed approximately an opposite output that their neighbors or cousins raped Rony Sutrodhor, Moni, Ripa, or Mala Akter. Although strangers victimized Bithi Akter and her friend preplanned the incident.

Intersection of Gender, Power, and Money to Blame the Women

Women are the most suitable example to believe that they are always ready to be victimized (Karmen, 1984:50-51) and blamed. Women with severe mental or emotional difficulties have the most significant risk of becoming rape and molested victims. The country's socio-cultural development like Bangladesh contains pervasive gender discrimination, so girls and women face many obstacles to their development. The study found five research respondents (Rony Sutrodhar, Moni, Ripa, Mala Akter, and Bithi Akter) who were victims of rape and six research participants (Rikta Islam Rima, Pratima Das, Kanta, Shikha Akter, Shahida Akter, and Sumona Akter) who were victims of sexual harassment.

Anyone can be raped or sexually harassed victim regardless of age, sexual orientation, appearance, location, education, profession, race, or socioeconomic background (mcadsv, 2019). The study also identified the same in research respondents that they were very different in their education, or profession, or location, or age, religion, and even socioeconomic background. But all of them are sexually harassed and rape victims.

Rape and sexual harassment are often acts punishment used to demonstrate power over girls and manufacture control. Sexual offenses generally occurred for sexually related purposes, but rape and sexual harassment are often not sexually motivated acts. Instead, they stem from aggression, rage, and the intentional determination to exercise power over someone else. Pratima Das was victimized not for sexual purpose instead for aggression and power-gaining purposes.

In this sense, the study revealed three issues: on sexual issues (faced by Kanta, Bithi Akter, Moni, Ripa, Shahida Akter, Mala Akter, and Sumona Akter), on financial issues (Shikha Akter, and Bithi Akter), and on other issues (such as Rikta Islam Rima was uncultured, Rony Sutrodhor was overreacting, and Pratima Das was over-smart), the following statements of the research respondents will illustrate that they were blamed for such purposes:

> *After that incident, various people came to visit me. Some came for showing sympathy or some for criticizing likely as: once a lady came to our home and asked me that 'Bithi, how much have you earned for today?....Then she told my mother that, 'you have done a great deed by using your daughter! ...* (Bithi Akter)

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Nur-e-Alam said to the whole village that Mala had a lot of illegal affairs…also with him…. (Mother of Mala Akter)

I don't know such cultures…. also have no ideas about such stupid cultures!! I have never seen such a fool like Rima in my whole life!... (Mother-in-law of Rikta Islam Rima)

I worked hard…sometimes sewing, or sometimes working on farm…saved money…built my home…I did everything..but my in-laws said that I had stolen these things from them!! They blamed me as a thief!... (Shikha Akter)

The study also identified that sexually harassed women were victimized by person known to them who had blamed them very spontaneously. Mostly Sumona Akter was by her father-in-law, Rikta Islam Rima was by her *Ukil* Father (like father-in-law), Shahida Akter was by a known person, and Pratima Das was by the principal of the college where she was a lecturer. Karmen (1984) found that a diverse set of psychological and social conditions may set whole categories of women apart as peculiarly the more convenient, inviting, and vulnerable people, who will attract offenders of sexual harassment for blaming them (66-67). Kenny, Samah, and Fah (2011) also opined that regardless of age, social status, or other biographical characteristics, women of all classes are affected by sexual harassment and rape (295). Moreover, Karmen (1984) stated that divorced or separated and unmarried people had experienced violence far greater than married couples or widowed individuals (51).

Patriarchal Tradition behind Blaming
The prime motivation for people to blame is to justify abuse or social injustice. Perpetrators, bystanders, society, and most surprisingly, victims themselves have played significant roles. The study explored some causes that remained behind blaming of all research respondents in general. The most common reason is patriarchy. Symbolic violence provided by the patriarchy is inflicted through impositions of gendered cultural norms and values. The symbolic violence victimized almost all research respondents. Their husbands were either addicted to gambling, or women. After knowing the issue when the victims tried to sort out the problem, they faced beating, assault, divorce or threats, defamation, or revictimization. In some cases, their family members had also faced the same. The following statements of respondents illustrate the patriarchal culture as a reason behind victim blaming:

Last year the incident occurred…Although nothing happened, rather a misconception.. Actually, my daughter-in-law is a fool..So she was not able to identify that person's affection toward her. I requested him to forgive Rima …otherwise, he might file a case against her… And the person is too right; thus he did not. It's a matter of my family's reputation! I was satisfied with my decision! … (Mother-in-law of Rikta Islam Rima)

Men are dangerous, anything can happen, any men can do sex anytime, anywhere… (Grandmother of Moni)

It was also a powerful myth that served to maintain fear and respect of men. The superstitious culture entirely covered Rony's family, and thus, the offender got an excuse by which he not only saved himself but also got a pardon from Rony for protecting her from defamation. Before marriage a woman is perceived as the property of her father or male guardian, and the ownership is transferred to the husband after marriage. Notably, most of the research respondents held this view.

He (the perpetrator) is a man, so that he can do anything…moreover he rectified his mistakes by bringing a good marriage proposal for our daughter so, why did not we listen to him!… (Aunt of Rony Sutrodhor)

Moni, Ripa, Rikta Islam Rima, and Sumona Akter were also victims of violence due to patriarchal tradition. Whenever Sumona, or Pratima tried to express their feelings toward their husbands, mother-in-laws, fathers, mothers or other family members, they reject them. Gracia (2014) thinks that when the responsibility of violence has transferred on the victims, incidents seem to be trivialized and blaming is to be deserved. Mother-in-laws of Sumona, and Rima were the suitable examples of the traditional patriarchal society. According to them, men are the arch of society, thus after hearing everything from victims, they reversely blamed their daughters-in-law with their families, not the perpetrator.

Finally, I accumulated my strengths and told everything to my mother-in-law! I had a hope in mind that she might understand me because she is also a woman after all! But after listening she did not say a word against him….I was frustrated and then contacted my sister-in-law and she said to me 'Sumona, he had done the same with me! You will

just be alert always! But no need to tell everyone about the matter! ... (Sumona Akter)

In the case of research participants Moni and Ripa, their perpetrators were rescued because their villages' authority believed that boys could have such interest and so they could do such petty matters! Men's 'high status' in comparison to women, leads to vulnerability by decreasing women's ability to refuse sexual advances. Moni and Ripa's cases also had the same issues wherein their perpetrators belonged in the highly social and political status.

> *The head-man had opined in Shalish that Moni and Ripa were minors, so they did not have carnal knowledge. Moreover, those boys were also young, and they could have such interest because they were boys! So this could not be claimed as rape!* (Mothers of Moni and Ripa)

> *"My sister-in-law asked me why my brother went to another woman. You must have not given him proper affection. It's your fault! My father-in –law and others questioned me whether I have any illegal affair with anybody else?"* (Kanta)

The institution of marriage was also closely supported by patriarchal attitudes, which defined the male as an authoritarian figure control women. Before marriage woman was perceived as the property of her father or male guardian, and after marriage, the ownership transferred to her partner. It was noticeable to the cases of Kanta and Shikha Akter.

Perceptions and Public Attitudes lead to Victim Blaming
Public perceptions and attitudes from family members, neighbors, society, have always transferred the responsibility for occurrences toward victims (Gracia, 2014:03). The study also found the same in Rony, Sumona, Mala, Moni, Ripa, Pratima, Shahida, and Bithi. The father-in-law of Sumona and neighbor of Shahida claimed that victims provoked them. Thus they committed crimes otherwise, those occurrences would not happen. Cousin of Rony, the neighbor of Mala, Ripa, Moni, also demanded the same.

> *When the police arrested him, he told them that I was interested in talking with him! The police told us the matter…My mother, brothers and I denied this matter…but others did not believe.. they still believe that issue…even my relatives!* (Shahida Akter)

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*If I go to the market to buy my necessities, then the people look at me in such a way that possibly I am going to commit something illegal! (*Sumona Akter*)*

A girl's life is like a box of treasure…if once it is open, then…! (Bithi Akter)

He told everyone that I was interested too …!! .. (Rony Sutrodhor)

Gracia (2014) considered public attitudes contribute to victim blaming through the placement of the responsibility of commission on the victim (03). When Rony, Bithi, Moni, Ripa, Sumona, and Rima tried to speak out the truth, they were hindered. It was wholly rejected due to the peoples' perception toward the perpetrator. The following statements are such perceptions:

A woman should never talk…or raise her voice, especially against a man! If anyone dares to do this then she has to pay.. Now which one are you doing? Shame on you! (Grandmother of Sumona Akter)

As well as misfortune, women as victims have another common criterion which is blaming them rigorously. But the sad fact was that the victims like Pratima Das had less idea about blaming, rather they thought that this is a cultural norm (Straus, 1977:545).

Consequences of Blaming
Socially victims were suffering also, through isolation or deprivation from their rights by their families. As a social consequence, social isolation refers to the society limiting the victim and her family partially or entirely. Research respondents Sumona, Bithi, Moni, and Ripa suffered from this. The study found two categories of isolation: isolation from family (faced by Kanta and Shikha) and isolation from society (faced by Moni, Ripa, Sumona, Rima, and Bithi), and detention (faced by Sumona, Rima, and Bithi). The statements of the research respondents will illustrate the same:

*It's like I'm a dust-bin…. And the outsiders look at me in thus way..when I go to roof..then their (neighbors) looks disturb me and make me realize this strongly….I do not feel good. So, I leave the roof and always remain in this home…just see the four walls. (*Rikta Islam Rima*)*

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> *When I decided to share everything to everyone, especially to my mother-in-law about her husband's character, then my father-in-law started to make up the fact and I did not know what he told to her!...But later she always tried to lock me just in the home! In fact she banned my visit to the neighbors!* (Sumona Akter)

The study revealed that mental tortures were common for all research respondents; physical tortures especially beating (faced by Kanta, Shikha, Rima, and Sumona), and threatening (faced by Moni, Ripa, Pratima, Shahida, Mala, Sumona, and Bithi). Being slanged is the most common impact of blaming. Often victims had to face other consequences with slangs or tortures like, verbal-assault and bullying (faced by mostly Rima, Rony, Pratima, Shahida, Sumona, and Bithi). Following statements of the research respondents will illustrate that they were blamed by slang languages:

> *In front of the members of our village, I started explaining what happened, the head-man said that I must try to stay out of trouble. I said, I was not asking for any trouble and then he was so furious, said, I might not go for the issue again. But I was stubborn, and then he said that not only your daughter but also you're a slut!* (Mother of Moni)

> *After that incident, whole area knew the fact and various organizations, persons provided condolence and financial support. When others knew these, they felt jealous and started to blame Bithi and especially me that I had facilitated rape on my daughter for financial gaining. Then all the village-people surrounded my home and ordered for no entrance in the village, schools, markets or any other else!*(Mother of Bithi)

> *When we reported the matter we did not know that he (the head-man) wanted a salary increase alongside many illegal facilities. So in a way the collection of the evidence was going to help the perpetrators and we were remained isolated from the justice, from the police, from any kind of help. In fact our neighbors were also threatened when they tried to contact with us.* (Mothers of Moni and Ripa)

In general, all of the research participants had to face this disordered life resulting in constant psychological problems likely as self-blame, anger,

shame, self-pity etc. Their victimization was therefore found as burden, not just a loss and slowly they felt disabled, shattered and utterly helpless (Karmen, 1984: 36-37). Moni, Ripa, Bithi, Mala, Rima, etc. always carrying burden and were struggling. Often family member did not want to help victims rather blamed them for their misfortune. Rima, and Rony were the suitable examples in this regard because they protested against their kinship-perpetrators.

> *People already knew that I am a liar! I had lied with my character! I am not able to be faced with them. I feel a lot of anger, hatred upon me. but I have nothing to do!* (Rikta Islam Rima)

Victimization sometimes facilitates the development of female criminality. In case of research respondent Sumona Akter, this has also been noticed. Sumona is modest, polite, and wholly introvert. But these haunting incidents made her numbed and utterly helpless, thus she slapped her father-in-law and once threatened him with chopper.

> *Either I will kill him or myself… (*Sumona Akter*)*

The most acute suffering of blaming was that they had to loss their normal life-style which was more severe than victimization. The consequence has to bear not only by victims but also by their families. Research respondents Kanta, Rima, Rony, Pratima, etc. had suffered alone while the other respondents Shikha, Moni, Ripa, Shahida, Mala, Sumona, etc. were the sufferers with their families. Moreover, research respondents Moni, Ripa, Pratima, and Rima had to withdraw their cases against perpetrators in terms of promising to stop blaming against them.

The study also revealed that almost all respondents were worried for further victimization. Research respondents Kanta, Rima, Pratima, Shahida, Mala, Sumona, etc. had a fear in mind that their perpetrators might attack them again. Neighborhood of Sumona considered her as slut, so some of them proposed her to fulfill their illegal demands. Following statements will be helpful to realize their sufferings:

> *He still lives nearby, I feel more anger, scared and hatred when I see him!* (Rikta Islam Rima)

> *After getting bail, Nur-e-Alam often threw stones in the roof at night…regularly he did this..but no one was here to stop him..everyone was scared of him!* (Mother of Mala Akter)

Conclusion

In Bangladesh along with other countries, issue of gender violence is increasing alarmingly day by day and the most common practice of blaming the women for the increase of violence is also continuing. This blaming acutely exists in the belief of the 'just world' in such way that victims are bad people and bad people always have evil consequence and good people always have good consequence. This shameful psychology demands that victims are the wrong people of the wrong time at the wrong place. This situation becomes worse in case of female victims. Because rights of women still has not been considered as the fundamental and constitutional rights in many families and societies. Along with this psychology, sexual inequality, lower educational and family background, poor income, disrupt cultural norms etc. often facilitate violence against women especially intra-family violence.

Those problems not only facilitate the violence within family but also beyond it. For example, sexual harassment is a common practice of victim blaming culture which further promotes gender violence likely as rape, acid throwing, suicide, murder, etc. The study was an attempt to bring this issue in front of the nation to reduce crimes against women. The responsibility is not only upon the victim and her family but also on the whole society. This way, it will be more helpful not only for the academic field but also for the Government to raise public awareness in this regard. However, abolishment of blaming the victim is desperately needed but it will be possible only when the problem of sexual inequality can be truly tackled. In summary, academics face so many challenges in their efforts to reduce victim blaming against women. However, the study recommended that women and men should share a similar point of view on blaming the women, especially on victims of crimes against women by breaking the boundary of the 'just world belief'. Besides, symbolic violence which is inflicted by the impositions of gendered cultural norms should be eradicated from the society to stop blaming the women.

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