



Is it a crime to be born a woman in India?

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In Indian household, the arrival of a baby boy is celebrated with great joy and happiness. Whereas the arrival of a baby girl is met with an unbridled sadness. Why are the reactions different on the same occasion? Why most of the Indian couples don't want a girl child? Quite often I ponder upon these questions and it may sound heartless but aren't these couples righteous enough to react in certain way? If we go deep down and try to understand from a psychological view point, preferring boy child over a girl in country like India is not erroneous. It is true for the couples who think raising a girl child in India is strenuous and scary at the same time. How heart wrenching it is for the parents who have daughters, when they read/hear the news of a young girl being brutally tortured, sexually abused or raped by the perpetrators. Rape is the fourth common most crime in India. According to the latest government figures, India recorded an average of 87 rape cases daily in 2019 and overall 4,05,861 cases of crime against women during the year, a rise of over 7% from 2018, the latest government data released on September 29, 2020. According to NCRB, a woman reports rape in every 15 minutes in India. Hathras rape incident wasn't enough for the womanhood to witness another gangrape case of a 9 year old Dalit girl in south-west Delhi's Nangalarea.

Impact of rape on the victim's mental health

Rape is not just physical violence, it is also mental violence. The traumatic event has a long lasting impact on the rape victim's mental health. The trauma of being raped or sexually assaulted can be shattering, leaving the victim feel scared, ashamed, and alone or plagued by nightmares, flashbacks, and other unpleasant memories. They no longer able to trust others. They feel detached from others or struggle in maintaining a close

relationship. The rape survivors are at an increased risk for developing symptoms of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), major depression, eating disorders, substance use disorder, etc. Sexual assault can also take a toll on the victim's physical health. They may develop gastrointestinal problem, irritable bowel syndrome, pelvic pain, chronic diseases such as , hypertension, arthritis, etc.

Is rape a crime or mental disorder?

- There are a lot many people in the world who have this notion that rape is a mental disorder. First of all, it is necessary to establish that rape is not a mental disorder; rather it's a criminal offence. Albeit some rapists maybe diagnosed with mental disorders, yet there is no such disorder that provokes people to rape. The two proposed diagnosis Coercive Paraphilia and Hebephilia were rejected again by APA (American Psychological Association) for DSM-5. Earlier, the proposal to create a mental diagnosis for rapists was repudiated 5 times in the past years-in 1976 for DSM-III; in 1986 for DSM-IIIR; in the early 1990's for DSM-1V; in 1998 for an APA Task Force report; and now for DSM-5. Motives behind rape vary and are difficult to quantify. However, studies show that rapists have some common characteristics:- a lack of empathy, narcissism, feelings of hostility towards women.

Rape is a heinous crime which completely affects physiological, psychological and emotional well-being of the victim and victim's family. Deploying certain psychotherapeutic treatments like psychodynamic psychotherapy, trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy (TF-CBT), and eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy (EMDR) for the treatment of patients following



sexual assault and abuse will surely help the survivors to overcome the traumatic event. Not only this, the victim's family should also be understanding, supportive and patient towards sufferer. It surely takes time for the wounds to get healed, but with love, support and empathy; it will surely heal pronto.