

Facilitator Resource: Violence Scenarios

Scenario 1

A woman and her boyfriend are in a hotel room together. They start kissing and caressing each other. The boyfriend begins to take off her clothes. She stops him and says that she doesn't want to have sex. He is furious and tells her that he has spent a lot of money on the room and says, "What are my friends going to say?" He pressures her to change her mind. First he tries to be sweet and seductive, then he begins yelling at her in frustration. Finally, he pulls at her forcefully, pushing her down on the bed.

Key Points

Even if the woman agreed to go to the motel with her boyfriend, and even if she is kissing him, it does not mean that she wants to have intercourse with him. Her boyfriend is pressuring her to have sex, and despite the fact that she has told him she does not want to have sex with him, the man tries to force her by using physical force. It is clear that the man intends to rape his girlfriend. Everyone has the right to refuse sex for any reason or for no reason at all. A person can choose to refuse sex for any reason and at any point—even if it's during a sexual act. All sex must be consensual, meaning that both partners must freely agree to participate in a particular sexual activity. Just because two people are in an intimate relationship together does not mean that rape cannot occur.

Scenario 2

A 12-year-old boy has just come home with his examination results. He has failed. His parents shout at him; his mother refuses to give him any food that day, while his father threatens to teach him a lesson he will not forget. Would you describe what the parents did to the boy as violence? Why?

Key Points

Although the boy's father has threatened physical violence, which will definitely hurt the boy, the mother's behavior can also harm him physically and mentally. Therefore, what the parents did to the boy can be described as violence. It is natural for the parents to be angry at their son's behavior, and they do have a right to scold him and tell him to improve his performance the next time. But "disciplining" their son cannot be an excuse for using physical force or depriving him of basic necessities.

Scenario 3

In a university, an openly gay young man is constantly harassed by his peers who insult and mock him because of his sexual identity.

Key Points

Every individual has the right to be treated equally and fairly, regardless of religion, sex, race, caste, ethnicity, and sexual and gender identities. In this case, the young man is being discriminated against because of his sexual identity. This will result in psychological/emotional harm to the young man.

Scenario 4

A woman and her husband work in the same company. The woman has just got a promotion, while the man has not. As a result, he is upset and has stopped talking to his wife; he taunts her in front of his friends, telling them that she is now “too important” for him. Do you think there is any violence involved in this situation? Why?

Key Points

Yes, the husband’s behavior is a form of violence. It will cause emotional and mental harm to the woman. It is his jealousy that is making the man hurt his wife in this manner. Also, most men are brought up to believe that they are “superior” to women; so when his wife does better than him at her job, he probably feels inferior, he feels he is “less of a man.” But the fact is that, like a man, a woman has a right to have a career and to secure a promotion based on her hard work and good performance.

Scenario 5

A well-off couple has employed a 13-year-old girl to work as a domestic helper. The girl is expected to do all the housework, including washing the clothes and vessels, cleaning the house, taking care of the couple’s 2-year-old baby, and buying things at the market. She is expected to work 7 days a week. She gets a salary and two meals every day. Do you think there is any violence involved in this situation? Why?

Key Points

Yes, this is a form of violence. This is a clear example of child labor. And every case of child labor causes serious mental, emotional, and even physical harm to the child.

The law prohibits child labor. However, this is a common situation in many countries. Children often work in hazardous and extremely harsh conditions. This deprives them not only of basic rights like education, but they also lose out on their childhood. Children are employed because they provide cheap labor; employing a child does not mean that the employer is “helping” the child’s family. Employing an adult in the child’s place would not only put an end to this practice, but it would also reduce the large-scale prevalence of adult unemployment in our country.

Scenario 6

The wife and husband in a couple both have full-time jobs. When the wife returns home at the end of the day, her husband expects her to cook his dinner, help the children with their homework and prepare them for bed, and tidy up the house. Most nights, the husband also expects his wife to have sex with him. The wife is often very tired at the end of the day and needs sufficient rest to wake up early the next day so she can get the children ready for school before she goes to the office. As a result, she often refuses to sex with her husband. On several occasions, however, her husband has forced himself on her in spite of her protestations. Do you think there is any violence involved in this situation? Why?

Key Points

Yes, this is a form of violence. The type of violence described is marital rape because the husband has been forcing his wife to have sex against her will. All sexual encounters must be consensual; both partners—whether married or not—must be able to provide their consent free from coercion and violence. When partners are not consenting and are forced or coerced into engaging into sexual practices, it is rape.