



EXPLORING SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS BEHIND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN SARGODHA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Violence against Women has become a global concern because this specific issue affects the life of women adversely. Domestic violence is most persistent form of Violence against Women. It is a severe violation of human rights. Many demographic, economic, psychological factors may be responsible for the domestic violence but social factors contain prime importance in this regard. Pakistani society is facing the trouble of increase in domestic violence because this issue is still under acknowledged and underreported. An exploratory study was conducted to probe the socio-economic factors behind domestic violence. Interview schedule was utilized as a tool to accumulate concerning data. A representative sample of (N=100) was collected through purposive and snowball sampling techniques. 56% of women indicated that they have faced physical violence and a huge majority i.e., 71% has faced psychological violence. The results suggest that women are more prone to bear and face domestic violence due to economic dependence.

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women continues to be a universal epidemic that kills, tortures, and disfigures women physically, psychologically, sexually and economically. It is one of the most pervasive of human rights violations, denying women and girls' equality, security, dignity, self-worth, and their

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right to enjoy basic freedoms. Violence against women is present in every country, cutting across boundaries of culture, class, education, income, ethnicity and age (UNICEF, 2000).

It is one of the most systematic and widespread human rights abuses in the world. It is directed against a woman and affects women excessively. Such gender-based violence against women is a form of discrimination and deeply rooted in power imbalances and structural relationships of inequality between women and men. It harms families, impoverishes communities and reinforces other forms of inequality and violence throughout societies (United Nations, 2007). In addition to causing injury, violence increases women's long-term risk of a number of other health problems, including persistent pain, physical disability, drug and alcohol abuse, and depression (Ellsberg, 2005; Srinivasan, 2011).

Gender relations that presume men to be superior to women and given the women subordinate status become a cause of violence against women. Patriarchy is considered as main reason of violence against women (Khan et al., 2011). Women are peripheral and marginal in the management of family matters (Michael and Oliver, 2012). Much of gender violence is considered normal and enjoys social sanction. Demonstration of violence includes physical aggression, such as blows of varying intensity, burns, attempted hanging, sexual abuse and rape, psychological violence through insults, embarrassment, intimidation, blackmail, economic or emotional threats, and control over speech and actions. In extreme, but not unknown cases, death is the result (Saravanan, 2000).

In 1991, first time the issue of violence against women was recognized at the international level in real sense. When the CEDAW Committee, responding to pressure from women's groups and formulated recommendations, which articulated violence against women as gender based discrimination covered by CEDAW. Women from the grassroots level from all over the world came together and mounted an international campaign to make violence against women an important issue of human rights. In 1993, UN conference of human rights at Vienna, first recognized gender-based violence as a human rights violation. In 1993, women demanded for the UN declaration on the elimination of violence against women. Within six month general assembly with the standing ovation passed the United Nations Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women (Coomeraswamy, 2005)

Violence Against women is now widely recognized as a serious human rights abuse as increasingly as an important public health problem with substantial consequences for women's physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health (Moreno et al., 2006; Kyu et al., 2005). Some forms of violence lean to be particular to a life-cycle stage, such as female feticide through sex-selective abortion, female infanticide, and female genital cutting, other forms of violence cut across all ages. Violence can be in the type of physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, verbal

abuse, and specific acts of violence during pregnancy. Women are also debilitated by restricting their access to food and medical care, carrying out dowry deaths and honor killings, and pressurize them to have sex through rape and/or sexual harassment. Men who hurt women can be intimate partners, family members, or other men. The subset of violence by intimate partners is usually referred to as “domestic violence,” although the term is not always obviously defined (Kishor et al., 2004).

UN Beijing World Conference on Women explicitly recognizes that violence against women creates an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development, and peace at the national level and violates the human rights of women at the individual level (ibid). It is clearly based on the unequal power relations between men and women, underlying which is the patriarchal social structure that is constructed, reinforced and perpetuated by socio-political institutions put in place by men and which thereby ensure that men, by asset of their gender, have power and control over women and children (UN, 2000).

American Medical Association defined intimate partner violence as a pattern of physical, sexual or psychological abuse by a person with whom the victim has an intimate relationship. According to WHO domestic violence as “any act of “gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”(Ali et al., 2007).

All these forms effect women but “Domestic violence” is one of the most widespread forms of violence against women, and it imposes a massive burden for women throughout the world. It can be physical, psychological and sexual. It occurs in all countries and transcends social, economic, religious, and cultural groups (Kyu et al., 2005). “Domestic violence,” “wife abuse,” “spouse abuse,” and “intimate partner violence,” is terms often used interchangeably. The word “domestic” identifies an intimate relationship that exists between two individuals, whether they are married or cohabiting (Mahapatra, 2008).

Domestic violence term is used for the people who are bonded through law, blood or personal relationship. It is defined as a violent behavior in any relationship by one or both partners to keep power and control over another. It is also known as domestic abuse, child abuse, and intimate partner violence (IPV). The various instances of domestic violence include physical aggression like hitting, biting, restraining etc, or threats like sexual abuse, controlling or authoritarian, emotional abuse, stalking or passive/covert abuse (like neglect). It may or may not form a crime, depending on local rigorosness and extent of specific acts (Domestic Violence & Its Effects, 2010).

UN Fourth World Conference on Women, section 113-114 defines domestic violence as that “physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to

women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution; physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs. Other acts of violence against women include violation of the human rights of women in situations of armed conflict, in particular murder, systematic rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy. Acts of violence against women also include forced sterilization and forced abortion, coercive/forced use of contraceptives, female infanticide and prenatal sex selection” (Allen, 2008).

Physical abuse, psychological abuse (e.g. controlling behavior, economic abuse, social isolation), and sexual abuse are included in the forms of domestic violence. Physical violence can often result in multiple injuries and may lead to chronic conditions, while emotional abuse can have severe long-term effect (UNICEF, 2000).

According to UNICEF(2000), In physical abuse slapping, beating, arm twisting, assault, asphyxiate burning, choking, lash out, threats with an object or weapon, and murder and harmful traditional practices to women such as female genital mutilation and wife inheritance are also included .It is the practice of passing a widow, and her property, to her dead husband’s brother. In sexual abuse forced sex through threats, terrorization or physical force, forcing unwanted sexual acts or forcing sex with others are included.

In Psychological abuse includes behavior that is proposed to intimidate and pursue, and takes the form of threats of leaving or abuse, confinement to the home scrutiny, threats to take away custody of the children, annihilation of objects, isolation, verbal aggression and constant embarrassment and In economic abuse includes acts such as the rejection of funds, rebuff to contribute financially, denial of basic needs and food, and controlling right to use health care facilities and control access to employment, etc (UNICEF, 2000).

In most populous countries of the world The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is the sixth, and is ranked 125th out of the 169 countries on the Gender Development Index (GDI) and 99th out of 109 on the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) (Aurat Foundation, 2011). Pakistani society is a true example of manifesting this violence where there are deep-seated beliefs based on culture and traditions, norms and social institutions that legitimize and therefore perpetuate violence against women. Women are considered as personal properties of men and men control every aspect of lives of women including their behavior and movements. Men have the right to make decisions, and women have to follow their decisions in family, tribe, community and society (Abrar et al., 2010).

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are following:

- To determine the level of domestic violence against women.
- To explore the social factors those continue domestic violence against women.
- To identify the economic factors those perpetuate domestic violence against women.

METHODS

This research was conducted in order to explore socio-economic factors of domestic violence against women. The target population was the married women of Sargodha district. In social research, surveys are one of the most frequently used methods of data gathering (May, 1997). Survey method was used for this research and data were collected through an uncomplicated and short interview schedule from the respondents on the variables studied. Target population of this research was married women of age group 15-49. The opinions and characteristics of a population can be explained through the use of a representative sample (May, 1997). 100 female respondents were selected through purposive and snowball sampling technique. Respondents are selected on the basis of inclusion criteria. Purposive sampling technique is used when we select respondents according to our purpose. We select those respondents purposefully who serve our goals of research. Purposive sampling technique was used because sampling frame of women who were the victims of domestic violence was not available. Interview schedule was used as a data collection tool.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics was in the form of frequencies, percentages. The Special Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-15.0) was used to aid in analysis of this data.

Demographic information

In this study, only married women were included. Respondents who were belonging to the age group of 15-22 were 6.7%, the respondent from age group 23-29 were 23.3%, from 30-36 the percentage of respondents were 34.4% and the highest percentage from the age group of 37-49 which was 35.6%. Percentage of illiterate respondent was 42.2% and the respondents who had primary-middle education were 21.1%. Matric- intermediate 25.6% and B.A-M.A was 11.1%. frequencies were shown. Abrar et al. (2010) conduct a study on women violence in Pakistan's rural and urban areas concluded that violence level also varies with reference to age and education differences. women who were housewives 74.4%, teaching 10 % and the women who were domestic worker and do domestic work in other houses were 8.9% and who working in agriculture were 6.7%. The percentage of respondents who earn from 5000-10000 were 48.9%, who earn 10000-15000 were 14.4%, who earn 15000-20000 were 11.1% and respondents earning

25000-30000 were 25.6%. About 50% respondents were from nuclear family and 50% were from joint family.

Violence Experience

Violence is defined in the WHO's World Report on Violence and Health as: "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal development or deprivation" (Dalal, 2008). A huge majority i.e., 83.3% respondents were strongly agreed with the statement that they experience violence in their marital life. These findings support the view that women's status determines the level of violence against married women (Lamichhane et al., 2011; Moraveji et al., 2012). 63.3% respondents said that they have faced violence within last 1 year. These findings follow similar studies which indicate that women are suffering due to violence within household and this violence is badly affecting their abilities (Srinivasan, 2011; Moreno et al., 2006).

Physical Violence

Most studies investigated that socio-cultural factors are associated with domestic violence against women (Mahapatra, 2008). More than half i.e., 56% of respondents in current study indicated that their husband slapped or thrown something at them which could hurt them. These findings appear to confirm that prevalence of domestic violence against women is caused by socio-economic issues (Aftab et al., 2011; Dalal et al., 2009). Survey recorded that 38% percent of respondents faced the physical violence and their husbands threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife or weapon against them.

Psychological Abuse

About 71 % percent of respondents felt that their husbands insulted or made them feel bad about their self. This result is consistent with view that undermining the security of woman, her self-respect or her personality is diminishing her physical or mental capacities (Babur, 2007; Gulcur L.,1999). The findings from previous studies support current study that communication gap, and lacking in problem-solving skills of couples initiate domestic violence (Ali et al., 2011; Naeem et al., 2008; Kyu et al., 2005). This is consistent with the findings that Self-reported past-year and lifetime prevalence of psychological abuse were 81.8% and 83.6% (ibid). 81.1% of respondents indicated that the Attitude of husband and in-laws becoming a cause of constant stress.

Economic Abuse

Economic abuse includes acts such as the denial of funds, refusal to contribute financially, denial of food and basic needs, and controlling access to health care, employment, etc (UNICEF, 2000). About 64% of women indicated that Husband controls access to health facilities. These findings provide evidence which support the previous findings that Poverty and unemployment are widely seen as contributing factors to domestic violence (European Commission, 2010; Mutiso et al., 2010;

Kishor et al., 2004). 67% of respondents said that their husbands always try to keep them dependents in money matters. Earlier studies (Hove et al., 2011; Bates et al., 2004) support these findings that household economic status was associated with less domestic violence in marriage.

Social Factors behind Domestic Violence against Women

Social factors are those factors which are external to individual and have palpable effect on individuals (Abercrombie et al., 1994; Kishor et al., 2004). They are present in society in which we live. They have great impact on our life. These factors are related to our social life. In these factors our societal structure is included. 51% of women indicated that Gender inequality is responsible for domestic violence against women which confirm previous studies (Dalal, 2008; Adegoke, 2008; Coomeraswamy, 2005). 66% of women indicated that Husband's work has more value than your work. 37% of respondents consider that Cultural norms and traditions are responsible for domestic violence against women. These findings support the view that culture is used to justify the violence against women, therefore violence against women is normalized, tolerated and accepted as social behavior and nobody question on it (Grieff, 2010; Noor, 2004). 29% of women were strongly agreed that considering family as a private sphere increases the domestic violence against women. Lisa Gregg Police Report (2005) supports the results of current study. 21% of women were agreed that Gender specific socialization makes women the victim of domestic violence. These findings of our study support the view that patriarchal structure of our society becoming the cause of domestic violence (Tracy. S. R., 2007). About 66% of participants revealed that Lack of social support makes women vulnerable to domestic violence. These findings are consistent with study of Ngoma (2005). About 78% of participants indicated that if you have strong social support from your paternal family then the attitude of your in-laws or husband was comparatively better. About 43% indicated that having any knowledge regarding the law of domestic violence against women can save them from violence. About 34% of respondents indicated that improper laws for domestic violence are contributor to increasing domestic violence against women. These findings confirm the view that Violence against women continues to have an excessively low priority on the International development agenda and in planning (Elizabeth et al., 2009).

Economic Factors behind Domestic Violence against Women

When asked whether Economic Dependence is the root cause of violence against women, 61% indicated strongly agree responses. Only 37% showed satisfaction that Husband gives sufficient money for monthly expenditure. About 69% believed that Limited access of women in both formal and informal sector jobs become a cause of violence against women.

CONCLUSION

The findings show that women of Sargodha district face serious physical and psychological violence from their intimate partners. They are also deprived of right of economic participation and economic independence. Sargodha district like remaining Pakistani society has a traditional setting

where cultural restrictions bound women. Women have indicated the extent of psychological abuse they have faced. However, there are numerous social factors which give rise to all sorts of violence. In conclusion, the results of this study prove that women in Pakistani society are facing serious domestic violence within private sphere. Only women are not suffering with domestic violence but it also has serious repercussions for other family members. Research findings supported the argument that economic dependence is leading cause of domestic violence. The study's sample was not diverse in terms of area but it was diverse in terms of social status and experiences. The findings were not so surprising because women have been traditionally deprived in Pakistani society.

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