

Battered Women

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ABSTRACT

Background: Violence against females is as old as human history, in the ancient history young females were slaughtered in different terms as a tradition which were labelled as a sacrifice to save the rest of the society. In the modern world although such practices are not in vogue but the pattern of violence has changed but still prevail around the globe. The nature of violence could be sexual, physical, psychological or some other form. Majority of such violence are domestic due to which they are not reported so exact data is not available. The figures calculated on the available data are also not encouraging.

Method: Study was conducted at Gujranwala for a period of five months. Self-designed questionnaire was used after validation by the experts. Focus of violence against women was limited to physical, sexual, mental and economical violence.

Results: The present study showed that physical violence dominated all other violence's followed by sexual, mental and economical violence.

Conclusion: Violence against women is very common and is observed globally. Majority of such cases are not reported and the issue is resolved or suppressed before being highlighted. It is generally accepted that those matters which are not reported are considered to be resolved. It is never considered that all such issues leave a long lasting impact on the general health of the female which ultimately affects the family as she is the only caretaker of her family who have to spend majority of the time with her children as compared to her counterpart. Proper education to all females at primary school shall provide them with awareness about their right and health.

Keywords: Violence, tradition, domestic

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is not a new commodity, it has been a voice of the society for a long time, in the recent past a lot of awareness have been given to the public through social media¹. Although a lot of NGOs working for the rights of females and some government agencies especially focusing on this issue have been working effectively but fruitful results are still awaited². According to different statistics the available data suggests that approximately one third of the women globally are being battered at different level³.

If we skip the word women for a short time, violence against females starts from infancy which is known as infanticide till old age i.e. deprived of old aged benefits⁴. From literature review violence against women can be classified grossly into physical, sexual, economical, mental and emotional violence⁵.

All such violence may be domestic or they may be related to work place if females are working at a place other than their home. An undocumented fact globally observed through different societies is the male dominance, this is reflected by the physical violence observed among female community which is at the forefront of all other type of violence⁶. Physical violence may even be killing of an unwanted child particularly female child known as infanticide, which have been observed

globally through ancient times. Although this practice has declined but sporadic cases are being observed among different societies. The other types of violence commonly observed are beating with blunt objects, kicking, slapping, punching etc. in case of adult pregnant female's abdomen is the most common site of violence.

Sexual violence is the most highlighted violence observed among females. This type of violence is a very common violence observed but unfortunately most of the cases are not been reported, among the reported cases it is observed that these cases are not followed properly⁷. Such violence is most common among the working class females whether they are working at offices or at homes such as house maids⁸. Some of the sexual violence cases are accompanied with physical violence also. Physical violence is dominated in those sexual cases when where female refuses to consent.

Third type of violence observed is mental or emotional violence, although not documented much, but it has a long lasting effect which if encountered at early age is going to produce personality effect on the females which could be a life time stigma for them⁹. Mental, psychological or emotional violence is observed among young school girls, college students, working women and house wives. Such violence affects the working abilities of females which further aggravate the situation.

Economic violence is another type of violence observed among females, particularly when they are earning but are deprived of the resources which they

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possess and earn, they are forced to depend on their male partner to assess the financial resources¹⁰. Those females who have their own independent source of income are made to depend on their counterpart for financial liberty.

All different types of violence have a grave impact on the overall wellbeing of females. Being students they cannot achieve good grades, working at offices they can't perform at their best and being house wives they find it difficult to cope with day to day activities and raise their children. In addition, the health of the females is affected adversely. Majority of the cases such deprivation is transferred to their children which adds to the misery of the family. Studies from different quadrants has shown strong association between poor physical and psychological health of females and violence against them^{11,12}. In majority of the cases vital evidence is lacking even though the association between violence and poor performance cannot be neglected.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

It is a cross sectional quantitative study conducted in the densely populated city of Punjab i.e., Gujranwala. A self-designed questionnaire which was validated through experts, was used for this study. The categories which were focused were financial violence, physical violence, sexual violence and mental violence.

Data collection: Data was collected from 1st January to 31st May 2018. City of Gujranwala was divided into four divisions. Population under study was selected randomly, only those participants who consented were included in the study and their confidentiality was maintained. Those participants who were not able to fill the questionnaire but were willing to participate in the study were helped to fill the questionnaire. Rest of the participants were educated enough about filling the questionnaire.

Data analysis: Data was analyzed using SPSS software.

Table 1: Age n=100

Biodata	Frequency	%age
Age		
11-15 years	5	5%
16-20 years	10	10%
21-25 years	25	25%
26-30 years	36	36%
31-35 years	24	24%

Table-2: Marital status n=100

Unmarried	19	19%
Married	60	60%
Widow	2	2%
Divorced	19	19%

Table 3: Educational status n=100

Illiterate	20	20%
Middle school	31	31%
Matriculate	35	35%
Graduate	14	14%

Table-4: Job status n=100

Employed	35	35%
House wife	65	65%

Table-5: Residential status n=100

Self-residence	32	32%
Rented residence	68	68%

Table-6 Type of violence

Violence	Mean	SD
Physical	45.121	9.231
Sexual	20.109	6.612
Financial	25.01	7.011
Mental	30.34	8.245

Table-8: :Violence correlation among participants

Physical	Pearson correlation	0.242	
	P value	0.008	
Sexual	Pearson correlation	0.321	
	P value	0.009	
Financial	Pearson correlation	-0.015	0.355
	P value	0.872	0.000
Mental	Pearson correlation	0.203	0.334
	P value	0.026	0.000

RESULTS

The study included 100 participants which were categorized under different table to make understanding better. Table-1 showed frequency of the participants and their %age with reference to their age. 5% of the participants were between age group 11- 15 years. 10% were between age 16-20 years. 25% were between the age of 21-25 years, 36% were between 26-30 years of age and 24% were between the age group of 31- 35 years.

Table-2 exhibits the marital status of the participants. 19% of the participants were unmarried, 60% of the participants were married, 2% were widows and 19% were divorced.

Table-3 shows educational status of the participants. 20% of the participants were illiterate, 31% could study up to middle school, 35% were matriculate and 14% were graduates.

Table-4 highlights the employment status of the participants. 35% were employed which included working at different homes and office jobs. 65% of the participants were housewives.

Table-5 shows the residential status of the participants. 32% were living at their own homes, whereas 68% were living at a rental property.

Table-6 shows the mean and standard deviation of different type of violence females encountered. Physical violence mean is 45.121 and SD is 9.231, sexual violence mean is 20.109 and SD is 6.612, financial violence mean is 25.01 and SD is 7.011 whereas mean of metal violence is 30.34 and SD is 8.245.

The correlation among different type of violence with the participants is shown in table-7. The Pearson correlation of physical violence is 0.242 and P value is 0.008, the Pearson correlation in case of sexual violence is 0.321 and its P value is 0.009, in case of financial violence Pearson correlation is -0.015 and its P value is 0.872 whereas in mental violence Pearson correlation is 0.203 and its P value is 0.000.

DISCUSSION

Violence against women whether it take place domestically or at work place has significant effect on the health and wellbeing of females, a multi country study in 2005 conducted under WHO on women's health and domestic violence against women by García-Moreno C, Jansen H, Ellsberg M, Heise L, Watts C supports the present study¹³. Majority of such cases are not reported as it is presumed that whether they are not to be fruitful or sometime may even result in some grave outcome such as losing job or further aggravating violence, a study published in Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health 2004 by Sundaram V, Helweg-Larsen K, Laursen B, Bjerregaard P is in support of this study¹⁴.

Violence against females has a long history, in the ancient time female children were killed or slaughtered in lieu of some spiritual act, studies conducted by Engels D in 1980 and Rives J in 1998 supports this study^{15,16}. No one in the society blamed anyone as it was considered to be a custom in majority of the societies. In other words, such a crime was not given any due importance, which otherwise should have been punished.

Majority of the crimes against females has short term effect such as physical violence, but large number of violence has long lasting effects which not only affect the health of the females but also has got grave influence on the mental health of the females, study conducted in 2006 by Reed GL, Enright RD supports present study¹⁷. Such long term effects on the mental and psychological health of the females need to addressed at all forums because they are vital person in the brought up of their children which are the future of any nation.

The current study addresses the hot issue of multiple violence against females, one school of thought is that such issues are individual incidences taking place at home or at work places and does not need to explored at larger scale. The fact is that when data from any community is collected the results appear to be terrifying holistically, studies conducted in 1984 by Linz DG, Donnerstein E, Penrod S and Sadler AG, Booth BM, Mengeling MA, Doebbeling BN in 2004 supports the present study^{18,19}. In our society domestic violence which is not reported, is a wide spread abuse. Such issues are resolved at domestic level by a group of people which usually comprise of elderly family members which does not justify the issue but rather female is pressurized in such a way which leaves no room for her to argue, and in all such cases it is presumed that all corners of justice have been met, a study conducted in 2003 by Fabiano PM, Perkins HW, Berkowitz A, Linkenbach J, Stark C supports our study²⁰. In all such cases it causes ill effect on the mental health of the female, which leaves a long lasting effect, a study conducted in 1999 by Goldfarb SF supports the present study²¹.

Another very important and a grave violence is sexual abuse and harm to the females, it is not related to any age group, the misery in such cases it quite similar to rest of the violence, such cases are also not reported or very seldom reported a study conducted in 1993 by Fitzgerald LF and by Reilly ME, Lott B, Caldwell D, DeLuca L in 1992 supports this study^{7,22}. The females who are at risk are house maids or females working at offices. This

harassment could be of any level. Shame, guilt, exposure to society are the common threats which prevent the female from reporting such incidences at any forum a study conducted by Reilly ME, Lott B, Caldwell D, DeLuca L in 1992 supports this study²². Such cases are quite large in number, as they are not reported it is presumed that they are of minor nature study conducted in 1994 by Smith MD supports this study²³.

Those females who are working women are deprived of their right to spend their earning at their own will. Males being the dominant family member presumes that they are the only deciding authority at home utilize all the resources earned by the counterpart i.e. female. Due to gender bias and dominating nature of males, majority the resources earned by females are utilized by males as they consider it to be right, study conducted in 1998 by Laband DN, Lentz BF supports this study²⁴.

It has been observed that majority of the violence is not observed as a single entity, rather it is a cluster of violence observed in a single case, only the dominantly effected case is highlighted and it is considered to be a single violence and addressed accordingly, rest of the violence are not given any regard, study conducted in 2007 by Fantuzzo JW, Fusco RA supports this study²⁵.

Those females who encounter violence of any type usually do not retaliate, this provides more room to the offenders for further violence, that is why those females who face such violence encounter such violence's repeatedly, study conducted in 2008 by Daigle LE, Fisher BS, Cullen FT supports this study²⁶.

According to different studies mental torture is by far more commonly observed than any other abuse but seldom reported.

In societies like ours which is a male dominated society due to multiple factors, the most dominating being religious factor. Majority of us do not practice religion in its true spirit, rather it is misused which gives a large room to males to make decisions about females for finances, social setup and domestic issues. In majority of such cases all violence's are covered in such a way that it appears that all issues have been resolved.

This study clearly advocates that violence against females is a global issue and it is one of the major contributing factor in declining health of females, study conducted in 2014 by Masterson AR, Usta J, Gupta J, Ettinger AS in accordance with the present study²⁷. Collectively these finding suggest a powerful message, that such violence's are not isolated in the society rather they are global issue which require immediate action rather than paper work.

CONCLUSION

Violence against women is very common and is observed globally. Majority of such cases are not reported and the issue is resolved or suppressed before being highlighted. It is generally accepted that those matters which are not reported are considered to be resolved. It is never considered that all such issues leave a long lasting impact on the general health of the female which ultimately affects the family as she is the only caretaker of her family who have to spend majority of the time with her children as

compared to her male counterpart. Proper education to all females at primary school shall provide them with awareness about their right and health.

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