

GENDER AND VIOLENCE: A RISING ISSUE

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ABSTRACT

Women status in Pakistan is not conspicuous in any discipline of the life. Gender violence is pervasive and persistent, cutting across divisions of class, caste, age and community. Gender based violence is perpetrated at many different levels, i.e. at the family, community and state levels, and in many different forms. The fear of violence perpetuates a state of insecurity; a feeling of insecurity undermines a women confidence, besides affecting her access to resources and overall quality of life. Women have specific problems, which must be catered for. The present study was conducted through random sampling by 150 married women. All the rural women of Tehsil Faisalabad were included in the sampling frame. The data was collected through pre-tested and validated interview schedule and then was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to draw conclusions and to suggest measures for improvement. It was found from the study that violence has different forms such as, physical, verbal, mobility, psychological, social and economic. All these forms impacted an adverse affect on women's life at various stages. Government, social groups, theologians and organizations should play their role in discouraging such behaviours.

Key words: gender, violence, and women's issue

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It can include physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, and it is beyond the boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography. It takes place in the home, on the streets, in schools, office/the workplace, in farm fields, refugee camps, during conflicts and crises. It has many manifestations — from the most universally prevalent forms of domestic and sexual violence, to harmful practices, abuse during pregnancy, so-called honour killings and other types of femicide (UNIFEM, 2011). Gender violence appears in numerous ways as per sexual, physical, emotional abuse by an intimate partner, forced labour or sex, dowry-related violence (WHO, 2009). In addition, many forms of violence are long-standing social, cultural and community practices like bride burning, honour killings among others (i.e. murdered on the name of family), street sexual harassment, early and child forced marriages. Gender violence is neither static nor isolated, and is inexorably linked to the political climate, social conditions, new trends in society, advancements in technology, and access to education and health care, among other factors (Coomaraswamy, 2005).

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap WEF (2010) report reveals the gender inequality gap in basic four areas; (i) Economic participation and opportunity – outcomes on salaries, participation levels and access to high-skilled employment. (ii) Educational attainment – outcomes on access to basic and higher level education (iii) Health and survival – outcomes on life expectancy and sex ratio (iv) Political empowerment –

outcomes on representation in decision-making structures. Progress will be achieved when countries seek to reap returns on the investment in health and education of girls and women by finding ways to make marriage and motherhood compatible with the economic participation of women.

Feminist scholars have long argued (and continue to do so) that the security of women, in both private and public spaces, is integral to creating and sustaining security for any population (Bunch, 2004). A woman does not have to directly or repeatedly experience violence to feel insecure. The fear of violence perpetuates a state of insecurity; a feeling of insecurity undermines an individual's confidence, besides affecting her access to resources and overall quality of life.

WHO (1996) in its press release stated that the role of housewife had been increasingly devalued in modern society. Intimate partner abuse, physical abuse, battering, isolation, breaking trust, disrespect, psychological abuse, economic abuse are also fall in the category of domestic violence. A survey conducted by WHO (2009) in ten countries concluded that almost 15%-71% of women bear physical or sexual violence by a husband or partner while between 4% -12% of women being physically abused during pregnancy. Every year, about 5,000 women are murdered by family members in the name of honour worldwide.

UNDP (1995) mentioned in their "human development" report that many women and girls from all social, cultural and income groups were subject to specific forms of violence because of their gender. This gender-specific violence included emotional, physical and verbal assault; rape and mass rape; sexual

exploitation and slavery, forced pregnancy, forced or selective abortion; and forced sterilization. World Bank (1997) also reported the same type of violence against women across the globe. The report presented by World Bank also enlightened that gender violence was significant cause of female mortality.

Gender based violence takes many different forms and there may be distinctive patterns or manifestations of gender violence associated with particular cultures or regions. There is an only way to develop the entire society that is to develop women and to make them enable to fully contribute in the process of development as the equally important and useful members of the community. The present study was thus planned to study various forms of violence and their effects on women in the society.

METHODOLOGY

The universe for the present study was the rural areas of Faisalabad District. The study was conducted through random sampling by survey method. Three villages that are; 275JB, 277JB, and 278JB were selected through simple random sampling technique from the Faisalabad District. From each village one teaching institute was selected through convenient sampling. One hundred and fifty respondents were interviewed in the said area. The data were collected through validated interview schedules. The interview schedule consisted of both open ended and close-ended questions. Pre-tested interview schedule was used for collection of data.

The collected data were processed. It involves the transformation of the observations gathered in the field into a system of categories and the translation of these categories into codes amenable to quantitative analysis. After completing the field work, data were analyzed by using SPSS program (SPSS, 15).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main objective of the study was to study the impact of domestic violence on women's reproductive health in lower class in Faisalabad district. For this purpose a well-structured interview schedule was developed for respondents and data were gathered and processed.

The data presented in tables 1 and 2 clearly indicate that the respondents belonged to three major castes and they belonged to poor middle income group. The results of the study are in line with the findings of Tabassum (2002). She found that 40% of the respondents had up to 6000 monthly income, and 60% of the respondents had above 6000 monthly income.

The results show that 67% respondent's family members use abusive language. About 84% respondents

received taunting remarks from their family members. Almost 52%, 41%, 33%, 73%, of the respondents reproach, threat for divorce, threat for snatch of children, insult by their family members respectively. While 43% feel that due to verbal violence they were fell in ill, 32% feel that due to verbal violence there is miscarriage or other reproductive health problem. The present results are in line with the findings of Visaria (1999). The author reported that women in India faced verbal violence like: not preparing meals on time (66 %), not cooking meals properly (51 %), not caring for the children properly (48 %) and economic stress (48 %). In addition, 45 % of the women reported that their husbands used abusive language in the presence of their children, and 63 % reported that this occurred in the presence of their parents as well.

Table 1. Distribution of the respondents according to their caste

Cast	No.	%
Arain	82	54
Rajput	28	18
Jatt	40	26
Total	150	100.0

Table 2. Distribution of the respondents according to their family monthly income

Family income	No.	%
Up to 6000	75	50
7000-10,000	38	26
Above 10,000	37	24
Total	150	100

Table 3. Distribution of the respondents according to physical violence

Statements	Yes		No	
	No.	%	No.	%
Would your family members slap you	57	38	93	62
Would your family members punch you	78	52	72	48
Would your family members kick you	74	49	76	51
Would your family members scratch you	77	32	102	68
Would your family members throw objects on you	30	20	120	80
Would your family members threat/attack with weapon upon you	33	22	117	78
Would you threat for disfiguration	24	16	126	84
Do you feel that physical violence effects your reproductive health	89	59	61	41

Table 3 depicts that the distribution of respondents regarding physical violence. UNIFEM (2011) also found women are victimized of violence in

multiple ways like burning, bruises, scratches, broken bones, bites and sexual violence. In this context WWSF (2005) reported that each year and estimated two million girls suffer the practice of female genital mutilation. Worldwide, 20 to 50 % of women experience some degree of domestic violence during marriage.

Conclusions: It is concluded that women of Pakistan experienced violence especially in rural areas. Lower class women are mostly affected by various types of violence at home, at farm and out side the home. Women should be respected as required and desired by the teachings of Islam. The right of social, mental, educational and professional status should be given to females.

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