

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN FAMILY

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Abstract: violence, inflicting physical and mental injuries to the marriage partner, it is a prevalent phenomenon among women. Almost one-third of all women experience some kind of domestic violence during their married life from their spouse. Among survivors, home violence leads to serious consequences. This study was meant to identify the rate of domestic violence against married women in Iran. Physical and mental violence is a prevalent phenomenon among women. In this research the sample size was 298 married women in Iran in the city of Ahwaz . Result of this research showed that 43.95 percent of the women had been assaulted by their husbands during the past year or in their marriage period and it is important to notice that the violence was occurred in all age groups of the women.

1. Introduction

A major problem with our current knowledge base is the lack of precise prevalence figures for women exposed to domestic violence. Gender effects, particularly as they pertain to the perpetration of violence, have been examined extensively with multiple methodologies and experimental designs, across disparate populations and settings, and on varying types of aggressive behavior. Women are more likely to be beaten, raped, or killed by a current or former male partner than by anyone else (Epstein, 1999). Violence against women and girls is a major health and human rights concern. Women can experience physical or mental abuse throughout their life, in infancy, childhood, and/or adolescence, or during adulthood or older age. The World Bank estimates that rape and domestic violence account for 19% of the total disease burden among women aged 19 – 44 in industrialized countries. This means that, for women, one of every five years of healthy life lost because of injury, disease, or premature death is attributable to violence (Gazmarian et al. 1996). So It has been argued that “injuries are probably the best proof of force” (Ledray, 2001). Physical violence is a tactic used by men to restrict an intimate partner's behavior, especially her sexual behavior outside the intimate relationship (Buss & Malamuth, 1996; Daly & Wilson, 1988; Wilson & Daly, 1996). Hence the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) defines violence against women 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 private life” (UNO, 2000). When physical violence is separated by method of inflicting violence (slapping, throwing objects, etc.), preliminary evidence suggests that women in stepfamilies are at higher risk of the most severe forms of physical violence (Brownridge, 2004). Despite two decades of increased public awareness, domestic violence remains a serious public policy issue in the world. Thus, in this respect, the terms “observe” and “witness” imply passivity, exposure to domestic violence includes a wider range of indirect or direct involvement, such as intervening by placing one's self in harm'sway or calling [police] (Edleson, Mbilinyi, Beeman, & Hagemeister 2003; Fantuzzo et al., 1997). Hence domestic violence is rarely reported by neighbors and other non-family members and most often by the victim or family members (Iyengar, 2008). To assess the incidence of self-reported physical, emotional and sexual violence in pregnancy, 3275 women in the city of Babol in Iran is taken to the consideration.

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Result of this study showed , the prevalence of physical, sexual and emotional domestic violence was respectively 9.1%, 30.8% and 19.2%. Compared with those not reporting physical, sexual and emotional violence, women who did were more likely to deliver by cesarean and to have abnormal progress of labor, premature rupture of membranes, low birth weight, preterm birth and any hospitalization before delivery. Prevalence of physical, emotional or sexual violence during pregnancy was high and was associated with adverse fetal and maternal conditions. These findings support routine screening for physical, emotional and sexual violence in pregnancy and postpartum period to prevent consequences of domestic violence (Faramarzi, Esmaelzadeh & Mosavi, 2005).

Rennison (2001) found that fear of reprisal from abuser was the most commonly cited cause for not reporting a domestic violence incident. This is hotly contested claim. Women are thought to be abusers in only less than 5% of intimate partner violence cases (Dobash et al., 1992), while the men's rate as abuser are higher in case of domestic violence.

1.1. Culture and Violence

Indeed, culture and how it impacts on domestic violence has received little empirical or sophisticated theoretical attention, even though patriarchal belief systems, conservative norms for family, marriage, and gender roles, and adherence to religious beliefs and practices are often identified as a certain way of life (Eastman et al., 2007). Thus violence is an embedded part of our society and social norms dictate the circumstances under which aggression is acceptable and even condoned. It has historically been socially acceptable for males to use aggression against their wives to resolve interpersonal conflicts. The socially sanctioned use of violence in combination with the power inequality evident in many parts of our society today, help to create a system of male domination and female submission (Hien & Ruglas,2009). Cultural proscriptions against seeking help outside of the family or the immediate cultural milieu, as well as exposure to negative experiences and being an ethnic minority in [any country], may make it harder for certain subgroups of women to seek help (Ibid). The same cultural proscription shape Iranian women's marital life in the time of facing any kinds of abuses. In fact women experiences domestic violence under the cultural constructions which shape their lives.

2. Method and Material

Demographic diversity in terms of total population size, Ahwaz were selected for the propose of this research. The study population consisted of 298 married women, 20 to 54 years old, and the samples are randomly selected for data collection, Domestic violence was categorized as any physically or mentally assault against women by their husbands during any time in the past. The data were analyzed using SPSS Ver.11.5. We report analyses performed with the Chi square test for frequencies and Pearson-correlations for showing severity of associations.

3. Results and Discussion

Domestic violence continues to be a complex and perplexing social problem with psychological roots in intimacy (Dutton, 2007), attachment (Mauricio, Tein, & Lopez, 2007), emotional deregulation, and negative reciprocity in communication (Gottman et al., 1995). Relationships where physical abuse has occurred typically illustrate bilateral dysfunctionality on emotional, verbal, and physical levels.

Cultural and religious issues can play a major role in the perception of domestic violence and assaulting.

The average age for the 298 women as participants were 33.63 years (S.D. =7.469; range = 18–54, Variance= 55.788). The socio-demographic variables of the sample and their response to domestic violence were examined.

Table 1: Domestic violence against women in terms of, Age of women and duration of marriage

Domestic Violence in marriage duration	Women's age					Duration of marriage				
	<20	20 -29	30-39	40-49	50+	<5	5 -14	15 -24	25 -34	35+

Yes	1 0.7%	41 31.3%	58 44.3%	26 19.8%	5 3.9%	30 28.6%	43 41.5%	19 18.4%	10 9.6%	2 1.9%
No	2 1.2%	45 28.7%	64 40.8%	35 22.3%	11 7.0%	81 41.6%	71 35.7%	25 13.1%	14 7.8%	3 1.6%
Total	3 0.7%	86 28.9%	132 44.3%	61 20.6%	16 5.5%	111 37.3%	114 38.2%	44 14.8%	24 8.1%	5 1.6%

The age distribution of participants indicate that majority (n=132, 44.3 percent) of women were between age group 30-39 years. Hence, it can be clearly stated that violence was more frequently occurred in the women's aged 30-39 years old (n=58, 44.3 percent vs. n=64, 40.8 percent in the same age group without violence) (P<0.003). Over all it is important to notice that the violence was occurred in all age groups of the women. The association between experiencing violence and marriage duration was statistically significant P=0.025, women with facing violence (41.5 percent vs. 35.7 percent in women without violence with the 10-19 years marriage duration in life).

Table 2: Domestic violence against women in terms of, education level of women and their husbands

Domestic Violence in marriage duration	Women's education				Men's education			
	Illiterate	Elementary school	High education	Higher	Illiterate	Elementary school	High education	Higher
Yes	103 50.5%	81 39.8%	15 7.3%	5 2.4%	94 45.2%	89 42.8%	20 9.6%	5 2.4%
No	30 31.9%	34 36.2%	20 21.3%	10 10.6%	30 33.3%	30 33.3%	20 22.2%	10 11.2%
Total	133 44.6%	115 38.6%	35 11.7%	15 5.1%	124 41.6%	119 39.9%	40 13.4%	15 5.1%

(sig=0.002, F=2.796) (sig=0.003, F= 3.335)

Table 2 shows the relationship between the level of literacy of women and men and domestic violence. There seems to be a significant relationship between these two variables. It is expected that domestic violence against women increase as the level of literacy goes down. Considering F=2.796 and a significance level of sig=0.002 and 50.5% illiterate women those who reported the domestic violence, that the level of their education were low. And the relationship between the level of education of husband and using aggression against their wives the finding reveals that there is significant relationship between two variables in such a way that when the level of education of the husband is lower, using the aggression behaviors against their wives increases. Based on F value (F= 3.335) and significance level of (sig=0.003), almost 45.2 % of illiterate men using violent act in the family, Hence there is a significant relationship between the level of education and violence against their intimate partner.

Table 3: Domestic violence against women in terms of women and their husband's jobs

Domestic Violence in marriage duration	Women's occupational status		men's occupational status	
	Housewife	Employed	Employed	Unemployed
Yes	75 71%	32 29%	96 73.3%	35 26.7%
No	91	100	150	17

	47.6%	52.4%	89.8%	10.2%
Total	166 55.7%	132 44.3%	246 82.6%	52 17.4%

The women's occupational status has statistically significant association with violence in their life. Hence violence against housewives is more frequent compared to employed women, $P=0.001$. (Housewife 71 percent vs. 29 percent employed women). Man's occupational status had a significant association with domestic violence $P=0.001$, (among ($n=52$) unemployed men 26.7 percent vs. 10.2 percent use domestic violence against their wives) and the violence was more exercising by the seasonal worker and driver men, so it can be mentioned that the economic problems were the most frequent cause of domestic violence among unemployed families.

Table 4: regression analysis and domestic violence against women on the base of socio-educational status of samples

Variables	regression coefficient	significant
Age	0/010	0/914
Marriage duration	0/120	0/179
Husband's education	-0/080	0/472
Woman's education	-0/034	0/487
Husband's occupational status	-0/038	0/669
woman's occupational status	-0/065	0/710
Sig	0.000	

Analysis of variance follow by F- tests revealed strong significant relationship between the age ($\text{sig}=0.008$, $F= 2.962$), woman's and man's education [$(\text{sig}=0.002$, $F=2.796)$ and ($\text{sig}=0.003$, $F= 3.335$)] with domestic violence against women. Hence Pearson correlations ($r= 0.242$, $\text{sig}= 0.000$) indicated that duration of marriage positively correlated with one or more indices of violence.

Thus regression analysis of the domestic violence entered with the demographic and interview variables, followed by stepwise procedure model, revealed only woman's age, man's and woman's education and occupational status were remained as significant predictors of the domestic violence.

4. Conclusion

Violence is an embedded part of our society and social norms dictate the circumstances under which aggression is acceptable and even condoned and It has been socially acceptable for males to use violence against their intimate life partner to resolve interpersonal conflicts.

The women's strength and determination were not acknowledged, and domestic violence remained a private and secret matter. They were, indeed, blamed and even punished for being victims. However researchers have often suggested that this way of life maintains gender inequality and reduces women's ability to speak out against, or report abuse; reinforces the message that what happens between husband and wife is a private matter; makes it more difficult for individuals to challenge or reject ideas about violence; and keeps abuse hidden and invisible (Sudderth, 2006). Iranian women suffered from many types of violence that are due to specific cultures and laws. They deny the violence because they have some traditional and special cultural views. Most of them fear from single life and have hopeless and insecurity senses from their future. They may be unable to visit their children and may also loss their rights following divorce (Amin aleslam, 2000). Thus, the finding of this research showed that 43.95 percent of the women had been assaulted by their husbands during the past year or in their marriage period. While the results from 50 population-based studies in 36 countries indicate that between 10% and 60% of ever married or partnered

women have experienced at least one incident of intimate partner violence (Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottmoeller, 2002). The result of this study showed that there is significant relationship between the level of education of women and their husbands with domestic violence, revealed woman's age, man's and woman's education and occupational status were remained as significant predictors of the domestic violence. Among Iranian women privacy was culturally valued, so keeping domestic violence a private family matter was what is expected culturally. Indeed many women told about how they remained in abusive relationships for the sake of their children's future, believing that their children would be better off if their parents stayed together. Hence women as a result would often sacrifice their own peace, happiness, and safety for the sake of the children and to keep the family intact.

5. References

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