

## **Physical Violence on Women: A Comparative Study of Rural and Urban Areas of Muzaffarabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir**

### ***Abstract***

*This research is a comparative study of physical violence on women in the rural and urban areas of Muzaffarabad, Azad Jammu & Kashmir. The main objectives were: to examine the prevalence of physical violence; and explore whether the physical violence is due to financial matters or not. Thus, across sectional descriptive study was steered through a sample size of 600 respondents (300 each from rural and urban areas) using non-probability convenient sampling technique. The data was collected through close ended questionnaire. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the analysis of data. Chi-Square test was applied to check the association among dependent and independent variables. The study findings revealed that more physical violence against women due to financial matters exist in urban area than in rural community. The study unpacked variety of violence against women i.e. slapping, kicking, hand grabbing women hairs, and throwing objects on them. The overall conclusion that we draw from the study is that high rate of physical violence against women varies in rural and urban areas. However, a slight difference is observed while most of the indicators resulted higher rate of physical violence against women on financial matters grounds, in urban areas. They study concludes that women in urban areas are more vulnerable to physical violence than women in rural area. It can be asserted that the physical violence against women may be seen as an expression of men power that they use to maintain their status at the face of changing gender relations. The study suggests a wholesale educational program (by school mosque, media and home) to break the connection between violence and masculinity.*

**Keywords:** *Masculinity, Physical violence, Domestic violence, rural/urban areas, Cross Sectional*

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## INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is a fundamental violation of the human right to life, physical safety, self-respect, and dignity. It is very dismaying that the prevalence of violence against women is affecting virtually all societies, but often it goes unreported and in many societies it is still accepted as normative and normal behaviour. Nevertheless, feminist sociologists have been successful, at least in the global north, in bringing violence against women to the public's attention and academic and political debate. As stated earlier and reiterated here again that violence against women exists across the world. A growing body of research confirms its existence both in the developed and developing world (see Grovert, 2008). Majority of these studies conclude the phenomena as one-way street of in gender violence. Feminists argue that violence against women is an expression of men's power, that men use violence to maintain their hegemonic status. They also argue that violence offers men a sense of power not available to majority of men in the public domain. Thus, it is the manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women. Due to this unequal power relation, some forms of violence against women, especially domestic and customary violence, are so entrenched in the culture that they are hardly recognized as violence and largely condoned by the society.

### **Physical Violence against women: The broader Perspective**

One in every four women will experience physical violence in her lifetime (Tjaden, et al. 2000). An estimated 1.3 million women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year (Costs of Intimate Partner Violence against Women in the United States, 2003). Almost 85 percent of domestic violence victims are women (Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, 1993-2001). Historically, females have been most often victimized by someone they knew (U.S. Department of Justice, 2005). Females who are 20-24 years of age are at the greatest risk of nonfatal intimate partner violence (U.S. Department of Justice, 2006). Most cases of domestic violence are never reported to the police (Frieze Br&owne, 1989). The results from Zimbabwe show that 32 percent of women were repeatedly abused by a family or household member from the age of 16 (Watt et al., 1997). In India, 18 to 45 percent of currently married men acknowledged physically abusing their wives (Narayana, 1996). In Cambodia about 16 percent of women reported being repeatedly abused by their spouse; eight percent reported being injured (Nelson and Zimmerman, 1996). Lower level of education results violence and men justify physical violence to their spouses (Haj, 1998). Garcia et al. (2005) concluded that the high ratio of abuse and

violence against women by partner has been a main cause in health concerns. The abuser and victim can have some features which give rise to abusive relationships (Mintz & Cornett, 1997).

### **Physical Violence against women in Pakistan**

Violence within the family has been one of the most concealed offenses because the family is considered a consecrated among the institutions. The family matters are considered to be private matters and nobody is permissible to obstruct in them. It is generally presumed that violence cannot exist among family members, because it is alleged that family members always help and collaborate with each other, but the evidences are that diverse forms of family violence are the certainties of almost every society. The incidence of such acts of the violence against women at home are often marked out of the sight because it is considered an assault to the family and women are suppressed and scared of exposing it. However, current statistics replicate the omnipresence, frequency and the intensity of violence against women all over the world. Around the world at least one woman in every three has been beaten and coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Most often abuser is the member of her own family (Govt. of Pakistan, 1999). Poverty manifests itself along the lines of class, gender, and region and rural-urban divides. The incidence of poverty in rural areas is higher than in urban areas according to income, poverty and broader measures (UNDP, 1999).

Domestic violence is fairly widespread across all classes. It ranges from slapping, hitting, and kicking to murder. Since, it goes unnoticed until it takes extreme forms of murder or attempted murder. A study conducted by the Women's Division suggests that domestic violence takes place in approximately 80 percent of the households in the country (Ibid. p.10.). Three quarter of poor Pakistanis live in rural areas. A review undertaken by the Social Policy and Development Centre claims that "*while incidence of poverty has been falling in the urban areas in recent years, it has been climbing in rural areas*" (Development Centre, 1998). The present social structure is considered to be a source of domestic violence; women are physically violated by men (Gelles & Cornell, 1985). The violence against women, thus, can be seen as the result of gendered socialization (Zakar *et al.*, 2013). In Pakistan, battered wife with typical personality is restraint, nervous with low self-confidence. The women mostly come from restricted and conventional environment where men and women are traditional and victimized (Niaz, 1995). Domestic violence reveals at all levels of society in varying forms, it ranges from covert to overt acts (Hassan, 1995). Mumtaz and Shaheed (1987)

listed the Majlis-e-Khawateen, a fundamentalist women group established by government to oblige the women and women rights. Iqbal (1990) specified the behavior of sons and in-laws is indispensable that women are beaten by their sons, parents and in-laws. Women are snubbed, disregarded and even found intolerable by a large section of society. Khan and Sajid(2011) analyzed that women due to traditions and cultural norms are limited to their families. Asif et al. (2010) specified that violence has worst impressions upon the women's life like autonomy, productivity, life standard and care, which has had alarming results like loss of life. Nawaz et al. (2008) indicated that domestic violence is an economic, educational, developmental and human rights issue. In Karachi, 150 women were asked about health care facilities, 34percent of women claimed physical abuse whereas; 43percent of male respondents justified the violence (Bawah, et al. 1999).

## **METHODOLOGY**

The present research was focused to compare the prevalence of physical violence on women in the rural and urban areas of Muzaffarabad, Azad Jammu & Kashmir and to explore whether the physical violence is due to financial matters. A cross sectional descriptive research was conducted with a sample size 600, 300 each from rural and urban area on household level by using non-probability, convenient sampling technique. A structured close ended questionnaire was designed to collect data from the respondents. SPSS version 13.00 was used for the analysis of data and Chi-Square test was applied to check the association among the variables.

### **Hypothesis**

1. Financial matters are more likely to cause physical violence between partners.

## **RESULTS**

### **Socio-economic Characteristics**

In any social setup the socio-economic characteristics of an individual play a vital role in the formation of attitudes and behavior patterns and his standing in the social set-up. Therefore, it seems imperative to explain socio-economic characteristics of the respondents under study. Some of the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents were as follows:

**Table 2:** Demographic Characteristics of Respondents according to Residence in Rural and Urban Area of Muzaffarabad AJK

Variable		Residence		Total	Percentage%	
		Rural	Urban		Rural	Urban
Age in Years	15-25	88	38	126	29.5	12.7
	26-36	104	124	228	34.6	41.4
	37-47	56	88	144	18.6	29.4
	> 47	52	50	102	17.3	16.7
Total		300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Qualification of Respondent		138	62	200	46.0	20.7
Illiterate						
Primary		35	22	57	11.7	7.3
Middle		37	16	53	12.3	5.3
Matric		50	79	129	16.7	26.3
Intermediate		14	55	69	4.7	18.3
BA & Masters		26	66	92	8.7	22.0
Total		300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Qualification of Husband		92	35	127	30.7	11.7
Illiterate						
Primary		15	7	22	5.0	2.3
Middle		39	24	63	13.0	8.0
Matric		92	98	190	30.7	32.7
Intermediate		29	57	86	9.6	19.0
Bachelor & Masters		33	79	112	11.0	26.3
Total		300	300	600	100.0	100.0
No of Children	1-2	88	97	185	29.3	32.3
	3-4	83	125	208	27.7	41.7
	5-6	70	32	102	23.3	10.7
	7 & Above	59	46	105	19.7	15.3
Total		300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Sex of Children	Male	46	40	86	15.3	13.3
	Female	44	50	94	14.7	16.7
Both of the above		186	187	373	62.0	62.3
None of the above		24	23	47	8.0	7.7
Total		300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Family Income Less than 10,000		175	106	281	58.3	35.3
10,001-20,001		79	100	179	26.3	33.3
20,002-30,002		27	50	77	9.0	16.7
More than 30003		19	44	63	6.3	14.6
Total		300	300	600	100.0	100.0

## Physical Violence against Women

**Table 2:** Feedback of the Respondents Regarding Manifestation of Physical Violence in Rural and Urban Areas

Physical Violence	Residence		Total	Percentage	
	Rural	Urban		Rural	Urban
Is your partner violent towards you?					
Never	265	262	527	88.3	87.3
Once	8	17	25	2.7	5.7
Twice	5	5	10	1.7	1.7
Often	22	16	38	7.3	5.3
Total	300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Does your partner torture you physically?					
Never	271	266	537	90.3	88.7
Once	12	13	25	4.0	4.3
Twice	5	11	16	1.7	3.7
Often	12	10	22	4.0	3.3
Total	300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Does your partner slap you?					
Never	261	257	518	87.0	85.7
Once	3	11	14	1.0	3.7
Twice	6	14	19	2.0	4.7
Often	30	18	48	10.0	6.0
Total	300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Does your partner kick you?					
Never	289	290	579	96.3	96.7
Once	6	5	11	2.0	1.7
Twice	0	1	1	0.0	0.3
Often	5	4	9	1.7	1.3
Total	300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Does your partner throw objects at you?					
Never	285	274	559	95.0	91.3
Once	3	12	15	1.0	4.0
Twice	2	2	4	0.7	0.7
Often	10	12	22	3.3	4.0
Total	300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Does your partner grab your hairs?					
Never	297	292	589	99.0	97.3
Once	1	5	6	0.3	1.7
Twice	0	1	1	0.0	0.3
Often	2	2	4	0.7	0.7
Total	300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Does your partner insult you in front of others?					
Never	284	248	532	94.6	82.7
Once	1	7	8	0.3	2.3
Twice	1	21	22	0.3	7.0
Often	14	24	38	4.7	8.0
Total	300	300	600	100.0	100.0
Does your partner quarrel with you on financial matters?					
Never	251	239	490	83.7	79.7
Once	1	6	7	0.3	2.0
Twice	0	10	10	0.0	3.3
Often	48	45	93	16.0	15.0
Total	300	300	600	100.0	100.0

Violence against women at home may be manifested in the form of deprivation or physical and economic resources, threatening her with violence or taunting her with threats of domestic violence. Acts of physical violence were significant in the research areas and hence interpreted: in rural area of *Muzaffarabad* 11.7 percent women were found victim to the violence by their partner while a greater ratio, 12.7 percent experienced it in the urban areas in lifetime. Physical torture is heinous to health wherein rural area, 9.7 percent women had been tortured physically by their husbands while in urban area 11.3 percent were tortured physically. Intensity of acts of physical violence can be gauged that in rural area, 13 percent were victim of slap whereas in urban area 14.3 percent were slapped, 3.7 percent women were victim of kick by partner in rural areas and 3.3 percent were being victimized by the use of kicks in urban areas, in rural area, 5 percent were found victim of throwing objects at partners and 8.7 percent were victim of it in urban areas, 1 percent women were grabbed by hairs in rural areas while 2.7 percent were found victim in urban areas, 5.4 percent women were insulted by their husbands in front of others as contrary in urban area 18 percent were victim to it and 16.3 percent respondents quarrel on financial matters where as in urban area 20.3 percent women experienced it lifetime (Table 2).

## DISCUSSION

Domestic violence against women is mostly perpetrated due to social values that attribute low status to women and devalue their lives and activities. Physical abuse is more common form of violence against women and is rooted in patriarchal social system, psychological and economic dependence on men throughout their lives. The social structure and social system of Pakistan has its significance in keeping up the patriarchal ideology which is stemmed from generation to generation while ensuring the subordinate positions of women in the society. The results of the research exposed that the physical violence by husbands in the form of physical abuse carried out due to economic reasons, which is endorsed through many researches, as (Hafiz, 1998) investigated that wife beating is common in Pakistan but its frequency and intensity vary across different groups and communities and mainly the rural areas are more exposed to it. According to World Bank (1997), domestic violence for women has severe manifestations across the globe. Although domestic violence is significant cause of female morbidity and mortality but the dilemma is that it is almost never seen as public health issue by the concerned authorities i.e. governments in the third world. Female focused violence also represents a hidden obstacle to economic and social development, by sapping women's energy undermining their health,

physical violence deprives society from women's full participation. Violence does not occur as an isolated incident in the lives of abused married women. Physical torture usually occurs on a regular basis causing deep scars on the victims, the victim's family and on society as a whole. Women's physical health is often permanently damaged (Anonymous, 2000). Women are snubbed, disregarded and even found intolerable by a large section of society. Khan & Sajid (2011) analyzed that women due to traditions and cultural norms are limited to their families and they generally do not expose such acts because of their societal and ethnic status while Asif et al. (2010) specified that violence has worst impressions upon the women's life like autonomy, life standard and care and Nawaz et al. (2008) indicated that domestic violence is an economic issue which leads to many unexplored horizons and ultimately the social structure is weekend.

Any act of physical violence that results in or is likely to result in physical harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts of violence which has long term impacts not only on the lives of females but on the siblings as well (Anonymous, 1993; Fishabach and Therbert, 1997). The adversity of physical violence across the globe is significant that one in every four women experience domestic violence in her lifetime (Tjaden et al. 2000). Women are victims of physical assault by an intimate partner each year (Costs of Intimate Partner Violence against Women in the United States, 2003). Almost 85 percent of domestic violence victims are women (Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, 1993-2001). In India, currently married men acknowledged physically abusing their wives (Narayana, 1996). The extent of violence against women at home has been basically veiled and comprehensively outlined by communities that fear of an admission of its occurrence will be piercing to the worthiness of the family. However, current statistics replicate the omnipresence, frequency and the intensity of violence against women all over the world. Around the world at least one woman in every three has been beaten or otherwise abused in her lifetime and the proportion is increasing in the rural areas where traditional life is experienced (Govt. of Pakistan, 1999). Poverty reveals itself along the lines of class, gender, and region and rural-urban divides. The frequency of poverty in rural areas is higher than in urban areas according to both income poverty and broader measures while income reveals many social diseases along the physical violence on women (UNDP, 1999). Domestic violence ranges from slapping, hitting, and kicking to murder which suggests that domestic violence takes place in approximately 80 percent of the households in the country (Ibid. p.10.).

**Table 3:** Association of Financial Matters with Different Variables

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	Chi-Square	df	P-Value
Financial Matters	Violent Partner	46.256	9	0.000
	Slap the Partner	89.420	12	0.000
	Kick the Partner	38.982	9	0.000
	Throw Objects at Partner	42.826	9	0.000
	Grabbing Hairs of Partner	28.275	9	0.000
	Insult in front of others	45.234	9	0.000
	Physical Torture	74.405	9	0.000

The Pearson Chi-Square test showed significant association between the violence and financial matters thus a strong nexus develop between the financial matters and different types of violence. The chi-square values indicated that the financial matters have substantial connotation with the other variables which manifested that physical violence is mostly triggered by the economic substances among the family members and especially between partners has had great impetus on social wellbeing of family and hence society.

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded that domestic violence is more prevalent in urban areas rather than rural areas. The physical violence is caused by the financial problems which illustrated that the economic conditions are the basis for violence against women. The women endorsed that low income is the constraint which arises from the low literacy level and less opportunities and gives rise to physical violence. It not only causes physical violence but sparks a state of restlessness and anxiety among the men where they are either unemployed or having low income and a large family to feed. The consequences of such a grim situation are the physical violence on women which had enduring impacts not only upon their lives but also the whole family. It is documented that the ratio of physical violence vary in rural and urban areas but a slight difference is observed while most of the indicators resulted higher ratio of physical violence, on women in urban areas. So it is evident that in urban areas women were found more prone to physical violence as compared to rural area.

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