

Socio-Demographic conditions and nature of violence against women living in Himachal Pradesh: An Exploration

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Abstract

The present study was designed to explore the Socio-demographic condition and nature of violence against women. In the total sample of respondents, such conditions are invariably same as they are living in same area, relationship of with interpersonal violence among adult and aged women. The objective of the study was to explore into the socio-demographic conditions leading to violence against women. The study initially involved universal sample of 800 women (400 each from adult and aged women) living in Shimla city. From these two groups, 200 adult and 200 aged women were selected randomly on the basis of their age and education level. The age limit of the participants in the adult group ranged from 18 to 34 years whereas, for the aged group the age limits ranged between 35 to 58 years and the participant must be a qualified graduate in order to be a participant in the study. The subjects were defined as those who have faced interpersonal violence at least 3 or 4 times in their life span. Since, there is not data available about the women who have faced interpersonal violence, the participants were selected from amongst those who were known to the researcher and ready to share their experiences with the assurance of keeping their details confidential. To assess the interpersonal violence among these women, an Interpersonal Violence Scale was developed to explore the interpersonal violence among the adult and aged women following the lines of Edleson & Minnesota (2007) scale on domestic violence. For assessing violence exposure to women, 33 items on five point scale inventory were constituted. There were five options: Never, sometime, often, almost and always. Each item is scaled from the lowest to the highest and each sub-item representing a point on the scale. This also means that only one of the sub-items is to be checked for a particular respondent under each of the 33 items. It is clear from above research evidence that women are very much prone to the domestic violence. In the present study only those women who were facing domestic violence participated in the study. The study has investigated the nature of violence and revealed that women are most prone to Eve-teasing (93.35), followed by stalking (81%) and physical transgression 69.50%.

Introduction

In the past few decades, violence against women has been recognised as a dominating phenomenon worldwide including India (WHO, 2002). Given to women's stressful living conditions inside their homes, the health, and human right concerns of women are of vital importance and deserves to be given serious attention. Their vulnerability to violence expands and the probability of violent events increases when they work outside their homes, outside their familial and social boundaries.

Violence in common parlance refers to violent actions with reference to a particular code of conduct. As per Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, it means violent behaviour that is intended to hurt or kill somebody. The word 'violence' has its origin in Latin word *volentia* which refers to behaviour involving physical force which is destructive in nature and adversely affect the individual against which it is propagated. Segen's Medical Dictionary extend the meaning of violence to actual use of physical force against another person, oneself, or a group of community which results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury or death.

Violence against women is found to be differ with age and status and **socio-demographic conditions** and its psychological consequences differ in different social groups (Babu and Kar, 2009). Heise et al (1994) have found that gender relations, perpetuated through gender socialization and socio-economic inequities are the root cause of violence against women. Mahajan and Madhurima (1995) in their study in the slums area nearing Chandigarh have found that violence against women due to women's low economic status, poor living condition and above all drinking of wine by their male partners, however, they have taken no recourse to get out of this vicious circle. Further, beyond normal condition, a situation like riot may give impetus to the violent conditions. Sarkar (2002) has established that during Gujarat riots, the women were the main target of violence, even the heinous type like rape, were meted out to them.

Socio-demographic conditions and Interpersonal violence

Mahajan and Madhurima (1995) in their studies in the slums area of Chandigarh have documented that family violence against women and elder people exist in such areas in totality. They have found that lower socio-economic conditions and cultural setting specific to Indian society and interpersonal violence go hand in hand. Their results also established that women in family are prone to violence in every stage of their development.

Visaria (1999) conducted studied on a sample of 450 women in Gujarat. It has been found that violence tend to vary with age, status and socio-economic conditions of women. However, the psychological abuse level ranging from 60% to 75% and the difference in groups are statistically insignificant.

Jewkes (2002) studied the causes of intimate partner violence and found that poverty, alcohol consumption increases the risk of violence. The women, who are more empowered in terms of education and socio-economic conditions are protected but the relationship between empowerment and risk of violence is not linear.

Panda (2004) done extensive study in Kerala and found that 64.9% of his sample reported at least one form of psychological violence. It has also been reported that psychological violence is 3 times greater than the physical violence in both rural and urban areas.

Brown et al (2005) conducted study on battered women and intimate partner abuse. Results revealed that women expected to be abused following their partner's alcohol or drug use and further noted that their partner's patterns of abuse had either prevented or disrupted their employment. Participants expressed strong interest in finding work or pursuing a career and expected to complete educational and /or licensing requirements that were commensurate with their stated work/career goals. Finally, determined to not be abused by their partner again, participants aspire for a future of freedom and peace of mind, without their abuser, while focusing on re-establishing and building healthy relationships with their children.

Carlson et al (2005) investigated into the attitudes and beliefs about domestic violence. They interviewed 1,200 residents from six New York communities. Overall, the respondents were less

inclined to define women's aggressive behaviour in pejorative or unlawful terms than men's. Respondents believed that violence was common in their communities, and that it affected a significant minority of couples. Multivariate analyses provide correlation among the socioeconomic background on tolerance for or knowledge about family violence.

Worden et al's (2005) study presents findings from a public opinion survey designed to measure beliefs about the causes of domestic violence based on telephone interviews with 1,200 residents across six New York State communities. Most respondents think about the causes of violence in the context of individual problems, relationships, and families, not as a problem with roots in our society or culture. Few believe that women are the cause of their own abuse and one fourth still believe that some women want to be abused. Second-hand experiences with domestic violence were associated with some beliefs about causes of abuse, and gender, age, education, and race were associated with certain beliefs in predictable ways.

McCholskey et al (2005) conducted a study in Zambia. The result of this study reported that as many as 48% Zambian married women reported to have experienced violence against them with 26% reporting exposure in the past 12 months.

Pandey (2005) conducted study on the individual and interpersonal risk factors in intimate partner violence in one of slum area of Kolkata. After studying 751 households and married women between 15-44 years of age has found that overall IPV was 17.6% interpersonal factors involved were lower socio-economic status (22.3%), limited access to family and friends (50%) and age difference <5 years (23.2%).

Milan et al (2005) observed that the frequency, dyadic nature, and potential implications of relationship violence differ in parenting and nulliparous (never given birth) adolescent females from low-income, urban communities. They found that the frequency and dyadic nature of violence did not differ between parental status groups. Over half of the adolescents in both groups reported relationship violence in the past year, with female-enacted violence more common than male-enacted violence.

Shannon et al (2006) studied the women facing intimate partner violence in rural (n=378) and urban (n=379). Overall, results suggest that women from both areas utilized a variety of help seeking resources and coping strategies in significantly different ways. Urban women used more help seeking resources than rural women perceived the justice system services as less helpful than urban women. Coping strategies and help seeking are related, with problem focused coping associated with the use of more formalized help seeking resources.

Yang et al (2006) conducted a cross sectional survey on physical abuse against pregnant aborigines in Taiwans. Participants were 1143 aboriginal women who had just given birth in hospitals. About 175/1143 of the women (15.3%) had ever experienced physical abuse from a husband or intimate partner, and 79/1143 of the women (6.9%) had experienced it during their recent pregnancy. Multiple logistic regression analysis revealed that the women who were more likely to have been physically abused during their pregnancy were had fewer years of education, husbands who were unemployed, with a patriarchal family situation and had alcohol, cigarette and non-professionals provide adequate support and health education, develop intervention, and use referrals in concept with routine prenatal care in order to reduce and prevent the physical abuse of aboriginal women in Taiwan.

Abrahams et al (2006) examined the prevalence of and risk factors for intimate partner physical violence against women. Interviews were conducted with a sample of 1,378 men. An average of 42.3% (95% CI: 39.6,44.8) reported physical violence against a partner of the last 10 years, and 8.8% (95% CI: 7.3, 10.3)

reported physical violence in the past year. After adjustment for age, occupational group, and race, the factors associated with use of violence against partners of the last 10 years were having no post school training (OR=2.10), witnessing parental violence in childhood (OR=1.87), involvement in fights at work (OR=2.73) and in communities (OR=1.54) drug use (OR=1.99), problem alcohol use (OR=1.98), perceiving hitting women to be acceptable (OR=4.54), frequent conflict (OR=2.40), women's alcohol use (OR=2.25), conflict about sex (OR=2.16), and conflict about his infidelity (OR=2.81).

Guilbert (2006) conducted a study to find out whether there are differences between the forms of violence exerted by sportsmen and those represented within sports areas. Three hundred competitors from five sports disciplines (Karate, basketball, table tennis, swimming and shooting) were approached and filled out a questionnaire. Results showed (1) sportsmen do not exert the same forms of violence depending on the sport and that there are similarities between the forms of violence in sports and those represented in the sporting field which supports the homological assumption. Overall results show that the forms of violence, their frequency and their degree are particularly effective variables when accounting for differences in relations violence in sports and among sportsmen.

Babu and Kar (2009) in a population based study of 1718 women found that overall prevalence of physical, psychological, sexual and any other form of violence among Eastern India women were 16%, 52%, 25% and 56% respectively. The multivariate logistic regression revealed that the psychological violence has significant association with socio-economic characteristics of women.

Kamat et al (2010) conducted a cross sectional study consisting of 379 married women and found that 26.6% reported spousal violence and women victimization is related to the years of marriage, poor educational status and working. The results showed that social factors and social attitudes play important roles in violence against women.

Umesh et al (2010) conducted face to face interview of 379 married women in Goa. Spousal violence was reported by 26.6% of the respondents. Factors predisposing the women to victimization included early years of marriage, poor educational status for men and women, working women, and alcohol consumption by the husband. Women with higher monthly income compared to their husbands seemed to be protected. Majority of the victimised women preferred to be silent sufferers. The help seeking behaviour was not proportionate to the severity or the duration of violence but seemed to be influenced by variables like women's employment, education and income.

Ushie et al (2010) in Nigeria, the area of their study found that female respondents in the age group of 15-49 years faced psychological violence (65%) and sexual violence (55.4%). They have also found that this is higher in the nuclear families. Main coping strategy is endurance which is employed by 44% women. The next coping strategy employed is resorting to prayers and resolution (35%) and third is fighting back.

Lamichhane et al (2011) in a cross sectional study of 1296 young married women between the age of 15-24 years, in Nepal found that more than half 51.95 reported having experienced some form of violence in their lifetime. 25.3% reported physical violence and nearly 46.2% reported sexual violence. Likewise 35.8% reported experiencing some form of violence in past 12 months.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to explore into the socio-demographic conditions leading to violence against women. In the total sample of respondents, such conditions are invariably same as they are living in same area.

Methodology

The present study was designed to explore into the socio-demographic conditions leading to violence against women. Besides, it was endeavoured to get insight into the relation of the socio-demographic factors with the type of violence. The present chapter will discuss the methodology for the study.

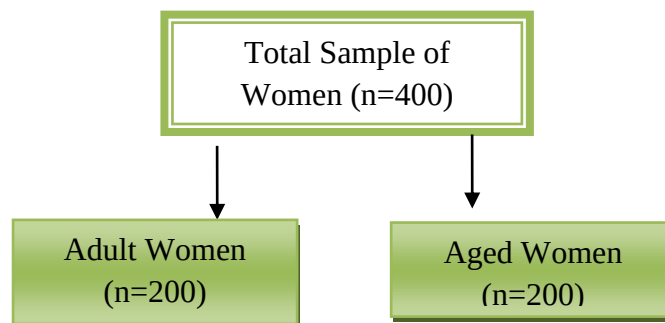
Sample/Participants

The study initially involved universal sample of 800 women (400 each from adult and aged women) living in Shimla city. From these two groups, 200 adult and 200 aged women were selected randomly on the basis of their age and education level. The age limit of the participants in the adult group ranged from 18 to 34 years whereas, for the aged group the age limits ranged between 35 to 58 years and the participant must be a qualified graduate in order to be a participant in the study. The subjects were defined as those who have faced interpersonal violence at least 3 or 4 times in their life span.

Since, there is not data available about the women who have faced interpersonal violence, the participants were selected from amongst those who were known to the researcher and ready to share their experiences with the assurance of keeping their details confidential.

Figure -1

Sample



Tools Used

The data related to socio-demographic conditions and type of violence faced was collected through structured interview schedule. Besides, the following tools were used to assess the interpersonal violence, of the adult and aged women:

(a) Interpersonal violence scale:

To assess the interpersonal violence among these women, an Interpersonal Violence Scale was developed to explore the interpersonal violence among the adult and aged women following the lines of Edleson & Minnesota (2007) scale on domestic violence. For assessing violence exposure to women, 33 items on five point scale inventory were constituted. There were five options: Never, sometime, often, almost and always. Each item is scaled from the lowest to the highest and each sub-item representing a point on the scale. This also means that only one of the sub-items is to be checked for a particular respondent under each of the 33 items.

Scoring

The score on each item ranges from 1 to 5. To get the total interpersonal violence score is calculated by, adding all the factors score. Total score ranges from 33 to 165 and higher score indicate more interpersonal violence.

Results

The prevalence of different types of violence in minor or major intensity has been categorised in family, psychological and outside family violence which involves stalking, eve-teasing and physical transgression. The data reflecting the prevalence among the adult group of respondent is tabulated in table

Table -1

Adult (18-34 years)		
Type of violence	No.of respondents	%age of respondents
Family violence	200	100%
Psychological violence	200	100%
Stalking	162	81%
Eve-teasing	187	93.35%
Physical transgression	139	69.50%

This table indicates that family and psychological violence is faced by all the respondents, while stalking is reported to have been experienced by 81% of the respondents. Eve-teasing and physical transgression is reported by 93.35% and 69.50% respondents respectively.

Among the aged respondents, the data reflected that family and psychological type of violence has been reported by all. This fact along with other data is detailed in table -2.

Table -2

Aged (35-58 years)		
Type of violence	No.of respondents	%age of respondents
Family violence	200	100%
Psychological violence	200	100%
Stalking	133	66.50%
Eve-teasing	127	63.50%
Physical transgression	106	53%

Table -2 indicates that like adult group of respondent, family and psychological violence is faced by all the respondents in this group too. Stalking is reported by 66.50% of the respondents. Eve-teasing and physical transgression is reported by 63.50% and 53% respondents respectively.

The objective of the present study was to explore the socio-demographic conditions as related to violence. Secondly, this study also explored the differences between adult and aged women on the variables.

Socio-demographic conditions and nature of violence

Present study has revealed some socio-demographic conditions which are related to the domestic violence:

Familial conditions: The respondents equivocally reported their own family is the source of violence against them. According to them their familial conditions were responsible for their undue suffering. They accepted that their family members like husband were involved in commission of physical abuse,

verbal abuse and the activities that causes embarrassment and put them under humiliating situations. They understand that many times they have also faced sexual abuse from their husbands as their willingness to perform sexual activity has no value and their consultation is not pre-requisite. They were unanimous on the view that in husband-wife relationship, they many times felt neglected and ignored as their husband tend to value their family members more and often admit to their demands and expectations, however, they were not given proper care and attention. Consequently, they felt neglected and emotionally abused. They are given to understand that this happen in every family with every woman. They generally do not intend to talk about it and want to have a way out of it. They have conscientious understanding that –*aurat ke saath aisa hi hota hai* (It naturally happens with woman!).

They also reported that they also faced a kind of violence at the hands of their mother, father and brothers, who do not allowed them move freely and mix with people on their own will but restricted their movements forcefully. To this too, they admitted that they have sometimes made transgression to such restrictions but as a whole they could not feel free to act on their own will. Even, they also reported to have witnessed restrictions on account of their dressing, talking manners and even walking style. They wanted to conform to the tradition that they should behave like a girl.

Further, they also reported violence, especially verbal and psychological violence at the hands of their in-laws i.e. especially from their mother-in-laws. Surprisingly, those who have become mother-in-law too reported the reverse of it. They understand that this is due to lack of understanding between them.

All of them estimated the reasons for occurrence of family violence are that all families have tensions, and all families sometimes resolve these tensions in inappropriate ways. Even the best parents and the most loving couples sometimes lose their tempers, say intentionally hurtful things to one another, raise their voices when arguing, and even lash out at loved ones physically.

These findings are in consonance with the findings Levesque (2001) who has found that the family violence resulting in physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect or other forms of maltreatment. These findings also corroborates to the observations of Gelles and Cornell (1990) that this is socially accepted that ‘it just happens’ and understand it as inconsequential.

Socio-cultural condition: Data reveals that social and cultural conditions also contribute to physically violent and verbally aggressive interactions either inside family outside family boundaries. Many structural factors too make families particularly prone to violence. Structurally, still women, irrespective of many other favourable conditions is still considered one step down to the males in the family as well as in society. They admitted to have deeply felt the power differentials that result in violence against them. Culturally, they are expected to shelter the shame of the family. They reported to have generally do not react most of the in order to defend the social reputation of their marital as well as parental family.

All the respondents shown agreement with the fact that in every situation, it was they, who faced the consequences, emotional harms or physical abuse. They reported that stalking is common form of violence in this society. Besides, eve-teasing, socially disapproved indirect comments and a restricted physical transgression is quite common form of violence faced by the respondents in their lives.

These findings are in consonance with the findings of Spitzberg (2002) who have found that stalking is common and manifestly repetitive. Besides, it also shows corroborations with the findings of study conducted by Sheridan, Blaauw and Avies (2003). The findings are in line with the findings of Lamichhane et al (2011) who have found that women reported having experienced some form of violence in their lifetime.

Psychological conditions: The respondents were of the view that violence also reflects the mental conditions of the perpetrators. They understand that they are not normal social beings and they want to transgress the social norms and cultural boundaries by force. They also feel that they themselves tend not to take such happening seriously unless there is major threat to their lives or damage to property. They also tend to perceive themselves weak as compared to the perpetrator. These findings corroborate the result of Jones (1977) and observations of (Barnett et al, 2005).

Nature of Violence

The results have revealed that among adult respondents family and psychological violence is faced by all the respondents, while stalking is reported to have been experienced by 81% of the respondents. Eve-teasing and physical transgression is reported by 93.35% and 69.50% respondents respectively (see Table -1). Among the aged respondents, like adult group of respondent, family and psychological violence is faced by all the respondents in this group too. Stalking is reported by 66.50% of the respondents. Eve-teasing and physical transgression is reported by 63.50% and 53% respondents respectively (see table -2).

These findings corroborates with the findings of some previous researches in the same field. Babu and Kar's (2009) have found that overall prevalence of physical, psychological, sexual and any other form of violence among Eastern India women were 16%, 52%, 25% and 56% respectively. Pandey (2005) who has found that between the respondents of 15-44 years of age overall IPV was 17.6% interpersonal factors involved were lower socio-economic status (22.3%), limited access to family and friends (50%) and age difference <5 years (23.2%). Mahajan and Madhurima (1995) and Visaria (1999), asserted that violence tend to vary with age, status and socio-economic conditions of women. Panda (2004) found that 64.9% of his sample reported at least one form of psychological violence and such violence is 3 times greater than the physical violence in both rural and urban areas.

Lamichhane et al (2011) studied women between the age of 15-24 years. More than half 51.95 reported having experienced some form of violence in their lifetime. 25.3% reported physical violence and nearly 46.2% reported sexual violence. Likewise 35.8% reported experiencing some form of violence in past 12 months. Abrahams et al (2006) found that an average of 42.3% (95% CI: 39.6, 44.8) reported physical violence against a partner of the last 10 years, and 8.8% (95% CI: 7.3, 10.3) reported physical violence in the past year. Cry et al (2006) studied 126 females in the age group of 13 to 17 years. More than 45% reported experiencing some sort of physical violence in their dating relationships.

Discussion

The results have revealed that among adult respondents family and psychological violence is faced by all the respondents, while stalking is reported to have been experienced by 81% of the respondents. Eve-teasing and physical transgression is reported by 93.35% and 69.50% respondents respectively. Among the aged respondents, like adult group of respondent, family and psychological violence is faced by all the respondents in this group too. Stalking is reported by 66.50% of the respondents. Eve-teasing and physical transgression is reported by 63.50% and 53% respondents respectively.

These findings corroborates with the findings of Babu and Kar's (2009) findings aided the findings of this study, who have found that overall prevalence of physical, psychological, sexual and any other form of violence among Eastern India women were 16%, 52%, 25% and 56% respectively. Pandey (2005) who has found that between the respondents of 15-44 years of age overall IPV was 17.6% interpersonal

factors involved were lower socio-economic status (22.3%), limited access to family and friends (50%) and age difference <5 years (23.2%).

These findings corroborates the findings of Mahajan and Madhurima (1995) and Visaria (1999), who has found that violence tend to vary with age, status and socio-economic conditions of women and the psychological abuse level ranging from 60% to 75%. Besides, it is supported by the evidences gathered by Panda (2004). He has found that 64.9% of his sample reported at least one form of psychological violence and such violence is 3 times greater than the physical violence in both rural and urban areas.

The findings also got support from the findings of Jewkes (2002) who has found that the women more empowered in terms of education and socio-economic conditions are protected as compared to others.

Kamat et al (2010) found that 26.6% reported spousal violence and women victimization is related to the years of marriage, poor educational status and working. Besides, Yang et al (2006) have also found that 15.3% of their sample had experienced physical abuse from a husband or intimate partner. The findings of Umesh et al (2010) reported that spousal violence was reported by 26.6% of the respondents. To them also women with higher monthly income compared to their husbands seemed to be protected but majority of the victimised women preferred to be silent sufferers. The help seeking behaviour was not proportionate to the severity or the duration of violence but seemed to be influenced by variables like women's employment, education and income.

Ushie et al (2010) found that female respondents in the age group of 15-49 years faced psychological violence (65%) and sexual violence (55.4%). They have also found that this is higher in the nuclear families. Main coping strategy is endurance which is employed by 44% women. The next coping strategy employed is resorting to prayers and resolution (35%) and third is fighting back. Lamichhane et al (2011) studied women between the age of 15-24 years. More than half 51.95 reported having experienced some form of violence in their lifetime. 25.3% reported physical violence and nearly 46.2% reported sexual violence. Likewise 35.8% reported experiencing some form of violence in past 12 months. Worden et al's (2005) study presents findings domestic violence were associated with some beliefs about causes of abuse, and gender, age, education, and race were associated with certain beliefs in predictable ways.

Shannon et al (2006) found that women from both areas utilized a variety of help seeking resources and coping strategies in significantly different ways. Urban women used more help seeking resources than rural women perceived the justice system services as less helpful than urban women. Coping strategies and help seeking are related, with problem focused coping associated with the use of more formalized help seeking resources. Abrahams et al (2006) found that an average of 42.3% (95% CI: 39.6,44.8) reported physical violence against a partner of the last 10 years, and 8.8% (95% CI: 7.3, 10.3) reported physical violence in the past year. After adjustment for age, occupational group, and race, the factors associated with use of violence against partners of the last 10 years were having no post school training (OR=2.10), witnessing parental violence in childhood (OR=1.87), involvement in fights at work (OR=2.73) and in communities(OR=1.54) drug use (OR=1.99), problem alcohol use (OR=1.98), perceiving hitting women to be acceptable (OR=4.54), frequent conflict (OR=2.40), women's alcohol use (OR=2.25), conflict about sex (OR=2.16), and conflict about his infidelity (OR=2.81).

Cry et al (2006) studied 126 females in the age group of 13 to 17 years. More than 45% reported experiencing some sort of physical violence in their dating relationships. Galvani (2006) established that women do not blame alcohol for their partner's violence, they hold the men, not their alcohol consumption, responsible for their actions. Gracia et al (2006) showed the importance of several

correlates of public attitudes toward attitudes and behaviour because failure to intervene appears to be a common response of those aware of incidents of partner violence against women. Madan-Bahel (2006) result indicated that a history of domestic violence is associated with decreased psychological well-being in mid-aged Australian women.

Watlington et al (2006) examined the roles of religion and spirituality among African American survivors of domestic violence. Women who evinced higher levels of spirituality and greater religious involvement reported fewer depression symptoms. Religious involvement was also found to be negatively associated with posttraumatic stress symptoms. Women who reported higher levels of spirituality reported utilizing higher levels of religious coping strategies, and women who reported higher levels of religious involvement reported higher levels of social support. Results did not support hypotheses regarding social support and religious coping as mediators of the associations between mental health variables, religious involvement, and spirituality.

Findings

1. It is clear from above research evidence that women are very much prone to the domestic violence.
2. In the present study only those women who were facing domestic violence participated in the study.
3. The study has investigated the nature of violence and revealed that women are most prone to Eve-teasing (93.35), followed by stalking (81%) and physical transgression 69.50%.

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