

Increasing Trend of Battered Wife in Pakistan

1. Alvina Raja 2. Azhar Masud Bhatti 3. Abid Karim 4. Abdul Hamid 5. Najeeb

1. Assoc. Prof. of Forensic Medicine, IMDC, Sialkot 2. Asstt. Prof. of Forensic Medicine, CMC, Lahore 3. Asstt. Prof. Jinnah Medical College, Peshawar 4. Prof. of Forensic Medicine, Sialkot Medical College, Sialkot 5. Prof. of Physiology, FMDC, Abbottabad.

ABSTRACT

Objectives: To evoke law enforcement agencies for better legislative measures against increasing trend of battering of wives in Pakistan.

Study Design: Cross Sectional / Analytic Study

Place and Duration of Study: This Study was conducted at the Emergencies & OPDs Departments Islam Teaching Hospital, Sialkot, District Headquarter Hospital, Gujranwala, Rehmat Memorial Hospital, Lahore, Ameer ud din Memorial Hospital, Peshawar and Shahina Jamil Hospital, Abbottabad from 1st January 2012 to 31st May 2013.

Materials and Methods: Total 169 cases of battered wives were reported but 100 cases of battered wives out of 169 who consented were selected in the study. A proforma was specially designed to include different influential criteria like age, socio economic group, combined or joined family system, education, mental or physical health and addiction.

Results: Out of 100 cases who were selected the maximum incidence was among the young age group ranging between 21 to 30 years 56% in low socio economic group, 83% in suppose of addicted partners, 63% in illiterate couples, 67% in joined family system. Poor physical and mental health of wife is another precipitation factor amounting to 83%.

Conclusion: The tendency of battered wife is a global problem. It is increasing day by day in developed / under developed countries and nations. This trend is even going to be increased in Muslim countries where battering to the wife is prohibited (Haraam). Increasing tendency in Pakistan is mainly due to illiteracy addiction, financial stresses and low standards of living which in turn are the basis of poor physical and psychological health.

Key Words: battered wife, psychological , economical, mental / physical sickness, joint family system

Citation of article: Raja A, Bhatti AM, Karim A, Hamid A, Najeeb. Increasing Trend of Battered Wife in Pakistan. Med Forum 2015;26(11):10-13.

INTRODUCTION

Recently many social scientists have paid their attention towards the issue of violence against women, not only in the developed but also in the developing world. Feminist movements for the last three centuries have been focusing of the repressive conditions being faced by women across the world but the condition of the women is still far from satisfactory and cries out for amelioration.¹ Recently feminist scholars have concentrated on strategies to safeguard women from domestic violence.² Although, technological advancement, globalization, industrialization, internationalization of media and efforts made by international institutions, including international non-governmental organizations have created some space for women to compete on equal footing but the situation is unfortunately still much unsatisfactory for those women who are living in under developed nation.³ On the other hand there are few international humanitarian organizations, which are working to eliminate this

violence against them.⁴ The cumulative and even concerted efforts by struggling parties have been born little fruit and the situation still remains unpalatable and oppressive. This brutal violence has different forms and multi-lateral dimensions.⁵ It varies for society to society in its magnitude and intensity.⁶ Wife battering is one of the major issues and practices in violence against women. According to Heise violence against women is a worldwide phenomenon, transcending cultural, geographic, religious, social and economic boundaries. It has come to be recognized internationally as an important issue and has become the subject of a substantial amount of research in recent decades.⁷ The most common type of violence against women is domestic; violence perpetrated by intimate partner or ex-partner.⁸

In the context of Pakistan social setup violence against women has a very abnormal proportion since the societal norms encourage and perpetuate the superiority of men-folk. Among other reasons for the dominance of the men over women, is the joint family system.⁹ This stretched family yields excessive influence of the in-law over the wife husband relations and is a substantial cause of wife degradation, wife humiliation and wife battering. It is usually the mother-in-law who

Correspondence: Alvina Raja

Assoc. Prof. of Forensic Medicine, IMDC, Sialkot

Contact No.: 0333-5035613

E-mail: alvina-afzal@hotmail.com

is the major factor in this sanguine drama but she is all the same reinforced feudal make-up of family structure. It is very rare that mother-in-law comes to fend the disputes but most of time she ignites and sparkles vicious conflagration among spouses. Her Pandora-box of complaints against her daughter-in-law is never exhausted.¹⁰

The factors intercalating through which female are targeted in rural Punjab have specific formations. The societal norms to a large extent incite the husbands to wife battering. To some extent religion is also misused in perpetuating. The same extant religion is also misused in perpetuating such acts.¹¹ The frequency of severe wife battering has resulted into a chain reaction of social malformation.¹² The present research has unfolded disastrous, the victims have an urge to live in a nuclear family rather than to live in a joint family and face such inexorable violence. In their perception and to some extent true, it minimizes the intrusions of the in-laws thus rending part the social fabric of society. While on the other hand some of these victims are struggling to opt out of marriage contract but are faced with the dilemma of between the devil and the deep blue sea since the dissolution of such a contract is likely to result into further misfortune and complications and top of all the infliction of social stigma, that is attached to a forsaken divorce.¹³

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This cross sectional / analytic study was conducted at the Emergencies & OPDs Departments Islam Teaching Hospital, Sialkot, District Headquarter Hospital, Gujranwala, Rehmat Memorial Hospital, Lahore, Ameer ud din Memorial Hospital, Peshawar and Shahina Jamil Hospital, Abbottabad from 1st January 2012 to 31st May 2013.

Total 169 cases of battered wives were reported but 100 cases of battered wives out of 169 who consented were selected in the study. A proforma was specially designed to include different influential criteria like age, socio economic group, combined or joined family system, education, mental or physical health and addiction.

RESULTS

In our study the incidence of battered wife was maximum at the age of 21 – 30 years (33 %) and minimum at the age of 71 – 80 years as shown in Table No.1.

The incidence was maximum in house wife (25 %) and minimum in wives of business man (0.5 %).

The incidence of battered wife was 56 % in lower class, 34 % in middle class and 20 % in high gentry.

Addict member of married couple had 83 % incidence of battered wife and 17 % in non addict couple.

The incidence of battered wife was 73 % in families having more than one wife and 27 % in families having single wife.

The incidence of battered wife was 83 % in couple having mental / physical sickness as compared to healthy couple (17 %).

The incidence of battered wife was 63 % in literate couple and 37 % in illiterate couple.

The incidence of battered wife was high 67 % in couples living in non joint family system as compared to couple living in joint families (33 %).

The trend of battered wife was 67 % in rural area and 33 % in urban area as shown in table No.9

Table No.1 Battered Wife with relation to age

S.No	Age	Cases	Percentage
01	10 – 20	10	10 %
02	21 – 30	33	33 %
03	31 – 40	25	25 %
04	41 – 50	15	15 %
05	51 – 60	11	11 %
06	61 – 70	04	04 %
07	71 – 80	02	02 %
	Total	100	100 %

Table No.2 Battered wife with relation to occupation

S.No	Occupation	Case	Percentage
01	Students	07	07 %
02	House wife	25	25 %
03	Factory worker	15	15 %
04	Office worker	10	10 %
05	Business man wife	05	05 %
06	Former wife	07	07 %
07	Laborer	15	15 %
08	Addict wife	16	16 %
	Total	100	100 %

Table No.3 Battered wife with relation to socio – economic status

S.No	Socio – economic status	Case	Percentage
01	Lower class	56	56 %
02	Middle class	34	34 %
03	High gentry	20	20 %
	Total	100	100 %

Table No.4 Battered Wife with relation to addiction of wife / husband

S.No	Addiction	Cases	Percentage
01	Member of Addict couple	83	83 %
02	Non Addict couple	17	17 %
	Total	100	100 %

Table No.5 Battered wife with relation to Marital Status

S.No	Marital Status	Case	Percentage
01	More than one wife	73	73 %
02	Single wife	27	27 %
	Total	100	100 %

Table No.6 Battered Wife with relation to mental / Physical Sickness of wife / husband

S.No	Sickness	Cases	Percentage
01	Sick wife / husband	83	83 %
02	Healthy wife	17	17 %
	Total	100	100 %

Table No.7 Battered Wife with relation to Literacy Status

S.No	Literacy Status	Cases	Percentage
01	Literate	37	37 %
02	Illiterate	63	63 %
	Total	100	100 %

Table No.8 Battered wife with relation to joint family system

S.No	Family System	Cases	Percentage
01	Joint family system	33	33 %
02	Non joint family system	67	67 %
	Total	100	100 %

Table No.9 Battered wife with relation to residential area

S.No	Residential area	Cases	Percentage
01	Rural area	67	67 %
02	Urban area	33	33 %
	Total	100	100 %

DISCUSSION

Battered wife is a global problem and exists in both developed / under developed nations. The battering of wives is going to be increased even in Muslims countries like

Pakistan, Bangladesh and Saudi-Arabia etc.¹⁴ The battering can be decreased by observing preventive measures like

- Joint family system
- Creating awareness about human rights by seminars, religious teachings / education
- By providing psychological services
- By providing social services
- By providing economical services
- By providing treatment for mental / physical sickness.
- By increasing literacy rate
- By increasing religious teachings

In our study the incidence of battered wife was maximum at the age of 21 – 30 years (33 %) and minimum at the age of 71 – 80 years as show in Table No.1.

The incidence was maximum I house wife (25 %) and minimum in wives of business man (0.5 %).

The incidence of battered wife was 56 % in lower class, 34 % in middle class in 20 % in high gentry.

Addict member of married couple had 83 % incidence of battered wife and 17 % in non addict couple.

The incidence of battered wife was 73 % in families having more than one wife and 27 % in families having single wife.

The incidence of battered wife was 83 % in couple having mental / physical sickness has compared to healthy couple (17 %).

The incidence of battered wife was 63 % in literate couple and 37 % in illiterate couple.

The incidence of battered wife was high 67 % in couples living in non joint family system as compared to couple living in joint families (33 %). The trend of battered wife was 67 % in rural area and 33 % in urban area.

Most of the battered women thought that it was due to the family tradition and husbands are incited or coaxed by other family members to commit such acts.¹⁵

Domestic violence or any other type of violence is always due to some clashes in the relationship of two or more than two individuals. Family is a basic institution of the society where all the members act as component of the system and for the smooth environment it is important that every one play his/her role positively.¹⁶

The most important factor in the domestic violence in previous studies is the crucial role of mothers-in-law in Pakistan society. It is considered as extrinsic factor which abets and encourages the husband to become batterers in their houses.

The perception of divorcing has been fundamentally associated with severity of battering. Although it is thought to be course for a female to initiate for divorce, in rural Punjab.¹⁷

CONCLUSION

The tendency of battered wife is a global problem. It is increasing day by day in developed / under developed countries and nations. This trend is even going to be increased in Muslim countries where battering to the wife is prohibited (Haraam). Increasing tendency in Pakistan is mainly due to illiteracy addiction, financial stresses and low standards of living which in turn are the basis of poor physical and psychological health.

Suggestions: The tendency of battered wife can be decreased by observing measures like, (1) Joint family system (2) By creating awareness about human rights by seminars, religious teachings / education (3) By providing psychological services (4) By providing social services (5) By providing economical services and (6) By providing treatment for mental / physical sickness.

Conflict of Interest: The study has no conflict of interest to declare by any author.

REFERENCES

1. Heise L. Violence against women: the health burden. *World Health Stat Q* 1994;46(1):78-85.
2. Shaikh MA. Is domestic violence endemic in Pakistan: perspective from violence from Pakistani wives, *Pak J Med Sci* 2003;19(1):23-28.
3. UHRC. United Human Rights Council of the Armenian Youth Federation. Domestic violence against women in Armenia. Western United States 2010.
4. Kurz D. Separation, divorce and women abuse. *Viol Age Women* 1996;2(1):63-81.
5. Schuler SR, Hashemi SM, Riley AP, Akhter S. Credit programs, patriarchy and men's violence against women in rural Bangladesh. *Soc Sci Med* 1996;43(12):1729-1742.
6. Haj-Yahia MM. A Patriarchal perspective of beliefs about wife beating among Palestinian men from the West Bank of the Gaza Strip. *J Family Issues* 1998;19(5):595-621.
7. HRCP. Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. State of human rights in 1999. Lahore, 2000.
8. Ali PA, Gavino MIB. Violence against women in Pakistan: a framework for analysis. *J Pak Med Assoc* 2008;58(4):198-203.
9. Fortune M, Enger C. Violence against women and the role of religion. VAWnet, a project of the National resource center on domestic violence / Pennsylvania coalition against domestic violence. Harrisburg PA;2006.
10. Heise LL. Violence against women: an integrated, ecological framework. *Viol Age Women* 1998;4(3):262-290.
11. Almosaed N. Violence against women: a cross – cultural perspective. *J Muslim Affairs* 2004;24(1): 67-88.
12. Choi A, Edleson JL. Social disapproval of wife assault: a national survey of Singapore. *J Comp Family Stud* 1996;27(1):73-88.
13. Paudel GS. Domestic violence against women in Nepal. *Gender Tech Development* 2007;11 (2): 199 -233.
14. Kadir MM, Fikree FF, Khan A, Sajan F. Do mother-in law matter? family dynamics and fertility decision-making in urban squatter settlements of Karachi, Pakistan. *J Biosoc Sci* 2003;35(4): 545-58.
15. Fikree FF, Bhatti LI. Domestic violence and health of Pakistani women. *Intl J Gynaecol Obstet* 1999;65(2):195-201.
16. Naved RT, Persson LA. Factors associated with spousal physical violence against women in Bangladesh. *Stud Family Plan* 2005;36(4): 289- 300.
17. Black DA, Schumacher JA, Slep AMS, Heyman RE. Partner, child abuse risk factors literature review. National Network of Family Resiliency, National Network for Health. Iowa state University 1999.