Some Reasons behind the Violence of the Women's Rights in Pakistan

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Abstract: Violence is most pervasive yet least recognised human rights abuse in world. It is also a profound health problem, sapping women's energy, compromising physical health and eroding self esteem. Despite its high costs, almost every society in the world has social institutions that legitimises, obscure and deny abuse. Violence against wives is one of the leading causes of female injury in Pakistan. In Pakistan around one and half lakh women commit suicide due to it. It is the second largest cause of death among women in Pakistan. According to the latest NCBR (2012) reports, the incidents of domestic violence are growing at a record of 13.3%. Though domestic violence exists at a high level and is increasing but the reporting rates of this crime is very low, which is known as hidden domestic violence. A silence is maintained to protect the honor of family and community or may be to protect herself from fear of re-victimisation. The family of the victim also do not come for support. According to estimates only one in four and that too extreme violent cases of domestic violence is actually reported. This study is diagnostic cum descriptive and is based on case study of 25 violence victims of Hyderabad district Pakistan. The present study will investigate the relation between spouse abuse and social sanction of domestic violence. The study will discuss the role parents play in compounding their daughters' problem. The pressures of family and relatives towards the victim of wife abuse and how society indirectly provides social sanctions despite legal provisions against domestic violence.

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1. Introduction

Violence constitutes a major form and process of oppression of women. Violence has always been used as a means to subjugate women and keep them in position of subordination. A narrow definition of violence may define it as an act of criminal use of physical force (Browne, 1993). Gender based violence may take many different forms and there may be distinctive patterns, or manifestation of gender violence associated with particular communities, cultures or regions and historical epochs, however gender violence is present in all society, it is a structural phenomenon "embedded in the context of culture; social, economic and political power relations, which reduce women to economic and emotional dependency, the property of some male protector (Dobash et al., 1992). Societies organised around gender, hierarchical power relation give legitimacy to violence against women (SCP, Bangladesh). There is a great host of historical evidence to show that women have always suffered from domestic violence (Martin, 1976; Tomes, 1978; Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Freeman, 1979; Smith, 1989; Clarke, 1992). However, this problem has only become publicly evident when there has been a strong feminist movement, enabling the collective organisation against its occurrence (Freeman, 1979; Borkowski et al., 1983; Pence & Paymar, 1993). Domestic violence has been recognised as an area that needs more detailed and indepth research, particularly on the general population (Smith, 1989). The true extent of violence is generally agreed to be difficult to ascertain. It is supposed to be one of the most hidden figures of any crime (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Hanmer & Stanko, 1985; Worrall & Pease, 1986). Figures derived from agencies like the police are necessarily selective and cover only a small proportion of victims. These represent the "tip of the iceberg" and in some cases, for instance those derived from women's refuges, point more to the limited availability of such resources rather than the overall extent of the problem. According to the best knowledge of the author, this is the first study is going to conduct in Pakistan on woman's rights.

The definition of domestic violence against Women:

"Any act, omission or conduct by means of which physical, sexual or mental suffering inflicted, directly or indirectly, through deceit, seduction, threat, coercion or any other means, on any women with the purpose or effect of intimidating punishing or humiliating the or of maintaining her in sex stereotyped roles or of denying her human dignity, sexual self-determination, physical mental and moral integrity or of determining the security of her person, her self-respect or her personality or of diminishing her personality or of diminishing her physical or mental capacities (Lewis, 1988). Under such a definition any structural feature that perpetuates gender based discrimination could arguably quality as violence (Pan American Treaty)". The Pakistani report of the UNESCO project on women and violence states that "Violence in general, is a coercive mechanism to assert ones will over another in order to prove or feel a sense of power. It can be perpetuated by those in power against powerless in retaliation against coercion by others, to deny their powerlessness Any hierarchical system of social organisation, where there are categories of dominant group subordinate groups, is inevitability accompanied by the victimisation of the latter through various means, subtle pressure, through the power of ideology, through mechanism of socialisation that reward compliance and punish non compliance and also through open force" (UNESCO, 2008). The most comprehensive and wide ranging definition of violence against women was given in the first article on the UN Draft Declaration on the Elimination of violence against women in sept1992 "Any act of gender based violence that results in, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. There is increasing consensus, as reflected in this definition that abuse of women and girls regardless of where and how it occurs, is best understood within a gender and how it occurs, is best understood within a gender framework because it stems in part from women s and girls subordinate status in society (UN Draft Declaration, 1992). The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) tastes that "Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which has led to domination over and discrimination against women by men prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men (UN Declaration EVW, 1993). Pakistan has taken decisive steps to prevent domestic abuse against women in recent times through section 365B, and the new act i.e. Domestic Violence Act 2005 but even after the coming of this act the victimized women are conditioned by society to accept violence silently because these women are helpless have no other option but to bare the pain, an Indian girl is taught to believe that her rights will be violated because they are dependent on

men and they the makers of their rights and that's why a victimized women rarely question back her husband.

Some Facts about Wife Abuse in Pakistan: World report on violence and heath, 2002, shows that

- 1. 10-69% of women reported being physically assaulted by intimate male partners at some point in their lives (WRVH, 2002).
- 2. Up to 70% of female murder victims are killed by their male partners
- Every nine hours in Pakistan a young married women is burnt alive beaten to death or driven to commit suicide (HRWR, 2004).
- 4. It is estimated that more than 15000 women suffer from dowry related violence every year (WRVH, 2002).
- AS calculated that between 60 million and 107 million women are missing worldwide.
- 6. Intimate partner abuse resulted in 2,340 deaths in 2007. Of these deaths, 70% were females and 30% were males (WRVH, 2007).
- 79.2 Pakistanis' believe that the law domestic violence act 2005 will divide the families (NCRB, 2007).
- 8. Domestic violence is one of the leading cause of female injuries in almost every country. In Pakistan 10% of broken hands can be attributed to it (PWHRO, 2005).
- Nearly one lak of women are killed due to wife battering
- Latest NCRB reports that the crime against women are increasing at the rate of 6% Per year.
- 11. In this the category of torture which records incidents of domestic violence is growing at a rate of 13.2%.
- 12. Statistics reveal that 45% of Pakistani women are slapped kicked or beaten by husband
- 13. About 74.8 of women who reported violence have attempted to commit suicide based on a sample of 10000 women (UNESCO).

However, even these shocking statistics do not begin to give voice to the fear and betrayal experienced by victims of domestic violence. Furthermore, experiencing violence of this kind can greatly hinder victims from enjoying a full range of their human rights, particularly the right to bodily integrity Domestic violence is recognized as a violation of the basic rights of women, and freedom from such violence is an important aspect of women's welfare. Domestic violence has severe health and social consequences for women (WHO, 2002). Any campaign for women's rights and an end to violence against women must confront the prevalence of violence within intimate relationships. The special

circumstances of this violence have implications on four levels which must be addressed First, on the local level, the intimate nature of domestic partnerships will change the way victims respond to being assaulted; thus, campaigners must not overlook the victim's unique perspective when establishing initiatives to provide direct aid to victims. Second, the society the victim is part of has incredible influence on whether domestic violence is tolerated; so campaigners need to work towards changing attitudes that foster and condone such violence. Third, although the State is often the level at which campaigners against genderbased violence work, many States retain separate laws to govern home life which, instead of protecting the family as intended, can actually serve to make it more difficult for individuals within the family to escape violence; thus, campaigners should lobby to improve these policies. Fourth, human rights discourse at the international level has traditionally neglected to confront domestic violence, and campaigners need to be catalysts towards ensuring that international human rights systems. Most stories of domestic violence in Pakistan usually contain only one of these two themes: a husband beats his wife and she is a helpless victim at his mercy, and a husband beats his wife, but she triumphs over him and is liberated from the shackles of patriarchal control. The reality of domestic violence in Pakistan, however, lies in the Middle.

2. Methodology

This study is based on 25 victims of domestic violence (initially it was of 40 cases but due to non cooperation of respondents it was confined to 25cases) in Hyderabad district. For this study only those women were randomly selected who have filed cases under domestic violence act of 2005. Victims from the age group of 15-45 were randomly selected. They belonged to different economic status, caste, region (rural and urban) and religion. Informed consent for the survey was obtained from the respondent at the start of the individual interview.

Hidden Domestic Violence: Though wife abuse exists but documentation rate of this crime is comparatively very low which is known as' hidden domestic violence'. According to estimates only one in four and that too extreme violent cases of domestic violence is actually reported (Tolman & Wang, 2005). Data from different surveys indicate a high prevalence of domestic violence against women in all societies. However, prevalence data show only one side of the problem: the seriousness of the problem in terms of how widespread it is in our societies. Another side of the problem, one that has received less attention, is that most of the cases of domestic violence are unreported (Sable et al., 1999). That is reported cases of domestic

violence against women represent only a very small part of the problem when compared with prevalence data. This part of the problem is also known as the 'hidden" part of domestic violence. An image where reported cases of domestic violence against women (usually the most severe end of violence), and homicide of women by their intimate partners represents only the tip of the iceberg. According to this metaphor, most of the cases are submerged, allegedly invisible to society this suggests that we are not dealing very well with this problem. Of course, it is important to further understand why female victims of domestic violence don't report or seek help (Cox & Pascall, 1994). This study is interested in hidden period of domestic violence that is the time period during which act of violence is perpetrated and finally the case is being filed by the victim. In this study the aim to understand the violence from woman victim's perspective. It is because the victim is the one who experiences the violent behavior.

Table 1: Age group of respondents

Age	Wife		Hus	sban	At	the	A	t th	e time		
	Prese				ds		time of		of marriage		
	nt				Present		marria		husband		
	Ag	e			Age	9	ge wife		age		
			Pe	ercenta			age	:		Pe	ercenta
			ge							ge	!
15-	1		49	6	-		6	24			
19								%			
20-	7		28	3%	1	4%	1	56	7		28%
24							4	%			
25-	7		28	3%	9	36	2	8%	14	1	56%
29						%					
30-	8		32	2%	1	40	3	12	4		16%
34					0	%		%			
35-	1		49	6	3	12					
40						%					
40-	1		49	6							
45											
Abo					2	8%					
ve											
Total		25		100	2	10	2	10	25	5	100
					5	0	5	0			

This figure shows that 80 percent of females are married between the age group of 15-24 and 84 percent of males are married between the age of 20-29.60 percent of cases are filed between the age of 25-34.

Table 2: Family structure and Residential area

Family type	Joint	Nuclear	Total
	18	07	25
Residential	Urban	Rural	25
Area	20	5	

Majorty 72 percent of the respondents belonged to joint family 28 percent belonged to nuclear family.

80percent belonged to urban residential area and 20percent belonged to rural area

Table 3: Education

Education	Wife	Percentage	Husband	Percentage
Uneducated	3	12%		
5 th	1	4%	4	16%
8 th	4	16%		
Xth	1	4%	2	8%
XIIth	5	20%	8	32%
Graduate	5	20%	5	20%
Post-	6	24%	2	8%
graduate				
Other(enge			4	16%
einer)				
Total	25	100	25	100

Figere3 shows that 24 percent of respondents were postgraduate, 20 percent graduate and higher secondary consecutively.12 prcent of victims were uneducated, 16 percent were educated up to 8th class, on the other hand 16percent of males were engineer.20percent had a graduation degree, 8 percent were educated up to postgraduation.16 percent only up to 5th class and no one was uneducated.

Table 4: Commencement of conflict and violence committed against respondents

committee agamst respondents					
Just after marriage	15	60%			
1-4 years	7	28%			
5-9years					
10-14years	2	8%			
15-19years					
Above20 years	1	4%			
Total	25	100			

This figure shows that in 60percent of cases violence has started just after marriage, the reasons may vary according to respondents, and then it declines gradually with the increasing years of marriage.

Table 5: Causes of violence

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Dowry	14	56%
Illicit relation	8	32%
Girl child	3	12%
Over workload	3	12%
No job of husband	3	12%
Drinking	2	8%
Divorcee wife	1	4%
Property of wife	2	8%

This figure shows that reasons of violence varied with the respondents. Dowry is still on the top after 50 years of legislations. It is still considered the right of the groom to get hefty amount of money to get married. In 32percent of cases illicit relation of partner was main cause. Today also giving birth to a girl child is considered as a sin of females. Like in 12 percent of cases giving birth to girl was main cause of violence. Wife is also a target of husband's frustration and violence when he himself is not in a job. Divorce is

still considered a taboo in Indian society, a prospective groom demands extra amount of dowry for getting married to a divorcee women, and if he does not get it he has right to hit his female partner. A newly married girl duty is to oblige everybody from in law's to brothers sisters children's and other relatives available in the house. She has to cook, clean ,wash dust and do everything alone, the overwork load is also a reason for starting psychological and verbal violence, as she does not get proper rest and works continuously for long hours .

Table 6: Consequences of violence on the respondents

Leaving husband home	01	4%
Forcefully removed form the house by husband	14	56%
Parents interference and taking her with them	06	24%
He left home	2	8%
None	2	8%
Total	25	100

Figure 6 shows social security of violence. In 84 percent of cases the wife is either dragged out or is father has taken her back. In 56percent of cases the victims were dragged out of their house and no one has cared to call her back., in 24percent of cases father/family members of the victims took her back because the victims were beaten and locked in the room without proper food and water. The victims came out with the help of police, relatives, and neighbors. In more than half of the cases the daughter in law had been either thrown out of his husbands house or has returned to her natal home with the exception of one who filed case. She returned to her in laws home after working out for compromise. Domestic violence accelerated upon her return to her husband home and reached a climax In one case the victim was found tied with a rope in jungle by a stranger. In 8% of cases the husband left home (the person with drinking habit left family at the age of 55, the other person left her for another girl).

Abused women most often seek help from their own families. Initially when the violence were discussed by the victims the family members and other relatives did not take any action and when the daughter were abandoned or was in fatal condition she was called back. There were no reporting during this period .After some months of communication between the parents or relatives, the victims were resend to the same environment and the abuse cycle continued. It was found that family discord violence and harassment are more commonly associated with female suicides in India .It has been noted that female suicide due to harassment dowry problem and problem related to family roles is high in India. Like, in three cases the kerosene was poured on the wife for killing them. Many perceive a "discussion" on domestic violence in

the Indian society as disrespect to the Indian culture, divorce as detrimental to the upbringing of the children if there are any, and continue to live in denial about the severity.

Table 7: Respondents view about returning back in husband's home

Yes	18	72%
No	7	28%
Total	25	100

Figure 7 shows that although there is hidden violence against female and no social security is given but still 72percent of victims want to return to there husbands house and only28percent did not compromise on her stand. It also shows that there are hidden pressures from family, society and other institutions to maintain outer harmony in the family.

Table 8: Hidden period of violence and violence reporting period

Time period	Left/sent back	Percentage	Case filed after leaving	Percentage
0-1years	7	28%	7	28%
1-2years	6	24%	11	44%
3-4years	5	20%	5	20%
5-6years	1	4%	2	8%
7-8years	1	4%		
9- 10years	1	4%		
11- 14years	2	8%		
15- 19years	1	4%		
20above	1	4%		

This figure shows social security of victims. In 28 percent of cases the victim bears all sort of violence for one year. Forms of violence varied according to respondent (given in fig 9). 24 percent of victims bears violence for two years and also maintained silence about it while 20percent of victims for four years. It is persistent to note here that in majority of cases neither the women nor her family reported the violence to the police or took any action against violence, although it is a punishable offence. During this period also, violence is of severe type, like in five cases victims were tried to murder by burning or shooting by pistol but they had maintained silence about the incident. Victims, It is found that family discord violence and harassment are more commonly associated with female suicides in Pakistan. It has been noted that female suicide due to harassment dowry problem and problem related to family roles is high in Pakistan. Women bears this kind of torture because it is her house and her husband, and it is her duty to maintain harmony in the family. When the victims reaches her natal house her parents generally re-send

her to the same environment after some sort of compromise. At this time there is no security of violence.

The victim have low esteem and is depressed at this time. The case against abusive husband is only filed when she has been dragged out of the house and sent back to her father. In 84percent cases were filed because victims had no house to live and husband does not accept her. It is also important to note that the cases are not immediately filed, when she returns her natal home. Her parents try to communicate with the husband and try to resolve the issue and make compromises. During this time period victim's life is at bay. So the role parents play in compounding their daughter problem must be accepted as part of the pressure acting on the young women .It was observed in many cases she had been persuaded by her own parents to bear every-thing quietly, not discuss her misery with others and encouraged to go back to a violent home finally the case is filed when the victims and guardian have no way left. The period between leaving home and filing a case may take a very long time like in 28percent it took a whole year for victim to wait and watch in 44percent of cases the time was between two years. In 20percent of cases the victim waited for 3 to 4 years for her husband to call her back, and avoid filing of case. In 8percent of cases the victim waited for more than 5-6 year. It is a really long time to wait without any mistake of hers.

Table 9: Forms of violence perpetrated

Table 9: Forms of violence perpetrated	
Physical violence	
Any form of physical violence	23
Pushed her, shook her, or threw something at her	6
Slapped her	19
Twisted her arm or pulled her hair	8
Punched her with his fist or with something	
that could hurt her	4
Kicked her, dragged her, or beat her up	9
Tried to choke her or burn her on purpose	8
Threatened her or attacked her with a knife, gun,	7
or any other weapon	
did not provide food etc	9
locked her in room	7
Sexual violence	7
Had illicit relationships with other females	
Forced her to perform any sexual acts she did not want	2
To	2
Emotional violence	25
Any form of emotional violence	
Said or did something to humiliate her in front of others	15
threatened to hurt or harm her or someone close to her	6
	25

This figure shows different forms of violence which were perpetrated against wives.

The Pakistani Society: Family is the basic building unit of social institutions and it weaves the very fabric of culture. Arranged marriages have been the integral

part of the Pakistani society since ages. Basically a marriage is termed arranged when it is arranged by people other than those getting married (Babur, 2007). The other people involved in the arrangement of marriage can be parents, matchmaking agents, matrimonial sites or trusted third party. Marriage alliances have immediate effect on women. Newlywed was also most vulnerable in family not only from husband but also in laws and other relatives (Babur, 2007). She has to work for long hours cook clean and manage home take care of everybody from a small kid to the eldest from the first day of marriage. And if she is unable to do she is victimised within the four walls of their own home and not by strangers but by the same person whom they call their own and also is expected to keep silence about it Domestic violence is a silent crisis that happens daily and with impunity behind closed doors and within close relationships in many Pakistani homes (Gelles & Straus, 1979; HRCP, 2003). Community gender norms tacitly sanction domestic violence. The strongly held belief is that marriage as a social institution should be preserved at all costs and that family honor is important forces women to remain silent on the issue and live with abuse. Unfortunately this is a shared philosophy with the criminal justice system, further victimizing the woman. 'Survivalist corruption' (Prasanna, 1995) adds fuel to the fire independent legal and social status. The cultural and social isolation of being in a unknown family: Owing to the fact that Pakistani women step into a husband home after their marriage, and given the fact that a large number of marriages in Pakistan are still "arranged" to a degree where the couple interact with each other only after the wedding (Rehman, 2009). Food, clothing, mannerisms and other cultural aspects appear alien to her lifestyle and value system. Very often, women in Pakistan are not fluent in speaking to others, may have a very hard time either communicating with people from another culture or understanding them or making friends (Shaheed,1990). In such a state, she may find it very difficult to find someone that she can confide in about her marital problems. Often this cultural isolation leads to acute depressions.

3. Conclusion

While lack of information discourages the women to speak up, divorce is still a huge taboo in the Pakistani communities. Many perceive a "discussion" on domestic violence in the Pakistani society as disrespect to the Pakistani culture, divorce as detrimental to the upbringing of the children if there are any, and continue to live in denial about the severity other reasons.

- 1. Victim fears they will be beaten more severely if they try to leave, abusers often threaten to find and kill or harm the victim and their families.
- Victim depends on the batterer for food, shelter, economic security Victims believe they will have no one to talk to, understand or believes in them.
- 3. Victims believe their children need two parents, and do not want to raise them alone.
- 4. The victim wants to keep the family together and live up to a religious commitment to remain with their partner.
- 5. The victim does not believe they can take care of themselves or their children alone.
- 6. Victims want to be loyal to the relationship and stand by their partner.
- Victims believe that no one else will want them.
- 8. The victim rationalizes that things could be worse with someone else.
- The victim is ashamed of the situation and believes that others will think negatively of them.
- 10. Victims believe others will think they are low-class or stupid for being involved in an abusive relationship.

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