

ISSN : 2231-2374

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



Journal of

AVINASHILINGAM DEEMED UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN
COIMBATORE - 641 043, TAMIL NADU, INDIA

Vol. 21, No.4 * Quarterly * October 2011

EFFECT OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ON THE LIFE OF WOMEN IN EARLY ADULTHOOD

*** AMIRTHA GOWRI, R.**

**** ROXY DEVI, K.**

Introduction

Gender based violence is one of the most widespread human rights abuses and public health problems in the world today, affecting as many as one out of every three women. Gender based violence is the ultimate manifestation of unequal relations between men and women (Shilaja, 2008). Gender based violence is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females. Acts of gender based violence violate a number of universal human rights protected by international instruments and conventions. Many but not all forms of gender based violence are illegal and criminal acts in national laws and policies (UNFPA, 2011).

Sexual and gender-based violence can occur anywhere, at any time. And also it occurs in all classes, cultures, religions, races, gender and ages. During armed conflict, social structures are disrupted. Preventing sexual and gender-based violence thus requires changes in gender relations within the community, that is, the socially prescribed roles, responsibilities, expectations, limitations, opportunities and

privileges assigned to persons in the community based on their sex (Usha, 2004).

Gender based violence is quite common in almost all the developing countries (Sharma and Manisha, 2004). Around two-third of married women in India are victims of domestic violence (2000). The National Family Health Survey reports about the inequality and violence pervading in the country. In India, 37 per cent of ever married women have been victims of spousal violence. Very often women used to suffer violence against them in silence for fear of adverse repercussions (NFHS – 2, 2000). In Manipur, 44 percent of married women have been victims of spousal violence (NFHS – 3, India, 2005-06).

Gender based violence has very close link to poverty and overall development down turns in the economy such as the current economic recession and increasing poverty can actually, trigger an increase in violence. Alcoholism, unemployment, the age gap between partners, frustration and poor role modeling also contribute to violent behaviour. These may be factors which put women at greater risk of violence because of the stress treated by financial hardship and

* Professor & Head in Human Development, Avinashilingam Institute for Home Science and Higher Education for Women, Coimbatore – 641043.

** Postgraduate student

relationship issues (Preeti, 2006). Psychological trauma ranges from paralysis and terror to emotional pain, sense of denial, depression and mental disorder while social costs include rejection, stigmatization, further sexual exploitation and severe punishments (www.rhre.org). The effect of violence can be devastating to women's reproductive health as well as to other aspects of physical and mental well being. In addition to causing injury, violence increases women's long term risk of a number of other health problems including chronic pain, physical disability, unintended pregnancy and adverse pregnancy (Meenu, 2009).

Education of women and the community in general on women's rights related to gender based violence and how to protect and claim them is the need of the hour. Most of the cultures are not gender sensitive and therefore biased against women. For this reason, the violation of women's rights is commonly observed as even expected. Consequently, women are prone to such abuses as rape and wife battering just because of their sex. Therefore it is necessary to educate women and the community in general on women's rights and channels and redress in case they are violated some of the issues that can be focused man include types and effects of gender based violence, human rights violation and laws related to violence against women (www.preventgbvafrica.org). Hence the study has been undertaken to

- find out the prevalence of gender based violence in Manipur
- identify the effect of gender based violence in the life of affected women
- provide education on gender based

violence and laws related to it to the affected women and

- evaluate the effect of education provided to the affected women.

Methodology

Manipur, the capital of Imphal and Thoubal district was selected to conduct the study. Hundred women subjects from Imphal and Thoubal district were selected by purposive sampling technique. An interview schedule and a knowledge assessment schedule were used to collect data on their knowledge on various aspects of gender based violence. After collection of data an educational programme was conducted in a schedule manner on aspects such as types and different kinds of violence, physical effects, psychological effects, social effects, different human rights and acts related to violence against women. The knowledge assessment schedule consisted of 10 statements of objective type with yes or no answer and each correct answer carried one score. Visual aids such as charts, pictures, flip charts and charts with pictures were used. A manual on gender based violence was prepared and distributed to all the participants of the programme. After education the same schedule was administered to the sample and their level of knowledge gain was assessed.

Results and discussion

1. Socioeconomic background of the respondents

Majority of the women were in the age group of 33-40 years (39%), 36 percent of the women were in the age range of 28-33 years and 25 percent were in the age group of 22-28 years.

Majority of the respondents belonged to nuclear family (71%) and the rest belonged to joint family (29%). Majority of them (79%) were Hindus, followed by backward caste (32%). The respondents belonging to schedule caste (17%) and tribe (9%) were less.

Majority of the respondents (36%) have completed higher secondary education. It is heartening to note that 24 percent were graduates followed by seven percent post graduates. There were eight percent of illiterates. Effort has to be taken to see that illiteracy is eradicated. Nearly half of the women were housewives (45%) and rest were employed in handloom sector (31%), non-government organization (12%), as teachers (5%) and in government offices (4%).

As per the HUDCO (2004) classification 38 percent of the respondents were earning above Rs. 10,000 per month followed by Rs. 5000-10,000 (33%) and Rs. 3000-5000 (19%).

The marriage of most of the respondents was love marriage (82%) and the rests were arranged marriage (18%).

The details regarding the habits of the spouse of victims of gender based violence are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Habits of the victims' spouses

Habits	Percent (N=100)			
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Total
Smoking	55	5	1	61
Alcohol consumption	58	4	1	63
Pan chewing	34	5	24	63
Drug usage	3	4	23	30
Gambling	6	9	53	68

Majority of the respondents' husbands had all unwanted habits such as gambling (68%), alcoholism, pan chewing (63%) and smoking (61%). Only 30 per cent were drug users. Above half of them had the habit of consuming alcohol and smoking daily. Smoking and alcohol are positively correlated with gender based violence. Alcoholism raises violence and consequently family disintegration. Hence, it can be concluded that these habits of the victims' spouse become one of the reasons which accelerate the incidence of gender based violence.

Behaviour of the victims' spouses

Table 2 shows the behaviour of the victims spouses.

Table 2. Behaviour of the victims' spouses

Behaviour of husband	Percent N =100
Did something to humiliate the wife in front of others	95
Insists on knowing whereabouts at all times	88
Becomes jealous or angry if wife talks to other man	85
Frequently accuses wife for being unfaithful	82
Husband does not trust wife in money matter	82
Tries to limit the wife to contact with her family	71
Does not permit to meet female friends	46

It is observed that 95 per cent of respondents' husbands humiliated their wife in front of others whereas 88 per cent of husbands were insisting on knowing the whereabouts of their wife at all times, followed by 85 per cent of them becoming

jealousy or angry if their wife talked to other men. Accusing the wife for being unfaithful, not trusting the wife in money matters (82% each) and trying to limit the wife's contact with her family (71%) were also observed assessing the victims of the spouse.

Act of gender based violence by the spouse

Majority of the spouses of the respondents had insulted and slapped their wife in front of others (87%). Seventy one per cent of the spouses had pushed them down, shook them or thrown something at wife and 67 percent of the spouses forced their wife to have sexual intercourse even when they did not want it. The other acts of violence were threatening to hurt or harm their wife with knife or any other weapon (59%) and kicking, dragging or beating them (56%).

Kind of hurts experienced by the respondents

Table 3 presents the kind of hurts experienced by the respondents.

Table 3. Kind of hurts experienced by the respondents

Details of hurts*	Percent N = 100
Injury	77
Bleeding	72
Denial of food	71
Bruises	66
Headache	64
Lesions and cuts	52
Back pain	49
Fracture	44
Pelvic pain	37
Being locked in a room	31
Loss of teeth	30
Abortion	29
Burns	20
Heart problem	13
Sexually transmitted disease	5

* Multiple response

It is inferred from the table that gender based violence has its effect on the respondents as it resulted in injury (77%), bleeding (72%) and denial of food (71%). The other effects were bruises (66%), headache (64%), lesions and cuts (52%), back pain (49%) and fracture (44%). Very badly abortion has taken place in 29 per cent of the respondents. After the act of gender based violence 20 percent of women got the medical treatment immediately. It is necessary to get immediate treatment for the women to avoid further complications. In most of the incidents, the affected women got help from their neighbours and mother-in-law. The women hardly got the help of the mother and friends, the reason being the long distance between their mother's home and in-law's home. Rarely two percent of women got help from their husband himself.

Effects of physical violence

Even though seven percent of the husbands assured their wife that the act of gender based violence would never happen again, they exhibited the violence once again. Seventy three percent of women hide the act of violence. The reason might be that the women would have felt humiliated by the act of violence. Thirty one per cent of the respondents had the courage to prevent the act of violence. They had the ability to stop their husband from slapping, kicking and other acts of gender based violence. All the respondents irrespective of the kind of gender based violence could not overcome it immediately. Majority of them (73%) felt very angry after the violence whereas fear gripped among 72 percent of them as they could not stand the violence. Depression, agony and anxiety were the other emotions experienced by the respondents.

Psychological problems faced by the respondents

Table 4 shows the psychological problems faced by the respondents.

Table 4. Psychological problems faced by the respondents

Statement	Percent
Sleep disturbance	96
Inability to concentrate on work	95
Felt ashamed to face others	92
Inability to trust the spouse	92
Felt embarrassed when criticized in front of others	91
Felt fear of intimacy	83
Prevent husband from getting angry	79
Tension in doing things which pleases the husband	75
Felt sometimes that future is hopeless	73
Psychological stress	69
Spouse threatening to take away the child	43
Thought of committing suicide	39
Spouse threatening to kill if she tries to leave him	27
Fear of husband taking away the child with him	26
Husband threatening to commit suicide	13

More than 90 per cent of the respondents suffered from sleep disturbance, could not concentrate on work, inability to trust him and felt ashamed to face others. Eighty three per cent of the women had fear of intimacy. Above 75 per cent of the women were tensed up when they had to do the things which please the husband and thought that future is hopeless. Psychological stress, threatening to taking away the child if she leaves him, threatening to kill the wife or commit suicide, were the other problems faced by the respondents. The respondents got help and emotional consolation support from their parents (59%), followed by others like NGOs, CBOs and women association

(32%), in laws and neighbours (22% each and siblings (19%). The husband did not like the respondents receiving help from others. So they stopped their wife from going out of the house (98%) and denied them doing whatever they like to do (76%).

Awareness of the women on gender based violence

An awareness programme on gender based violence was organized for a subsample of 50 women. Its effect was assessed by administering the same schedule before and after the awareness programme and the details of which are depicted in Table 5.

Table 5. Awareness of the women on gender based violence

Aspects	Before		After	
	N= 50	Per cent	N= 50	Per cent
Meaning of gender based violence	7	14	50	100
Marital rape	6	12	50	100
Imprisonment for giving and receiving dowry is not upto 3 years	9	18	49	98
Pre-natal sex determination is prevented by Pre-natal diagnostic techniques Act, 1986	7	14	48	96
Women cannot be allowed to clean, lubricate or adjust heavy machinery in motion	15	30	49	98
Disagree the dowry system	49	98	50	100
Dislike of being under the control of spouse	40	80	50	100
Women should contact the local councilor for any violence	6	12	49	98
PWDV Act 2005 is religion neutral	6	12	49	98
Denial of property is violence against women	6	12	48	96
Mean ± S.D	3.040± 1.194		9.860± 0.350	
't' value	39.407**			

** P(<0.01)

The awareness of the respondents on gender based violence before education was very poor. Cent percent of the respondents had known about gender based violence, marital rape, dowry system and did not want to be under the control of husband after the awareness programme. Majority of 98 per cent understood about punishment for dowry and PWDV Act after the education programme.

Majority of the respondents (above 96%) have understood about the related act of gender based violence such as pre-natal diagnostic technique act and inheritance rights of women after education. The finding clearly brings about the need for creating awareness among women regarding gender based violence.

Conclusion

Gender based violence is an abuse of human rights and failure to address it amounts to complicity. It is also unquestionably a critical development issue that needs to be addressed for the effectiveness of poverty reduction plans and strategies. The cost of not addressing gender based violence is significant both socially and economically.

The effects of gender based violence on human society are immense and almost impossible to measure by a single yardstick. The cumulative effect of the menace of gender based violence affects every area of life and its conclusion is visible to the sensitive eye at home and in the office, markets and restaurants, schools and corporate. The batters and the battered are both conspicuous in the teeming faces of millions on the home of every country in bleak faces with broken spirits.

REFERENCES

1. Meenu, A. (2009), *Women Empowerment and Globalization a Modern Perspective*, New Delhi, Kanishka Publishers distributors, 323.
 2. Nirupama, B. (2007), *Human Development a Lifespan perspective*, Jaipur, Aavishkar Publishers distributors, 268-269.
 3. Preeti, M. (2006), *Domestic Violence Against Women*, New Delhi, Deep and Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd., 257-258
 4. Sharma, B.R. and Manisha, G. (2004), Gender based violence in India – A never ending phenomenon, *International Women's Studies*, 6,1,113.
 5. Shilaja, N. (2008), *Women's Role in Modern World*, Jaipur, ABD Publishers, 210-246.
 6. Usha, S. (2004), *Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Right*, Delhi, Authorspress, 164-166.
- National Family Health Survey (NHFS) 2, 200, www.nfhsindia.org
National Family Health Survey (NHFS) 3, 2005-06, www.nfhsindia.org

Research Highlights

Vol. 21, No. 4, 2011

RESEARCH ARTICLES

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Social change through women empowerment
<i>Meenakshisundaram, T.S.K.</i> 200 | 7. Production of rubber in India
<i>Ramalinga Choodambigai, S. and Meena Devi, S.</i> 237 |
| 2. Effect of gender based violence on the life of women in early adulthood
<i>Amirtha Gowri, R. and Roxy Devi, K.</i> 203 | 8. Customer's perception towards service quality - a case study of ICICI bank
<i>Santhiyavalli, G.</i> 245 |
| 3. Perceived self-efficacy and its influence on specific efficacy outcomes
<i>Arockia Marachelvi and Hasana, K.T.</i> 209 | 9. Reconstructing the identity of the 'emotionally disturbed handmaidens of the war' in Michael Ondaatje's <i>The English Patient</i>
<i>Preetha, M. and Chitra Sivasubramaniam</i> 255 |
| 4. A study on strengthening under privileged food service system of the selected home in Chennai
<i>Premala Priyadharshini, V. and Soundarya, A.R.</i> 218 | 10. Learning medium of low vision pupils
<i>Sambathvani, K. and Gomathi, G.</i> 261 |
| 5. Some gG-axioms
<i>Sivakamasundari, K.</i> 227 | RESEARCH ABSTRACT 267 |
| 6. Effect of composted pressmud and rhizobium on biometrical and yield parameters of soyabean (<i>Glycine max L.</i>)
<i>Anju singh and Vijayalakshmi, A.</i> 232 | NEWS MAKERS 271 |
| | SHORT COMMUNICATION 273 |
| | BOOK REVIEW 276 |