




Prevalence of Intimate Partner's Violence (IPV): A Demographical Analysis of Women Residing in Shelter Homes

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the prevalence of intimate partner's violence (IPV) through the analysis of key demographical factors among women who sought refuge in shelter homes. This quantitative cross sectional research was conducted on the sample of 110 sheltered women (ages between 16 to 60 years) from the 10 different shelter homes (Dar-ul-Aman) of the Punjab, Pakistan. Sample was drawn through purposive sampling technique. HITS (Sherin et al., 1998), was used for assessment of IPV along with a customised demographic sheet and consent form. The quantitative analysis revealed that the ratio of IPV is significantly higher in arranged/forced marriages as compared to love marriages ($p = .042^*$), additionally, husbands having extra-marital affairs abuse their partners more ($p = .049^*$) as compare to the husbands having no extra-marital affair. It was also revealed that there is no significant difference in geographical boundaries in facing the IPV, both urban and rural women are being the victim of IPV equally ($p = .327$). Furthermore, it was also evidenced on the basis of significant positive correlation that the ratio of IPV increases gradually ($r = .263^{**}$) with the increasing years of marriage, it can be concluded that women in long-term marriages are more prone to IPV and there is a need to address the issue more closely in long term marriages.

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1. Introduction

Intimate partner violence is a prevalent issue worldwide, it is not restricted to any specific culture, class, or ethnicity, as it stems from the unequal power dynamics upheld by patriarchy. This form of gender-based violence involves exerting control and harm over a partner through intimidating, threatening, or harassing behavior, affecting them physically, sexually, emotionally, and psychologically, and is unfortunately widespread in Pakistan due to the subjugated status of women (Hadi, 2020). No reliable and comprehensive data on the prevalence of IPV in Pakistan at both national and subnational levels was (Iqbal & Fatmi, 2021). IPV remains an ongoing and persistent issue, causing immense distress to females, who find refuge in shelter homes (Dar-ul-Aman) facilities in Punjab, Pakistan. The prime determination of this research is to delve into the intersection between key demographic factors and intimate partner violence amongst these survivors of violence. Estimating the prevalence of IPV among the diverse demographic profiles of women seeking shelter is of utmost importance for a multitude of reasons. Women facing IPV, is a common social and psychological issue in Pakistan. It is often viewed as a private family matter in Pakistani culture and impacts both urban and rural women. Women have encountered discrimination, oppression, and violence as a routine matter of their lives, due to the misinterpretation of tribal customs, social traditions, and cultural norms. However, in Pakistani context, the literature lacks sufficient emphasis on evaluating, addressing, preventing, and finding effective solutions to this problem (Tahir, Rafiq, Yousufi, & Sheikh, 2021). Limited access to information on the

socio-cultural and psychological aspects of IPV on domestic level in South Punjab is due to entrenched cultural values and lack of autonomy among women in domestic settings, leading to an environment where power imbalances thrive. The patriarchal culture in the region reinforces male dominance and authority in household matters, which propagate imbalanced and hierarchical situation of power handling (Sattar, Ahmad, & Asim, 2022).

2. Literature Review

A most relevant empirical investigation was found through the navigating of literature, was took place at shelter home Multan, Pakistan. The pervasiveness of IPV, and its effect on women's health was inspected qualitatively. The interviews of 21 offended women were conducted through the sequential sampling technique. 20 participants, out of total 21, stated facing psychological ailments such as depression, personality disorders and emotional instabilities due to IPV. 18 maltreated participants stated that they experienced head injuries and burns as the main physical ailments resulting from their husband's violent actions. This combination of psycho-physiological ailments and reproductive health issues caused these females to seek refuge in the shelter home (Sattar, 2020). Literature also recommended that the IPV should be studied with demographical correlates like age, number of children, ethnicity and parental IPV history (Triantafyllou, Wang, & North, 2019). Another study inspected the pervasiveness of IPV, its effect on homelessness among women, and subjective experiences of victims of violence residing in shelter homes. The study outcomes discovered that women survivors of IPV valued the support, which they are being provided at shelter homes, primarily for their emotional and physical needs. The participants also suggested to improve shelter experiences included the need for support groups for survivors and children, as well as decreasing certain limitations in shelter homes (Hammond, 2018). It was also observed through a cross-sectional study, conducted on 551 shelter seeking Norwegian women that the IPV is connected with low quality of life among shelter seeking women (Alsaker, Moen, Morken, & Baste, 2018).

2.1. Research Gap

Drawing from the information presented in the introduction and literature review, it is evident that a potential gap in research could be identified in the lack of a thorough understanding concerning the correlation between demographic factors and intimate partner violence (IPV) experienced by female survivors who are currently residing in shelter homes situated in Punjab, Pakistan. Despite the fact that existing research has delved into the prevalence and consequences of IPV among women seeking refuge in shelters, there exists a void within the academic literature when it comes to a comprehensive examination of demographic variables such as the type of marriage (love/arranged), infidelity on the part of the husband, length of the marriage, and area of residence, and how these factors interplay with the prevalence of IPV. While some studies have briefly touched upon the demographic determinants of IPV, there is an inadequacy of research that is specifically dedicated to exploring these aspects within the unique context of shelter-seeking survivors in Punjab. Furthermore, the current body of literature predominantly concentrates on qualitative inquiries or investigations carried out in Western settings, with limited empirical studies being conducted within the distinct cultural and societal ambiance of Punjab, Pakistan. Consequently, there exists a gap in scholarly work when it comes to a thorough quantitative evaluation of demographic factors and their correlation with the prevalence of IPV among women seeking shelter in this particular region. By addressing this identified research gap, it is plausible that insightful revelations could be gleaned by facilitating the development of targeted interventions and support services that to meet the specific requirements of this demographic cohort. Additionally, it will provide more robust evidence to inform policy formulation as well as aid in the allocation of resources aimed at combating IPV and offering assistance to survivors in Pakistan.

2.2. Rationale of the Study

This study aims to present a thorough comprehension of the prevalence of IPV among women survivors residing in Shelters Homes in Punjab by examining pivotal demographical factors. The rationale for embarking on this research is founded on the imperative need to address the pervasive issue of IPV and its impact on a specific demographic group. By scrutinizing the prevalence rates from the perspective of specified demographical factors such as love/arrange marriage, extra-marital affair of the husband, duration of marriage, and

notably, the area of residence. Additionally, conducting a detailed analysis of such particular demographic factors can provide invaluable insights into the vulnerabilities that may make women more prone to experiencing IPV. Not only does it illuminate the persistent psychological consequences encountered by survivors of IPV, but it also acts as invaluable source information in shaping and enhancing the support services provided by shelter homes.

2.3. Objectives

Present Research was aimed to accomplish the subsequent objective:

1. To explore the prevalence of IPV through the analysis of key demographical factors among the female IPV survivors, residing in the shelter homes (Dar-ul-Aman) of Punjab.

2.4. Hypothesis

1. The women in arrange marriages will face more IPV as compared to women in love marriages among female IPV survivors residing in shelter homes.
2. There will be a significant difference among the level of IPV from ex-husband with and without having extra-marital affair among female IPV survivors residing in shelter homes.
3. There will be no significant difference in IPV among the urban and rural female IPV survivors residing in shelter homes.
4. IPV will have significant positive correlation with years of previous marriage among female IPV survivors residing in shelter homes.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The self-identified female victims of IPV (N=110) sheltered in Dar-ul-Amans were the sample of this study. The age range of the participants was 16 through 60 years, containing different demographic characteristics like, education, area of residence, years of previous marriage, love or arrange marriage, and the extra-marital affair of the ex-husband.

3.2. Research Design and Procedure

It was a quantitative, cross-sectional study, data was collected by visiting each shelter home, after seeking permission from the deputy directors of each district and the institutional heads. All the participants were approached to build rapport through introductory sessions and then asked for their consents to participate in the study. Only those participants were included in the study who showed their will and fulfill the inclusion criteria.

3.3. Instruments

Data was collected through the HITS scale (Sherin, Sinacore, Li, Zitter, & Shakil, 1998a) and the self-structured demographic sheet along with the consent informed. HITS is a 4 items short domestic violence screening tool, to assess the verbal and physical violence, with the internal consistency of .87 (Sherin, Sinacore, Li, Zitter, & Shakil, 1998b). The Urdu translation of the scale was used in this study.

4. Results

Table 1: Independent Samples t-test for Comparing IPV among Love and Arrange Marriages Among Sheltered Women (N=110)

Variables	Love Marriage	Arrange Marriage			95 % CI		Cohen's d	
	(n=08)	(n=112)	df	t	p	LL		UL
Intimate Partner's Violence	M (SD) 14.1 (6.0)	M(SD) 15.9 (3.6)	108	-1.24	.042*	.13	1.5	0.36

*p < .05.

Results of table 1 showed that level of IPV is higher among arranged marriages (M = 15.9) as compared to love marriages (M = 14.1) of sheltered women. An independent t-test showed that the difference of IPV between love and arranged marriage is significant (p = .042*, one tailed), and the effect size is medium (d = 0.36).

Table 2: Independent Samples t-test for Comparing IPV among Sheltered Women in Context of Ex-husband's Extra Marital Affair (N=110)

Variables	Ex-husband having extra-marital affair (n=57)	Ex-husband having no extra-marital affair (n=53)			95 % CI		Cohen's d	
	M (SD)	M(SD)	df	t	p	LL		UL
Intimate Partner's Violence	16.4 (3.7)	15.0 (3.9)	108	1.9	.049*	.003	2.90	0.36

* $p < .05$.

Results in table 2 showed that higher level of IPV is faced by those sheltered women whose ex-husbands have extramarital affairs ($M = 16.4$) as compared to no extra marital affair of ex-husband ($M = 15.0$). An independent t-test showed that the difference of IPV is significant ($p = .049^*$, two tailed), and the effect size is medium ($d = 0.36$).

Table 3: Independent Samples t-test for Comparing IPV among Urban and Rural Sheltered Women (N=110)

Variables	Urban women (n=48)	Rural women (n=62)			95 % CI		Cohen's d	
	M (SD)	M(SD)	df	t	p	LL		UL
Intimate Partner's Violence	16.1 (3.5)	15.4 (4.1)	108	.984	.327	-.74	2.2	0.18

* $p < .05$.

Results in table 3 showed that level of IPV among urban ($M = 16.1$) and rural sheltered women ($M = 15.4$) is not significant ($p = .327$, two tailed), and the effect size is less than small ($d = 0.18$).

Table 4: Correlation between IPV and Years of Previous Marriage among Sheltered Women (N=110)

Variables	M	SD	1	2
1. HITs (IPV)	15.7	3.88	1	.263**
2. Years of Previous Marriage	3.5	1.18		1

** $p < .01$

Results in the above table 4 displayed that IPV and the years of marriage are significantly positively correlated ($r = .263^{**}$) with each other. As the duration of marriage increases, the ratio of IPV also increases among women residing in shelter homes.

5. Discussion

The outcomes first assumption of the research demonstrated that the proportion of intimate partner violence (IPV) is significantly higher in arranged/forced marriages as compared to love marriages. This assumption is also supported by the literature that IPV is prevalent in arranged/forced marriages. A qualitative study was found in this regard which was conducted on Asian women trapped in forced marriages and facing IPV (Sandhu & Barrett, 2024). It should be determined that the marriages without consent are more vulnerable for the IPV on the basis of extensive research, because there is limited research available on this issue (Basra, 2018). Moreover, the results of second assumption of the study found that husbands who engage in extramarital affairs are more likely to abuse their partners in comparison to husbands who do not have extramarital affairs. This assumption is also being supported by the literature, an Investigation of marital infidelity and types of IPV in rural areas of Malawi, revealed that females did not show a higher likelihood than men of reporting physical abuse when their partners are under the suspicion of committing infidelity. Moreover, being aware about the partner's infidelity was found to be substantially linked to both partner's risk of experiencing sexual intimidation and physical violence (Conroy, 2014). The third assumption of the study revealed that there are no geographical limitations in experiencing IPV, both urban and rural women face IPV without a significant difference. This assumption is also supported by the literature. An investigation about the prevalence and occurrence of the different forms of IPV, was conducted in Nigeria. This study included both urban and rural women of various age ranges, to explore the different forms of IPV and its prevalence. The results of study revealed that IPV is a common in the lives of both urban and rural women. There are no geographical

limits in experiencing different types of violence by their partners. These findings support the assumptions of the study under discussion (Balogun, Owoaje, & Fawole, 2012). Furthermore, the current results also indicated that the prevalence of IPV tends to rise gradually as the marriage continues with the passage of time. Literature also explored that many factors contribute to the women experience of IPV during the course of marriage. A previous study also confirms that duration of marriage, along with other demographical factors, plays a significant role in women's experience of IPV (Öyekçin, Yetim, & Şahin, 2012). Ultimately, the study under discussion, being consistent with the previous literature, concluded that higher level of IPV is associated with long-term marriages, husband's infidelity as well as arranged/forced marriages. The vulnerability of being victimized by IPV is equal for both urban and rural women, which shows the threatening pervasiveness of IPV, without any geographical boundaries.

6. Conclusion

Conclusively, the study explored the prevalence of IPV, as objectified, it illuminated the various aspects of IPV among women residing in shelter homes. The findings demonstrated higher prevalence of IPV in forced/arranged marriages as compared to love marriages, which shows the importance of getting consent from females before marriages, because forced marriages can lead to serious consequences including IPV. It was also concluded that husband's infidelity can also triggers IPV, which could be a reverse action to hide the guilt of being a cheater. A major finding of the study exposed that both urban and rural women are equally vulnerable for the IPV, which is an alarming situation for the safety of women in large scale geographical boundaries. The last but not the least finding revealed that the women in long-term marriages are more prone to be the victim of IPV as compared to women in short-term marriages. There is a dire need for focused interventions, policy making and support systems to effectively combat with this ubiquitous issue.

6.1. Recommendations

1. Counseling and couple therapies should be advised to couples in long-term and arranged marriages to reduce the ratio of IPV through the communication and effective conflict resolution under the supervision of trained counselors and psychologists.
2. Forced marriages should be considered as the violation of human rights, the will and choice of females should be considered at the time of their marriages. In this regard, awareness campaigns should be launched to raise the awareness of gender equality and consent before marriage for females, as their religious and human right.
3. Academic researches should be encouraged so the identification of triggering factors of IPV in long-term marriages along with other significant demographical factors could be possible to design interventions and policies.
4. Accumulative Policies should be implicated for the safeguard of IPV survivors and improvements in the systems should be made for their easy access to reporting IPV, getting justice, support and shelter services.

6.2. Implications of the Study

1. Policymakers can get the directions from these research findings to confront the intimidating issue of IPV experienced by women in Pakistani culture.
2. The results of study will help in allocating the resources for initiating the shelter, physical and mental health support programs for the IPV survivors.
3. These findings will help in designing the awareness campaigns in the society to foster healthy and violence free marriages.
4. The results will lead to the subsequent research projects that can distillate on understanding IPV patterns in long-term marriages and focus on effective interventions.

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