Impact of Domestic Violence on Mental Health against Women Workers’: A Comparative Study in Rural and Urban Areas of Chittoor District

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Abstract

Traditionally, women were expected to marry and settle down while men were accorded the rights, power, and authority over them. Today, however, women’s status in the society has gradually improved giving her many roles to play in real life not just as a wife but also a mother, a daughter-in-law, a sister, a daughter, etc. Moreover, majority are now working equally with men and receiving wages as well. Despite these changes, however, cases of domestic violence against women such as physical, mental, sexual, psychological, verbal and even emotional have been reported. This paper discusses these various forms of violence and their impacts into the life of women. Results of the study reported physical violence at 41 percent both in rural and urban areas, with a total of 43 percent in urban areas and slightly lower in rural areas with 39 percent. The results of the study also probed that 56% of the respondents are facing physical assaults - many of which were inflicted by their husband or family members. Finally, it is evident from the study that there is a significant difference between the women residing at rural and urban areas with respect to mental depression. Stakeholders may take efforts to enhance the competence of primary health care providers to recognize and treat mental health consequences of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and acute to chronic stress in women.

Keywords: domestic violence; mental health; women; suicide; psychological
1. Introduction

In ancient centuries to modern times, women are facing so many problems in their day to day lives from the moment they were born to the time they grow up and become members of the society. Various problems and obstacles have continued to restrict their actions and challenge their very own existence. While development in many aspects of the society continues to improve, fair and respectable treatment of women remains elusive in many parts of the world. A study on women revealed countless cases of violence in different countries in the world (World Health Organization, 2005). It is affecting people from all walks of life – young or old, rich or poor, including women not just from the least developed countries but also even to the most advanced nations. Violence ranges from assaultive, coercive, abnormal behaviour, physical, sexual, psychological as well as economic violence (Unicef, 2006). What is more alarming is that abuse and unfair treatments emanate not just from the people of the society to which they belong but even amongst their own family members such as parents, mother-in-laws including their husbands who are supposed to take good care of them and protect them from harm. Such forms of domestic violence are becoming more and more prevalent and it is causing serious problems not just to the abused party but also to the abuser.

Recently, a more pressing issue concerns the devastating impact of domestic violence not just on the physical health but also emotional (Umberson, 2003; Siegel, 2013) and mental state (Swartz, Swanson, Hiday, Borum, Wagner, & Burns, 1998; Pico-Alfonso et. al., 2006; ) of women who went through the vicious cycle of violence in their lives. At present, various organizations and institutions are taking the challenge to resolve and provide solutions for the safety and protections of women across the globe. Along this line, this study was conceptualized following these main objectives:

a) To assess the different forms of domestic violence of women workers;
b) To know the status of the mental depression through the domestic violence; and
c) To identify the suicidal tendency status among the respondents.

2. Review of Literature

Several studies have emerged as a result of the overwhelming desire and need to address the issue of violence among women. For instance, Lindhorst, Oxford,
and Gillmore (2007) expressed the influence of domestic violence to unemployment. They stressed that it is important to consider the long term effect of domestic violence to women’s capacity to support and sustain themselves after the abuse and violent experienced suffered. Waghamode, Desai Bhavana., and Kalyan (2013) also explored gender-based violence where men consider themselves superior than women. Abuse and violence in these instances maybe perceived normal and acceptable as justified by men’s superiority over women. Gender-based violence, accordingly, includes physical aggression, marital rape, and psychological violence. Mahapatro, Gupta and Gupta (2012) identified psychological violence as more prevalent than physical or sexual violence among women. Hence, they suggested the need for governments to create programs and policies that will prevent violence from happening among women. Kamimura, Ganta, Myers and Thomas (2014) investigated intimate partner violence (IPV) among 18 to 62 age group women. They found out that poorer women underwent through various types of violence in their lives. The need for community health centers, in these cases, is crucial to provide intervention and assistance towards their recovery.

2.1 Types of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is having many types of forms. It depends on personality among the gender based and situational. Basically domestic violence can start from simple to complex manner and can occur in many forms (Kennedy, 2007; World Health Organization, 2002).

a. Physical violence

This is probably one of the most common of domestic violence among women and it is sometimes accompanied by psychological abuse and in many cases by sexual assault. These types of violence may include small aggressive actions like hitting, slapping, punching, etc. to more serious cases as murder.

b. Sexual violence

In this type of violence, the victim is forced to have sexual intercourse with the assailant or take part in an unwanted sexual activity. This type of violence is often occurs with physical violence as it involves primarily coercion.
c. Mental or Psychological violence

Experiencing abuse or an attack can lead to serious mental health problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety. Moreover, the abuser's psychological or mental violence can include anything that impacts the mental health and well-being of their partner.

3. Methodology

The study was conducted in the rural and urban areas of Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. A stratified random sampling method has been adopted to select the women respondents for the study. A total of 100 samples were collected in rural areas. Specifically, two villages from five mandals were selected. Moreover, about 10 women were chosen to participate from each village. Similarly, a total of 100 respondents were selected in the urban cities of Chittoor and Tirupati. A total of 5 wards in each town were selected with 10 women from each ward. Thus, the study consisted of a total of 200 respondents. Finally, the data were interpreted with the help of SPSS tools, Percentage, and Chi-square tests.

4. Results and Discussion

A. Forms of Domestic Violence

Table 1: Forms of Domestic Violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Physical (%)</th>
<th>Psychological (%)</th>
<th>Verbal (%)</th>
<th>Technical (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>39 (39)</td>
<td>53 (53)</td>
<td>5 (5)</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10.495*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>43 (43)</td>
<td>43 (43)</td>
<td>11 (11)</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>82 (41)</td>
<td>96 (48)</td>
<td>16 (8)</td>
<td>6 (3)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>10.495*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Significant at 0.05 level

Most of the respondents’ opinion is differing on domestic violence, they can imagine that partner or husband physically hurts to victim is called domestic violence, but not only the physical, remaining are psychological, verbal and technical violence.
The table-1 explains about types of Domestic violence difference in rural and urban areas. Major proportionate i.e. 48 percent of the respondents’ are affected with Psychological violence, in that total 53 percent in rural and 43 percent in urban areas. In rural areas the affected percentage is slightly high the reason is lack of education, common sense, poverty and unemployment of husband; in contrary, the reason in urban areas are male domination, ego problem, dual earners and timing. In the psychological context, putting stress continuously, this leads to depression, which means chronic mental illness.

The respondents’ affected due to Physical violence are 41 percent both in rural and urban areas, in that urban area has been accounted for 43 percent and slightly low in rural areas i.e. 39 percent. The forms of physical violence are slapping kicking, hitting, beating, through object etc.

Verbal violence can be dangerous other than one; it makes big issues with the verbal controversy. Verbal violence has been accounted for 8 percent both in rural and urban areas. Verbal violence is meant as scolding, abusing, blaming, using obscene language, and humiliating.

Last but not the least is technical violence (6%), this violence seems to be same in both rural (3%) and urban areas (3%). Rural women are not using any technologies, to some extent they use key pad mobile phones; whereas in urban areas the usage of smart phones, tablets, computers, etc. is high. This technology creates a big difference in between wife and husband & also with their attitude. Now the trend is totally depending on technology, violence also occupies the space with technology in all categories i.e. sexual, abuse, harassment, intimate partner and stalking. While the dynamics of violence largely remain the same, technology extends the reach and creates new forms of abusive behavior.

The obtained Chi-Square values (10.495, at $df : 4$ and $p$-value: 0.033) is greater than the Critical Value (9.488, 0.05 Level of Significance). Therefore, it is obvious from the results that there is a significant difference between Rural and Urban areas working women with regard to the forms of Domestic violence.

**B. Physical assault faced by the respondents**
Table 2: Physical Assault of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Very Serious (%)</th>
<th>Serious (%)</th>
<th>Moderate (%)</th>
<th>Very less (%)</th>
<th>Not at all (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Chi Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>25 (25)</td>
<td>19 (19)</td>
<td>17 (17)</td>
<td>12 (12)</td>
<td>27 (34)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>21 (21)</td>
<td>24 (24)</td>
<td>15 (15)</td>
<td>11 (11)</td>
<td>29 (22)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46 (23)</td>
<td>43 (21.5)</td>
<td>32 (16)</td>
<td>23 (11.5)</td>
<td>56 (27)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

@ Not significant at 0.05 level

The table-2, educates about physical assaults, 27 percent of the respondents indicated that they are not at all facing the physical assaults. Still 44.5 percent of the respondents claim that their level of physical assaults is Very serious (23%) and Serious (%). Followed by, 16 percent of the women reported that they are moderately affected by physical assaults; whereas 11.5 percent of the women reported that they face very less physical assaults. The overall data confirms that rural areas face very high incidences and urban areas face high instances of physical assaults.

The calculated Chi-Square values (1.169, at df : 4 and p-value: 0.883) is less than the Critical Value (9.488, 0.05 Level of Significance). Therefore it is described from the results that there is no significant difference between Rural and Urban areas working women with regards to domestic violence physical assaults of the respondents.

C. Mental Depression

Table 3: Mental Depression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
<th>Can't say (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>70 (80)</td>
<td>9 (9)</td>
<td>21 (21)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>83 (82)</td>
<td>14 (14)</td>
<td>3 (3)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15.692 **</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>153 (76.5)</td>
<td>23 (11.5)</td>
<td>24 (12)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant at 0.01 level
As reported by World Health Organization, Depression is not only the most common women's mental health problem, but may be more persistent in women than men. Depression, anxiety, somatic symptoms and high rates of comorbidity are significantly related to interconnected and co-occurring risk factors based on roles, stressors and negative life experiences and events (World Health Organization, n.d.).

Violence affected women are victim of mental or psychological torture, which causes mental illness to women; Husband or family members are using abusive words in front of other, not given any priority to take decisions about family, aggravation, etc. Regarding above conditions women was softer than men. More than one third, 76.5 percent of the respondents is affected by mental depression, when women facing psychological or mental violence continuously they are affected to depression. It is interesting to note that 12 percent of the women are not able to identify whether it is depression or suppression. Remaining one tenth, 11.5 percent of women are not facing any psychological or mental violence. Meanwhile, related to the table urban areas having more mental depression than the rural, the reasons are urbanization, facilities, durables, city culture, weekend trends, bad habits, spending leisure time with other avocations, luxuries life, etc. Above concerns husband may put the extra pressures their wife or it occurs to violence, wife may be gone to depression. In rural area women are not aware about that how depression comes into their life. The computed Chi-Square values (15.692, at df : 2 and p-value: 0.000) is greater than the Critical Value (9.21, 0.01 Level of Significance). Therefore, it is clear that there is a significant difference between Rural and Urban areas working women with respect to Mental Depression.

D. Suicidal Tendency

Table: 4 Suicidal tendency among the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Never (%)</th>
<th>Occasional (%)</th>
<th>Regular (%)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Chi-Square</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>68 (68)</td>
<td>20 (20)</td>
<td>12 (12)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1.764</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>75 (75)</td>
<td>18 (18)</td>
<td>7 (7)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>143 (71.5)</td>
<td>38 (19)</td>
<td>19 (9.5)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>@</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

@ Not significant at 0.05 level
The table 4 express on suicidal tendency among the violence affected women. Majority 71.5 percent of the women reported that they never felt suicidal tendency, those women are mentally very much strong than the others. Second highest volume is 19 percent, means those women gets occasional suicidal tendency and nearly 10 percent of the women have regular suicidal tendency. The calculated Chi-Square values (1.764, at \( df : 2 \) and \( p \)-value: 0.414) is less than the Critical Value (5.991, 0.05 Level of Significance). Therefore, it is evident from the results that there is no significant difference between Rural and Urban areas towards suicidal tendency.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

The results of the study revealed and evidenced that domestic violence is highly prevalent in the day to day life of urban and rural women. Domestic violence is affecting their quality of life and physical and mental health of women. Similarly, this indicates that any country or city prone to violence. Several pioneering research studies have been reported similarly and out of that thirty five studies have been conducted in twenty countries (Heise L, 1994), the higher incidence of domestic violence of men against women was reported to be the most regional form the physical violence and sexual violence. Despite of the above, an immense finding was reported that due to domestic violence, nearly 30% of the women showed suicidal attitude regularly and occasionally. Which evidenced that domestic violence leads to the adverse effects towards quality of life and detrimental to their mental health (Adeodato, Carvalho, Siqueira, Souza, 2006).

5.2 Conclusion

Nowadays, domestic violence is well sounded than the any other issue. Amidst this issue, the government has established many services and schemes to prevent or curtail domestic violence. ICDS and ICPS, One Stop Centers, Sakhi, women counseling centers, women police stations (She team), legal support, NGO services etc., all aim to support women in their struggle against violence. While these institutions and organizations make a lot of difference in the life of battered and abused women, psychological support from family, friends, and the society is equally powerful and quite beneficial. Also, it is crucial to enhance the competence of primary health care providers to recognize and treat mental health consequences of domestic violence, sexual abuse, and acute and chronic stress in women.
References


