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Domestic Violence against Women: Role of Psychosocial Factors

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ABSTRACT

Violence especially the domestic violence against women is recognized as a global phenomenon. Globally one in three women experiences violence from their partners. To know the causes of this domestic violence against women researchers selected the 600 women -300 from rural population and 300 from urban population using stratified random sampling technique. Domestic Violence scale (Nagar, Khokhar and Miya, 2017), Aggression Inventory (Sultania, 2005) and Religiosity Scale (Bhushan, 2006) were used to measure domestic violence, aggression and religiosity of the subjects respectively. Linear regression analysis showed that level of education, working status, residential locale and level of aggression significantly predict the domestic violence against women. Religiosity did not emerge a significant predictor of domestic violence. Illiterate, non-working i.e house wives, urban living and women with higher aggression experienced higher domestic violence in comparison to literate, working, rural living and with low aggression women.

Key Words: Domestic Violence, Education level, Residential locale, Working Status, Aggression



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INTRODUCTION

There are many types of violence against women but in this research we have emphasized the domestic violence by which every girl child or female has affected worldwide. According to UNICEF (2000) “domestic violence” includes violence that occurs within or outside home against girls and women by an intimate partner including a live in partner and other family members. The term ‘domestic violence’ is used when there is a close relationship between victim and the offender. Domestic violence can be in the form of sexual, physical, or psychological abuse (Government of NL, n.d.). Domestic violence also named as domestic abuse or family violence, is abuse or other violence in a domestic setting, such as in cohabitation or marriage. It is also called ‘intimate partner violence’. Thus it can be said that Domestic violence is violence committed by ex-partners, live in partner, husband, immediate family members, family friends, and other relatives against the girls/women.

Domestic violence is recognized as a global phenomenon, the significant health seeking behavior which affects the physical, emotional, psychological health of the victim. The National Health Survey conducted under the governance of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, reported that above 1/3 of women (34%) between the ages of 15–49 years have experienced spousal physical violence (IIPS & MI, 2007). WHO (2013) estimates that globally one out of three women (30%) experiences violence from their partners. 26-28 percent and 10-16 percent of women between 20 to 44 years of age face violence from their current or past husbands in their lifetime and in the past 12 months respectively (WHO, 2021). The prevalence of domestic violence in young women aged 15–24 years is high, ranging from 29.4% to 31.6%, while the prevalence in older women above 24 years ranges from 15.1% to 37.8% (Thupayagale-Tshweneagae & Seloilwe, 2010). In a multicentric study including 14507 women across 18 states of

India found that overall 39 percent of women faced domestic violence (Mahapatro, Gupta & Gupta, 2012). In a review Semahegn & Mengistie (2015) found that in Ethiopia domestic violence against women ranged from 20 to 78 percent while on an average 51.7 percents of women faces domestic emotional violence.

Women with a low-income level faced a higher rate of domestic violence than the high income level women (Kocacik, & Dogan, 2006; Babu & Kar, 2009; Mahapatro, Gupta & Gupta, 2012; Nadda et al, 2019; Maguele, Taylor, & Khuzwayo, 2020). Low level of education or illiteracy was associated with higher domestic violence (Kocacik, & Dogan, 2006; Babu & Kar, 2009; Mahapatro, Gupta & Gupta, 2012; Dixit et.al.,2013; Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015; Bhatnagar et al., 2018; Nadda et al. 2019). Kamat et al. (2010, 2013) also found that illiterate women face domestic violence 4 times higher than that of literate women while Ram et al. (2019) found no significant effect of education on domestic violence in rural areas of south India. Babu & Kar (2009) also found that older age, and urban residence were associated with domestic violence.

While rural residence was found to be associated with domestic violence by Semahegn & Mengistie (2015). In his study Sarkar, (2010) found that females of 30-39 years and 10-19 years of age groups, and unmarried women were highly exposed to domestic violence while religion, types of family, number of children, and per capita monthly income of the family had no association with domestic violence. In a study Krishnan et al. (2010) found that women who were employed before marriage and were currently employed face significantly higher domestic violence in comparison to unemployed women. The employment status (steady employment the whole year and finding

difficulty in finding a job) of husbands was a significant factor of domestic violence. Similar results were found by Kamat et al. (2013). While Semahegn & Mengistie (2015) and Maguele, Taylor, & Khuzwayo (2020) found that unemployed women faces more domestic violence in comparison to employed women. No significant effect of occupation on domestic violence was found by Nadda et al. (2019). Women with alcoholic or substance abuser or gamester partner were found to be experiencing higher domestic violence (Mahapatro, Gupta & Gupta, 2012; Kamat et al, 2013; Ram et al., 2019; Dixit et.al., 2013; Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015; Nadda et al., 2019; Maguele, Taylor, & Khuzwayo, 2020).

Other factors like lower caste in India ((Mahapatro, Gupta & Gupta, 2012); early years of marriage (Kamat et al., 2013; Ram et al. (2019); monetary problems, dowry, and extramarital affairs (Dixit et.al, 2013); religion (Muslim women) (Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015); younger age (Bhatnagar et al., 2018; Maguele, Taylor, & Khuzwayo, 2020); joint family and early years of marriage (Bhatnagar et al., 2018); discrepancies in the education level between partners, marital status, history of violence including childhood violence experienced by both partners, social norms of male dominance, environmental and legal systems (Maguele, Taylor, & Khuzwayo, 2020) are found to be associated with intimate partner violence among women.

It is also clear from review of studies that factor responsible for domestic violence against women are different for one county to the another and one area /society to the another area/society. A few studies were carried out in western part of Uttar Pradesh state of Indian republic. Thus leave a scope for further research in this area. It is a burning problem almost all over the world, considering its importance and severity, the present research has been undertaken for the study.

Objectives:- Main objectives of the study was as follows-

To identify the various predictors of domestic violence against women

Hypotheses:- Keeping in mind the review of literature on the topic following hypothesis was formulated-

‘Education level, Occupation, Inhabitation, level of Aggression and Religiosity significantly predict the domestic violence against women.’

METHODOLOGY

Sample:-

The data of the present research work was taken from two districts - Ghaziabad and Saharnpur, of Uttar Pradesh state of India. The stratified random sampling technique was used for collecting the data. In this respect, districts were divided into two blocks (rural/urban). From each block researchers selected five villages and thirty (30) respondents were selected from each of the villages. Finally, there were 150 respondents randomly selected from one block of the district. Thus 300 subjects were selected from both the districts. Same procedure was adopted for urban respondents. Five wards in both cities, 30 respondents from each ward thus a total of 300 subjects from both districts were finally selected. Thus a total of 600 subjects were included in the study. In order to collect information about married women and cases of domestic violence, researchers consult Patwari, Police Inspector, Mahila Thana etc.

Research Design: -

The present research was an attempt to study the effect of certain socio-psychological variables such as education, occupation, inhabitation, aggression and religiosity on domestic violence against women. To carry out research in a scientific manner and to draw unbiased influence correlation design (multi causal correlation model) was used for explaining domestic violence against women.

Tools Used: -

To collect appropriate information and quantify data from respondents the following tools were used by the researchers -

- 1. Religiosity Scale** - Religiosity Scale developed and standardized by Bhushan (2006) was used. It is a five-point rating scale. It has 36 items. Algebraic sum of the score of each item denotes the total score. Higher scores indicate greater degree of religiosity.
- 2. Aggression Inventory** - Aggression inventory developed and standardized by Sultania (2005) was used to measure the aggression level of the subjects. It contains 59 items. The Spearman Brown reliability and test-retest reliability was found to be 0.90 and 0.85 respectively. The test was found valid at 0.01 level of significance on product correlation methods with other inventory. Higher scores indicate higher aggression.
- 3. Domestic Violence Scale** - Domestic Violence Scale developed by Nagar, Khokhar and Miya (2017) was used. It is Yes/No type of scale having four dimensions viz sociological, biological, economical and psychological. There are 70 items in the scale. Yes score sum indicates domestic violence. High scores indicate the greater degree of domestic violence.
- 4. Personal Data Schedule** - Personal data schedule was used for collecting personal and geographic variables.

RESULTS:

Data were analyzed with the help of multivariate techniques especially by Simple Multiple Regression analysis. Table 1 showed that the F-ratio (5, 594) = 12.43, $p=0.001$ was significant at 0.001 level of significance, which means that all the five predictors significantly affect domestic violence among women. The value of R, R-square, Adjusted R-square and

Std. Error of estimates for all the five predictors were 0.308, 0.095, 0.095 and 20.28 respectively. Table- 1 showed that the t-test (598) value for level of education, occupation, inhabitation, aggression, and religiosity was 2.27 (p=0.023), 3.56 (p=0.001), 4.22 (p=0.001), 2.94 (p=0.003), and 0.92 (p=0.357) respectively. It means that education level, occupation status, inhibition and aggression emerged as a significant predictor for domestic violence against women while religiosity was not emerged as significant predictor for domestic violence against women. The

regression equation for this model can be represented as follows-

$$\text{Domestic Violence} = 27.69 - 5.15 * \text{Education level} - 6.93 * \text{Occupation status} - 7.71 * \text{Inhabitation} + 0.16 * \text{Aggression} + 0.03 * \text{Religiosity}$$

Inhibition has the highest beta weight, after that comes occupation, then aggression, then education level and at last religiosity which has the lowest beta weight. Nearly 10 percent of variance in domestic violence is affected by these factors.

Table - 1

Showing the multiple Regression analysis for Domestic Violence (N=600)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F- Statistics			
				F	df1	df2	p value
0.308	0.095	0.087	20.28	12.43	5	594	0.001 ^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		p value
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	27.69	4.80		5.77	.001
Education	-5.15	2.27	0.106	-2.27	.023
Occupation	-6.93	1.95	-0.163	-3.56	.001
Inhabitation	-7.71	1.83	-0.182	-4.22	.001
Aggression	0.16	.056	0.117	2.94	.003
Religiosity	0.03	.032	0.037	0.92	.357

DISCUSSION:

Results showed that the education level of women emerged as a significant predictor of domestic violence. When we dichotomized it into low and high levels of education, it was found that domestic violence was higher among illiterate women or women with low levels of education as compared to their counterparts with higher education. Means, domestic violence was decreased or lesser in literate/ highly educated women. Having a high education level makes women more aware of their rights along with feeling of

more power. It also gives them higher status in family and society, they feel themselves as independent and autonomous, which in turn appears to lower the domestic violence as compared to those women who do not have education or lower level of education. This study supports the finding of Kamat et al. (2010, 2013); Shrivastava & Shrivastava (2013); Kimuna et al. (2013); Mishra et al. (2014); George et al. (2016); Bharnagar et al (2018) and Nadda et al. (2019) while not in

congruence with the finding of the Pewa et al. (2015) and Ram et al. (2019).

Another variable which emerged as significant predictor of domestic violence against women was occupation (nonworking and working) of women. Domestic violence was found high in non-working women while it was lesser in working women. Economic security, power to take decisions independently which comes with the occupation may be the reason for lesser domestic violence among working women. Though a woman becomes the strong pillar of family and if not working even then she perform all the domestic work like cooking food for family member, take care of daily need of all family member and look after the children and elderly at home but this role of a woman in family is treated as their duties but not counted a work as she does not earn money for the family. It was observed that most of the non-working women face domestic violence if they ask for help or do not perform the domestic work properly. On the other hand, working women not only perform the domestic work but also help the family in earning money for the family so may be the reason for lesser domestic violence in them. Our study support the findings of the study by Babu & Kar (2009); Semahegn & Mengistie (2015) while result of this study were incongruent with the result of Kamat et al. (2013), Nadda et al. (2019); Ram et al. (2019) and Krishnan et al. (2010).

Domestic violence is present at an alarming threshold in both urban and rural areas. However the trends of violence deferred in both the communities, hence our findings supported the study by Babu & Kar (2009). Pandey (2008), who reported that urban women reported physical violence 20% and sexual violence 2% above than the rural women. When we applied these findings in our own socio-cultural milieu, we found that in rural areas joint family culture is dominant. People live together, earn together from the same profession like labor, agriculture,

handicraft etc. in such a family any member suffers any problem, the whole family tries to saluce it sometime, other family members, gram panchayat also help to solve the problem in the desired manner. Elder people also have all the rights to interfere in their matters, so rural women face less domestic violence as compared to urban women. On the other hand, in urban areas people live in nuclear families and in most of the cases husband and wife were working, there were no elder people to sort out their problems when they faced due to disturbances. Study by Nadda et al. (2019) found that the women who live in nuclear families face higher reciprocal violence/ domestic violence. Sometimes women play dual roles or multiple roles, sometimes conflict may arise in their roles, which create aggressive behavior, short tempered, due to this action and reaction behavior which further converted into domestic violence. There is no middle man who helps to solve problems. That is why urban women have more domestic violence as compared to rural women. In contrast to the result of this study Semahegn & Mengistie (2015) and George et al. (2016) found that prevalence of domestic violence was higher among rural women.

In this study researchers studied the role of aggression of women on domestic violence against them. Results showed that level of aggression was a significant predictor which was positively related with domestic violence. Means that if a woman has higher aggression she faces higher domestic violence while those who showed less aggression they face lesser domestic violence. Possible reasons for such types of results may be either control power of the men on their counterparts or it may be due to aggression used as an instrumental behavior (on part of women) who can use this behavior as defense mechanism to save herself from such type of domestic violence or it may be an expression of fear/anxiety/helplessness occur due to

domestic violence. There may be a chain reaction meaning when women face domestic violence she expresses her aggression toward her counterpart, in response to that male counterpart using more force or violence to counter that aggression and that increases the aggression of women. Reasons may be anything but aggression increases domestic violence or vice versa. The results of this study support the findings of the study by Singh & Vardhan (2021), who found that women (either working or non-working) who face domestic violence have significantly higher aggression than the women who do not face domestic violence.

Results showed that religiosity did not emerge as a significant predictor of domestic violence. Meaning that it did not matter whether a woman was religious or not she may or may not face domestic violence. Results of this study are in congruent with the result of Shrivastava & Shrivastava (2013).

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of results and discussion it can be concluded that inhabitation (urban vs. rural), occupation (working vs non-working), education level (illiterate vs literate) and aggression emerged as a significant predictors of domestic violence while religiosity was not emerge as a significant predictor of domestic violence against women. Urban living, non-working, illiterate and women with higher aggression face significantly higher domestic violence than the rural living, working, literate and women with low level of aggression. All the five predictors combinely affect the 10 percent variance in domestic violence. Out of which 18 %, 16%, 12%, 11% and 4% effect on domestic violence was of inhabitation, occupation, aggression, education level and religiosity respectively. To conclude, it can be said that the present research investigation is extensive and intensive but it is not fully completed in itself. Theoretically speaking, domestic violence should be studied along with some personality

variables, values, work ethics and some socio-psychological variables only then some new light can be thrown on domestic violence as a whole.

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