

0572 PREVALENCE AND NATURE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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Violence against women (VAW), particularly by husbands is common in Bangladesh. The nature of violence ranges from scolding to severe beating, forced sex and in extreme cases murder. The paper highlights prevalence, nature and intensity of such violence and its determinants. Qualitative and quantitative methods have been used to answer the questions. It includes 240 in-depth interviews (168 of women 72 of men) and sample survey of 3900 married women, and 1600 men spread over three districts of Bangladesh. The study shows frequent violence against women. Gender inequality, economic dependence of women on their husband and patriarchal system reinforce each other to perpetuate and promote violence against women. Unreasonable sexual demand by husbands, suspicion of extra marital relationship by either partners, perceived neglect of husband by wife and continued demand for dowry are dominant reasons for the conflict leading to different forms of VAW. The patriarchal system and prevailing gender inequality have conditioned women's mentality to the extent that many women justified husband's beating and forced sex as their right. What hurt them most is insult in presence of others than beating by husbands behind closed door. Working women at the initial stage of their life had faced more violence than non working, perhaps because they challenged established gender role. The provides estimate of level of VAW in Bangladesh and clues that could be used for community education and consensus building against perpetuation of VAW.