

CONSEQUENCES OF HUSBAND PERPETUATED VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ON CHILD HEALTH AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL STATE

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Background The UN-Resolution defines violence against women-VAW as any-act of gender-based violence resulting in physical/sexual/psychological-harm/threat to women, coercion or arbitrary-deprivation of liberty, in her life. Despite several national/global initiatives (*Nairobi-Strategy'85, Beijing-Platform'95*), promoting/enforcing women's-rights remains slower. In Asia, prevalence/magnitude of VAW is being-rampant. Here, we present preliminary-findings on family-violence (FV) from Bangladesh and its' negative-impact on child's health and psycho-social state.

Purpose Study occurrences of husband-perpetuated FV and assess its effect on child's health and psycho-social state (school-performances).

Methods This cross-sectional survey was conducted among 72 married-women living-in 64 households in randomly-selected three rural-villages. Adopting a 2-tier-methodology we interviewed all women using a pre-tested structured-questionnaire, and assessed their perception on-VAW, qualitatively (using FGDs, In-depth-Interview/IDIs).

Outcome Of 72 women, 94% were less/ill-literate, 53% poor, majority being 1st wives. Of 68% (n=49) with some-degree of family-violence, 45% tolerated mild-form (mostly verbal and rarely physical abusing/slapping), 37% endured moderate-form (verbal/physical-abusing 3-4 times/year) and 18% sustained severe-form (physical torturing every 1-2 weeks-apart) of VAW. While verbal-abusing was confined in rebuking/reprimand; physical-abuse ranged from scolding to battering: fist-hitting/hand-twisting, beating, punching, kicking/knocking. Few severe-cases sustained throat-grabbing/knife-charging/burnt-off body-parts/forced-sex and suicidal attempts. Attesting these findings, post-FGD/IDI-transcript analysis revealed dowry-demand, gross-poverty and/or husband-dependency was prime-causes of FV. But, FV-victims never raised voice to avoid social-chaos/gossip and/or pro-male (husband)-biased unfair-judgment(s). Severity of FV-cases was associated with child's health (pre-set-parameters), ($p < 0.04$) and school-performance ($p < 0.03$) including other psycho-social-state.

Significance/Contribution Occurrence of FV in rural-Bangladesh (breaching women-right) and exerting negative-impact on child's health/psycho-social state (violating child-right) remains imperative for immediate intervention towards stopping male-driven socio-cultural-epidemics right now if not possible to combat it instantly.