

# Effect of Domestic Violence on Pregnancy Outcome in a Metropolis

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## ABSTRACT

Violence against women is a public health concern of considerable importance in developed and developing countries. It includes violence on women and children by an intimate partner and by other family members. Women and children are often in great danger in the place where they should be safest: within their families. For many, 'home' is where they face a regime of terror and violence at the hands of somebody close to them – somebody they should be able to trust and deserve care and protection. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre has worked a lot on the issue of domestic violence against women and girls in world. Women continue to suffer from 20% to 50% worldwide from violence varying from country to country. A cross sectional study was carried on in Gynecology ward of Sheikh Zayed Hospital, Jinnah Hospital, General Hospital, Mayo Hospital, Services Hospital, Ganga Ram Hospital and Gynecology clinics in rural areas with data analyzed using SPSS. Differences be considered statistically significant at  $P < 0.05$ .

**Keywords:** IPV-Intimate Partner Violence, CEDAW-Convention on the Elimination of All

## INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is a public health concern of considerable importance in developed and developing countries [1-4]. It includes violence on women and children by an intimate partner and by other family members. Women and children are often in great danger in the place where they should be safest: within their families. For many, 'home' is where they face a regime of terror and violence at the hands of somebody close to them – somebody they should be able to trust and deserve care and protection. UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre has worked a lot on the issue of domestic violence against women and girls in world. Women continue to suffer from 20% to 50% worldwide from violence varying from country to country (Mehr Khan, Director, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre). The National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS), conducted in 1995 and 1996, found that nearly one in four women surveyed experienced rape and/or physical assault by a current or former spouse/partner/dating partner at some time in their lifetime, with about one and one-half percent of women having been so victimized in the 12 months

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before the survey. The National Crime Victimization Survey's (NCVS) and other studies have found that women are the victims in as much as 85% of domestic violence incidents. WHO did a study and found that the female part of the world has to have face problems till they fertilize and the only solution they seek to their problems is their death.

Table 1 - Examples of Violence against Women Throughout the Life Cycle

PHASE	TYPE OF VIOLENCE
Pre-birth	Sex-selective abortion; effects of battering during pregnancy on birth outcomes.
Infancy	Female infanticide; physical, sexual and psychological abuse.
Girlhood	Child marriage; female genital mutilation; physical, sexual and psychological abuse; incest; child prostitution and pornography.
Adolescence	Dating and courtship violence (e.g. acid throwing and date rape) economically coerced sex (e.g. school girls having sex with "sugar daddies" in return for school fees); incest; sexual abuse in the workplace; rape; sexual harassment; forced prostitution and pornography; trafficking in women; partner violence; marital rape; dowry abuse and murders; partner homicide; psychological abuse; abuse of women with disabilities; forced pregnancy.
Elderly	Forced "suicide" or homicide of widows for economic reasons; sexual, physical and psychological abuse.

(Source: "Violence Against Women", WHO., FRH/WHD/97.8)

Violence against women at any time in their lives represents a serious social, legal and medical problems<sup>7</sup> and one in every four women experiences domestic violence in her lifespan<sup>8</sup>. According to an estimation done by NCDW 85% of women face violence<sup>9</sup> in which 1.3 million are assaulted by

intimate partner each year<sup>10</sup>. The female age group at highest risk for domestic violence victimization is 16 to 24<sup>11,12</sup>.

It is one of the most chronically underreported crimes and women report only one-quarter to one-half of their assaults to police. The majority of physical assaults are not life threatening; rather, they involve pushing, slapping, and hitting<sup>13,8</sup>.

Surveys provide us with estimates of the level of domestic violence in the world, but there are wide differences among them depending on the definitions of domestic violence used and populations surveyed. According to 'Regional Monitoring Report, UNICEF' and 'Domestic Violence Research Center, Japan' regional domestic violence statistics is plotted as;

Table: 2 Industrialized Countries

Country	Prevalence
Canada	29% of women (a nationally representative sample of 12,300 women) reported being physically assaulted by a current or former partner since the age of 16.
Japan	59% of 796 women surveyed in 1993 reported being physically abused by their partner.
New Zealand	20% of 314 women surveyed reported being hit or physically abused by a male partner.
Switzerland	20% of 1,500 women reported being physically assaulted according to a 1997 survey.
United Kingdom	25% of women (a random sample of women from one district) had been punched or slapped by a partner or ex-partner in their lifetime.
United States	28% of women (a nationally representative sample of women) reported at least one episode of physical violence from their partner.

**Middle East**

Country	Prevalence
Egypt	35% of women (a nationally representative sample of women) reported being beaten by their husband at some point in their marriage.
Israel	32% of women reported at least one episode of physical abuse by their partner and 30% report sexual coercion by their husbands in the previous year, according to a 1997 survey of 1,826 Arab women

**Africa**

Country	Prevalence
Kenya	42% of 612 women surveyed in one district reported having been beaten by a partner; of those 58% reported that they were beaten often or sometimes..
Uganda	41% of women reported being beaten or physically harmed by a partner; 41% of men reported beating their partner (representative sample of women and their partners in two districts).
Zimbabwe	32% of 966 women in one province reported physical abuse by a family or household member since the age of 16, according to a 1996 survey

More recent data from the World Health Organisation Multicounty study<sup>15</sup> reported prevalence estimates of between 1% and 28% for the ten participating countries with the highest prevalence reported from Ethiopia and Tanzania<sup>16</sup>.

**Asia and the Pacific**

Country	Prevalence
Cambodia	16% of women (a nationally representative sample of women) reported being physically abused by a spouse; 8% report being injured.
India	Up to 45% of married men acknowledged physically abusing their wives, according to a 1996 survey of 6,902 men in the state of Uttar Pradesh.
Korea	38% of wives reported being physically abused by their spouse, based on a survey of a random sample of women.
Thailand	20% of husbands (a representative sample of 619 husbands) acknowledged physically abusing their wives at least once in their marriage

The domestic violence is not even stopped during pregnancy and studies have shown that physical abuse during pregnancy increases the risk of miscarriage, abruption placentae, preterm labour and delivery, pregnancy complications, hypertension, delivering low birth weight, fetal fractures, physical injuries and stress<sup>15,17,18,19</sup>. Other adverse negative health outcomes may include rupture of the uterus, liver or spleen, antepartum haemorrhage and pelvic fractures<sup>20</sup> IPV has also been reported as a contributing cause of maternal deaths<sup>21</sup>.

They are many factors contributing to enhancement of domestic violence and it is the need of hour to reduce the factors leading to domestic violence. Women with family incomes less than \$7,500 are five times more likely to be victims of violence by an intimate than women with family annual incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,000. According to Innocenti Research Center, UNICEF different cultural and economic issues lead to violence

There are 16,800 homicides and \$2.2 million (medically treated) injuries due to intimate partner violence annually, which costs \$37 billion<sup>22</sup>. These surveys and researches provide us with the data that there is a lot of variation from country to country and even city to city as far as domestic violence is concerned. Even in Pakistan researchers are focusing on this sensitive issue, among 150 females which were interviewed a prevalence of 34% of physical abuse and a strong association between domestic violence and depression has been reported<sup>[23]</sup>. And 33% males of 70 interviewed reported slapping their wives<sup>24</sup>. In other south Asian countries like India there is even more high domestic violence (Table 2)<sup>25,26</sup>.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

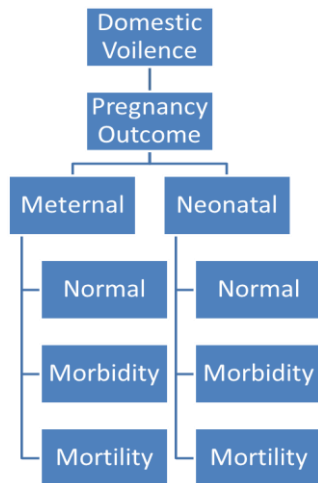
1. To find out the prevalence of domestic violence among the pregnant women.
2. To determine the causes and type of domestic violence endured on pregnant women and their

effect on pregnancy, in terms of maternal and neonatal outcome.

- To determine various factors of domestic violence during pregnancy & in the light of result of study, to suggest recommendations for control of such assault.

### MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

This cross sectional study was conducted in the Department of Gynecology, Sheikh Zayed Hospital, Jinnah Hospital, General Hospital, Mayo Hospital, Services Hospital, Ganga Ram Hospital and Gynecology clinics in rural areas. All pregnant females who gave consent and presented in wards in last trimester were included in the study. Domestic Violence influences the pregnancy outcome as per hypothesized. Different pregnancy outcomes include normal to motility of child and mother both.



### RESULTS

In total of 255 domestic violence, 68% found in age 20-30 years, 32% found in age 31-40 years (Table 1).

Table 1: Frequency and derterminants of domestic violence in pregnancy and its association with pregnancy outcome according to age

Age	Frequency	%age
20-30	173	68
31-40	82	32

In total of 255 domestic violence, 68% found in rural areas , 22% found in urban areas (Table 2).

Table 2: Frequency and derterminants of domestic violence in pregnancy and its association with pregnancy outcome according to locality of residence

Locality	Frequency	%age
Rural	200	78
Urban	55	22

In total of 255 domestic violence, 60% found in illiterate 40% found in under matric (Table 3).

Table 3: Frequency and derterminants of domestic violence in pregnancy and its association with pregnancy outcome according to education level of husband

Education Level	Frequency	%age
Illiterate	155	60
Under Metric	100	40

In total of 255 domestic violence, 78% found in labour, 22% found in government servants (Table 4).

Table 4: Frequency and derterminants of domestic violence in pregnancy and its association with pregnancy outcome according to husbands' occupation

Occupation	Frequency	%age
Labourer	200	78
Government servants	55	22

In total of 255 domestic violence 58% found in own buildings and 42% found in rent buildings (Table 5)

Table 5: Frequency and derterminants of domestic violence in pregnancy and its association with pregnancy outcome according to type of housing

Type of Housing	Frequency	%age
Own	150	58
Rent	100	42

In total of 255 domestic violence 32% found in married life and 68% found in during non married life (Table 6).

Table 6: Frequency and derterminants of domestic violence in pregnancy and its association with pregnancy outcome according to domestic violence faced during married life

Domestic Violence faced during married life	Frequency	%age
Yes	80	32
No	175	68

In total of 255 domestic violence, 22% found during current pregnancy while 78% found during non pregnancy tenure (Table 7).

Table 7: Frequency and derterminants of domestic violence in pregnancy and its association with pregnancy outcome according to domestic violence faced during current pregnancy

Violence during current Pregnancy	Frequency	%age
Yes	55	22
No	200	78

### DISCUSSION

Up to 32% of married men acknowledged physically abusing their wives. The domestic violence is not even stopped during pregnancy and studies have shown that physical abuse during pregnancy increases the risk of miscarriage, abruption placentae, preterm

labour and delivery, pregnancy complications, hypertension, delivering low birth weight, fetal fractures, physical injuries and stress. Other adverse negative health outcomes may include rupture of the uterus, liver or spleen, antepartum haemorrhage and pelvic fractures. IPV has also been reported as a contributing cause of maternal deaths. Mother facing physical violence versus mother not facing violence have a marked difference in their child health. In total of 255 domestic violence 68% found in age 20-30 years, 32% found in age 31-40 years. In total of 255 domestic violence, 68% found in rural areas, 22% found in urban areas. In total of 255 domestic violence, 22% found during current pregnancy while 78% found during non pregnancy tenure. In total of 255 domestic violence, 32% found in married life and, 68% found in during non married life. In total of 255 domestic violence, 58% found in own buildings and 42% found in rent buildings. In total of 255 domestic violence, 78% found in labour, 22% found in government servants. In total of 255 domestic violence, 60% found in illiterate, 40% found in under matric.

## CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Thirty two% of married men acknowledged physically abusing their wives. Study has shown that physical abuse during pregnancy increases the risk of miscarriage, abruption placentae, preterm labour and delivery, pregnancy complications, hypertension, delivering low birth weight, fetal fractures, physical injuries and stress. Other adverse negative health outcomes may include rupture of the uterus, liver or spleen, antepartum haemorrhage and pelvic fractures. IPV has also been reported as a contributing cause of maternal deaths..

- Laws & regulations regarding control of domestic violence should be regulated and implemented in true letter of spirit.
- A comprehensive mass media campaigns by using IEC materials should be communicated in the population for community awareness, community participation, community mobilization and change in behaviour to stop and control the domestic violence.

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