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# Determinants Of Domestic Violence Against Women In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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## Abstract

**Background:** The present study “determinants of DVAW” was conducted in Dir (L) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. According to United Nations Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women, DVAW is not limited to the physical, sexual or psychological violence only rather it includes intimate partner violence IPV, partner sexual abuse, dowry related violence, marital rape, and sexual harassment at domestic work place.

**Methods:** The researchers used quantitative research approach/design. Data was collected through non-probability sampling with purposive sampling technique. The researchers used an interview schedule for data collection. The data was collected from 384 female respondents in the study area. The collected data was analyzed by application of descriptive and Chi-square statistical tests.

**Results:** The findings of the study highlighted a significant ( $P = 000$ ) ( $P < 0.05$ ) between DVAW and the risk factors RF i.e. low education of women and their intimate partner IPV, financial dependency, women subordinate position, confinement to domestic sphere, dowry related violence and exchange marriage.

**Conclusion and Recommendations:** The present study suggests that government should review the existing laws related to women protection and its implementation in true letter and spirit. Besides, the government and concern stakeholders should to develop a prevention and protection mechanism to reduce DVAW while civil societies to support government and to create awareness in masses related to DVAW and their consequences on intimate partner relationship as well as children personality development.

**Keywords:** Domestic violence; women; risk factors; society; intimate partner

## **1. Introduction**

Domestic violence against women is a social problem in Pakistan. Unfortunately there is no official statistical data base and reporting mechanism available on domestic violence against women. According to United Nations Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women. Domestic violence against women is not only limited to her physical, sexual or psychological violence rather its included intimate partner violence, partner sexual abuse, dowry related violence, marital rape, sexual harassment at domestic work place. The researchers conducted the present study to analyze the social determinants of domestic violence against women.

Though its nature and form may vary, DVAW is present, without any exception, across the globe in peoples of almost every religion, culture, and race. History of physical, emotional or sexual abuse comprises of those experiences which takes place during adolescence, less than 18 years or adulthood (18 years age), irrespective of the level and nature of offence of the guilty party. Schechter and Ganley (1995) have defined DVAW as a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviours, including physical, sexual and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners. DVAW may refer to as domestic abuse (DA), family violence (FV), family abuse (FA), and intimate partner violence (IPV) in the form of partner abuse or family maltreatment, etc. (Kurst-Swanger & Petcosky, 2003; Peraica, Petrovic, Baric & Galic & Kozaric- Kovacic, 2020). However, the most comprehensive definition of DVAW is, any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between those aged 16 or above who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality (Office, 2013; Peraica et al., 2020).

Working group of world health organization WHO held in 1966 defined the DVAW as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, male development or deprivation. This definition covers all sorts of the DVAW, whether they are physical, emotional and sexual resulting in injuring or murdering the victims. This report further categorises violence in three broad groups as self-inflicted, mutual, and combined. Results of several studies reveal that DVAW affecting women is a universal phenomenon, prevalent in almost every society and culture (Khorasani & Merzaei, 2012). Numerous studies show that women are the victim in majority situations in cases of domestic violence among grownup family members (Howard, Trevillion & Agnews & Davies, 2010; Peraica et al., 2020). Similarly, research work on the occurrence of DVAW felonies committed by both genders (men and women) have determined that men can also be a victim of DVAW (Alejo. 2014: Peraica et al., 2020; Walby & Myhill, 2001). An international European research work carried out on DVAW and IPV against women/men associated to IPV in the overall populations determined relatively the same proportions across gender (Costa et al. 2015). Similarly, the data gathered by the United Kingdom UK office for national statistics bears that divorcing or separated ladies are more easy targets of DVAW, as compared to masculine victims. It further reveals that a higher proportion of offenders of DVAW are other family members (Crime Survey for England and Wales 2019) reported in (Peraica et al., 2020). In the same coin, statement No. 239 of the WHO entitled as “violence against women” has highlighted the prevalence of the share of DVAW among different regions of the world as, 20 percent for developed countries, 20 percent for Latin America, while majority(70%) for undeveloped countries (Razaghi, Ramezani, Tabatabaei Nejad, & Parvizy, 2013).Furthermore in U.S it has been found that 38.5 % of wives become victim of domestic violence, resulting in their death by their own husbands (Bowling et al., 2010). One out of every three women has faced IPV throughout their lifetime (Breiding, 2014), and 1.3 million women are physically beaten by their life partner annually in the United States (Monahan, Bannon & Damso, Connor, 2020; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). IPV consist of some physical and/or erotic violence, nuisance, or psychological violence toward a close partner (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black & Mahendra, 2015). Such practices are tremendously common among in-service people, mostly women (Kimerling et al., 2010; Portony, Relyea, Street, Haskell & Iverson, 2019).

By taking example of France it has been noticed that 10% of the female come across DVAW and even approximately hundred thousand wives are sexually abused by their own husbands (Moracco, Runyan, Bowling, & Earp, 2007). Considering the case of New Zealand, the most prominent form of DVAW observed

is sexual and physical violence (Faramarzi, Esmailzadeh, & Mosavi, 2005; Paterson, Feehan, Butler, Williams, & Cowley-Malcolm, 2007). It is universal truth that with the passage of time culture of a society changes. Thus the occurrence of physical violence is diminishing; however the occurrence of emotional violence is steadily growing (Razaghi, et al., 2013). There are several reasons like fear and shame due to which these women remain quiet and reluctant to disclose the treatment meted out to them. Considering another study conducted in Japan by taking Japanese women as respondents, it was found that Japanese females, due to certain factors like, culture, fear of degeneration of the conflict, fear of losing unity in family, and protecting themselves from any humiliation never show they are victim of DVAW and never search for help in this context (Amber & Guth Leon, 2000).

There are several RF which are causing DVAW. These are alcohol abuse, the accessibility of weapons, or socioeconomic disparities. The report issued in 2000 by UNICEF and the United Nations Women annual report for 2011-2012 identifies the micro-economic reasons responsible for DVAW. Both reports accomplish there is significant relationship between small rank education, inadequate economic prospects and DVAW. These two factors restrain female competencies due to which there is consistency of DVAW at domestic and communal level. Those women with high qualification rarely face DVAW and are able to handle any untoward situations (Taheri, 2013). Low qualification is one of the factors responsible for the ignorance of those women who are facing DVAW. Other studies endorse that females with significant academic achievements are found to be less tortured by their life partners (Yang, Ho, Chou, Chang, & Ko, 2006). Similarly, Skhavat (2006) affirms that there is a correlation between female academic achievement and males' violence against them.

The second most prominent factor is culture, as it forms individual and communal gender socialization. There are several cultures in which DVAW are ignored which compromise part of marital life. Choi (2015) determined that Korean cultural ethics are the stoutest predictors for a Korean cleric's reaction to DVAW, and are more significant as compared to gender role assertiveness or essential religious faiths.

At the times, violence against women is a universal issue and prevails in many countries, particularly in un-industrialized states. The data issued by UNICEF in 2008 shows that approximately 33% women in the world are suffering from DVAW, especially form forced sexual relationship, or from sexual mistreated, and approximately one in each five females is raped (Giddens, 1997). Among all forms of violence the most common is DVAW (Flury, Nyberg, & Riecher-Rössler, 2010).

It is worth noting that the impact of this victimization affects not only the victims but also their families, children, friends and society as a whole (Abdul-

Ghani, 2014; Folami, 2014; Heise, 2018). The usage of partner-violence discloses their children to a dangerous atmosphere and affect the protective role of the mother (Levendosky, Bogat, Benard & Garcia, 2018; Mohaupt, Duckert and Askeland, 2020). Men's practice of IPV has been linked with vehement biases in communal information processing (Mohaupt, et al., 2020; Setchell, Fritz & Glasgow, 2017). Sometimes children also become victim of fierceness. Child abuse of sexual, physical and emotional mistreatment and negligence, result into long-lasting or severe domestic vehemence, and educational inattention (Sedlak et al., 2010; Spers, Werrf, Roos,, Mooren, Maric,2019). The intellectual and physical abuse of child may affect the youngster's physical, social-emotional and mental development.

In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa the proportion of DVAW is comparatively higher than in other ethnicities in the country. A 2008 annual report of Aurat Foundation's Pakistan on violence against women places Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on top of the list i.e. 35.31%. Figures for the rest of the country are Punjab 20.9%, Sindh 15.62 Balochistan 0.93% and Islamabad 1.56% respectively. One of the pertinent questions to ask is that why the DVAW ration is so high in Khyber Pakhtunkhw, although the province's population is 13.18 percent of the total population of the country? (Shah, et al., 2012).

A study conducted in Karachi identifies Pakhtuns as more likely to abuse their wives than other ethnic groups in the city i.e. Pakhtuns 34.1 percent, Punjabis 27.3 percent, Sindhis 9.6 percent, Mohajirs 23.3 percent and other 5.7 percent. The situation is worsening day by day since women in Pakistan are beaten, tortured and killed on a daily basis. Homicide is a serious crime and, therefore more likely to be reported. In the year 2009 a total number of 1988 honor-related killings suggest that DVAW frequently occur (Saeed, 2012). Throughout the country a total number of 608 cases reported against DVAW, showing Punjab's province leading 271 reports. However, the largest event based on demographics comes from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), which reported 163 women in the past year (Perveen, 2010; Qadeer, 2014; Khan, 2016).

Unfortunately, due to peculiar cultural practices in Pakistan DVAW is seldom or rarely reported. The issue, therefore, remains under-researched leading to few or almost no policy changes in the country. Due to misinterpretations of certain cultural and religious norms in Pakistan women are subjected to various forms of discrimination and violence on a daily basis. Figures show that about seventy to ninety percent women are subjected to DVAW in the country. This includes physical, psychological, and emotional male-treatment. Some common specific acts targeted against women include, honor-killing, partner male-treatment and marital rape, acid-throwing and burning of female by close family members. The

most worrying part is that the issue is rarely considered a social crime unless it degenerates into homicide or attempted homicide. This sometimes forces the victim women to suicide or a planted accident. Due poverty and illiteracy, the proportion of DVAW is relatively high in the study area as compared to the rest of the country. The present study was an attempt to assess the magnitude of violence targeted against women by their male partners and to identify significant factors associated with violence against them. The primary aim was, therefore, to analyze the determinants of violence against women in the study area. The study was conducted among women from diverse socio-economic conditions mainly to assess the proportion of DVAW and its associated factors.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

The study was conducted in Lower Dir district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Conceptual frame designed for this study was as risk factors **RF independent variable and domestic violence against women DVAW** dependent variable, while basic information of the respondents i.e. age, literacy status, husbands' education, and income; form of violence i.e. psychological, social, and financial were also worked out. For data collection a well thought out and pretested interview schedule was used. Data was collected from a sample size of 384 married females as per Krejcie & Morgan (1970) devised formula from a population of 725,576 females (Government of Pakistan Population Census, 2017) in the study area. The total number of female population in the target area is 725,576 (Government of Pakistan Population Census, 2017). The collected data was entered into SPSS for checking reliability and association measurement. The overall reliability stood at 0.71 which is acceptable in social sciences. Similarly, demographic information and form of violence data was analysed through univariate test. For checking association between dependent and independent variables chi-square test statistics through 0.05 confidence level was carried out.

### **2.1. Ethical Approval and Respondent Consent**

The researcher discussed with the respondents directly and upon his/her approval and consent got data through interview schedule. The concept of written approval from the respondents is against the cultural values in the area. Therefore, upon verbal consent of the respondents the researcher collected data.

## **3. Results**

### **3. 1. Demographic profile of the respondents**

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. Of (n=384, 100%) respondents, (n=210, 54.4%) age range were between 15-24 years. Majority of respondents were illiterate i.e. (n=235, 61.1%), however, (n=76, 19.7%) had

primary level education and (n=58, 15.1%) had secondary level of education. Furthermore, majority of the respondents' husband were also illiterate i.e. (n=154, 40%) but, (n=110, 28.6%) had primary level education and (n=90, 23.4%) had secondary level of education. Moreover, majority of the respondents i.e. (n=152, 39.58%) income were between Rs. 10,000 to 20,000.

### **3.2. Various types of DVAW**

Table 2 shows the various types of DVAW. Of (n=384, 100%) respondents, (n=134, 34.89%) reported they had experiencing physical violence i.e. hitting, kicking, biting, punching etc. Majority of respondents (n=130, 33.85%) reported they were facing psychological violence i.e. their partner calling them wrong names, threatening, insulting etc. On the other hand i.e. (n=75, 19.53%) told that they were socially tortured i.e. restriction on meeting with parents/family and were prohibited from seeing them. Furthermore, some of the respondents i.e. (n=45, 11.71%) told that their husband have restriction on their finances.

### **Table 3. Association between RF and DVAW**

To evaluate the relationship between RF and DVAW, variables were presented into statements, as given in (Table-3.2). The results show a significant (P=0.005) relationship between low education and low income and DVAW. However, a non-significant (P=0.040) relationship was found between fewer job opportunities for women and DVAW. In addition, a significant (P=0.002) relationship was found between drug addict husbands, male dominancy, joint family system, early marriage, Badal marriage (exchange marriage) and inadequate dowry with DVAW.

## **4. Discussion**

The current study shows that, more than one third i.e. 34.89 % of the women reported have been physically violated by their husbands. Previous studies in the country also give similar statistics with one-third to one-half of the participants identified as subject to some form of IPV. The literacy status of the partners has also been identified as having significant impact on the prevalence of DVAW. The outcomes of this study also reveal a positive co-relation between the literacy status of the spouses and DVAW. Education has further a positive role in affecting the individuals in particular and the society in general as to how they perceive the mistreatment against women. On the other hand the lack of education significantly reduces women's understanding and knowledge of their rights and reinforces their thinking of existent gender roles leading to the acceptance of the status quo (Rani & Bonu, 2009).

Studies have found that unemployment and low economic status increases the risk of depression, aggressiveness and violent behaviors which in turn can

result in an increased risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse. As unemployment is one of the serious problems in the country, it is one of the primary determinants of violence against women (Coker, Smith, McKeown & Melissa, 2000). The results of the current study also clearly indicate a positive association between the low income level of husband and wife and DVAW among women.

The results further show that women whose husbands take drugs experience DVAW. This is consistent with the findings of previous studies (Ntaganira, Muula, Siziya, Stoskopf, Rudatsikira, 2009; Easton, Weinberger, McKee, 2008) which showed that smoking, alcohol consumption, and using other substances of abuse were strongly associated with IPV. Substance abuse, including smoking and alcohol consumption, may be directly responsible for IPV by affecting cognition, reducing self-control, perpetuating aggression and may also induce stress and unhappiness in relationships, thereby, further increasing the risk of violence and conflict (Stuart, Temple, Follansbee, Bucossi, Hellmuth & Moore, 2008).

Women reported in the current study that one of the vital factors for DVAW is less job opportunities for women. These results are in line with previous researches that empowering women through social networking along with income earning improves their capacity to access information and resources available in society, thereby enabling them to seek help in case of spousal abuse (Boyle, Georgiades, Cullen & Racine, 2008). Male dominance is frequently mentioned as a determinant of the DVAW. Decision making authority makes the man more dominant in the family and society and increases the likelihood of violence against women. Pakistani society is patriarchal in which male members hold decision-making authority, head the families, and control wealth. This often led to marital/verbal conflict (Ali & Gavino, 2008). The current study also found a significant association of male dominance and DVAW.

In the Southeast Asian region, people usually live in extended families, where mothers-in-law have major influences on family size, family planning and household decision-making. It is believed that interference from the mother-in-law is a factor that precipitates violence against the daughter-in-law (Kadir, Fikree, Khan & Sajan, 2003). A study reported that thirty percent (30%) in-laws are a common reason of marital conflict leading to verbal and physical abuse of the wife by her husband (Fikree & Bhatti, 1999). The current study also endorses the previous studies that joint family system is one of the responsible factors associated with violence against women.

This study also found a significant relation between early marriage and inadequate dowry with DVAW. Previous studies also identify child-marriage as a significant factor in making the women vulnerable to IPV. Early or child-marriages are commonly practiced across the South Asian countries including Pakistan. The



socio-economic conditions of the families force them to consider girls a liability and a burden on their shoulders, leading them to dispose of the burden as soon as possible. Earlier studies have identified child-marriage as factor in making the women vulnerable to violence in spouse's house. Moreover, dowry also plays a role in continuation and reinforcing domestic violence against women in the country. Studies show that women with inadequate dowries are more prone to domestic violence in the in-laws house than do women with more acceptable dowries (Ali & Gavino, 2008).

## **5. Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to examine the various RF behind DVAW in Pakhtun society. The findings of the study show that multiple factors are responsible for DVAW in Pakhtun society which include illiterate respondents and their partners, unemployment, low income, fewer job opportunities for women, drug addict husbands, joint family system, male dominancy, badal (exchange marriage), and inadequate dowry.

## **6. Recommendations:**

The study recommends that government should be more focused on female education as various research studies articulated there is a close link between education and DVAW, therefore focusing on female education will go a long way in helping the cause of reduction in violence against women. Job opportunities for female especially married women will enable them to protect themselves from DVAW by their husbands or any other family member. Moreover, the government should review the existing laws related to women protection and its implementation in true letter and spirit. Furthermore, a policy change by the government in the shape of launching a prevention and protection mechanism to reduce DVAW is the need of the hour. In this regard, it is highly recommended that civil societies should come out to support government and to create awareness in masses related to DVAW and to review its consequences on IPV as well as children personality development.

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**Table 1. Demographic information of the respondents**

<b>Demographic information</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age (years)</b>		
15-24	210	54.4
25-34	129	33.5
35-45	45	11.1
<b>Respondents Education</b>		
Illiterate	235	61.1
Primary level	76	19.8
Secondary level	58	15.1
Graduate level	15	04
<b>Husband Education</b>		
Illiterate	154	40.1
Primary level	110	28.6
Secondary level	90	23.4
Graduate level	30	7.8
<b>Monthly Family Income</b>		
10,000-20,000	152	39.58
20,001-30,000	125	32.55
30,001-40,000	107	27.86

**Table 2. Various types of DVAW**

**5811 | Sameer Ul Khaliqjan**                      **Determinants Of Domestic Violence**  
**Against Women In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan**

<b>Types of DVAW</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Physical i.e. hitting, kicking, biting, punching etc.	134	34.89
Psychological i.e. calling wrong names, threatening, insulting etc.	130	33.85
Social i.e. Restriction on meeting with parents/family and friends prohibit you from seeing them.	75	19.53
Financial restriction	45	11.71

**Table 3. Association between RF and DVAW**

<b>Independent variables</b>	<b>RF</b>	<b>Dependent variable DVAW</b>	<b>Statistic <math>\chi^2</math> and P value</b>
Low Education		DVAW	14.342(0.005)
Low income		DVAW	14.287(0.005)
Fewer job opportunities for women		DVAW	12.224(0.040)
Drug addicts husband		DVAW	54.365(0.002)
Joint family system		DVAW	43.547(0.002)
Male dominancy		DVAW	11.649(0.006)
Early marriage		DVAW	17.183(0.003)
Badal (exchange marriage)		DVAW	11.653(0.005)
Inadequate dowry		DVAW	44.674(0.001)