



## Research Article

# Physical Violence Against Women During Pregnancy

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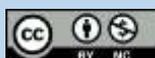
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### Abstract

The objective of this study was to determine the prevalence of physical violence during pregnancy and the factors associated with it. Although the whole world has recognized the violence against women is a serious risk to the health and development of the whole country. But still, it exists in almost all parts of the world. It is found more prevalent in developing countries as compared to the developed countries. This aspect signifies the socioeconomic aspect of the country. This study was performed by random sampling in gynae units of Jinnah hospital Lahore. Total 100 women were given the questionnaire and collected through the help of department's personnel. The results revealed the predominance of factors that cause and aggravate the violence against women during pregnancy.

### Introduction

Domestic violence against women is reported among lower and middle class as well. However, many cases of severe violence are even not reported because of family pressure. The most significant of the domestic violence is physical violence during pregnancy. The consequences of this type of violence are very damaging and long-lasting. Violence

during pregnancy so badly effect not just mother's health both physically and mentally, but also damages the health and well-being of next generation. This situation of ignorance passes on generation to generation due to lack of awareness (Ellsberg *et al.*, 2008).

Physical violence during pregnancy is defined as “moderate to severe violence experience with one or more of the following behaviors: hit, beat or kick, slap, threatened by a weapon or in any other way during pregnancy” (Watts and Zimmerman, 2002). The risk factors behind occurrence of such events are low socioeconomic status, low level of social support, suspicion of infidelity or husband accusing wife of an affair, dowry harassment, low education of husband and husband being regularly drunk (Coker et al., 2004).

Secondly, great concern risk factors related to women experiencing physical violence during pregnancy include being single, being young, poor, deprived of antenatal care, unintentional pregnancy or being unhappy about having pregnancy (Peedicayil et al., 2004). The prevalence of physical violence during pregnancy is estimated based on reported cases. It ranges from 0.9% to 20%. However, 04% of women experiencing violence during their lifetime have also experienced violence during pregnancy (Gazmararian et al., 1996). Violence against women by an intimate partner range from 9.7% to 30%. Further, Illiteracy is the main factor behind violence by intimate partner (Marwick, 1998).

It is a known fact that our society is a male dominant society. In this context, power is assigned on gender basis and that power gives the right to men to physically beat their wives and daughters (Martin et al., 1999). The most miserable condition in most of cases is that, it is not taken as violence but as a cultural phenomenon. So, it's very difficult task to eradicate such events from society. However, awareness among both genders is the sole solution to that problem. Especially, awareness among women about their legal rights and health is of vital importance (McFarlane et al., 1992).

Even, if nobody is socially supporting the women, state and law is here to provide security to the women. As far as, the role of state and law is concerned, there is a significant difference among developed and developing countries (Glander et al., 1998). In developed countries, the strict situation of law and its implementation is the sign for control violence against women. While in developing countries, the prevalence of old beliefs and myths and cultural values are the main factors promoting violence during pregnancy. So, that difference is significant enough to undertake that problem and to take appropriate steps to eradicate that damaging problem (Audi et al., 2008). Likewise, women in Pakistan also experience the physical violence in home and during pregnancy as well which have effect on the baby and mother's mental health. Thus, this study assesses the prevalence of the physical violence among the women of public hospitals of Lahore, Pakistan.

## Literature Review

Violence against women is widely recognized as a serious issue. Thus, consideration of violence against women issue

for investigation is necessary. Death is the most severe consequence of violence against women (Bessa et al., 2014). As far as study and research about violence against women is concerned, WHO noted that 30% of women experienced violence by intimate partner and 7.2% of women reported non-partner sexual assault. This type of violence has worst effects on women physical and mental health. Social responses to this assault include restraining orders and mandatory arrest policies. WHO suggests the need for more effective interventions to reduce sexual violence against women (Peedicayil et al., 2004).

One of the sensitive forms of violence during pregnancy is physical violence. If we review literature about this vital issue, the prevalence was from 0.9% to 20.1%. Violence against women during pregnancy is the condition which poses greater risks to the health of both mother and child due to violence (Olweus and Limber, 2017). Violence during pregnancy comes under the sky of domestic violence which refers to all forms of violence in the family environment (Iliyasu et al., 2013). However, the study mentions that prevalence of domestic violence against women varies from 10 to 70% (Santos et al., 2010).

World Health organization has emphasized on the various kind of violence i.e. violence by intimate partner is 15 to 71%, physical violence is 4 to 54% and sexual violence is 4 to 50% (Arslantaş et al., 2012). However, prevalence of physical violence against women in various countries i.e. In Japan prevalence is 8%, In Serbia and Montenegro, it is 13%. In Thailand this prevalence is 11%, in Brazil, it is 32% and in the province of Peru, that is 44%. After a huge study about violence, the major reason behind this violence comes to know is low socioeconomic level of women and their intimate partner (Arslantaş et al., 2012).

## Methodology

This study is of descriptive and cross-sectional design which aims to analyze the prevalence of physical violence against women during pregnancy. The participants of this study were the patients from gynae unit I, II and III of Jinnah Hospital Lahore. Physical violence was measured through the questionnaire developed by Levy and Lemeshow (1965) based on the categorical scale (1: Yes & 2: No). The self-administered questionnaire was distributed through simple random sampling technique to 100 pregnant women who were visiting Gynae ward of Jinnah Hospital Lahore for treatment. For data collection, the permission from the hospital administration was taken and consent of the respondents was also taken.

Data was analyzed using SPSS statistics 21. The participants general characteristics, physical violence during pregnancy were analyzed with descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation etc. To determine the prevalence of physical violence the

respondent's response was analyzed through frequency distribution.

## Results and Discussion

### Age Group

Table 1 shows that 34% of the pregnant women were among the age group of 18-25 years, 36% of women were among the age group of 25-35 years, 22% women were among the age group of 35-50 years and 8% of women were above the age of 50 years.

### Marital Status

Table 2 shows the result that all women in the current study as participants were married.

### Qualification

Table 3 shows that 52% of women have done matric, 17% of women have done intermediate and 31% women did graduation.

### Number of Children

Table 4 shows that 19% of women had 1 child, 24% of women had 2 children, 19% of women had 3 children, 14% of women had 4 children and 24% had 5 children.

**Table 1:** Age of the respondents

		Age group			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	34	34.0	34.0	34.0
	25-35	36	36.0	36.0	70.0
	35-50	22	22.0	22.0	92.0
	above 50	8	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 2:** Marital status of the respondents

		Marital status			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	100	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 3:** Qualification of the respondents

		Qualification			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	matric	52	52.0	52.0	52.0
	intermediate	17	17.0	17.0	69.0
	graduation	31	31.0	31.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 4:** Number of Children

		Number of children			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	19	19.0	19.0	19.0
	2	24	24.0	24.0	43.0
	3	19	19.0	19.0	62.0
	4	14	14.0	14.0	76.0
	5	24	24.0	24.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

**Question #1: Do you have experienced any type of violence during pregnancy?**

Table 5 shows that 47% women experience any type of violence during pregnancy while 53% response negative to this question.

**Question #2: Do you have experienced slap from your husband or anyone else during pregnancy?**

Table 6 shows that 48% of women experienced slap from their husband or anyone else during pregnancy and 52 % of women gave response in negation to this question.

**Question #3: Do you are beaten by your family during pregnancy?**

Table 7 shows that 25% of women were beaten by their family during pregnancy and 75% of women responded in negation to this statement.

**Question #4: Have anyone hit you during pregnancy?**

Table 8 shows that 26% of women were hit during pregnancy by anyone in the in laws while 74% of women have not experienced that type of violence.

**Question #5: Do you are ever threatening with weapon during pregnancy?**

Table 9 shows that only 7% of women were threatened with weapon during pregnancy while 93% of the women were disagreeing this.

**Table 5:** Do you have experienced any type of violence during pregnancy?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	47	47.0	47.0	47.0
	no	53	53.0	53.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 6:** Do you have experienced slap from your husband or anyone else during pregnancy?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	48	48.0	48.0	48.0
	no	52	52.0	52.0	100.0

**Table 7:** Do you are beaten by your family during pregnancy?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	25	25.0	25.0	25.0
	no	75	75.0	75.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 8:** Have anyone hit you during pregnancy?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	26	26.0	26.0	26.0
	no	74	74.0	74.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 9:** Do you are ever threatening with weapon during pregnancy?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	7	7.0	7.0	7.0
	no	93	93.0	93.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

**Question #6: Do your husband drunks?**

Table 10 shows that husbands of 19% of women were agree that their husbands used to drink while 81% of women responded in denial.

**Question #7: Do your husband has outside affairs?**

Table 11 shows that 32% of women’s husband had affairs outside while 68% of women said no to this statement.

**Question #8: Do your husband smoke or take drugs?**

Table 12 describes that 45% of women said that their husbands used to smoke and take drugs while 55% of women said no to this statement.

**Question #9: Do you have social support from your in-laws?**

Table 13 shows that 62% women have social support from their in-laws while 38% were abandoned of this support.

**Question #10: Is there any witness of your violence?**

Table 14 shows that 34% women had witness of their violence while 66% women had not.

**Table 10:** Do your husband drunks?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	19	19.0	19.0	19.0
	no	81	81.0	81.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 11:** Do your husband has outside affairs?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	32	32.0	32.0	32.0
	no	68	68.0	68.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 12:** Do your husband smoke or take drugs?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	45	45.0	45.0	45.0
	No	55	55.0	55.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 13:** Do you have social support from your in-laws?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	62	62.0	62.0	62.0
	No	38	38.0	38.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 14:** Is there any witness of your violence?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	34	34.0	34.0	34.0
	no	66	66.0	66.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

This study aims to assess the prevalence of violence against the pregnant woman. This study results show that violence against women is directly related to the low socio-economic level of the women and their intimate partner. Moreover, in Pakistan, there are other factors like joint family system, poverty, ignorance, less awareness among women about their rights and family pressures etc.

According to this study results, 47% of women reported violence during pregnancy. That is alarming situation about the condition of law and order. In this study, 48% of women reported that they bear the slap by their husband during the pregnancy, 25% women reported the episodes of beating by their family during the pregnancy, 26% women reported the history of hit outside the home during pregnancy, only 7% of women were threatened with weapon during pregnancy, 19% women's husband used to drink, 32% of women's husband has outside affairs that is strong reason for violence against women. 45% of women's husband used to smoke or take drugs, 62% of women have social support from their in-laws and 34% women reported that there are witness of violence against them. However, the issue of violence is more prevailed among the pregnant women of low socio-economic backgrounds.

In Pakistan, majority of male prefer their ego. They think that they have right to abuse and beat the women. This is due to illiteracy and ignorance among lower class families.

## Conclusion

The current study aims to assess the prevalence of violence against the pregnant women visiting the public hospitals for treatment. The results show that prevalence of physical violence against the pregnant women is higher among the visitors of public hospitals. However, major reason of violence against the working women is the low socio-economic condition. Similarly, other factors behind this physical violence include inequalities reinforced by cultural, social and religious aspects.

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