

Intimate Partners and Multifaceted Violent Behaviour in Pakistan

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Abstract

Intimate partners' violence is a common occurrence in Pakistan. It has been affected by a host of factors, which are undergoing change with time. This paper is based on forty cases of married couples, some of whom are no more living together. The study highlights various aspects of IPV, including: economic abuse, drugs abuse, psychological complications, marital jealousies, consequences of love or arranged marriage, in-laws' provocations, sexual jealousies, marital maladjustment, long-distance migration, disability, children's issues, and tribal/feudal background. As more and more women are getting empowered through socioeconomic processes of change, they do find more options affordable in lieu of a violent and unhappy marriage. The new level of awareness has also helped non-earning women to step out of marriage if it becomes unbearable for them. In this way men also become aggrieved party, hence male victimization is also becoming noticeable. Male victims' cases are now also highlighted in print media but these are not discussed in academia. This paper presents the IPV situation of a section of Muslim society, ethnically diverse, economically segregated, largely urban, having the aspiration of becoming a developed modern nation, thereby passing through a transition. The findings are presented in a model which may apply to similar social conditions elsewhere.

Introduction

Pakistan is the sixth largest nation with an estimated population of 184.5 million including 70 million living in urban communities. With a declining fertility rate—at 3.3 in 2013—population is growing by 2 per cent annually. Life expectancy, presently 66.5 for females and 64.6 for males, is also going up.¹ Labor force participation of females is 28 per

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cent.² With about 3.4 million unemployed persons, Pakistan exports a huge amount of manpower.³ It is a society in transition where social polarization and disorganization have been intensifying since the last four decades at least. Political and economic stability has remained persistently at stake. The class structure is in flux and large scale migration has been causing population flows within and outside the country. Geo-strategic location and involvement of Pakistan in the 'War on terror' are the factors severely affecting the state and society relations. Terrorism and religious extremism together pose a twin threat to the peace and development of the society, hence the dwindling prospects for well-being and a happy contented life for the family and individuals. Economic insecurity prevails in millions of households and a culture of mafias, corruption, drugs and crimes is firming up. Both urban and rural communities are deeply affected by this series of multiplex crises affecting nationwide.

This paper presents the situation of husband-wife violence embedded in the conditions produced by structural and normative changes particularly in the urban family. The transformation has been simmering slowly and steadily.⁴ The family is governed in Pakistan by social (customary), religious and state laws. The courts refer to the personal laws of people's religious choices in family matters. One Pakistani family may lie at a certain point on the continuum from traditional to a modern-egalitarian one. Customarily women stay with the husband in a joint family set-up, generally obey them in matters related to family's interaction with the outer world, and enjoy a good deal of independence regarding household management. Relations with close relatives are mutually decided according to the family norms. Elders are

² As per *World Development Report 2013*, available at <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/HDR/2013GlobalHDR/English/HDR2013%20Report%20English.pdf>

³ It was 0.63 million in 2012. Government of Pakistan, *Pakistan Economic Survey 2012-13* (Islamabad: Finance Division, 2013), Chapter 12, pp.155-6, also available at www.finance.gov.pk

⁴ Referring to these transformations Zeenat Hisam, explained three decades ago that urban women had also become more educated, individualistic and freedom-oriented, preferring nuclear family and approving ideal size of family as four or less children. Then women had adopted a high preference for education which in turn was making them assertive whereas other marriage preferences remained unchanged; such as a beautiful submissive bride, hence a crisis started emerging. Love marriages were also getting popular in the 1980s. See her, 'Urban Family in Flux', *Dawn Magazine*, 14 May 1982, pp.I-II.

highly respected but with modernization of family structure, elders' control is waning out. Women are trained to be good household manager from the very beginning as marriage is considered their destiny, motherhood their loftiest standing and being an obedient wife a route to heaven. They do, or are expected to, please all the close relations, young and old, whereas men are the universal breadwinners. Women gain respect with increased number of children, especially sons. Submission to elders', husbands' and in many cases, sons' wishes ensures them peace whereas disobedience invites trouble. Another crucial aspect is their chastity and loyalty in marriage; a slight doubt in it can cause a huge uproar. Though a subtle amount of tolerance prevails about pre-marital and extra-marital sex, but such cases are not discussed widely. Mostly such cases are hushed up. Generally, gender roles socialization endorses the aforementioned pattern of control and submission between the two genders. Gradually with passage of time the patriarchal and patri-local character of family dynamics, household management and socialization is giving way to a more egalitarian one. With growing economic independence of women, urbanization, cultural modernization, family nucleation and migration, women's status within the family and society is improving. Women's say in matters traditionally considered male's domain is increasing and they have been gaining more confidence and control in public and private spheres. The number of love marriages, and their acceptance, despite brutal reprisals, is continuously rising. In fact, the choice of a girl or boy is usually verified by the family and approved in many cases. Chastisement for such daring act is also commonly known; a very small proportion of such girls/boys abandon their homes; suicides/killings happen in even fewer cases.

The constitution of Pakistan embodies the spirit of international laws focused at protection of women. It ensures equality for all citizens before law and equal protection; no discrimination on the basis of sex (Article 25). The state is responsible to protect the marriage, the family, the mother and the child (Article 35). In recent years, special laws have been enacted to provide women protection against all sorts of customary practices, harassment at the workplace, acid throwing and burning. Such laws have been facing vehement opposition from the conservative and religious section of the society.⁵ There are institutions, mostly dominated

⁵ For instance see, Sameeha Raheel Qazi, '*Tahaffuz-e-Haquq-e-Niswan ya Tahaffuz-e-Asyan Bill?*' (Karachi: Islamic Research Academy, 2006); and Maulana Mohammad Zahid Iqbal, '*Tahaffuz-e-Haquq-e-Niswan Bill, Haqeeqat Kiya Hai?*' (Lahore; Kitab Dost, 2006). Both these

by conservative Islamists; passing of a bill through them is necessary before its proper implementation.

In this backdrop of a transitional society, forty cases were selected for the study through purposive method. Ethnic, class and occupational variety was maintained. Male victimization is also highlighted. Literature survey is followed by methodology and discussion on the findings of the study.

Conceptual framework

Theories providing various explanations for IPV have been continuously in evolution. There have been: (a) Frustration Aggression Theory; (b) Learned Behavior Theory; (c) Learned Helplessness Theory (d) Cycle of Violence Theory (e) Family Conflict Theory for situational couple violence; (f) Coercive Control Theory; (g) Gender Theory; and (h) the Power and Control Wheel model. Since these provide explanation on certain aspects of violence, they have been used at times by the researchers. The present study, however, finds the Power and Control Wheel model closest to its approach. It explains that the abusers use various tactics consciously to exert their control, to maintain that control and to ensure submission of the partners. Therefore, the isolated incidences of violence are, in fact, part of the larger schema of the abuser to assert that he/she is in control. Since women's submission to men is endorsed by the gender inequality in the society at large, male violence is expected, endorsed and tolerated rather consolidated by cultural, political and economic institutions.

The types of violence dealt with in this study are defined as follows:

- a. **Physical violence:** It is intentional use of force which may cause harm, injury, disability or death. It includes pushing, slapping, and kicking, burning, biting, choking, grabbing, shoving, punching, using a weapon or to restraining one's body, size or strength. Denial of medicine or necessary food to a person in need of it also amounts to endangering physical survival.
- b. **Psychological and emotional violence:** It is a trauma caused by some one's acts, threats of acts, or coercion. It involves: insulting; controlling the victim's actions; keeping information from; making the person ashamed, embarrassed or harassed; isolating the person from family, friends and supporters; or denying access to money. The contextual factors and a history of violence are usually

associated with such conditions. Stalking is also included which involves a threatening behavior or being at certain place, sending messages or objects, vandalizing property, or following someone.⁶

- c. **Economic violence:** It is the condition of taking money, salary, property, valuables, even making use of a person's physical capacity to draw economic benefit, under threat, or by persuasion which later is realized by the partner(s) as being unjustified. It may involve forcing spending on others unwillingly. Refusal to provide money to the needy partner is another common form of economic violence.

It is understood that violence is learned from the environment through experience or observation, or while living in a community through actions at schools, peer groups, family, media, or through absorbing the overall cultural milieu. The understanding that violence is used by the partners in the form of abusive behavior for a long time in order to establish their control on other partner's life and belongings, leads one to see why it is directed by one person to another in certain conditions and why it can possibly be reversed at a later time. Though women's subordinate position has been nurtured historically, through traditional cultural socialization which puts them at a disadvantage, it is noteworthy that whenever women get command of a situation they possibly may become violent to men as well. When women gain strength and confidence in public space, through their economic and political participation, they do not submit to traditional patterns of patriarchal subordination. Such situation may incite violence on males, and this is a situation that this study is going to elaborate along with violence on females.

Literature Survey

Though an awareness and concern on the issue of domestic violence was there but little research was conducted before 1990. A study by the author in 1992⁷ focused IPV among all socioeconomic classes, ages, ethnicities, occupations, and urban and rural backgrounds. It revealed that most important reason behind domestic abuse of women was marital maladjustment caused by sexual jealousies, suspicion, extra- or pre-

⁶ The first two definitions are adopted from 'Intimate Partner Violence: Definitions', <http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/definitions.html>. Economic violence is defined by the author.

⁷ Anwar Shaheen, 'Beating Blue: Domestic Physical Violence against Women in Pakistan', Women's Studies Centre, University of Karachi (unpublished) 1992. This empirical study was based on interviews with 100 violence victims, functionaries of referral services and analysis of three years court cases from the Family Courts of Karachi Division.

marital affairs/engagement of husband or wife, or presence of multiple wives. Moreover, women's working conditions, their going out of house, working and interacting with men, mobility for education and work, and even dressing up properly for job had been creating suspicion. This was truer for the men having a sense of inferiority due to better qualities of the wives, such as beauty, wealth, authority, rank in job, higher social standing of their natal family, and an influential social circle, etc. Male victimization, however, was not included in this study. It happened only in 1993, in the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna, that violence against women was declared a violation of fundamental human rights. Later the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (20 December 1993)⁸ defined physical, sexual and psychological forms of violence against women and its heinous implications for women's lives.

In the context of Pakistan Shaheed (1994) found reasons for domestic violence against women as: rejecting proposal for marriage, not going back to an abusive husband, not meeting financial demands of the in-laws, not performing housework according to the satisfaction of household members, to settle a property dispute, or to dishonor a family member. The cases of maintenance filed by a divorced/separated woman and her children were usually delayed, and the decisions of some cases were pending even for ten years. This was documented in a study by the author commissioned by PAWLA, a women lawyers' NGO, focusing on court cases in late 1990s.⁹ Later women rights and legal aid organizations launched a campaign for it and consequently the courts were made bound to decide issues of family disputes (divorce, *khula*¹⁰, maintenance, custody, restitution of conjugal rights, etc.) within six months. Mahmood (2006)¹¹ explains domestic violence as to its reasons and impact, and suggests ways to eradicate it. According to him, the range of violence includes maltreatment, torture, verbal threats, mental torture, physical abuse, even homicide. He gives reasons as disobeying the elders' will, honour issues, dowry, personality disorders, short temper, and a strong desire to possess and control women, especially by those who depend on

⁸ Available at: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>, accessed 20 November 2013.

⁹ Pakistan Women Lawyers Association, *Action-Oriented Research for Effective Enforcement of Maintenance Decrees* (Karachi, 2000).

¹⁰ *Khula* is divorce initiated by the wife, as per Islamic rules, in which she gets divorce through the court if the husband refuses it in normal way.

¹¹ Zahid Mahmood, *Ghareelu Tashaddud Wajooahat, Asraat aur Insidad* (Lahore: Nigarshat, 2006).

men economically. He reports that at least 22 per cent women face domestic violence, with high incidence in rural as compared to urban households. His book is a helpful guide for practitioners of the referral agencies and social workers. One reason for husband's maltreatment reported by women domestic workers is the suspicion of their disloyalty to their husbands, if they work in better-income families and stay away for long hours.¹² A study conducted in 2007 in low income community of urban Karachi reports financial problems as the top most issue of conflict with the husband.¹³ A major issue causing domestic violence is related to love marriages, though it does not contribute directly to IPV, but once trouble arises in a love marriage, the couple, and mostly the wife, is left on her own if she had taken marriage decision against her family's will, while the parents/family mostly accept such marriages to save face, but many do not accept it whole-heartedly. Thus when a woman in arranged marriage expects help from parents, a woman in love marriage is either refused help, or is blamed for inviting violence by selecting a wrong man herself. In that situation she suffers more and the husband, knowing this fact, becomes more violent. In a large number of love-marriage cases, the couple is young, immature, and in certain cases not earning sufficiently hence dependent upon the larger family, so both become victims of violence. Furthermore, expectations in a love-marriage are higher, and when not met, frustration leads to aggression. Kanwar (1989) has confirmed the socio-cultural reasons stated above—concept of honour associated with women, traditional marriage and family system, traditional value system, poverty, frustration and a culture of aggression—as contributing towards crimes against person in particular and economic violence in general. Primary homicide is found strongly linked to these factors.¹⁴ There is continuous pouring in of news reports about killing under this custom. Any domestic conflict or conflict between married partners may be manipulated as an honour-murder. If the husband wants to get rid of his un-wanted wife, to get another wife, or to get a woman in exchange for her daughters etc. he may resort to

¹² Ayesha Shahid, *Silent Voices, Untold Stories Women Domestic Workers in Pakistan and their Struggle for Empowerment* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.173.

¹³ T.S. Ali and I. Bustanamante-Gavino, 'Prevalence of and Reasons for Domestic Violence among Women from Low Socioeconomic Communities of Karachi', *East Mediterranean Health Journal* (Nov-Dec 2007) Vol.13, No.6, pp.1417-26.<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18341191>.

¹⁴ Three cases of murder and death (two men and one woman), due to sexual jealousy and neglect are included in the sample of the study.

killing of wife in the name of honour. Hina¹⁵ has explained the whole range of factors behind domestic, societal/structural and state-sponsored violence against women. Disobedience, forced/exchange or odd marriages, expression of free will, dislike for wife's housework/cooking, etc., are the reasons for instigating. Sarwar explains that the doubt about illicit relations tops the list in many cases.¹⁶

Violence is a show of power. It is in fact the 'negotiation of domestic authority' as Donnan (1997) calls it, which is important in a discussion on IPV. Referring to the paucity of comprehensive information on the domestic relations in Pakistan, Donnan points at the need to understand the domestic processes related to gender equality, identity and reproductive rights. It is, therefore, imperative to have an insight into the working of domestic and marital relations. The present study on IPV tries to contextualize marital relations, as these are mostly rooted in conditions, processes and forces which are not under the control of the couple. Moreover, as Donnan holds, Pakistan is a highly heterogeneous country thus there prevails no single domestic culture.¹⁷ The awareness about domestic violence and literature on this issue was produced in a considerable amount mostly by the non-governmental agencies since the mid-1990s. A study by Shirkat Gah,¹⁸ a women's NGO, was the first published study. The activities for raising awareness and supporting victims of violence started thereafter, and the terms related to violence against women became common in the discourse on gender afterwards. The first empirical study on this issue, as per knowledge of the author, was conducted by herself in 1992.

In crime statistics, data on violation of women's rights in marriage is not maintained separately, but is mixed with other crimes. Though the government has established a few institutions safeguarding women's rights, their efficiency hangs in doubt due to general inefficiency or corruption. Crimes and social response are eagerly reported by the electronic media, and discussed by the concerned civil

¹⁵ Zahida Hina, *Pakistani Aurat: Aazma'ish ki Nisf Sadee* (Karachi: Irtiq Institute of Social Sciences, 2003), pp.25-45.

¹⁶ Beena Sarwar, '... On Suspicion of Illicit Relations', Miranda Davies (ed.), *Women and Violence Realities and Responses World Wide* (London: Zed Books, 1994), pp. 220-22.

¹⁷ Hastings Donnan, 'Family and Household in Pakistan', in Hastings Donnan and Frits Selier (eds.), *Family and Gender in Pakistan: Domestic Organization in a Muslim Society* (New Delhi: Hindustan Publishing Corporation, 1997), pp.19-20.

¹⁸ Yasmeen Hassan, *Heaven Becomes Hell: A Study of Domestic Violence in Pakistan* (Lahore: Shirkat Gah, 1995).

society organizations. The issue of family violence is highlighted by the NGOs only when a serious breach of the family norms is reported. Intimate partners' violence is included in domestic violence and the public reaction to IPV is mixed. Some believe the reported facts, others see mostly women at fault, and many think it a normal part of domestic life, not to be talked about. IPV, a new term coined to include partners living without marriage, is not yet popular in Pakistan. Since Pakistan does not have any significant number of such persons or at least they are not recognized publicly,¹⁹ the IPV conditions which can be studied are confined to husband-wife violence only. In few cases an ex-husband or ex-wife are found involved as well. Sadiq (2004)²⁰ has written a guidebook for guiding police personnel in dealing with violence against women cases, as their number has been increasing persistently.

At the international level, a large number of research publications and efforts have dealt with violence against women. The social conditions of domestic violence are expected to be similar in similar cultural and socioeconomic groups. Flavia (1988)²¹ has explained violence against women in the Indian situation in the 1980s. A study of 17 victims of violence by Bhattacharaya (2004)²² is found helpful for having an insight from India. Similar studies from South Asia can help understand the social context of the issue in Pakistan as well.

IPV Situation in Pakistan 2013

Despite being a common occurrence²³, the data on IPV is not available separately. An overall picture of violence against women shows 86,923 registered cases in thirteen years (January 2000-December 2012).²⁴ The most quoted source on the situation of women's rights is the annual report of an NGO, Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP),

¹⁹ The religious and country law (e.g. Hudood laws) prescribe very harsh punishment for sexual relations outside marriage hence are hushed up.

²⁰ Ehsan Sadiq, *Khawateen par Tashaddud, Police ka Kirdar, aik Rehnuma Kitab* (Islamabad: Muqtdira-e Qaumi Zuban [National Language Authority], 2004).

²¹ Flavia, 'Violence in the Family: Wife Beating', in, Rehana Ghadially (ed.), *Women in Indian Society* (New Delhi: Sage, 1988), pp. 151-66.

²² Rinki Bhattacharaya (ed.), *Behind Closed Doors Domestic Violence in India* (New Delhi: Sage, 2004).

²³ It was estimated by HRCP that about 80 per cent women in Pakistan suffer some kind of violence in their lives. Psychological violence and harassment are very common forms in both urban and rural set-ups.

²⁴ Qazi Imran Ahmed, 'Auraton ka Qatlaur Mazalim ... Kiya koi Roknay Wala Nahin?', *Jehan Pakistan*, 7 March 2013, special supplement, p.9.

which confirms that violence on women has been burgeoning. A trend may be discernible in the reports but the HRCP does not claim to provide a complete picture since the crimes against women go unreported in a significant number; more so in the tribal and feudal areas of the country. The HRCP reports about year 2011, 2012 and 2013 confirm an overall inferior and deplorable state of women's rights in the country, despite constitutional guarantees. It is held that women's insecurity and vulnerability to violence depends on their social status and variable access to the sources of empowerment and authority.²⁵ The HRCP report of year 2012 reveals that women have been victimized due to asserting their right to education, work and to decide about their lives. So crimes of serious nature have been perpetrated against them because there has been no systematic effort to combat them.²⁶ An NGO, Aurat Foundation, in its fourth consecutive report on violence against women reported 8,539 women as victims of violence in the year 2011, showing an increase of 6.7 per cent from the previous year, especially in the cases of sexual assault, acid-throwing, honour killing and domestic violence. The NGO observed that there had been a near-constant picture of violence in the years 2008-2010²⁷, and neither the state nor society were doing anything worth-mentioning to curb the trend. For 2013, HRCP's sources reported at least 389 women facing domestic violence; who were nearly all married, except 2 unmarried, 5 widows and 2 divorcees. The culprit was mostly the husband and his near relatives. Over 800 women committed suicide and domestic conflict was the top reason. In a survey in six districts in central region of Pakistan,²⁸ 66 per cent women reported facing sexual violence; 93 per cent affirmed marital rape, and about 75 per cent reported physical abuse. There were 150 cases of acid-burning and gas leakage/stove burning, out of which 44 women succumbed. In 2013, rape cases registered in Punjab²⁹ and KPK were 2,567 and 127 respectively, whereas 27 gang-rape cases were reported from Sindh province. In two years (2011-2012), 8433 incidents of violence against women were reported. Another estimate is that about 80

²⁵ See Chapter 5, Humans Rights Commission of Pakistan, *State of Humans Rights in 2011* (Lahore: HRCP, 2012).

²⁶ *The State of Human Rights 2012*, *op.cit.*, p.162.

²⁷ Detail on year-wise incidence, regional/province-wise break-up and not-registered with police cases is available at <http://www.af.org.pk/vaw-reports.php>

²⁸ Cf. Rutgers World Population Foundation study, in Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, *State of Human Rights in 2013*, *op.cit.*, p.177.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

per cent women are facing physical or psychological abuse; of these reported 66 percent accept it as their destiny, 33 per cent lodge complaint and only 5 per cent come out to resist and take action.

A crucial aspect of domestic violence is killing in the name of honour, which is mostly a tool to hide the actual reasons, such as refusing women their share in inheritance, or disputes over property. There were 705 cases of honour-killing in 2011,³⁰ and 923 including 99 minor girls, in 2012. These included 604 under the accusation of illicit relations, and 191 marrying of their own choice against family's approval.³¹ One month score of reported honour killings (25 July-25 August 2013) is 40, including 30 women (averaging one woman per day). The killers were husband in 12, brothers in 8, and other close relatives in rest of the cases.³² Almost similar situation prevailed in the previous year. This data hints at the nature of conflict over free-consent in marriage or sexual dissatisfaction in marriage. Another indicator is that of women murdered in other cases (936 cases); in which the murderer was husband in 259, brother in 52, father in 18 and other relatives in 92 cases. The report on suicides by women (reported as 701 in 2011), confirms comparatively a young age (15-30), a lower class background, and married status; main reasons being domestic conflict, unemployment, economic issues, failure in marriage by choice, and desperation due to violence by the husband. The report also explains that in Pakistan, suicides by women are mostly committed to protest against depriving them from asserting their human rights. The latest report by HRCP informs of 95 women suicides in total 218 cases in one month (25 July-25 August 2013) making women 44 per cent. Those who attempted suicide in two months (26 June-26 August 2013) included 79 women in total 143. The leading cause was reported as domestic conflict.³³ The HRCP report for 2013 also confirms violence against women as a major issue of human rights and reported 869 honour-killings and 1790 murder of women, including 452 by the husband.³⁴ It is, therefore, understandable that the frequency of seeking divorce through courts has become fairly high; at 45 cases being filed daily in 11 family courts of Karachi division. In 2012, there were entered 190 and 85 cases of

³⁰ As reported in Aurat Foundation's report for 2011, *ibid*.

³¹ *The State of Human Rights 2012, op.cit.*, p.171.

³² *Jehd-e Haq*, September 2013, pp.32-33.

³³ For detail on each case see *Jehd-e Haq* (monthly newsletter of HRCP), Vol.20, No.9, September 2013, pp.18-24.

³⁴ *State of Human Rights in 2010, op.cit.*, p.206.

divorce and *khula*, respectively. On the average it is two divorces per hour in Karachi.³⁵

At the government level, the issue of violence against women was recognized while preparing for the fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing (1995). The official report and the plan of action associated with it mentions violence as a separate chapter with eleven other important issues for women's existence in Pakistan. It was accepted that different manifestations of violence against women are a continuation of violence in their personal and community life, ranging from open violence (rape and mutilation) to tacit forms such as son-preference and girl-child marriage. Therefore, no change in women's status was thought to be effective without changing the existing social structure, defining gender and gender relations.³⁶

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the reasons behind intimate partners' violence in urban setting in Pakistan.
2. To highlight incidence of IPV against males, as this has been a rarely-investigated area of family life.
3. To propose some theoretical formulations on the basis of the study.

Method

Design

It is basically a qualitative study mostly using descriptive method. Forty case studies were selected through purposive method as the sensitive topic of IPV demands investigation through means which ensure confidentiality and credibility at the same time. A group of four trained researchers and the author herself collected such studies. Since the number of cases is small, generalization is not possible, yet the variety in cases indicates their representative value. Moreover, no two cases were similar in details, indicating that the range of intimate partners' violence is fairly broad. The investigators' previous knowledge about the violent couple was in fact useful if considered from the participatory observation method. In all cases it is first hand information. The investigators, highly educated and already trained and experienced in field investigation, were especially trained to look into the IPV processes.

³⁵ Nadeem Mahmood, Asif Saud, *et.al.*, 'Karachi mein har aik Ghanty kay doran do Ghar Ujad Rahay hain', *Ummat*, 10 September 2012, p.3.

³⁶ Government of Pakistan, *Pakistan National Report for Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995* (Islamabad: Ministry of Women Development and Youth Affairs, 1995), Chapter 5.

Sampling

The sampling method used in the study was snowball and dimensional, since it explored into the acquaintances and tried to pick only the different cases. The IPV cases were selected from three different provinces of Pakistan belonging to twelve different cities. The selection from different localities and ethnic groups in the sample case studies is helpful in understanding the heterogeneity in household structures in Pakistan, as confirmed by analysts.³⁷ When people migrate within the country or abroad, the conditions in different stages of their lives may cultivate violent behavior. Many couples in the case studies have been moving from one city to another or outside the country, therefore, their reference with one particular place becomes irrelevant. Moreover, violence is a learned behavior hence this study delves into the social history, too, which is not restricted to one city only. Another aspect to mention here is that even if the concept of domestic violence is limited or re-named as intimate partners' violence for a focused study, the role of the family is crucial in cultivating, instigating and preventing violent behavior in most of the cases, hence the research describes stories of forty families in a way.

Sample

The selected partner(s) were those who have been facing IPV for a considerable length of time, at least three years. They were already known for facing this problem and were further asked about reasons and process of IPV. The data shown in Tables numbered 1 to 7 shows details of the sample couples.

Table 1: Age of the IPV Partners

(percentage in parentheses)

Age in years	Females	Males
Up to 25 years	4 (10.0)	1 (2.5)
26-35	14 (35.0)	8 (20.0)
36-45	8 (20.0)	11 (27.5)
46-55	8 (30.0)	7 (17.5)
56-65	5 (12.5)	11 (27.5)
66 and above	1 (2.5)	2 (5.0)
Total	40 (100.0)	40 (100.0)

³⁷ Hasting Donnan, *op.cit.*, p.20.

Table 2: Couples by Ethnicity

Ethnic Background	Frequency	Percentage
Both Mohajir*	20	50.0
Both Punjabi	9	22.5
Both Pakhtun	5	12.5
Both Bengali	4	10.0
Both Kashmiri	1	2.5
Punjabi Woman, Pakhtun Man	1	2.5
Total	40	100.0

* Partition migrants from India.

Table 3: IPV Partners by Education

(percentage in parentheses)

Education	Female Partners	Male Partners
Nil	10 (25.0)	8 (20)
Upto primary	5 (12.5)	3 (7.5)
Matric	2 (5)	6 (15.0)
Intermediate	5 (12.5)	2 (5.0)
Graduate	4 (10)	8 (20.0)
Postgraduate	11 (27.5)	10 (25.0)
Professional	3 (7.5)	3 (7.5)
Total	40	100.0

Table 4: Couples by Socioeconomic Class

Socioeconomic Class	Frequency	Percentage
Lower	10	25.0
Lower-middle	14	35.0
Middle-middle	8	20.0
Upper-middle	4	10.0
High	4	10.0
Total	40	100.0

Table 5: IPV Partners by Occupations

(percentage in parentheses)

Occupation	Female Partners	Male Partners
Unemployed	-	2 (5.0)
Student	-	1 (2.5)
Unskilled labor	1 (2.5)	7 (17.5)
Domestic worker	6 (15.0)	-

Skilled labor	-	3 (7.5)
Farming	1 (2.5)	1 (2.5)
Petty business	-	4 (10.0)
Teacher/lecturer	15 (37.5)	2 (5.0)
Librarian	1 (2.5)	-
Army/police	-	4 (10.0)
Doctor/dentist	2 (5.0)	2 (5.0)
Nurse	1 (2.5)	-
Engineer	-	3 (7.5)
Banker	-	3 (7.5)
Factory owner	-	1 (2.5)
Office worker/officer	4 (10.0)	7 (17.5)
House-woman	9 (22.5)	-
Total	40 (100.0)	40 (100.0)

Table 6: IPV Partners by Present Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	16	40.0
Divorced	9	22.5
Separated	9	22.5
Widowed	6	15.0
Total	40	100.0

Table 7: Couples by Numbers of Children

Number	Frequency	Percentage
Nil	12	30.0
1-2	11	27.5
3-4	10	25.0
5-6	6	15.0
7 and more	1	2.5
Total	40	100.0

There were 40 such cases in which violence continued for a considerable length of time. The data was collected by the researcher herself and four trained investigators through interview with females or/and males. The couples were well-known to them due to close relations/friendship;³⁸

³⁸ This had an added advantage that the updated information is incorporated in this paper since the first draft of the paper. For instance, in one case the couple has recently separated when the husband was ousted by the wife; two couples divorced; whereas one of the victims of economic abuse has

hence the information is highly credible. The past and present development of the cases is generally known to the investigators.

In the small sample, for both partners a variety was found in respect of ages, ethnicity, education, occupation, socioeconomic class, marital status and number of children. Those no more in marital relations reported their past story which had put their marriage in trouble. This cross-section represents many variants of the Pakistani society and IPV takes place across the class divide. The sample couples had largely (93%) an urban background; people with somewhat rural background were only 7%. The occupational groups mentioned in Table 5 had internal diversity, such as the office workers included executive, telephone operator and computer-operator. The male laborers included rickshaw driver, cane-juice seller, factory worker, watchman, tailor, electrician, bus conductor.

Analysis

The details obtained through investigators' interviews and observations were recorded as case studies. For analysis, these descriptions were read again and again meticulously; in cases of confusion, further details were sought by the field investigators. The analysis was done through categorization of characteristics of partners and factors of IPV. Major factors are evaluated through quantitative method as well (see Table 8); it was meant to compare different cases. Details of life history of IPV cases is mentioned at suitable places in order to elaborate the actual conditions instead of hiding these in abstract statements or numbers.

Findings

Table 8 presents some important aspects of IPV. These will be discussed in the following sections.

Table 8: Couples by Aspects of Intimate Violence

(percentage in parentheses)

Aspect	Yes (%)	No (%)
Love marriage of the present partners of violence	8 (20.0)	-
Women as victim of	29 (72.5)	11 (27.5)

died due to persistent stress and bad health largely caused by job-related tensions which she could not escape due to minuscule income/disability of her husband.

physical/psychological/ emotional violence		
Men as victim of physical/ psychological/ emotional violence	11 (27.5)	29 (72.5)
Living in joint family	23 (57.5)	-
In-laws provoking violence on woman	23 (57.5)	-
Woman's parents supporting her actively	30 (75.0)	10 (25.0)
Physical abuse	26	-
Economic abuse	33 (82.5)	-
Psychological/emotional abuse	38 (95.0)	-
Sexual jealousy, multiple marriage, extramarital involvement	20 (50.0)	-
Man's bad habits (drugs, cigarettes, gambling, flying pigeons)	10 (25.0)	30 (75.0)
Couple/partner's migration as important reason	14 (35.0)	27 (67.5)
Filed suit with police	6 (15.0)	35 (87.5)

a. The categories of IPV

Regarding the process of violence, there were included 11 (27.5%) cases of male and 29 (72.5%) cases of female victims. Categories of violence regarding prevalence were ranked as psychological violence, emotional violence, economic violence, and physical violence in descending order.

The following sections deal with the reasons and process of violence. It would be followed by theoretical discussion.

b. Significant reasons and aspects of IPV

1. Psychological and emotional abuse

Psychological abuse is the first most prevalent form of violence found in this study. It involves and victimizes the partners, in-laws and the children in most of the cases. Insulting, abusing, blaming, threatening, deserting, throwing out of the house, and depriving of children, were common forms in this category. Character assassination of spouse and/or her/his relatives has been found common in cases of both female and male victims.

2. Economic abuse

The second major form of abuse is economic abuse. It is not necessarily due to poverty as this goes across the social classes and it is found a male quality victimizing women. It was also found the second most significant

reason of domestic violence in 1992 study. This abuse was reported in the form of refusing to maintain the wife and children, misappropriating wife's earnings/property/assets/savings, lottery money, etc. Jewelry and dowry are the most common causes of discord. Taking wife's income through various pretexts—joint saving; taking out money from a joint account; making her invest in joint car/property/business on which she has no control—were common forms observed in this study. A husband, an accountant by profession, inquired from his wife of the amount of her past earnings and also forced her to give him her salary, refusing which she was beaten. The marriage lasted only a few days.³⁹

3. *In-laws' provocations*

This has been a traditional factor creating trouble for a large number of couples. Usually the daughter-in-law is the worst sufferer in this conflict but the husband is also sandwiched in this conflict. There were 23 cases of provocative role by the mother-in-law or other in-laws. In the woman victim cases, it is mostly the husband who is either stopped from helping the wife, or he willingly joins his own family to escalate trouble. The domestic conflict with in-laws is triggered by very common reasons, such as: poor household skills, distribution of housework, not fulfilling the husband's rights, husband not taking side of the wife. Insult, threats, emotional abuse and physical violence is perpetrated by in-laws, as well in all the cases selected in this study. A newly-wed Pakhtun girl of 17 was regularly beaten by her sister-in-law for not washing pots, cleaning the house, etc. In a tribal culture the men are mostly away and the women are left to settle the score while living in small compound with co-wives and in-laws. In three similar cases the mother-in-law had been so inquisitive, blaming, displeased and unwelcoming for the bride that the divorce came up in few weeks, or few years. A case of serious depression was reported in a woman in love-marriage; both partners had to push their families for marriage; but the husband's mother could not tolerate that a woman, aged 24 took her son to a separate house, thus she tried to bring her back into the fold of joint family and engaged in the housework of two houses, one owned by the couple, and the second of the mother-in-law. She even stopped her from keeping any contact with her parents. Soon she developed depression; was taken back by her parents, where the husband did not come to settle the issue. Recently

³⁹ A case of young illiterate wife taken to a far-flung part of Pakistan is known to the author. There she was sold in gambling by her husband, of which a well-wisher told her. She escaped to her natal home one thousand mile away, after an ordeal. Is it economic abuse?

when a baby girl was delivered, her depression was relieved, the in-laws took her back, kept the newborn with them and threw new mother out after few days. Finally the police had to recover the baby and the court case was filed which ended in divorce by *khula*. The husband could not take stand against his mother's will. Another case of extreme control was reported as of the daughter-in-law who had to let her husband shift to his mother's room with his belongings because the mother-in-law was not happy with the baby daughter born 'so quickly' (1.5 years) after the first-born, a son. Married to her cousin, the professional woman had to leave husband's house soon to seek divorce, because there was no possibility for her to assert anything for her off-springs in that house. Mothers-in-law have certain formulations to ensure good luck and success in marriage, such as 'no two real sisters would be married to two real brothers' hence love affairs of this man with his cousin was rejected and he had to marry another cousin, but the affair continued, soon it interrupted the marital life in which the husband and his mother were equally responsible. In another case the daughter-in-law, also a professional, was forced to adjust to the lifestyle and culture of the in-laws, which she refused as it demanded a good deal of housework while she had a long working day in a bank. She refused to comply, took to a separate residence with her daughter, the husband did not accompany her, and finally she was divorced. In another case a clever father-in-law has been playing the role of 'traditional mother-in-law' in controlling the couple. He put strict financial control on the family, taking away the salary of his son for his business thus forcing the daughter-in-law to spend all her salary to meet her and her children's needs. The weak and sick mother-in-law was ineffective in the whole episode. There are more stories to elaborate this. In a case of migration abroad, the sister-in-law played a vicious role to tease the new bride and finally failed the marriage. Even after divorce, she engaged in stalking and harassing the divorcee.

4. *Childlessness and son-preference*

There were 12 childless couples in the sample. This aspect, though not referred directly, was important in dissatisfaction and frustration in life.⁴⁰ In one such case the husband used to call neighbor kids home to play with his pigeons and when the wife objected to his calling young girls on the roof-top he was furious. After five years of battering she decided to resist and got divorce. In a house-maid case, where after love marriage of

⁴⁰ In the 2007 study by Ali and Gavino this was the second most common reason in low-income community.

six girls born in a row, two were stillborn, two died at the age of 2 and 7 months due to illness as their father could not afford treatment, there survived two girls, who, now at the age of 13 and 10, are actively working as home-based workers to generate money, but the father is so much hateful of the daughter-producing wife that he asks, 'Leave my house. I do not want to see your face. I'll work hard only when I bring a second wife.' This wife is even earning for house-rent, the man, a rickshaw driver, is not keen to earn. She says, 'I have no place to go, so I keep bearing the blows every day'. A childless couple married in 1984, their relations rarely harmonious, as two times divorce has been pronounced, and the third one would be final. Yet the man says, 'Where would she go?', but the occasional series of violence has been on with insults, abuses, etc. The wife had been earning for all needs of family for many years when husband was jobless. The children of IPV homes are found mostly with signs of abnormal behavior or personality maladjustment.

5. *Long-distance migration*

There were 14 partner(s) whose migration had relevance to IPV. In an arranged marriage, apparently a good match, a high income family of England, tried to control the newly-wed girl from Pakistan and restricted her communication and meeting with her parents. In-laws tried to control her liberal style of living and forced her into a highly conservative lifestyle and norms of *purdah* (*hijab*). Later the issue was settled at submission of her parents' side. In another migration case of love marriage, the bride was about to join her husband in a foreign country, but he was controlled so much by his family that the relations strained. In an alien land she had to manage her stay all alone. He was so much influenced by his family that he doubted her capability to survive, thinking that she would beg and submit to his family's wishes to live with them in Pakistan while the husband was abroad for studies. The *sasural* (husband's family), pressurized her to accept this condition, and even went to the extent of mental torture, but she boldly faced all this and managed to get divorce through her determination and parents' support. Another case of lower class had problems of childlessness, narcotics and poor income. The addict husband maltreated the wife who had to live on her family's support, but later he went to Bangladesh, the country of origin of both the families, leaving the wife in Pakistan thinking her as useless for she bore no child. There his supply of drugs was cut-off, he started earning properly and then his mother made him to adopt his brother's son, so he called his wife from Pakistan and the issue was settled due to migration to a better environment. In another case of

migration, the husband, a medical doctor, who repudiated his wife within one week of marriage, had certain psychological inclination of sadism or personality disorder so he could not live responsibly in a family life. Since the marriage was arranged in Pakistan, and the girl's family met the prospective husband only twice, during which, they could not find any sign of abnormality, it happened only after the marriage that he started insulting and verbally torturing the bride. The mother-in-law joined the couple from Pakistan; and took the side of her son. The man, not ready to live as a disciplined husband, had been staying abroad for long, indulged in activities detested according to the Islamic standards of morality, thus the wife had to leave under threats. Later he was made to divorce by the Imam of the community. There are many cases of such across the continent marriages, where hopes vanish. When the brides from Pakistan join a lonely husband in foreign land, the couple may not get along, due to their own mismatch. If the husband's family lives nearby, then the matter can be aggravated due to their interference, as well.⁴¹ In such cases the expectations of the bride's family are not met which are mostly high due to man's foreign income. The marriage mostly takes place in Pakistan and later the visa issue also comes up to delay their union.⁴² In this way the Pakistani migrant families are suffering in marital adjustment alongside social and cultural adjustment abroad.

6. *Disability*

There are included two cases of blind couples. In one case of both blind partners of different ethnicity—man Pakhtun, the woman Punjabi—the woman suffered due to economic, physical and psychological abuse. She was forced to leave her job after marriage, live near his parents, adapt to their different culture, and be remained locked in a house from morning till evening. She was mostly left with very little food and no money at all. Already very weak due to poverty at her parents' home, she fell ill with TB. She was not allowed contraception, and three children were born under serious risk. Despite the advice of doctor she was made

⁴¹ In another case known to the author, the bride was accused of theft, and was made to leave England to escape from arrest and trial. In a case of marriage of a German woman with Pakistani man, the man's family kept two children and forced the wife to leave Pakistan.

⁴² In a high class highly educated family, the bride, first cousin, joined the husband after one year of marriage, because he was then transferred to the USA, so he could not get his wife's visa. Later they lived in Saudi Arabia, but could not develop harmony even in two years, and the conflict went on to the point of divorce. They did not have any child as well.

pregnant again and in the early stage of that pregnancy she died. She had never sufficient food for herself or the children, nor proper medicine and no care. Once she reported to her friend, 'Believe me we do not cook for four days, and live on the very little left in the fridge. My house is at the ground floor, and it is full of insects of all kinds'. The main reason was insensitivity of the husband about her needs. His tribal background had made him so whereas he used to work at a decent office as telephone operator. Later he married again and asked his second wife not to have children, whereas the previous wife desperately needed that understanding. Disability affects in other ways, too.⁴³

7. Husband as target of violence (total 11 cases)

There were two cases studied, where the wife had tried persistently to overpower the husband, through psychological pressures and dominating the household and social life affairs. She tried making the husband feel inferior, though he was more educated but he earned less and was less assertive than her. The husband preferred staying in marriage out of his kindness whereas divorce in Islam is fairly easy process for the man. Both these wives had steady income, secure job and a forceful personality due to the nature of the job; one in an office and the other in a school. One such husband later developed an extramarital affair as well. One wife belonged to a broken home; mother divorced; brought up by grandparents, and lived independently. In a case wife had studied only up to grade eight married to a cousin and had two children. Extra-marital affair of the wife with a relative of the husband could not be stopped by the husband rather he was eliminated by murder by unknown persons after five years of marriage. The wife married to man of her choice after spending a term in prison. Her sister was married to deceased husband's brother for compromise and compensation.

In another case of arranged marriage, the man was treated ill by the wife, as she had earlier affairs with good-looking men; but husband was not handsome. The daughters were also encouraged to criticize the father. When he was operated for by-pass surgery of heart, his temper became short. He was repeatedly refused and scolded when he demanded suitable food or any help from his children. He was also beaten by his

⁴³ In a case of exchange marriage of Siraiki family, a sighted woman gave birth to two blind daughters one after another and she was divorced under the fear of more blind babies. The husband's sister married to her brother had already died so divorce was not expected to bring any repercussion. The woman now lives with her daughter and brother's new wife and children, all in poverty.

wife's brother a few times. This continued till his death two years ago. The family is enjoying the financial gains of his pension, etc. In another case, the gambler husband was thrown out.

There were cases of mutual violence as well. An interesting case was of polygyny; wives used to fight and the husband beat them very often. The respondent wife reported that another wife had trapped the husband through black magic, so he did not take care of her. Wives quarreled over children issues, unequal maintenance and care, despite the fact that he had sold his first wife's (the respondent) jewelry to go to Dubai and to start his business twice. The first wife went to her parents. The battering was faced by the first wife and her children. Keeping two wives together and maltreating one is a naturally a source of dispute. 'I have a son and she has a son and he gave money for candy to her son and not mine, so we fought. She hit my son and I fought back. He became furious at me. When he tried to give me electric current I attacked him with a knife so I was saved.' The respondent also hates the other woman as: 'She is a woman of loose morals even then she is loved more by the husband. If he ever beats her she calls in the police'. Hence women are not always weak as is generally thought; they pay in violence in many cases and due to the same reasons one of the wives had to leave the marital home.

In another set of cases, the husbands face wrath of their wives because they do not financially support their wives properly, hence such are cases of economic abuse getting psychological abuse in return. One may call them mutual violence cases, but the husband had to face extreme problem due to his own failure and inadequacy. Mostly in such cases observed in this study when the children grow up and earn for themselves the father is sidelined. They prevent their father from being violent to their mother. There was another unique case of sectarian differences, which emerged after love marriage. The wife declared her compromise with husband's sect, making no dispute but silence. But her family continued pressing and dragging the issue, even trying the husband to change his religious beliefs and convert to their sect. With no fault of the couple, the in-laws pressurized the husband so much that he divorced the wife.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ In a similar case of religious difference, handled differently but wisely, the wife's family totally disconnected themselves and the couple remained happily though the difference came to be known was very serious and the couple remained childless, yet it was a love marriage which survived, as they adopted a baby as well. The difference was of Islamic and Qadiyani beliefs. The Qadiyanis have been declared non-Muslims by the government

It is observed that the methods of violence are usually the same, whether the victim is male or female; verbal abuse, insult, threats, suspicion on loyalty in marriage, criticizing other's physique, intelligence, family or abilities, etc. The only difference remains in physical abuse which is less likely to be directed at the male; however, in case of disease or disability, it can happen also. The men stay in such abusive marriages mostly because of consideration for the children or for good repute. Women try to cut men off from the relatives and supporters. Impending threats of physical violence remain there as the brothers or relatives of the wives can become their accomplices. In other set of cases, the man's love out of marriage becomes or seeks such accomplices. The husbands walk out of such homes as a show of anger and the angry wives feel sorry after some time, if they ever do.

8. *Divorce/separation*

Mostly such women are the ones who think they can live on their own means or their families can support them. A very bold woman remarked, 'I had decided if my family does not take me back I'll live on the street, or go to a shelter home'. Separation is seen as temporary as well long term, depending upon the possibility of the deserting partner returning.

9. *Tribal/feudal background*

Personalities raised in a tribal set-up are usually typical, as the cases have shown. They are mostly in-sensitive, caring little for women's need and may go for multiple marriages. They migrate to long distance as well, thus leave the wives at the mercy of their parents or in-laws. There was a man who married four times and ignored the wives badly, abused them, stayed away for long times and could not maintain them properly. He even did not show any desire to see his grown-up son, from the wife he had left behind, and who came all the way to locate him after twenty years. Once he married a woman about whom someone commented: 'she has blue eyes', and he left her at his uncles' place and disappeared,

of Pakistan, but they refuse to accept this version and can easily hide this identity. It is because that the difference lies in the belief about finality of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), which is a belief of the Muslims at large but the Qadiyanis believe in continuity of the series of prophets. It is highly sensitive issue because the Muslim girls do not marry non-Muslims and their marriage becomes null and void if the husband turns down his faith in Islam. The sectarian differences, referred in the previous case study, are only in practical life matters, which create trouble in daily observance of religion but without threat to the legality of marriage.

thinking that the blue-eyed women are unfaithful, and also because how someone could manage to see her eyes. Later he married a woman who was from Kashmir, she bore a son, but when she could not return from her natal home due to the border conflicts in Kashmir, he married another woman but also left her unattended and went to Karachi. When he was informed of her serious illness he came back but could not save her. He married his fourth wife in Karachi, but remained abusive and troubling the whole family even through his old age. Very recently he had divorced the fourth wife as well. Other cases of tribal culture are also reported with somewhat similar qualities.

Discussion

The study has dealt with not only the cases of two persons—husband and wife—but also of multiple wives, ex-husbands, boy-friends and girl friends. The issue of involvement of close-relatives of both the husband and wife meant including the whole joint or extended family in most of the cases. Regarding the types of abuse, the most common form is found to be psychological abuse, followed by economic and then physical abuse. As compared with the 1992 study, the rate of economic abuse seems going up; the most possible reason is women's increased participation in economic activities and in paid jobs. The sample is predominantly urban hence this aspect is highlighted. Economic abuse is found in many subtle forms. Social transformation in the past two decades has caused even a larger number of men moving out of the country for work, migration, study, etc. A big amount of money is extracted from the wife's family wherever it seems possible and feasible. A testimony to this is the advertisements for marriage which openly mention support for business or foreign citizenship as a part of transaction carried under marriage. The wife's side complies mostly if they have sufficient resources, feel it will benefit their daughter, or are under pressure of getting a suitable match. Such extortion happens while income, jewelry, dowry items, and property of the wife is taken out of her control, sold or usurped by the husband's side. Some other forms are also mentioned in this study. Women comply only under sheer trust, thinking it a joint venture to invest or spend, or they are threatened otherwise with serious forms of violence, divorce, deprivation of the custody of her children, scandals, etc. The wife's family in many cases goes out of way to keep their daughter's marriage intact due to the stigmas attached to divorce, separation, and a married daughter living in parents' house.

IPV is not anyway limited to one generation or one couple. It affects prospects of marriage, happiness and reputation of the whole

family, especially of the wife's brothers, sisters and daughters, whether married or unmarried. The binding cases of exchange marriages and two sisters married with two brothers result in destroying marriage of the other couple who might not have any trouble in their marriage. The mothers, who have proposed, advocated or initiated any proposal for marriage sometimes had to suffer if that marriage turns sour, indicating inferior status of women in marriage. They are blamed for being inadequate, corrupt, incompetent for controlling the daughter-in-law, so are simply detestable and disposable.

An important aspect of continuation or re-starting of cycle of violence is the understanding of mothers that the children need their father. This goes on despite the impending risk of violence. 'Mothers suffer due to their children, but at least my kids will have their father. I know he is kind at heart. It is only his bad luck that he got involved in bad circles. He has promised to behave.' This was stated by a wife who had depended upon her parents for ten years for shelter, food, education and security, even litigation cost. Trusting her criminal husband, she believes the story of his 'innocence' told in the last meeting in the court. Her parents and brothers ask: 'how can you just walk away with him now while he never contacted all of you even on Eids and festivals?' This deprivation, she contemplates, can be resolved at the cost of probable violence on her person and her children, only to have a father figure around. The naiveté shown by the wife, married at 17, now 33 years old, unable to earn sufficiently, is understandable. Another father, a gambler, who used to turn up occasionally to the family for getting money, one day asked the wife: 'Give me rupees 100,000 to arrange marriage of our daughter, then I'll come to attend the marriage.' The mother, a poor house-maid, knows how much difficult it is to arrange marriage of a daughter whose father is an absconder, and lives in another city. This clearly point to the highly patriarchal nature of the society.

On the other hand, women who earn sufficiently to survive, consider walking out of the abusive marriage. Their final decision depends upon the support from the natal family, or any other strong party they trust. But the basic decisive factor is that of woman's personality; she has to be confident enough to take risk and save her life from torture. There has been rise in incidence of divorce⁴⁵ due to the same reason that now women repudiate troublesome marriage and resist any social

⁴⁵ Recent reports in newspapers show that every month about 300 cases of *khula* divorce are filed in Karachi city courts, and the commonest reasons are: non-maintenance, domestic violence and forced marriage. Daily *Jehan Pakistan*, 19 November 2012.

pressure to continue it. The credit also goes to wide scale networks for women, legal aid and awareness about women rights both at the governmental and non-governmental levels. This has been confirmed by author's own study.⁴⁶ The practice of leaving a violent husband varies across the socioeconomic classes. It is the least in the poor class, where the women victims rarely have sufficient income, alternate residence and natal family support, though they might have the courage and awareness about it. In one such case the woman, along with three small kids, is supported by her parents, all eating extremely insufficiently, yet they have the sense that she needs to stay here as her husband, a first cousin, addict, working as bus conductor, had been trying to extort money out of their shared property in a fictitious case. He had recently divorced her. These are factors which need to be highlighted in the culture of poverty-stricken families. The last set of factors is related to external matters as migration, environmental crises, drugs, etc.

Theoretical Implications

A model can be suggested at this stage of analysis. In it, there are basically two sets of factors which can be highlighted in the form of a (proposed) Compulsion-Resistance Model. This Model explains that the intimate partners (mostly husband-wife) live in an environment having two sets of factors described below:

a. Factors of Compulsion

- i. Cultural notions about masculinity, femininity, ideal wife and mother, ideal husband and father, and ideal daughters and sons
- ii. Religious injunctions about the ideals explained above
- iii. Religious texts interpreted to seek compliance to the preferred ideals and notions
- iv. Economic pressures due to poverty, destitution, large families, and crises
- v. Marriage as a compulsory form of adult life
- vi. Traditional patterns of match-making mixed with a small number of modern ones
- vii. Traditional role of the mother-in-law and the in-laws
- viii. Son-preference

⁴⁶ Anwar Shaheen, 'Changing Cultural Patterns in Pakistan (1972-2006) with Special Reference to the Role and Perceptions of the Non-Governmental Actors of Change', PhD thesis (Unpublished), Pakistan Study Centre, University of Karachi, 2010.

b. Factors of Resistance

- i. Awareness of rights
- ii. Modern education
- iii. Modernist attitudes and courage to experiment
- iv. Agents of socialization inculcating outward personalities and liberal attitudes
- v. Freedom of interaction with the opposite gender in the public space
- vi. Anomalies and definite positions regarding rights and obligations of husband and wife in the interpretation of their system of beliefs of religious, sectarian, pseudo-religious and superstitious nature.
- vii. Possibilities of acquiring educational, economic, legal and political empowerment without any gender discrimination
- viii. A gender-bias free judicial system
- ix. Modern systems of seeking marriage partners such as marriage portals, matrimonial institutions
- x. Formal systems of support for the victims such as legal aid, shelters
- xi. Strong civil society upholding rights of the victims of customary laws, and other civil, political and cultural rights related to marriage.

These and similar factors give the individual a sense of individual rights in choosing and living in a marital union. The power or status of an individual within marriage is determined by the amount of compulsions imposed on him/her and the amount of resistance afforded by him/her thus defining his/her locale on the continuum from total submission to the traditional compulsions to a complete modernism (egalitarianism).

In Pakistan the situation has not stabilized enough to groom such personalities that might offer resistance to the traditional patterns of control implied in the institutions of marriage. Recently there has been observed a trend of fleeing from oppressive homes to cities with the help of relatives, friends or a paramour with whom one can marry under suitable conditions. It is really surprising to see such incidents among girls of highly traditional Pakhtun culture.⁴⁷ Oppressive marriage customs and a small space to rebel can give courage to the young minds especially who usually take risk without much thinking. Ethnically, it is seen that the ethnic groups having urban traditions and higher level of education are more open to free choice in marriage, as compared with those living under tribal, feudal and rural culture,

⁴⁷ Many such incidents are reported by the observers having inside knowledge, including the manager of a shelter home in Karachi.

found to be least supportive for awareness and realization of such rights.⁴⁸ Extension of oppressive trends is visible even among the Pakistani diaspora. Endogamy, though on decline, still is a revered tradition. Engagement at birth, child marriage, marriage in compensation, exchange marriage and marriage with big age differences are still accepted. The bride-price system still operates. An additional reason of discord comes from dowry, still a strong custom. Awareness of women about their rights in general and in marriage is gradually rising. The educational system does not take it seriously, but the social environment, media, family and peer groups, teach such rights. The performance of the civil society organizations is noteworthy in this respect; especially of the NGOs working for women's rights and advocacy that collect data on IPV and disseminate it.

Conclusion

The findings of the study indicate problems lying with certain aspects of marriage in Pakistan's society, such as the system of contracting marriage at the first place; it has many defects. The nature of residence of the new family determines prospects of violence among the husband and wife. Children are the third important aspect. Other aspects closely related to success of marriage, are: economic, psychological, sexual, and socio-environmental. The psychological aspect refers to mental health, laziness, affection, altruism, sense of responsibility, feeling inferior/superior, temperament, and personality traits related to social skills and adjustment. Economic aspect is crucial for survival and happiness. It is important to note that the economic factor is crucial in all the classes. Sexual satisfaction within marriage, though less talked about, is a prominent factor, as sexual jealousies sounded high in many sample cases. The socio-environmental factors significant for IPV include: availability of drugs/alcohol, gambling, crimes, migration, family's social power and prestige. Any crisis can hit the family, such as disability, death, business

⁴⁸ Observation and research studies by the author herself confirm these assertions. See, Anwar Shaheen 'Urban Women, Alternative Earning Strategies And the Exigencies of Globalization: A Study of Karachi', in S. Seweiringa and N. Katjasungkana (eds.), *The Future of Asian Feminism: Confronting Fundamentalisms, Conflicts and Neoliberalism* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), Chapter 9, pp.155-81; and 'Women's Economic Participation, Marriage, and Patterns of Support in Urban Karachi', in Ravinder Kaur, and Rajni Palriwala (eds.), *Marriage in Globalization Contexts: Exploring Change and Continuity in South Asia* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2014). Co-authored with Farhat Naz Rahman 'Womanhood in Pakistan, Status, Reproductive Rights and Marital Life: An Analysis', Rahm & UNFPA, 1997, confirms this on the national scale.

loss, litigation, imprisonment, etc. Financial, emotional and health crisis can come at any stage. The aged are especially vulnerable to health, retirement, disability and widowhood issues. Such crises or incidents also demand a high degree of tolerance for stress, hard work and sacrifice. Naturally, people have different levels of tolerance and thus they can be frustrated, reactive, and aggressive at times.

Many partners are seen being abusive after certain length of marriage, due to emerging new pressures and frustrations. In a patriarchal culture, where pre-marital or extra-marital affairs of men and women are hardly tolerated, the society gives more concessions to the man. If he dies or deserts his wife/family, someone usually turns up to support them. With rising materialism and selfishness, such a possibility is diminishing. Women, even today, usually look to their natal family for support in case of crises. Formal system of such support is very weak, not even the indigenous philanthropy, giving billions of rupees annually in Pakistan. This, points to the shock-absorbing capacity of the social system in which IPV runs as a common occurrence. Expanded opportunities for women's earning add to their survival possibilities and also give them hope to repudiate an abusive marriage household. The natal family nowadays tries to maintain regular contact with the married daughters even living abroad. It is also observed that in case of absence of such a support system, women either stay in abusive relationship or they live in poverty and distress in female-headed households. Women's better income, therefore, gives them courage to repudiate an abusive marriage. Male victimization, on the other hand, suggests that pressures and compulsions on men are rising whereas women are becoming more socially empowered.

Suggestions for Future Research and Action

Due to widespread intimate violence, attention has been given to proper legislation and institutionalization to combat it both by the governmental and non-governmental levels. However, its incidence yet needs to be investigated scientifically with larger samples in variegated settings. Implementation of such laws also needs review. In research, issues of psychological development of violent personalities and children of broken homes must be highlighted. People related with violent partners especially those doing mediation should be focused. Organized efforts to understand IPV through participatory research and then devising material for agents of socialization is needed.⁴⁹ Moreover, male victimization also needs a thorough investigation.

⁴⁹ For instance Paul Kevil, *Men's Work, How to Stop the Violence that Tears Our Lives*, transl. in Urdu by Amjad Tufail and Zohaib Yasir, *Mardana Tashaddud aur ooska Khatma* (Lahore: Takhleeqaat, 2010).