

Domestic violence against women in India a comparative analysis of NFHS-4 and 5

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Abstract: Married women in India who live in different states of India of experiencing physical domestic violence, which highlights the importance of having effective, scientifically supported, and culturally appropriate primary prevention measures. This study aimed to find correlations between domestic violence experience in early marriage today to guide primary prevention methods for this demographic. Because of the adverse effects on women's health, violence against women is now universally acknowledged as a severe public health issue. The findings of this research aims to highlight the general, "domestic violence" against women that typically occurs in the married home and includes all forms of economic, emotional, and physical abuse in adult relationships. A country's or region's demographic result, including women's health and health-seeking behaviour, is negatively impacted by domestic violence.

Keywords: Domestic violence, women, states, relationships, India,

Introduction:

Domestic violence's inclusion as a measure of gender equality for the fifth Sustainable Development Goal of the United Nations highlights the issue's worldwide impact. Individuals, families, communities, and society are all harmed by domestic abuse against women. In terms of people, it results in harm or death issues with reproductive health, dangerous drug and alcohol use, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, self-harm, and suicide. It causes miscarriage, forced abortions, stillbirths, low birth weights, preterm deliveries, and more acts of violence against families. Thus, domestic violence results from "cultural values, rules, and practices that afford men more status and power than women" (Torres, 1991, p. 128). It results in less involvement, diminished agency, and decreased economic productivity for communities and society. "The precision of the wording of this statement illustrates the challenge of defining violence against women. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women defines it as 'any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation

of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (Daruwalla et al., 2020, p. 01). A woman in India is frequently ridiculed and abused by her husband and other family members since, in accordance with traditional Indian thinking, a woman is not complete without a child. On the other hand, having too many kids in a family can encourage violence towards women, especially if the majority of the kids are girls. Strong son-worshipping tends to increase the overall number of kids in households in Indian society. A major cause of women’s health issues, domestic violence against women is a significant social problem that affects practically every nation in the modern world. Victims are frequently used to describe the perpetrators. Like other countries, “in India, spousal violence is still prevalent, and about 33% of ever-married women have ever experienced spousal physical, sexual or emotional violence from their current husband or most recent husband and 26% have experienced at least one in the 12 months preceding the survey” (Ahmad et al., 2019). According to a survey by “India’s National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), crimes against women committed by their husbands or other family members grew alarmingly from 2010 to 2016. Per 100,000 people, it was 8% in 2010 and 18% in 2016” (NCRB 2010; NCRB 2016). Determining the real truth and the variables that constantly contribute to the incidence of such violence is therefore crucial. This study’s primary goal is to determine the main influences of marital violence against women in India. “Truly said spousal violence is not a single level phenomenon rather than it is deep routed multilevel aspect. Most of the previous studies have been conducted by considering only individual factors through logistic regression approach” (T. Das & Roy, 2020 p, 02). For a clear and objective understanding, we used the two-level logistic regression approach with data from the NFHS-4 domestic violence module and the Handbook of Statistics of Indian States. A study conducted by the United Nation’s framework on domestic violence states that “all acts of gender-based-violence: physical, psychological, and abuse by a family member against women in the family, ranging from single assault to aggravated physical assaults, kidnapping, threats, intimation, coercion, stalking, humiliating verbal use, forcible or unlawful entry, arson, destruction of property, sexual violence, marital rape, dowry related violence, female genital mutilation, violence related to exploitation through prostitution, violence against household workers, and attempts to commit such acts shall be termed domestic violence” (Haobijam & Singh, 2021, p. 02).

Methodology

The present study uses the two latest available rounds of data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4, 5). The NFHS is the Indian version of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) international data collection project called the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). DHS surveys across the world collect information on key indicators of household characteristics, health, nutrition, family planning, reproductive and sexual health, and domestic violence against women. In India, NFHS surveys are implemented by the International Institute of Population Science (IIPS) under the stewardship of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. So far, five rounds of the NFHS surveys have been conducted, and the two latest rounds of data on which the present study is based were collected in 2015-16 and 2019-21, respectively. NFHS surveys are nationally representative for both rural and urban areas and cover more than 6,00,000 households in both rounds. For a large number of indicators, data is representative up to the district level. The domestic violence module is implemented at the state level and provides information on estimates of domestic violence against women at the state level. More details on the implementation of the domestic violence module and sampling design can be found in the reports of the survey. Therefore, the present study analyses domestic trends using NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (2019-21) data. We have also used socio-economic characteristics and state-level estimates. For comparison purposes, a simple percent point change method is used. Apart from this, the disaggregated estimate for rural-urban, wealth quintiles and state-level prevalence are used.

Table 1: Percentage of women aged 15 years and above ever-experienced physical violence in India

Socio-economic characteristics		NFHS-4 (2015-16)	NFHS-5 (2019-21)	Percent decline/increase
Residence	Urban	23.7	22.7	1.0
	Rural	31.0	29.1	1.9
Wealth status	Poorest	38.7	37.6	1.1
	Poorer	32.0	35	-3.0
	Middle	27.3	29.6	-2.3
	Richer	23.3	24.1	-0.8
	Richest	16.7	16.8	-0.1
State	New Delhi	24.1	26.2	-2.1
	Haryana	17.6	32.8	-15.2
	Himachal Pradesh	10.0	8.5	1.5
	J & K and Ladakh	09.3	10	-0.7
	Punjab	14.3	19	-4.7
	Rajasthan	23.2	22.6	0.6
	Madhya Pradesh	27.2	30.2	-3.0
	Chhattisgarh	17.8	33.9	-16.1
	Uttar Pradesh	32.7	33.2	-0.5
	Uttarakhand	17.8	13	4.8
	Bihar	38.6	37.2	1.4
	Jharkhand	30.6	29.6	1.0
	Odisha	31.0	33	-2.0
	West Bengal	26.1	31.5	-5.4
	Arunachal Pradesh	22.3	26.9	-4.6
	Assam	33.2	23.3	9.9
	Manipur	36.4	43.7	-7.3
	Meghalaya	14.1	26.9	-12.8
	Mizoram	08.5	13.2	-4.7
	Nagaland	09.4	12.5	-3.1
	Sikkim	13.2	5	8.2
	Tripura	26.8	26	0.8
	Goa	18.9	11.9	7.0
	Gujarat	13.0	18.1	-5.1
	Maharashtra	24.5	20.6	3.9
	Karnataka	42.5	22.9	19.6
	Kerala	09.2	13.5	-4.3
Tamil Nadu	41.3	44.2	-2.9	
Andhra Pradesh	33.7	43.7	-10	
Telangana	37.9	44.1	-6.2	
All India		28.7	26.9	1.8

Source: author's own compilation from DHS website

Results and Discussion

Table-1 presents the comparative results of domestic physical violence against women in India from 2015-16 and 2019-21. The table shows that at the national level, domestic violence against women is decline by 1.8 per cent. The above table has the socio-economic characteristic of experiences for the last 15 years against the physical domestic violence of women in India. The residence in urban areas in the year (2015-16) as compared to (2019-21) is decline by 1 percent. Similarly, the residence in rural areas in the year (2015-16) as compared to (2019-21) is decline by 1.9 percent. Therefore, it concludes that the physical domestic violence against women in rural India is declined. However, women's wealth status became rich became richer, and the poor became poorest as, per the study from 2015-16 to 2019-21. The data mentioned above table-1 significantly highlights the current status of physical domestic women violence against India's rich and poor families. The physical domestic violence against poorer women's wealth status in 2015-16, as compared to 2019-21, was decreased by 1.1 percent point. Similarly, the violence against the richest background domestic violence women's families in the same years respectively also increased by 0.1 percent point. Therefore, the above table-1 data verified that the physical violence against women in India is declining daily.

Furthermore, the state-wise data of India against domestic women violence. Each state's data having different from the others. Data in table-1 verified that Chhattisgarh state followed by Haryana is the highest in terms of physical domestic violence against women in India, while Karnataka state, followed by the state of Assam, reported the lowest violence that happened against women. By adjusting for the following confounders, it is possible to explain "the apparent link between spousal alcohol abuse and domestic violence (DV) experience: the educational level of the spouse, the satisfaction of the family with the dowry" (Maji et.al., 2022, p. 378), the level of spousal support the participant felt when in conflict with her spouse's family, stress, prioritising time to discuss the spouse's interests and situational acceptance of physical abuse.

Thus, this research concludes that physical domestic violence against women in India declined as compared to previous years. Although earlier research showed that tolerant attitudes about "physical spousal abuse were linked to higher rates of domestic violence in people living in slums, those studies looked at domestic violence over a lifetime rather than in the first few weeks or months of marriage" (Kalokhe, et al., 2018). The discrepancy can be

explained by the fact that, as opposed to her initial experience of domestic violence, which was measured in our study, the normalisation of domestic violence is more likely to have an impact on a woman's propensity to stay in an abusive relationship. The main aims of this study are among Indian states and union territories with high and low rates of domestic violence against women, whether there is any relationship between individual-level (women-level) features and state-level characteristics (variables). The study also draws attention to the fact that, even after controlling for sociodemographic factors, states and union territories with greater unemployment and poverty rates had a higher likelihood of experiencing marital violence against women than those with lower literacy rates.

Conclusion:

The phenomenon of domestic violence is global. Though other members of the conjugal home are frequently at fault, current or previous spouses are primarily blamed for violence against most women. In this present study, we have tried to investigate the socio-economic traits of women significantly associated with domestic violence. This article's primary goal is to determine how often domestic violence is in India's states so that it can investigate the socio-economic factors that have a significant impact on violence. The age of women is not a significant covariate to impact domestic violence in the area, even though the generation of women is thought to be a substantial factor for the occurrence of domestic violence in other states of India. Despite the passage of, violence against women and girls remains a significant obstacle and a danger to Indian women's empowerment. Planners of policies and programmes may take note of the study's findings to address the problem of domestic violence encountered by married women in the area.

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