



# Socio-economic Determinants of Domestic Violence among Married Women in Pakistan: An Analysis of PDHS 2017-18

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## Abstract

**Background:** Violence against women is a multidimensional global phenomenon with endemic situation in Pakistan. Violence against women negatively affects their personality, lifestyle, health and particularly reproductive practices. The aim of the present research is to find out the relationship between socio-demographic factors and domestic violence rate among married women in Pakistan.

**Methods:** Secondary data collected by Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2017-18 was used for analysis purpose. Women between the ages 15-49 who experienced any domestic violence and were willing to share information were included in this study and total 4085 (n=4085) women fulfilled the required criteria. Socio-demographic factors are selected as independent variables and domestic violence with its two types physical violence and emotional violence is selected as dependent variable. Descriptive statistics are used to find out the basic patterns in the data. Binary logistic regression is used to find out the relationship between socio-demographic factors and probability of facing domestic violence.



**Results:** Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents show that majority of the respondents (51.1%) were illiterate ages between 25-39 (59%). Majority of the respondents have at-least one living children (88.5%), belonged to Punjab (23.4%) and have husband's with secondary level of education (33%). The major determinants of domestic violence were found to be age, educational level, number of living children, type of place of residence, wealth index, and region belonged to and husband/partner education and occupation.

**Keywords:** Domestic Violence, Physical Violence, Emotional Violence, Socio-Economic Determinants.

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## Introduction

Gender based violence is defined as any act of violence that may results in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women (UN,1993 & 1995).According to the United Nations Declaration (1993), the main cause of Gender based violence is historically unequal power relation between men and women which led to domination and discrimination against women in society. Domestic violence is an important type of violence which has a number of forms i.e. physical violence, sexual abuse, intimidation, emotional abuse and assault. The forms of domestic violence included in the present study consist of only physical and emotional violence (Bosede & Alokun, 2013).

Domestic violence is a global issue and women all over the world either living in developing or developed country facing this problem. Domestic violence badly affects their basic human rights all over the globe. According to World Health Organization (WHO), domestic violence is the violation of basis human rights of women and it denies their equality, security and freedom in society (WHO, 2012). It also negatively affects their emotional, physical and psychological well-being with a number of long term and short term consequences. Results of the previous studies further indicate that it decrease the women's decision making power in family matters as well (UN Women, 2012; Panda, 2005; Mamdouh et al., 2012).

A study conducted by IIPS, 2009 & Marium 2014 found that higher economic status of women is negatively associated with the domestic violence. The woman with higher economic status is less likely to face domestic violence as

compared to woman with low socio-economic status (IIPS, 2009; Marium, 2014). Women living in rural areas are more prone to domestic violence as compared to urban ones and women living in low income residential areas are more likely to be victim of domestic violence and have abusive relationship (Panda & Agarwal, 2009).

## Objective of the Study

The objective of the present research is to investigate the relationship between socio-demographic factors and probability of domestic violence faced by women in Pakistan.

## Methodology

The present study is quantitative in nature. Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2017-18 which was carried out by the National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS), Islamabad, Pakistan was used as data source for the present research. PDHS data is collected from all the four regions of Pakistan including Gilgit-Baltistan (GB), Islamabad capital territory (ICT), Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). PDHS is the largest household-based survey ever conducted in Pakistan. Trained interviewers administered the survey either in national language (Urdu) or one of three regional languages (Punjabi, Sindhi, and Pashto) depending on the preference of household members. The data is collected at national level in Pakistan by using a well-structured questionnaire. The reason behind using PDHS data is its high reliability and validity.

The total sample size of PDHS consists of 50495 ever married women ages 15-49 years. Among them, 4085 women were selected for the



present research who faced any physical or emotional violence by their current or former husband/partner and were willing to share the information. In the present research, socio-demographic factors i.e. age, educational level, residential area, number of living children, wealth index, women current working status, region belonged to, husband/partner education and husband/partner occupation were selected as independent variable and domestic violence with its two types physical violence and emotional violence was selected as dependent variable. The conflict tactics scale was used to measure physical and emotional violence. Domestic violence was measured by asking following set of questions from women:

- (Does/did) your (last) husband/partner ever do any of the following things to you?
- a) Slap you?
  - b) Twist your arm or pull your hair?
  - c) Push you, shake you, or throw something at you?
  - d) Punch you with his fist or hit you with something that could hurt you?
  - e) Kick you, drag you or beat you up?
  - f) Try to choke you or burn you on purpose?

- g) Threaten or attack you with a knife, gun, or any other weapon?
- h) Physically force you to have sexual intercourse with him even when you did not want to?
- i) Force you to perform any sexual acts you did not want to?

Emotional violence among ever married women ages 15-49 was measured by using the following set of questions:

- (Does/did) your (last) husband ever?
- a) Say or do something to humiliate you in front of others?
  - b) Threaten to hurt or harm you or someone close to you?
  - c) Insult you or make you feel bad about yourself?

Descriptive statistics are used to find out the basic patterns in the data. Binary logistic regression is used to find out the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and probability of facing domestic violence. No ethical approval was required for using PDHS data as it is in public domain and freely available to use for analysis purpose.

## Results and Discussions

**Table 1. Demographic Profile**

Variables	Percentage %	Frequency N= 4085
<b>Experienced any Physical violence</b>		
No	75.4	3079
Yes	24.6	1004
<b>Experienced any emotional violence</b>		
No	69.6	2842
Yes	30.4	1243
<b>Highest educational level</b>		
No education	51.1	2087
Primary	13.8	565
Secondary	20.0	818
Higher	15.1	615
<b>Age</b>		



15-24	17.2	701
25-34	39.5	1613
35+	43.4	1771
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>	<b>Frequency N= 4085</b>
<b>Number of living Children</b>		
None	11.5	469
1-2	29.1	1188
3-4	32.0	1308
5+	27.4	1120
<b>Native language of respondent</b>		
English	.0	2
Urdu	8.7	354
Sindhi	9.4	382
Punjabi	21.9	894
Sariaki	7.6	310
Baluchi	4.6	186
Pushto	22.2	907
Other	25.7	1050
<b>Type of place of residence</b>		
Urban	48.4	1978
Rural	51.6	2107
<b>Wealth index</b>		
Poorest	19.4	794
Poorer	23.1	943
Middle	19.3	787
Richer	18.3	747
Richest	19.9	814
<b>Respondent currently working</b>		
No	86.0	3514
Yes	14.0	571
<b>Region</b>		
Punjab	23.4	955
Sindh	18.8	770
KPK	14.9	609
Balochistan	10.4	425
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>	<b>Frequency N= 4085</b>
GB	6.9	282
ICT	6.9	281
AJK	12.2	500
FATA	6.4	263
<b>Husband/partner's education level</b>		



No education	27.2	1112
Primary	13.2	538
Secondary	33.0	1348
Higher	23.6	964
Don't know	.0	2
<b>Husband/partner's occupation</b>		
Did not work	4.8	195
Professional/technical/managerial	16.6	678
Clerical	2.9	118
Sales	12.3	501
Agricultural - self employed	12.1	496
Services	7.0	285
Skilled manual	20.4	833
Unskilled manual	20.6	841
Don't know	.1	5

The above table shows that majority of the respondents (75.4%) were not facing any physical violence and only (24.6%) of them were facing any physical violence. In the same way, majority of the respondents (69.6%) were not facing any emotional violence as well and only (30.4%) of them were facing any sort of emotional violence by their husband/partners. The rate of women facing physical or emotional violence was about ¼ (25%) of the total sample which is alarming and comparatively high than neighbor countries of Pakistan.

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents show that majority of the respondents were illiterate (51.1%) ages 35+ years (43.4%) and only (17.2%) of them were ages between 15-24 years. Majority of the respondents (32%) have more than 3-4 children and only (11.5%) of them have no children.

Majority of the respondent's native language was Punjabi and Pashto and only two respondents (.0%) native language was English. Respondents were nearly equal in number from both rural (51.6%) and urban areas (48.4%). There was only little variation among the wealth index of the respondents. Most of the respondents (86%) were not working anywhere or doing any job and only (14%) of them were employed.

A large number of respondents were from region of Punjab and Sind (42.2%) and only (6.4%) of them were from FATA, (6.9%) were from ICT and (6.9%) of them were from Gilgit Baltistan (GB). Most of the respondents husband's/partners have secondary level of education (33%) and (27.2%) of them were illiterate.

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**Table 2. Bi-Variate Analysis**

Variables	Physical Violence		p= Value	Emotional Violence		p= Value
	No	Yes		No	Yes	
<b>Highest educational level</b>						
No education	69.1% (1441)	30.9% (645)		35.6% (1345)	64.4% (742)	



Primary	74.5% (420)	25.5% (144)	P< .000	68.5% (387)	31.5% (178)	P< .000
Secondary	81.8%(669)	18.2%(149)		75.9% (621)	24.1% (197)	
Higher	89.3% (549)	10.7% (66)		79.5% (489)	20.5% (126)	
<b>Age</b>						
15-24	79.7% (559)	20.3% (142)	P>.008	75.3% (528)	24.7% (173)	P< .001
25-34	73.7% (1187)	26.3% (424)		67.5% (1089)	32.5% (524)	
35+	75.3% (1333)	24.7% (438)		69.2% (1225)	30.8% (546)	
<b>Number of living Children</b>						
None	88.1% (413)	11.9% (56)	P< .000	81.2% (381)	18.8% (88)	P< .000
1-2	78.5% (932)	21.5% (255)		72.8% (865)	27.2% (323)	
3-4	74.5% (974)	25.5% (334)		68.3% (893)	31.7% (415)	
5+	67.9% (760)	32.1% (359)		62.8% (703)	37.2% (417)	
<b>Type of place of residence</b>						
Urban	77.5% (1533)	22.5% (444)	P<.002	71.9% (1423)	28.1% (555)	P<.001
Rural	73.4% (1546)	26.6% (560)		67.3% (1419)	32.7% (688)	
<b>Variables</b>	<b>Physical Violence</b>		<b>p= Value</b>	<b>Emotional Violence</b>		<b>p= Value</b>
	Yes	No		Yes	No	
<b>Wealth index</b>						
Poorest	69.1% (549)	30.9% (245)	P<.000	64.6% (513)	35.4% (281)	P<.000
Poorer	69.9% (658)	30.1% (284)		62.6% (590)	37.4% (353)	
Middle	74.1% (583)	25.9% (204)		70.0% (551)	30.0% (236)	
Richer	77.6% (579)	22.4% (167)		71.8% (536)	28.2% (211)	
Richest	87.2% (710)	12.8% (104)		80.1% (652)	19.9% (162)	
<b>Respondent currently working</b>						
No	75.3% (2644)	24.7% (868)	P<.644	69.8% (2453)	30.2%(1061)	P<.418
Yes	76.2% (435)	23.8% (136)		68.1% (389)	31.9% (182)	
<b>Region</b>						
Punjab	78.3% (748)	21.7% (207)	P<.000	75.3% (719)	24.7% (236)	P<.000
Sind	87.0% (668)	13.0% (100)		87.1% (671)	12.9% (99)	
KPK	65.2% (397)	34.8% (212)		50.2% (306)	49.8% (303)	
Baluchistan	54.1% (230)	45.9% (195)		63.5% (270)	36.5% (155)	
GB	91.5% (258)	8.5% (24)		73.4% (207)	26.6% (75)	
ICT	78.6% (221)	21.4% (60)		75.8% (213)	24.2% (68)	
AJK	84.8% (424)	15.2% (76)		72.2% (361)	27.8% (139)	
FATA	50.6% (133)	49.4% (130)		36.1% (95)	63.9% (168)	



<b>Husband/partner's education level</b>						
No education	68.0% (755)	32.0% (356)	P<.000	64.5% (717)	35.5% (395)	P<.000
Primary	73.4% (395)	26.6% (143)		67.7%(364)	32.3%(174)	
Secondary	76.7% (1033)	23.3% (314)		69.6% (938)	30.4% (410)	
Higher	84.5% (815)	15.5% (149)		77.3% (745)	22.7% (219)	
Don't know	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)		100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	
<b>Husband/partner's occupation</b>						
Did not work	73.3% (143)	26.7% (52)		62.6% (122)	37.4% (73)	
Professional/technical/managerial	82.6% (559)	17.4% (118)		76.5% (519)	23.5% (159)	
Clerical	87.3% (103)	12.7% (15)		70.3% (83)	29.7% (35)	
Variables	Physical Violence		p= Value	Emotional Violence		p= Value
	Yes	No		Yes	No	
Sales	73.7% (369)	26.3% (132)	P<.000	70.9% (355)	29.1% (146)	P<.000
Agricultural - self employed	71.7% (355)	28.3% (140)		70.4% (349)	29.6% (147)	
Services	78.6% (224)	21.4% (61)		72.6% (207)	27.4% (78)	
Skilled manual	77.2% (643)	22.8% (190)		70.5% (587)	29.5% (246)	
Unskilled manual	70.2% (590)	29.8% (251)		63.1% (531)	36.9% (310)	
Don't know	80.0% (4)	20.0% (1)		80.0% (4)	20.0% (1)	

The above table presents the results of chi-square test to find the association between socio-demographic factors and probability of women of facing domestic violence. The findings of the study show that education of the respondent is significantly associated with probability of facing physical and emotional violence (p<.000). Results show that physical violence was experienced by (30.9%) illiterate women, (25.5%) by primary pass women, (18.2%) by secondary pass and (10.7%) by women with higher level of education. It clearly indicates that as the qualification of the respondent increased, the probability of facing physical and emotional violence decreased. Results further indicate that younger women are less likely to face physical or emotional violence (p<.008) as compared to aged ones.

(20.3%) of the respondents ages 15-24 responded that they faced physical violence and (24.7%) faced emotional violence as well. Among age group (25-34 years), this rate was increased to (26%) and (32.5%) respectively. It was interestingly found that the rate of domestic violence once again started decreasing after 34 years of age. While finding the association between type of place of residence and domestic violence, it was found that (22.5%) of the women living in urban areas were facing physical violence and emotional violence (26.6%). One reason behind this increase in domestic violence rate can be that women living in rural areas usually have lower level of education, are poor and unemployed. It increases their chances to prone to be victim of domestic violence. Wealth of the





respondent was also found a significant determinant of domestic violence. It was concluded by a number of past studies that women who are wealthy and rich have lower chances of facing domestic violence. The results of the present study support the findings of previous studies and show that as the wealth status of women changed from poorest to richest, the rate of domestic violence decreased significantly.

Women working status was not found significantly associated with domestic violence rate. The findings of present study are different from previous ones who found significant relationship between these two variables. The findings further indicate that the region of the respondents was also significantly associated with probability of facing domestic violence. Women living in FATA were more likely to face physical (49.4%) and emotional violence (63.9%)

followed by Baluchistan (45.9%) & (36.5%) and KPK (34.8%) & (49.8%). The domestic violence rate was comparatively low in Punjab, Sind, GB, ICT and AJK. Above table also indicates that husband/partner level of education was significantly associated with physical and emotional violence. It was found that as the educational level of the respondent increased, their chances to commit domestic violence significantly decreased. In the same way, different domestic violence pattern were observed among husband's belonged to different occupations. Husbands who were not working or working in sales, agriculture, self-employed and unskilled manual labor were more prone to commit physical and emotional violence as compare to husbands who were doing clerical, services and skilled manual jobs.

**Table 3. Multivariate-Analysis**

Variables	Physical Violence			Emotional Violence		
	OR	95CI		OR	95CI	
		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper
Highest educational level						
Illiterate <sup>R.C</sup>						
Primary	.766	.620	.946	.834	.683	1.017
Secondary	.498	.407	.608	.575	.479	.691
Higher	.269	.205	.352	.467	.377	.579
Age						
15-24	.773	.624	.957	.735	.602	.897
25-34	1.087	.931	1.26	1.080	.934	1.248
35+ <sup>R.C</sup>						
Number of living Children						
None <sup>R.C</sup>						
1-2	2.018	1.478	2.756	.389	.300	.506
3-4	2.529	1.863	3.433	.630	.528	.751
5+	3.484	2.565	4.731	.783	.662	.927
Variables	Physical Violence			Emotional Violence		
	OR	95CI		OR	95CI	
		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper





<b>Native language of respondent</b>						
English	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Urdu	.966	.699	1.337	.739	.554	.987
Sindhi	.782	.560	1.092	.367	.261	.516
Punjabi	1.278	1.017	1.607	.964	.787	1.180
Sariaki	1.360	.992	1.863	.817	.606	1.101
Baluchi	5.613	4.034	7.809	2.997	2.180	4.122
Pushto	3.352	2.720	4.131	2.626	2.174	3.171
Other <sup>R.C</sup>						
<b>Type of place of residence</b>						
Urban <sup>R.C</sup>						
Rural	.800	.693	.923	1.243	1.087	1.421
<b>Wealth index</b>						
Poorest	3.047	2.361	3.932	2.205	1.760	2.762
Poorer	2.947	2.298	3.777	2.408	1.939	2.991
Middle	2.389	1.841	3.099	1.724	1.370	2.169
Richer	1.969	1.506	2.575	1.584	1.253	2.003
Richest <sup>R.C</sup>						
<b>Respondent currently working</b>						
No	1.050	.853	1.292	.924	.764	1.118
Yes <sup>R.C</sup>						
<b>Region</b>						
Punjab <sup>R.C</sup>						
Sindh	.541	.417	.702	.449	.348	.581
KPK	1.930	1.538	2.421	3.017	2.430	3.746
Balochistan	3.064	2.398	3.915	1.749	1.367	2.237
GB	.336	.215	.525	1.104	.816	1.493
ICT	.981	.709	1.357	.973	.713	1.326
AJK	.648	.485	.864	1.173	.918	1.498
FATA	3.532	2.652	4.704	5.388	4.026	7.210
	<b>Physical Violence</b>			<b>Emotional Violence</b>		
<b>Variables</b>	<b>OR</b>	<b>95CI</b>		<b>OR</b>	<b>95CI</b>	
		<b>Lower</b>	<b>Upper</b>		<b>Lower</b>	<b>Upper</b>
<b>Husband/partner's education level</b>						
No education <sup>R.C</sup>						
Primary	.768	.611	.965	.868	.697	1.080
Secondary	.645	.539	.771	.793	.670	.939
Higher	.388	.313	.481	.534	.439	.648
Don't know	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.
<b>Husband/partner's occupation</b>						
Did not work <sup>R.C</sup>						



Professional/technical/managerial	.581	.399	.844	.512	.364	.719
Clerical	.400	.214	.750	.705	.432	1.150
Sales	.984	.676	1.431	.687	.485	.974
Agricultural - self employed	1.085	.747	1.575	.704	.497	.997
Services	.749	.489	1.146	.630	.426	.930
Skilled manual	.813	.569	1.160	.700	.506	.970
Unskilled manual	1.170	.824	1.660	.976	.707	1.346
Don't know	.688	.075	6.293	.418	.046	3.810

The results of the binary logistic regression show that educational level of the respondent was significantly associated with chances to being victim of physical and emotional violence. Women with higher qualification have less chances to be victim of physical violence OR .269 [.205-.352] or emotional violence OR .467 [.377-.579] as compared to illiterate ones. The possible reason behind it can be that educated women better knows how to effectively deal with day to day affairs of married life and thus can easily overcome the misunderstandings in conjugal relationship if any.

Age of the respondents was positively associated with physical and emotional violence. As the age increased, the rate of physical and emotional violence also showed increasing trend. Results indicate that younger women were less likely to prone to physical OR .773[.624-.957] and emotional violence OR .735[.602-.897] as compared to aged ones. One possible reason behind this trend can be that at younger age, husbands and wife are at the start of their married life, have strong sexual urges and emotions for each other. With the passage of time, these emotions start to decrease due to marital responsibilities like arranging food and shelter for children and thus increase the chances of domestic violence. Findings of the study further point out that women with higher number of children have higher chances to face physical violence OR 3.48[2.57-4.73] but interestingly less chances to face emotional violence OR .783 [.662-.927]. Reason behind

this interesting finding can be that being a longer victim of physical violence makes a women used to this sort of situation and ultimately she starts to consider this brutal act as routine and thus is less emotionally disturbed.

While investigating the relationship between the variables of interests, type of place of residence was found significant predictor of domestic violence and women living in rural areas were found less likely to face physical violence OR .0800 [.693-.923] but interestingly more likely to face emotional violence OR 1.087[1.87-1.421]. Results further indicate the wealth index is also closely associated with domestic violence and poorest women have 3.04% more chances to face physical violence OR 3.04 [2.36-3.93] and 2.205% more chances to face emotional violence OR .0800 [.693-.923]. Current working status of women was surprisingly not found correlated with physical or emotional violence OR .1050 [.853-1.29], OR 924 [.764-1.11]. Findings of the study point out that women living in Baluchistan, KPK and FATA have higher chances to face domestic violence as compared to Punjab. On the other hand, women living in Sindh, GB, ICT and AJK have less chances to face domestic violence as compared to Punjab. Husband /Partner with higher level of education have less chances to commit domestic violence as compared to illiterate ones OR .388 [.313-.481]. In the same way, husband/partner occupation was also associated with domestic violence rate and data



shows that husbands who were linked to professional/technical/managerial, clerical, sales, services and skilled manual were less likely to commit domestic violence as compared to husband's who do not work. Similarly, husbands attached with agriculture, self-employed and unskilled occupation were more likely to commit this brutal act as compared to husband's who do not work.

#### **Recommendations and policy implications**

On the basis of results, a number of recommendations are proposed to overcome the problem of domestic violence. First, there is dire need to start awareness campaigns about the severity and intensity of this issue at national and international level. It will help policy makers to recognize the consequences of this problem on society and urgency to overcome this problem as earliest possible. Second, Government which is already working for women better education should further work hard for their educational and employment opportunities. It will help to decrease domestic violence rate among women as findings of the present study show that unemployed and women with low level of education are more likely to prone to domestic violence as compared to educated and employed ones. Third, most of the women do not report domestic violence faced by them in their marital relationship. Such women should be encouraged to report these cases so Government may understand the severity and intensity of the issue and make suitable laws and policies accordingly, and strictly implement the existing laws if any. Forth, Seminars are important tool of opinion making. Different seminars should be arranged to bring awareness among women regarding this issue and educate them about the solution and ways to overcome this problem so they may take courageous steps against domestic violence if ever faced in life. Fifth, Government should establish shelter homes for violence victims, ensure their access to counseling facility, establish legal assistance centres at district level

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and build pressure by human rights groups to effectively implement laws against domestic violence in the country. Government should also allocate more funds for women related developmental projects.

#### **Conclusion**

On the basis of findings of the study, it is concluded that despite the commitment and extensive efforts by the Government of Pakistan, the rate of domestic violence is prevalent in Pakistan. It has a number of long and short term consequences on women health and overall wellbeing. To relief the victims of domestic violence, there is need to take certain steps including conducting awareness campaigns, seminars, concentrate on women education and provide them better educational and employment opportunities. There is also need to conduct further studies on the same topic to explore the multiple dimensions of this issue to comprehensively understand and make fruitful policies to stop it.

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