

Introduction

Violence against women and girls continues to be a global epidemic that kills, tortures, and maims – physically, psychologically, sexually and economically. It is one of the most pervasive of human rights violations, denying women and girls equality, security, dignity, self-worth, and their right to enjoy fundamental freedoms. Violence against women is present in every country, cutting across boundaries of culture, class, education, income, ethnicity and age. Even though most societies proscribe violence against women, the reality is that violations against women’s human rights are often sanctioned under the garb of cultural practices and norms, or through misinterpretation of religious tenets. Moreover, when the violation takes place within the home, as is very often the case, the abuse is effectively condoned by the tacit silence and the passivity displayed by the state and the law-enforcing machinery (**UNICEF, 2000**)

Violence against women (VAW) has gained worldwide interest among researchers in both developed and developing economies in recent years. Domestic violence or wife abuse, including physical abuse towards adult and adolescent women, by male intimate partners, is one of the most common forms of

gender-based violence. A great number of detailed studies have been conducted particularly in the West, conceptualizing violent relationships and wife abuse. Similar research has been carried out in non-Western societies as well (**Faruk Kocacik, et al., 2007**)

Violence against women has been recently recognized by the United Nations as a fundamental abuse of women human rights (UN Resolution 48/104). Historically, however, little attention has been given to domestic violence as a broad social issue, or as one relevant to public health. Even less effort has been devoted to tackling the underlying causes of abuse. The sensitivities and stigma associated with domestic violence, the conceptualization of it primarily as a judicial and legal issue, and the lack of data on dimensions of the abuse have hampered understanding and the development of interventions. (**LORI L. HEISE, et al., 1994**)

The vast majority of perpetrators of domestic violence are men, who deliberately use abusive behavior to control their partners and former partners. They can come from any ethnic group, religion, class or neighborhood. They may be older or younger. However, whilst they may also be any gender, the majority of perpetrators are men. (**Women's Aid Federation of England, 2006**)

About 95% of reported assaults on spouses or ex-spouses are committed by men against women. (**Carrillo Roxanna, 1992**)

Domestic Violence isn't just hitting, or fighting, or an occasional mean argument. It's a chronic abuse of power. The abuser tortures and controls the victim by calculated threats, intimidation, and physical violence. Actual physical violence is often the end result of months or years of intimidation and control (**C.J.Newton, MA, 2001**).

Domestic violence is a real violence, often resulting in permanent injuries or death. Battering is a widespread societal problem with consequences reaching far beyond individual families. It is conduct that has devastating effects for individual victims, their children and their communities. In addition to these immediate effects, there is growing evidence that violence within the "family becomes the breeding ground for other social problems such as substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, and violent crimes of all types. Domestic violence against women is not merely a domestic issue; but, rather a complex socio-economical crisis that threatens the interconnected equilibrium of the entire social structure. (**Carrillo Roxanna, 1992**)

Among women aged between 15 and 44 years, acts of violence cause more death and disability than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war combined. Perhaps the most pervasive human rights violation that we know today, violence against women devastates lives, fractures communities, and stalls development. It takes many forms and occurs in many places – domestic violence in the home, sexual abuse of girls in schools, sexual harassment at work, rape by husbands or strangers, in refugee camps or as a tactic of war. (**Baher Kamal, 2011**)

The global dimensions of this violence are alarming, as highlighted by studies on its incidence and prevalence. No society can claim to be free of such violence, the only variation is in the patterns and trends that exist in countries and regions. Domestic violence is considered the most prevalent yet relatively hidden and ignored form of violence against women and girls. While reliable statistics are hard to come by, studies estimate that, from country to country, between 20 and 50 per cent of women have experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner or family member. (*UNICEF, 2000*)

Hypothesis:

Gap of knowledge regarding the frequency of domestic violence among married women in rural areas.

Aim of the Work

Objectives:

- 1) To measure the frequency of domestic violence (physical, sexual and psychological) among women attending Belefia Hospital in Beni Suef.
- 2) To identify risk factors associated with domestic violence.

Review of Literature

(1)-Definition of domestic violence:

There is no universally accepted definition of violence against women. Some human rights activists prefer a broad-based definition that includes "structural violence" such as poverty, and unequal access to health and education. Others have argued for a more limited definition in order not to lose the actual descriptive power of the term. In any case, the need to develop specific operational definitions has been acknowledged so that research and monitoring can become more specific and have greater cross-cultural applicability. *(UNICEF, 2000)*

The 1997 Report of the Task Force on Domestic Violence defines domestic violence as: The use of physical or emotional force, or threat of physical force, including sexual violence, in close adult relationships. This includes violence perpetrated by spouse, partner, daughter or any other person who is a close blood relation to the victim. Women's Aid, in their report, *Making the Links*, defines domestic abuse as including physical, mental and sexual violence and further: being made to have sex without giving consent, mental cruelty,

isolation from family and friends, deprivation of family income or car, prevented from taking up employment, or attending education or training, deliberate damage to pets, clothes, property or other personal items (*Pavee Point, 2011*)

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) defines violence against women 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." This definition refers to the gender-based roots of violence, recognizing that "violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men." It broadens the definition of violence by including both the physical and psychological harm done towards women, and it includes acts in both private and public life (*UNICEF, 2000*)

The definition identifies three areas in which violence commonly takes place:

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence that occurs in the family, including battering; sexual abuse of female children in the household; dowry-related violence; marital rape; female genital mutilation and other

traditional practices harmful to women; non-spousal violence; and violence related to exploitation;

- Physical, sexual and psychological violence that occurs within the general community, including rape; sexual abuse; sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere; trafficking in women; and forced prostitution;
- Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.(**UNDPI, 1996**)

Domestic violence, as defined, includes violence perpetrated by intimate partners and other family members, and manifested through: Physical abuse such as slapping, beating, arm twisting, stabbing, strangling, burning, choking, kicking, threats with an object or weapon, and murder. It also includes traditional practices harmful to women such as female genital mutilation and wife inheritance (the practice of passing a widow, and her property, to her dead husband's brother). Sexual abuse such as coerced sex through threats, intimidation or physical force, forcing unwanted sexual acts or forcing sex with others. Psychological abuse which includes behavior that is intended to intimidate and persecute, and takes the form of threats of abandonment or abuse, confinement to the home,

threats to take away custody of the children, destruction of objects, isolation, verbal aggression and constant humiliation. Economic abuse includes acts such as the denial of funds, refusal to contribute financially, denial of food and basic needs, and controlling access to health care, employment, etc. Gender bias that discriminates in terms of nutrition, education and access to health care amounts to the violation of women's rights. It should be noted that although the categories above are listed separately, they are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, they often go hand in hand. (*UNICEF, 2000*)

Some broad definitions:

- **Battery:** is the tort of intentionally (or, in Australia, negligently) and voluntarily bringing about an unconsented harmful or offensive contact with a person or to something closely associated with them (e.g. a hat, a purse).
- **Violence:** is "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation. This definition associates intentionality with the committing of the act itself, irrespective of the outcome it produces.

- **Domestic abuse:** can be broadly defined as any form of abusive behaviors by one or both partners in an intimate relationship, such as marriage, cohabitation, family, dating, or even friends. It is important to remember that abuse is always intentional, and can not happen by accident.

(2)-Types of Domestic violence

Abusers or perpetrators use a wide variety of abusive tactics. There are four general categories of abusive tactics:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional/Psychological Abuse
- Financial Abuse

The categories of abuse are defined below and examples of each are given. The categories are not exclusive. Some abusive tactics may fit into more than one category. A threat of physical harm, for example, could be seen as emotional abuse and as physical abuse. (**UNDP Cambodia, 2010**)

1-Physical Abuse:

Physical Abuse is the use of physical force against another person in a way that ends up injuring the person, or puts the person at risk of being injured. Physical violence is partner abuse when it is intended to enhance the power and control of the abuser over the partner. If the partner is afraid of the abuser, if the partner modifies his behavior in response to the assault or potential assault, or if the partner intentionally maintains a particular routine of behaviors in an effort to avoid violence – despite his preference not to do so – then this is partner abuse. Physical abuse can be defined as the threat of harm or any forceful physical behavior that intentionally or accidentally causes bodily harm or property destruction, including the following:

- Hitting, beating, choking, pushing, slapping, kicking, pulling hair, biting, punching, backhanding, arm twisting, shoving, kicking or burning
- Holding the partner down or preventing the partner from leaving
- Throwing and/or threatening with objects
- Locking the partner out of the home

- Refusal to get the partner help or medical attention
- Forced use of substances (e.g. alcohol and drugs)
- Denying or interfering with the partner meeting his basic physical needs (e.g. eating and sleeping)
- Smashing, damaging, stealing or selling the partner's possessions
- Threatening to use or the use of a weapon against the partner (e.g. hammer, knife, gun, etc.) (**UNDP Cambodia, 2010**) (**Roxanne D. Edwards & Melissa Conrad S., 2007**)

Slapping is the most common act of physical violence identified in intimate partner violence (IPV) research, followed by being struck with a fist. When ranking the severity of the act according to its likelihood of causing physical injuries, researchers considered moderate acts to include being slapped, pushed, or shoved and severe acts to include being hit with a fist, kicked, dragged, threatened with a weapon, or having a weapon used against the female partner. (**Susan D. et al., 2009**)

2-Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse is any forced or coerced sexual act or behavior motivated to acquire power and control over the

partner. It is not only forced sexual contact but also contact that demeans or humiliates the partner and instigates feelings of shame or vulnerability – particularly in regards to the body, sexual performance or sexuality.

Common examples are:

- Demeaning remarks about the partner's body or appearance
- Berating the partner about his sexual history
- Forcing sex or sexual actions on the partner without consent or minimization of the partner's sexual needs.
- Using force or roughness that is not consensual, including forced sex (rape) or unwanted touching.
- Rape with an object
- Refusing to comply with the partner's request for safe sex
- Coercing the partner into sex with others
- Violating an agreement for monogamy by having sex with others
- Exposing the partner to sexually transmitted diseases
- Criticizing sexual performance or desirability
- Withholding sex as a punishment

- Unwanted sadistic sexual acts
- Some forms of sexual abuse are crimes.(**UNDP Cambodia, 2010**) (**Roxanne D. Edwards & Melissa Conrad S., 2007**)

Due to the almost universal stigma surrounding sexual assault, rape and other sexual crimes are notoriously under-reported. In South Africa, for example, it has been estimated that in urban areas, fewer than one in twenty rapes are reported to the police, with even lower rates of reporting in rural areas. (**LORI L. HEISE et al., 1994**)

In Egyptian society, cultural and religious norms support a husband's right to practice sexual intercourse regardless of a wife's feelings, therefore many women do not consider having sex against their will as abuse. However, some women consider having sex against their will as a type of sexual abuse.(**H.M. Mamdouh et al., 2012**)

3-Emotional/Psychological Abuse:

A variety of forms of psychological abuse are frequently perpetrated. These include forced isolation, humiliation, denial of support and threats of violence and injury.

Regardless of the definition used, all surveys are likely to underestimate the level of abuse in intimate relationships. Women frequently are reluctant to disclose abuse because of feelings of self-blame, shame, loyalty to the abuser or fear. Moreover, women in many cultures are socialized to accept physical and emotional chastisement as part of the husband's marital prerogative, making them less likely to self-identify as abused. (**LORI L. HEISE et al., 1994**)

Many women suffer from emotional abuse, which is no less destructive than physical abuse. Unfortunately, emotional abuse is often minimized or overlooked—even by the person being abused. (**Melinda Smith., Jeanne Segal, 2013**)

Emotional Abuse can be verbal or nonverbal. Specific acts of psychological violence include being insulted or made to feel bad about oneself, being humiliated or belittled in front of others; being purposely intimidated or frightened (e.g., through yelling and smashing things); and being threatened with harm (directly or indirectly through a threat to hurt someone the respondent cared for). Another type of psychological abuse is controlling behavior, which includes keeping a woman from her friends; restricting contact with her family of birth; insisting on knowing where she is at all times; ignoring or treating her indifferently; getting angry if she speaks with other men; often