High Economic Class and Spousal Violence: A study on educated and working women in India

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Introduction

Spousal violence is high profile; hidden, grievous and wider social problem which is gendered and family through social and cultural practices that advantage men in violent conflicts with women where an education is an important factor in determining the acceptability of violence (Martin, 2002). Even many highly educated women still frequently choose to stay home once they are married (Radhakrishnan, 2009). Sometimes education does not empower women to enter the public arena for support. Better educated women or those belonging to better-off families who experience violence are least likely to share their experiences or seek support from others. This needs to be understood in the context of a culture of silence where women try to not disclose what happens within the home environment. (Visaria L., 2008). Women, though allowed to earn, are incapacitated by lack of control over their own resources and earnings and suffer discrimination and violence. The women who entered the public arena, but the family values dominate and family violence is kept as a closely guarded secret. In the private arena, at the level of the family, the family is still dominated by patriarchal norms. (Rajana Kumari, 2010). Thus, wealthy family is likely to have greater privacy. It is no accident that violence against women comes to the attention of the authorities at a greater rate in communities of lower socioeconomic status than those with higher status but wealthy buys privacy (Tenkorang E. et al., 2013).

Objective

1. To examine the women's acceptance of violence with their educational and working status.

2. To examine the regional difference of spousal violence in association with couple's education, occupation and their earning abilities.

3. To analyze the relationship between the socio demographic factors with education and occupation and its impact on violence against women in high wealth status families.

Methodology

Data for the present research work has drawn from the National Family Health Survey -3. This research study is based on high economic class families therefore as per wealth index richer (17,499) and richest (18,654) group has been identified for high economic class families. In this research study, data from 36,153 women of high wealth quintile including currently-married, separated, divorced and widowed women from the ever-married women have been taken. Bivariate and multiple linear regression analysis are carried out.

Results and Discussions

1. Women's Education and Acceptance of Violence: Husband can beat his wife for various reasons where women's education play crucial role to justify the acceptance of violence with attitude towards wife beating. It is interesting that 44 percent illiterate women do not accept the violence and only 9.4 percent of these women accepted all reasons for violence. While nearly 76 percents highly educated women do not accept violence and less than 1 percent of them accepted all reasons of violence which also indicates the acceptance of violence steadily decreases with increase in education among women.

2. Relationship between Socio demographic factors and Education & Occupation and its impact on violence against women: Socio demographic factors i.e. women's education and occupation also influence violence against women. Hence, **Table 1** shows the result of binary logistic regression estimates for relationship between types of violence against ever married women with educational and occupational factors.

Women's Education: Women with higher education were 0.2 times less likely to report emotional violence, 0.3 times less likely to report physical violence, 0.2 times less likely to report ever any violence and 0.3 times less likely to report physical and or sexual violence compared with those who are not education as well as less than higher education

Partner's Education After adjustments for covariates and women's own education, it is observed that women whose husbands are higher education are more likely to report lifetime violence where 3.6 times more likely to report emotional violence ($p<0.1$). However, women married to husband with primary and secondary education are 2.7 and 2.6 times respectively more likely to report physical and/ or sexual violence ($p<0.01$).

Spousal Educational Differences: Women who are equally educated as husbands are 0.8 times less likely to report emotional violence, 0.53 times less likely to report physical violence ($p<0.1$), 0.59 times less likely to report any types of violence ($p<0.1$). However women who are more educated than husbands are more likely to report emotional violence (OR=1.4), less likely to report physical violence (OR=0.86). Moreover, women with educational levels lower than their husbands are 0.45 times less likely to report to physical violence and any types of violence ($p<0.05$), 0.47 times less likely to report physical and or sexual violence than those women with no formal education.

Women's Occupation: Women's occupation is also correlated with the lifetime violence. Women with primary occupation are 1.8 times more likely to report of emotional violence ($p<0.01$) While women with secondary occupation are 1.2 times more likely to report of physical abused ($p<0.1$) and 1.38 times more likely to report of any types of violence ($p<0.01$) as well as women with tertiary occupation are more likely to report of emotional (OR=1.19), sexual (OR=1.16) and any types of violence (OR=1.1) Apart from it women whose workplace were outside are 1.33 times more likely to report emotional violence ($p<0.05$).

Partner's Occupation: Occupation gradients with lifetime violence were also observed when partner's occupation is analysed. Women whose husband are with primary occupation are more likely to report physical violence and those engaged with tertiary occupation are less likely to report of physical and or sexual violence compared to the women whose husband are not working.

Women Earning Abilities: Women who earn less than their partner are less likely to report violence, with odds ratio for emotional violence (OR = 0.59, p <0.01), any types of violence (OR = 0.77, p <0.05) and physical and or sexual violence (OR = 0.59, p <0.1) are statistically significant.

Conclusion

Education and employment are empowerment indicators to reduce the violence among women. In high wealth status majority of women do not accept violence by any reason. But it is interesting that in almost all regions (except North and Central) women with secondary education have reported experiencing high rate of any kind of violence in their lifetime. It is interesting to observe that when wife and husbands both are equally educated higher rate of violence is seen in North East, West and South region. These regions are educationally empowered and having matriarchal society where promoting gender equality, women autonomy also challenge the men's dominated society and their muscularity. This violence may be result of men's insecurity to their wives' independency, modern attitude, autonomy and non-acceptance of violence for any reasons It has come as statistically significant in the analysis that women with higher education are also less likely to face sexual and physical violence than those with lower education. Women face more violence when she is earning more than her husband which indicates that economic empowerment is not the sole protective factor.

Table 1: Logistic regression estimates (odds ratio) for relationship between types of lifetime violence against ever married women and educational and occupational factors, National Family Health Survey NFHS-3 (2005-06).

	Emotional Violence	Physical Violence	Sexual Violence	Ever any Violence	Physical and or Sexual Violence
Women's Highest Education (No Education®)					
Primary	0.8	1.122	0.771	1.077	1.177
Secondary	0.66	0.657	1.087	0.602*	0.676
Higher	0.208***	0.296***	0.582	0.230***	0.324***
Partner's Education Level (No Education®)					
Primary	1.997*	2.627***	2.417*	2.697***	2.667***
Secondary	2.737**	2.652***	2.352	2.914***	2.631***
Higher	3.594*	2.724*	2.385	3.559***	2.665*
Spousal Educational Difference (Neither educated®)					
Both equally educated	0.801	.538*	0.571	0.593*	0.545*
Wife better educated	1.383	0.856	0.901	1.026	0.852
Husband better educated	0.547	0.451**	0.587	0.451**	0.474**
Women's Occupation (Not Working®)					
Primary	1.814***	0.965	1.199	1.248	1.093
Secondary	1.331	1.262*	0.996	1.384***	1.270**
Tertiary	1.194	0.929	1.155	1.1	0.975
Women's Workplace (At home®)					
Away	1.331**	1.245**	0.889	1.232**	1.191**
Partner's Occupation(Not Working®)					
Primary	1.211	1.107	0.993	1.351	1.285
Secondary	1.175	0.925	0.686	1.16	1.034
Tertiary	1.35	0.83	0.698	1.146	0.951
Women Earning Abilities (More than him®)					
Less than him	0.586***	0.764	0.814	0.771**	0.802*
About the same	0.430***	0.445***	0.281***	0.456***	0.464***
Region of India (North®)					
Central	0.906	1.112	0.603**	0.97	0.979
North-East	0.532	1.006	0.761	0.909	0.947
West	0.827	0.678**	0.451***	0.725**	0.606***
East	0.666*	0.802	1.639**	0.929	0.946
South	0.545***	0.687***	0.282***	0.597***	0.575***
Constant	.047***	0.586	.157*	0.478	0.631

® Reference Category   ***=p<0.01, **=p<0.05, *=p<0.1

This model is Adjusted for Place of Residence, Household Structure, Religion, Cast, Media Exposure, Age group of women, Age at Marriage, Women's highest education, Partner's highest education, Spousal educational difference, Women's occupation, Women's work place, Partner's occupation, Women earning abilities, Husbands alcohol consumption and regions of India.