



## Psychological Aspects of Women Suffering from Domestic Violence

**Mr. Sajad Hussain**

Student, M.A. (Clinical Psychology), Department of Psychology, NIMS University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

**Dr. Vismita Paliwal**

Asst. Professor, Department of Psychology, NIMS University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India. Address: 70/28, Vitushri Vila, Paliwals way, Patel Marg, Mansarover, Jaipur,

### ABSTRACT

*It is said that marriages are made in heaven and celebrated on earth. Problems in marriage are bound to come, because two individuals having different personalities meet. In such conditions, clashes are bound to take place. Keep in mind; times are not the same always. Domestic violence may be defined as any abusive, violent and forceful or threatening act or word inflicted by one member of a family on another. The objectives of the study included the assessment of the level of mental health, anxiety and quality of life among the women suffering from domestic violence and women not suffering from it. The sample of 60 was taken which was divided into two groups equally. The first group comprised of the women who were not suffering from domestic violence and the second group consisted of women suffering from domestic violence. The tools employed were mental health inventory, Hamilton's anxiety scale and quality of life questionnaires. Difference between the scores was found through t-ratio. It was found that women suffering from domestic violence had significantly low level of mental health and quality of life compared to women not suffering from domestic violence. Sufferer women also perceived significantly more anxiety than the non-sufferer women.*

**KEYWORDS :** women, domestic violence, mental health, anxiety, quality of life

### Introduction

Domestic violence is defined as when there is an inflating/repeated or habitual physical injury. There are certain psychological factors which are found to be associated with domestic violence in many studies those children who experience violence in their homes show aggressive behavior from an early age resulting in their legacy of abuse in their adulthood (Schechter et al., 2007).

Domestic violence disturbs the victim physically as well psychologically. Domestic violence disturbs the battered women emotionally resulting in her being quiet and agonized. A psychological set back and trauma due to domestic violence affects all the spheres of her life. The suicide is the most common consequence reported in domestic violence victims. The numbers of such cases are increasing tremendously (Markowitz, 2000).

This poses a serious threat not only to the women's health but also to their children and other family members and constitutes a serious violation of women's rights. There is an urgent need for effective support, counselling and treatment of violence victims where health care staff and psychologists have a role to play as they are to observe professional secrecy and are relatively easy to access. However, some of the major psychological factors which are being assessed among the victims of domestic violence in the present study are

- Anxiety
- Mental Health
- Quality Of Life

An anxiety disorder is a serious mental illness. For people with anxiety disorders, worry and fear are constant and overwhelming, and can be crippling. It is defined as a vague, diffuse and a general feeling of fear and apprehension about danger.

From perspectives of the discipline of positive psychology or holism mental health may include an individual's ability to enjoy life and procure a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience (Witmer and Sweeny, 1992). Mental health can affect your daily life, relationships and even your physical health. Mental health also includes a person's ability to enjoy life - to attain a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience and quality of life.

WHO defines Quality of Life as individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. It is a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person's physical health, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships, personal beliefs and their relationship to salient features of their environment (WHO, 1997).

Therefore from the explanation given above it becomes clear that the incidences of domestic violence are increasing day by day which affect the women physically, socially, emotionally, financially and psychologically.

### Methodology

The purpose of the study was to assess the psychological aspect of women suffering from domestic violence. The objectives of the study included the assessment of the level of mental health, anxiety and quality of life among the women suffering from domestic violence and women not suffering from it. The sample of 60 was taken for the purpose of study which was divided into two groups equally. The first group comprised of the women who were not suffering from domestic violence and the second group consisted of women suffering from domestic violence. The sample was taking from various women day care centers. The tools employed were Mental Health Inventory, Hamilton's Anxiety Scale and WHO Quality Of Life Questionnaires. These questionnaires were administered on the 60 subjects. The scoring of the data obtained was done according to the manuals. The t-ratio was applied to the data obtained according to its relevancy.

### Result and Discussion

**Table 1: Showing Mean, SD, SED, t- ratio and significance level on Mental Health, Anxiety and Quality of Life between sufferer and non-sufferer women clients of domestic violence.**

Variables	Categories	Mean (N=30)	SD	SED	't'	Level of Significance
Mental Health	Sufferer	145.57	14.32	3.77	7.84	0.01
	Non-sufferer	175.22	19.12			
Anxiety	Sufferer	25.20	3.68	.78	3.20	0.01
	Non-sufferer	22.67	3.34			

Quality of Life	Sufferer	90.87	16.95	2.54	2.60	0.01
	Non-sufferer	101.57	11.70			

To support the above analysis the mean of the total scores obtained of the two groups (i.e. women suffering from domestic violence and women not suffering from domestic violence) was calculated and to analyze the significance of the difference observed in the mean values, t-test was applied to mean. The results of which may be seen in table 1 in which the mean, SD, SED, T-ratio and significance level on mental health, anxiety, and quality of life between the women suffering from domestic violence (sufferer) and women not suffering from domestic violence (non-sufferer) was depicted.

It may be seen from the table that the mean scores of the 30 women clients suffering from domestic violence came out to be 145.57 whereas the mean score of the women not suffering from domestic violence came out to be 175.22. The difference in the mean was calculated and the value of t-ratio came out to be 7.84 which was significant at 0.01 level. This shows that the women not suffering from domestic violence had significantly better mental health as compared to the women suffering from domestic violence.

This difference in the level of mental health was observed in all the dimensions of mental health also namely positive self-evaluation, perception of reality, integration of personality, autonomy, environmental mastery and group oriented attitude. The women clients who were suffering from domestic violence were not able to think positively about themselves. They deviated from the reality and started thinking about the outcomes and consequences of the domestic violence they are tolerating. Their total personality was affected which changed their behavior abnormally in the various social settings. They were not able to deal effectively with the environment and were also found to lack self-initiation.

In the next variable highlighting the level of anxiety of the sufferer and non-sufferer women, the mean scores of the women suffering from domestic violence came out to be 25.20 whereas that of non-sufferers came out to be 22.67. The t-ratio of which was calculated as 3.20 indicated that the women suffering from domestic violence also suffered from significantly high level of anxiety as compared to the women not suffering from domestic violence, mainly the fear of the future is so much inculcated in the minds of the women that they don't think that they can survive in the society or take care of themselves alone. This makes them anxious about the future consequences as they lack self-confidence.

The mean score of the quality of life questionnaire of the 30 women suffering from domestic violence came out to be 90.87 and those not suffering from domestic violence came out to be 101.57. The t-ratio obtained from these mean scores was 2.60 which were seen to be significant at 0.01 level. This showed that women suffering from domestic violence had significantly less level of quality of life as compared to women not suffering from domestic violence. The suffered women were not found to be satisfied in any aspect of their life style like, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, socially and environmentally.

Therefore, it may be seen that women suffering from domestic violence suffered from significantly low level of mental health and quality of life as compared to the women not suffering from domestic violence. The sufferers also possessed significantly high level of anxiety than the non-sufferers.

Thus, it proves our hypothesis that there is a significant difference between the level of mental health, anxiety and quality of life among the women suffering from domestic violence and women not suffering from domestic violence.

Thus, on the basis of the above table it may be said that women are suffering from domestic violence to such an extent that she needs help gets broken from all spheres of life. She doesn't know which way to go, what method she should follow in order to live happily and spend her rest of the life. Her mental state gets deteriorated, she becomes emotionally imbalanced, and finds no one to support or comfort her. At this stage she requires constantly motivating, encouraging and helping hand, where the role of a psychologist begins.

### Conclusions

- Domestic violence directly affects the mental health of the women who has been victimized by the family either by husband or by other family members by any means like using abusive language, hitting, kicking, choking etc.
- The women suffering from domestic violence also suffer from high level of anxiety as she fears from the negative consequences occurring from them. She is afraid of all the societal pressure and physical torture she has to suffer. Her mind constantly thinks about the possible solutions to overcome these stressful events and their outcomes.
- Domestic violence affects the daily routine of the women and reduces their level of quality of life. Depression, loss of sleep, loss of appetite and unhygienic living are most common symptoms observed.

### REFERENCES

- 1) Schechter, D.S., Zygmunt, A., Coates, S.W., Davies, M., Trabka, K.A., McCaw, J., Kolodji, A. and Robinson, J.L. (2007). Caregiver traumatization adversely impact young children's mental representation of self and others. *Attachment and Human Development*, 9 (3), 187-205. | 2) Witmer, J.M. and Sweeny, T.J. (1992). A holistic model for wellness and prevention over the lifespan. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 71, 140-148. | 3) World Health Organization. (1997). WHOQOL measuring quality of life. Geneva: WHO Press. 94. | 4) Markowitz, S. (2000). The price of Alcohol, Wife and Husband Abuse. *Southern Economic Journal*, 67 (2), 273-303.