

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

Dishari Gupta^{1*}, Dr. Ishita Chatterjee²

ABSTRACT

Women workers today play an essential and significant role in the economic structure of the country and 94% of women make up the unorganized sector of India. Domestic Violence affects women's productivity in all forms of life i.e. assaulted women will always get agonized and emotionally disturbed and are often bruised after occurrence of the torment. A working woman may lose her efficiency in work or drop out from work in some cases. The present study aims to explore the magnitude of sexual abuse by intimate partners and the quality of life of women aged 18 -35 years in 4 districts of West Bengal. Close ended questionnaire and focused group discussions were conducted to understand their experiences regarding perception of sexual abuse. The contributing factors to violence were alcohol abuse, desire to gain control over another family member and unjustified suspicion. This analysis might be used to improve future partner violence prevention and treatment programs.

Keywords: *Sexual Abuse, Quality of Life, Unorganised Sector*

The labour force in all developing countries consists of two broad categories: the organized and the unorganised. The organized sector are those sector consisting of activities carried out by the corporate enterprises and the government at central, state and local levels, solely with the help of wage paid labour which, in a great measure, is unionized. The unorganized sector on the other hand covers most of the rural labour and a substantial part of urban labour. The size of the unorganized sector in India has been growing over the past few decades. Almost 400 million people (more than 85% of the working population) work in unorganized sector and of these about 120 million are women. According to an estimate, by the National Commission on Self-Employed Women (1988), of the total number of women workers about 94 percent are in the informal or unorganized sector whereas just 6 percent are in the organized or formal sector. Thus, there is no hesitancy in saying that the unorganized sector in India is the women's sector.

¹ Research Scholar, Dept. of Applied Psychology, University of Calcutta

² Assistant Professor, Dept. of Applied Psychology, University of Calcutta

*Corresponding Author

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

Women workers play an essential and significant role in the economic structure of the country and have done so throughout its history but their efforts and accomplishments remain unacknowledged. Women have been invisible workers. Their labour and skills have been considered insignificant in relation to those of men. Problems of women working in unorganised sector have been increasing over the years. Women's economic participation can be estimated in the field of production of goods and services accounted in the national income statistics. Women work mainly for economic independence, for economic necessity, for a sense of achievement and to provide service to the society.

In a survey of 1200 women done by National Commission for Women, nearly 50 percent complained of gender discrimination and physical and mental harassment at work. Many also face severe sexual abuse at home by husbands or in-laws. Behind closed doors of homes across our country, many women are being tortured, beaten and killed. It happens in rural areas, towns, cities and in metropolis as well and affects all social classes, genders, racial lines and age groups. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reports that every six hours, a young married woman in India is found beaten to death, burnt or driven to suicide. In 2012, there were a total of 2,44,270 reported incidents of crime against women, while in 2011, there were 2,28,650 reported incidents.⁵ Of the women living in India, 7.5% live in West Bengal where 12.7% of the total reported crime against women occurs.

A recent G20 survey ranked India as the worst place to be a woman (Baldwin 2012). Female foeticide, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence constitute the reality of most girls' and women's lives in India. But the degree and nature of domestic violence in India not to speak of the world is grossly underreported in surveys and to the police.

According to the national survey, the statistical data on violence against women in India are stark. Nationally, 8% of married women have been subject to sexual violence, such as forced sex, 31% of married women have been physically abused in a way defined as 'less severe', such as slapping or punching, while 10% have suffered 'severe domestic violence', such as burning or attack with a weapon. Also, 12% of those who report being physically abused also report at least one of the following injuries as a result of the violence: bruises, injury, sprains, dislocation or burns, wounds, broken bones or broken teeth and/or severe burns. With regard to emotional abuse, 14% of Indian women will have experienced this at some point in their lives.

Most of the current Indian literature focuses primarily on the linkages between the socialization of women into subordinate positions, patriarchal control and domestic violence (Krishnaraj 1991; Heise et al. 1994; Miller 1992). Gender based violence is clearly based on unequal power relation between men and women. The status of women in India is not equal to the status of men in terms of access, participation and reward. The issue of gender discrimination manifests itself as violence in the family, community and society. As determinants of violence, proximate factors

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

like economic stress, alcohol consumption, joblessness and other factors need to be explored empirically and theoretically.

About 36-38 percent of women in a Tamil Nadu study and 42-48 percent of women in an Uttar Pradesh study reported violence (Jejeebhoy 1998). In one village in Punjab, 75 percent of the women from scheduled caste households reported regular beatings (Mahajan 1990). Rape of girls and women within the family, marital rape and other forms of sexual abuse are often accompanied by violence. The immediate consequences of these acts may lead to unwanted pregnancy or a sexually transmitted disease. The long-term effects are often depression, other mental health disorders and suicide. Researchers note that included among the more serious emotional effects for abuse victims is the consequence of engaging in suicidal ideation and actions (Coker et al., 2002; Huth-Bocks, Levendosky, & Semel, 2001; Frank & Dingle, 1999; Krishnan, Hilbert, & VanLeeuwen, 2001). Bergman and Brismar (1991) report a suicide incidence among intimate partner violence victims of more than eight times that of a comparable sample of non-victims. Health professionals and human rights activists increasingly see the prevalence of violence in the family as a public health issue (Ezenwa, 2003). Women are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment and sexual violence from men and boys living in or associated with the household.

Domestic Violence affects women's productivity in all forms of life i.e. assaulted women will always get traumatized and emotionally disturbed and remain quiet after the occurrence of the particular incident. The victims often commit suicide and such number is on the rise. A working Indian woman may lose her efficiency in work or drop out from work in some cases, paving the way for inevitable depression.

October, 29, 2009 issue of The Hindu published a study carried out between 2005 and 2006 on 750 married women aged between 16 and 25 in Bangalore, which revealed that those who became employed during that time had a 80 per cent higher chance of being abused by their husbands than women who remained unemployed. According to Suneeta Krishnan, an epidemiologist in RTI's Women's Global Health Imperative, key social expectation of men once married is that they work and earn for their family, and failure to meet this expectation can lead to social disapproval. "Social disapproval, a sense of inadequacy and frustration and related stressors associated with living in poverty may increase the likelihood of men perpetrating domestic violence," she reasoned. Fifty-seven per cent of women participating in the study reported having experienced domestic violence prior to joining the study. Additionally, 19 per cent of women who had not experienced domestic violence prior to the study experienced it at some point during the two-year period. The findings also showed that women in "love" marriages were almost twice as likely to experience domestic violence than those in more traditionally arranged marriages.

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

Gynecological symptoms were reported to be associated with a history of intimate partner violence on women in studies from both developing nations and developed countries. A study by Stephenson et al. (2006) found that gynecological symptoms were significantly related to the reporting of sexual violence, the most common symptom being bleeding after sexual intercourse during times other than menstruation, followed by abnormal vaginal discharge, pain or burning during urination, and pain during intercourse. The incidence of abnormal pap smear results and higher rates of cervical cancer have also been positively associated with a history of IPV, as has the occurrence of sexually transmissible infections (other than HIV/AIDS). The current study was carried out to explore the nature of sexual abuse in four districts of Bengal on women who are employed in the unorganized or informal sector and their quality of life. Focused group discussions with the abused women provide rich information on the psycho-social barriers of the women for staying back in such sexually abusive relationships inspite of being economically independent.

METHODS

The aim of the study is explore the perceived magnitude of sexual abuse and its effects on the quality of life of the female workers of the unorganized sector.

Focus groups interviews were conducted with women living in homes and domestic violence shelters who have been sexually abused by an intimate partner. The purpose of the study is to explore an abused woman's experiences, thoughts and reactions.

PARTICIPANTS

For the present study a representative sample of 100 married females from unorganised sector had been selected. Their age range was 18 to 35 years. Their educational status had been broken up in three categories namely lower primary, upper primary and high school.

The participants were mostly untrained nurses (ayya), domestic help and workers in small scale manufacturing units like plastic factory, fireworks factory, bindi and pen factory and zari workers and beedi workers had also been included in the study. These workers belong to four districts of West Bengal namely North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas, Nadia and Purulia.

PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

A combination of administered questionnaire and Focus Group Discussions was used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of some close-ended questions. Focus group discussions produce descriptive data about people own written or spoken and observable behavior. According to Gibbs (1997), focus group is useful for revealing through interaction, the beliefs, attitudes, experiences and feelings of participants in ways which would not be feasible using other qualitative methods.

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

INSTRUMENTS

- Quality of Life Scale was designed by the researcher under the guidance of Dr. Ishita Chatterjee. It had been developed in the light of Quality of Work Life Module of NIOSH, 2010. It is a closed ended schedule and had been validated by experts and pilot tested. Then the scale was translated in Bengali and a Cronbach-Alpha reliability score of 0.70 was calculated.
- A scale measuring Sexual abuse on intimate partner violence, victimization and perpetration based on the assessment tools by Martie P. Thompson, PhD, Kathleen C. Basile, PhD, Marci F. Hertz, Dylan Sitterle, Clemson University, Atlanta, Georgia. (*Suggested Citation: Thompson MP, Basile KC, Hertz MF, Sitterle D. Measuring Intimate Partner Violence Victimization and Perpetration: A Compendium of Assessment Tools. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, 2006*) was adapted. The questionnaire was first validated by experts working in the field of domestic violence and pilot tested. Items are rated either yes, no or sometimes and the highest score attainable is 20 The scale was translated in Bengali and a reliability of 0.76 was found in Cronbach-Alpha. The scale was designed with closed-ended questions to quantify the various issues such as forms of violence experienced by the women. A focused group interview was also conducted to understand the reasons for women remaining in the abusive relationship, efforts made by women to end abuse, reasons of their family members to inflict such abuse and future plans. The scale was administered individually after obtaining informed consent from the women. Each interview lasted approximately 40 minutes.

ANALYSIS

A variety of statistical treatment has been done for the study. The data was analyzed using SPSS 17 and our analytical approach includes bivariate analysis. Mean and standard deviation of sexual abuse and Quality of life was analysed as follows---

Statistics			
		Sexual Abuse	Quality of Life
N	Valid	100	100
	Missing	0	0
Mean		5.4600	30.0500
Std. Deviation		3.98081	6.69294

Table: 1

Non parametric statistics of Kruskal-Wallis was administered on the sample of 100 abused women and a significant effect of abuse on quality of life was visible. The sample was divided into 4 groups on the basis of their scores of sexual abuse on the 10 item scale. The control group

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

with no sexual abuse was N=16. Mildly abused group consisted of 39 participants (score=1-5) and moderately abused had 24 participants (score=6-10). 21 women were severely abused (score=11-20). The H score was found to be significant at .05 level.

The Kruskal-Wallis scores for Quality of Life Ranks

Test Statistics	
	QOL
Chi-Square	11.125
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.011

	Code	N	Mean Rank
QOL	1.00	16	42.84
	2.00	39	41.35
	3.00	24	61.71
	4.00	21	60.52
	Total	100	

Code 1 represents **no abuse** group of women, **code 2** represents **mildly abused** group of women, **code 3** represents **moderately abused** group of women and **code 4** represents **severely abused** group of women.

Table 2

A demographic analysis of data collected is given in the following table Magnitude of sexual violence in entire sample (N=100)

	Hitting in private sexual parts	Hitting in the breasts	Forcing to unusual forms of sex	Forcing to anal sex
Age of women				
18-24	92%	92%	70%	74%
25-35	81%	65%	33%	45%
Women's Education				
High School	74%	68%	42%	42%
Lower Primary	88%	83%	47%	67%
Upper Primary	92%	79%	59%	62%
Living Arrangement				
Joint	85%	79%	58%	65%
Nuclear	91%	78%	30%	43%
Socio-economic				

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

Status				
Wife's income less than 5000 per month	93%	80%	57%	64%
Wife's income approx or more than 5000 per month	81%	78%	47%	56%
Years of marriage				
1-5	94%	94%	64%	67%
6-10	88%	84%	56%	68%
11-15	79%	60%	36%	47%

Table: 3

Kruskal Wallis Analysis: Test Statistics

	Hitting in private sexual parts	Hitting in breasts	Forcing in unusual sex	Forcing in anal sex
Chi-Square	1.122	13.621	15.813	13.106
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.290	.000	.000	.000

Table: 4

b. Grouping Variable: age range

The kruskal-wallis analysis of demographic data shows no significant effect of age differences on abuse of private sexual parts. This was probably the same for all age ranges. But age did have an effect on the other forms of sexual abuse.

Kruskal Wallis: Test Statistics

	Hitting in private sexual parts	Hitting in breasts	Forcing in unusual sex	Forcing in anal sex
Chi-Square	.089	5.620	.526	.639
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.766	.018	.468	.321

Table: 5

b. Grouping Variable: Income

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

Statistics shows no much significant effect of income of the women on forms of abuse except hitting in breasts.

Kruskal Wallis Analysis: Test Statistics

	Hitting in private sexual parts	Hitting in breasts	Forcing in unusual sex	Forcing in anal sex
Chi-Square	3.913	1.968	1.119	2.240
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.141	.374	.572	.326

Table: 6

b. Grouping Variable: Education

Education has no impact on sexual abuse. Whether one has primary or high school education it does not help in being less abused.

	Hitting in private sexual parts	Hitting in breasts	Forcing in unusual sex	Forcing in anal sex
Chi-Square	9.234	8.669	7.219	5.300
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.002	.003	.007	.021

Table: 7

b. Grouping Variable: Years Married

Years of marriage did have significant impact on different forms of sexual abuse as evident from the above table

A significant difference was found in the quality of life of the female workers who were mildly and moderately abused.

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	1.570	.215	2.748	61	.008	4.48077	1.63051	1.22036	7.74118
	Equal variances not assumed			2.908	57.194	.005	4.48077	1.54066	1.39588	7.56566

Table: 8

The perceived reason of difference may be located in the pathological condition of moderately affected women who think that they have to live with this trauma from now on (no matter how “moderate” is the degree of abuse) while mildly abused women may have treated the abuse as accidental/ sporadic in nature, having no permanent debilitating impact. The degree of assault may precisely decide the outcome of mental preparation to combat it.

The following table shows no significant difference in the perception of quality of life among the workers without abuse and the ones with mild abuse.

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
	Equal variances assumed	.039	.843	-1.093	53	.279	-2.59295	2.37216	-7.35090	2.16500
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.164	32.245	.253	-2.59295	2.22802	-7.12992	1.94403

Table: 9

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

The abused workers suffer from mild depression, irritability, lack of energy to seek medical care; they are prone to be lachrymose and despondent sometime. But their only solace seems to be the workplace where some form of peer support helps them cope with the mental issues.

No significant difference was found among the moderately and severely abused group of workers in terms of quality of life.

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
VAR00002	Equal variances assumed	.073	.789	.199	43	.843	.34524	1.73734	-3.15845	3.84892	
	Equal variances not assumed			.197	39.487	.845	.34524	1.75685	-3.20692	3.89740	

Table: 10

The reason here once more is understandable: for a woman to be sexually abused is an assault on womanhood, modesty and identity. Sexual assault of severe degree and for sustained period of time can only expose the brutality of the perpetrator in the form of scars, injuries etc. the woman carries in her body leading to public humiliation. But for the moderately abused woman, this hardly can be a consolation, since they know the transition from “moderate” to “severe” may be just a matter of time and in any case, the mental trauma has become a permanent feature from which there is no escape.

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

The focused group discussions revealed a few causes of sexual abuse. The representation is as follows---

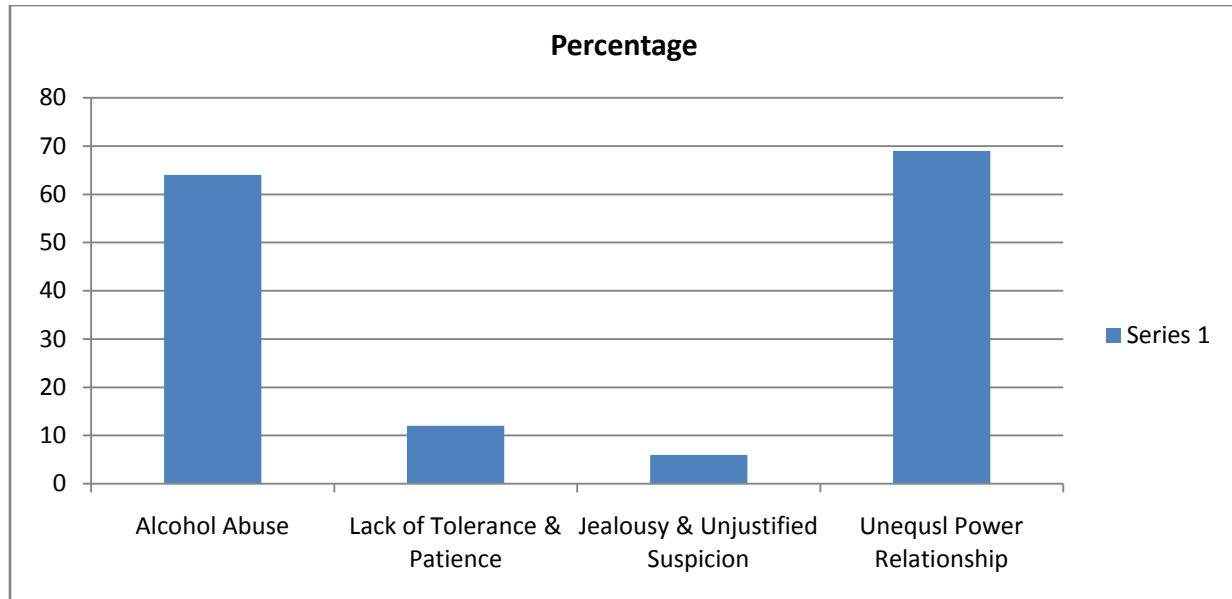


Table: 11 (Participants gave multiple answers)

DISCUSSION

Most of the women reported family constraints made them carry on with the violent marital relationship. They said that they were afraid of the poverty and the social pressures that could generate from living separated from their husband. Poor economic conditions and presence of children whose future might be affected are some major reasons. Marriage by choice (or 'love marriage') prevented many from going back to their maiden homes. Women said that there were times when they had wanted to commit suicide but could not because of children whose upbringing was solely dependent on them. Cultural belief in marriage and social stigma attached to broken marriages and not wanting to bring dishonor to maiden homes led many women to tolerate sexual abuse by intimate partners.

The husband and in-laws are the major perpetrators of abuse. Dowry demands emerged as a major cause of violence against women. It was common for the husband's relatives to instigate violence. Alcohol was another reason for marital violence. Suspicion and infidelity were found to be related to abuse. Most of the women despite being economically independent could not move out of their marriages fearing stigma and dishonor. Learning to live independently is often frightening and quite difficult, for domestic violence survivors are only used to being dictated by their abusers regarding what to do, how to do it and when to do it (Senter and Caldwell, 2002). This practice effectively paralyses the decision making ability of the women, shattering their self confidence.

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

Research also shows that abusers are generally drawn to women who already feel powerless in other aspects of their life. These people question their own worth and thus do not consider whether their needs are being met. Predators strategically boost the victim's self-esteem to gain trust before introducing the abuse. Many were victims of domestic abuse as children or grew up with parents who were in an abusive relationship.

But a considerable number of women felt their abusive male partners still possessed some good qualities: More than half (54 percent) saw their partners as highly dependable, while one in five (21 percent) felt the men in their lives possessed significant positive traits (i.e., being affectionate). Women stay in abusive relationships because they experience a form of captivity and oppression (Herman, 1992). Herman, 1992 argues that women in abusive relationships surrender to the coercive control of their perpetrator.

The battered women syndrome (BWS) is used to explain why women stay in abusive relationships. Walker, 1992 explained that women who have been physically, sexually, and/or seriously psychologically abused by their partners exhibit BWS (Gelles and Loeske, 1993). BWS is a group of psychological symptoms similar to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). According to this concept, women with BWS become pathological and experience depression, high avoidance, and disinterest in previously significant activities. Abused women with this syndrome develop "learned helplessness". For the battered woman, this means the loss of belief that adopting a way out will bring about safety. Therefore, many women fail to get out of abusive relationships. Women without adequate informal support from their family and friends may have no alternative accommodation when they leave abusive relationships. In the U.S., there are approximately 2000 temporary shelters for battered women. Most times, they are so filled to capacity so that many women and children are denied shelters. In India, such help is rare. The violence persists because discriminatory laws condone and even legalize certain forms of violence against women. Dismissive attitudes within the police and an inaccessible justice system compound the failures of the state to protect women's rights. The criminal justice system and the Police provide little protection for the victims and often dismiss domestic violence as a family matter and fail to investigate or press charges. Psychological entrapment may also be a reason for these women to stay on in abusive relationship. Although they earn and are economically independent, they are entrapped in a viscous cycle where they have invested a lot of time and hence cannot break out. An example can be taken of a married woman who spends a great deal of time, energy, and money trying to make her marriage work. Although she continues to feel dissatisfied with the status of her relationship, she may continue to invest more time and energy into the marriage in order to justify her previous expenses. Hence, the woman has invested too much into the relationship to quit (Teger, 1980). Although possibly unattainable, it is hoped that continued investments will increase proximity to the desired goal (Rubin, Brockner, Small-Weil, & Nathanson, 1980).

Content analysis from focused group discussions reveals that for both the groups of women of age range between 18 – 24 and 25-35 years, the dominant area of sexual abuse id hitting in

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

private sexual parts as well as hitting in breasts. For women, aged between 25 to 35, being forced to unusual forms of sex is much less than those aged between 18 -24 years. Similar is the response for being forced to anal sex. The pattern of demographic data shows that high school education for women abused had some impact on them as all the abuses are less for those who are more educated, while with upper primary education have seen higher magnitude of violence. A kruskal-wallis analysis, however, shows no significant effect of education on sexual abuse.

Demographic analysis also reveals that the degree of abuse is higher for women earning less than Rs. 5000 per month whereas it is relatively lower for those earning Rs. 5000 or more per month. However, Kruskal-Wallis analysis does not reveal much significant impact of education among women on sexual abuse.

The study has been done on economically independent women but it is seen that economic independence does not ensure them a better life, free from abuse. The focused group discussions reveal that the causes for sexual abuse have been mostly attributed to alcohol addiction and the coerciveness of intimate partners. Jealousy because of higher income of women and unjustified suspicion has been reported by very few responders. The inability to tolerate and lack of patience are perceived reasons for many men to beat up and sexually abuse their wives. It is clearly evident from the study that economic independence has not saved these women from sexual abuse. Most of the respondents have reported that they are helplessly entrapped within a conjugal relationship despite being sexually abused and the reason cited the most is the presence of children out of marriage for whom they feel morally responsible. Battered day in and day out, they cannot seek release from this traumatic experience just for the sake of their children.

IMPLICATION OF STUDY

Women working persistently day in and day out, have no legislative protection, not even the guarantee of a minimum wages. They work the year round with no regular employment and are not entitled to any social security benefits. On top of that these working women facing immense physical and sexual harassment at home incurring problems of depression and also face monetary loss for absence from work and drop outs. Women who wish to leave abusive partners or seek police protection are faced with a number of legal and other problems such as failure of the agency to provide support before separation is obtained. Legal services are extremely slow or not available when needed.

This study offers ample scope and opportunity for social service agencies/governmental organizations/ counseling centres to come up with proper plans to help the suffering women. Intervention strategies may be of various order. Since the legal redressal appears too distant a hope for many such women and the judiciary reacts rather late in many cases, a support system can be built which is able to take up the cases of affected women seeking legal justice. Generally the women feel shaky and reluctant to come out into the open with their complaints against the

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

offenders fearing societal persecution. This fear has to be allayed first and then proper legal advice must be sought out for them, paving the way for retributive justice. If this legal proceedings lead to separation, proper shelter for the women and their children is the next step. A shelter for only women can be of little help unless the needs of their children are given equal weightage. Confidence building procedure for such women should be prioritized since separation from spouses for many is still the most painful and unwelcome experience. Counseling processes for the couples, though not universally accepted, may be thought of as a remedial measure. Individual counseling of both the partners by experienced counselors may be of help in cases where the men are amenable to suggestions and women are willing to give the relationship another try provided their partners are willing to listen to the counselors, even though temporarily. The threat of greater physical violence has to be nullified by such agencies/NGOs/Governmental organizations/ social security groups. This can be achieved through sustained campaign over local levels taking help from the clubs, panchayets, municipal ward offices.

Creating social awareness against sexual abuse of women should be the primary objective. This has to be done discreetly with active support of the peer groups, few women are likely to come out on such sensitive issue openly. If restoring their loss of self respect is an important agenda, making avenues of redressal easily available should be the other part of the same agenda.

REFERENCES

- Baldwin, K (2012), 'Canada best G20 country to be a woman, India worst - Trust Law poll', Thomson Reuters, 13 June.
- Bergman, B., & Brismar, B. (1991). Suicide attempts by battered wives. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 83, 380-384.
- Coker, A. L., Smith, P. H., Thompson, M. P., McKeown, R. E., Bethea, L., & Davis, K. (2002). Social support protects against the negative effects of partner violence on mental health. *Journal of Women's Health & Gender-based Medicine*, 11(5), 465-476.
- Ezenwa C (2003). The role of medical practitioners in dealing with victims of domestic violence. In Legal Defense and Assistance Project (LEDAP), Domestic violence, zero tolerance, Lagos p. 63. Federal Ministry of Health (2001). Review of reproductive health studies. Abuja: Federal Ministry of Health, Nigeria.
- Frank, E., & Dingle, A. D. (1999). Self-reported depression and suicide attempts among U.S. women physicians. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 156(12), 1887-1894.
- Gibbs A (1997). Focus group social research update, Issue 19, Department of Sociology, University of Surrey pp. 20-24.
- Herman, T. (1992). Captivity. In Trauma and Recovery. (pp. 75-95)
- Huth-Bocks, A. C., Levendosky, A. A., & Semel, M. A. (2001). The direct and indirect effect of domestic violence on young children's intellectual functioning. *Journal of Family Violence*, 16(3), 269-290.

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

- Jejeebhoy Shireen "Wife beating in rural India- A Husband's right?" *Economic and Political Weekly* 33(15): 855-862.
- Krishnan, S. P., Hilbert, J. C., & VanLeeuwen, D. (2001). Domestic violence and help-seeking behaviors among rural women: Results from a shelter-based study. *Family Community Health, 24*(1), 28-38.
- Krishnaraj, Maithreyi, ed. 1991. *Women and Violence—A Country Report: A Study Sponsored by UNESCO*. Bombay : Research Center for Women's Studies, SNDT Women's University.
- L. Heise, J. Pitanguy, et al., "Violence against women: the hidden health burden," in World Bank Discussion Paper 255, World Bank, Washington, DC, USA, 1994.
- Miller, Barbara D. 1992. "Wife-beating in India: variations on a theme." In D. A. Counts, J. .K. Brown, and J.C. Campbell, *Sanctions and Sanctuary: Cultural Perspectives on the Beating of Wives*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- National Commission on Self Employed Women and Women in Informal sector: Shramshakti (No. 160 in Chapter 10) (July, 1988)
- National Crime Records Bureau. 2013. "Crimes against Women." <http://ncrb.gov.in/CD-CII2012/cii-2012/Chapter%205.pdf> (accessed March 2, 2014).
- Nauert, R. PhD, Senior News Editor, April 13, 2010 10:16am ET: *Why women stay in Abusive Relationships*. <http://www.livescience.com/8202-women-stay-abusive-relationships.html>
- Newman, K. (1993). Giving up: Shelter experiences of battered women. *Public Health Nursing, 10*(2), 108–113.
- R. Stephenson, M. A. Koenig, and S. Ahmed, "Domestic violence and symptoms of gynecologic morbidity among women in North India," *International Family Planning Perspectives*, vol. 32, no. 4, pp. 201–208, 2006. [View at Publisher](#) · [View at Google Scholar](#) · [View at Scopus](#)
- Rubin, J. Z., Brockner, J., Small-Weil, S., & Nathanson, S. (1980). Factors affecting entry into psychological traps. *Journal of Conflict Resolution, 24*(3), 405-426. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/002200278002400302>
- Senter, K. E., & Caldwell, K. (2002). Spirituality and the maintenance of change: A phenomenological study of women who leave abusive relationships. *Contemporary Family, 24*(4), 543-564.
- Straus, M.A., & Gelles, R. J. (1992). How Violent are the American families? Estimates from The National Family Violence Resurvey and other Studies. Ref. in Lloyd, S.(1997) *Domestic Violence and Women's Employment*.(1997).<http://www.nwu.edu/IPR/publication/s/nupr/nuprv03/lloyd.html>.
- Teger, A. I. (1980). *Too much invested to quit*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Thompson MP, Basile KC, Hertz MF, Sitterle D. *Measuring Intimate Partner Violence Victimization and Perpetration: A Compendium of Assessment Tools*. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, (2006)

Perceived Sexual Abuse and Quality of Life of Female Workers of Unorganized Sector- An Exploratory Study from Four Districts of West Bengal

UNIFEM, A brief account of violence against women in Kerala In: Support Services to Counter Violence against women in Kerala: A Resource Directory: UNIFEM south Asia Regional Office, 2000.

Vranda M N. (2013). Exploring Domestic Violence in an Indian Setting. Indian Journal of Gender Studies, 135-146, doi:10.1177/0971521512465940

Walker, L. (1992). The Battered Woman Syndrome is a Psychological Consequence of Abuse. In Gelles, R. J. & Loeske, D. R. (1993) (Ed.) Current controversies on family violence. Newbury Park, C A: Sage.

Webs

<http://www.icrw.org/files/publications/Domestic-Violence-in-India-2-A-Summary-Report-of-Four-Records-Studies.pdf>

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/working-women-face-more-domestic-violence-in-india-study/article40166.ece>