

Violence at home and community: Young men becoming perpetrators of non-consensual sex and spousal violence in India “Finding the missing link”

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Background:

Violence at home is a subject of increasingly public concern. The most affected victims of violence, may it be physical or psychological, are women and the most common violence at home is the spousal violence. Spousal violence is a significant public health problem because of the associated physical, psychological, and financial costs to victims, their families, communities, and society in general. Spousal violence is repetitive and can sometimes be fatal. The severe consequences of repeated spousal violence necessitate the development of ways to identify male abusers at high risk of perpetrating spousal violence so that actions can be taken to protect victims.

The adverse health consequences that women experience due to violence are wide ranging and encompass physical, reproductive, sexual and mental health outcomes. It is often unnoticed and disregarded, in part because it is considered as a forbidden. It is not only confined to the less developed or developing world but has remained a global challenge.

As UN Secretary-General, Ban-Ki-Moon (2007) puts in “*Violence against women and girls continues unabated in every continent, country and culture. It takes a devastating toll on women’s lives, on their families, and on society as a whole. Most societies prohibit such violence — yet the reality is that too often, it is covered up or tacitly condoned*”.

Violence against women is rampant in India and spousal violence being its worst form. According to India's National Family Health Survey-III, which interviewed 125000 women in 28 states during 2005-06, over 40% women reported physical violence by their husbands at some point of time. Over 51% of the 75,000 men interviewed didn't find anything wrong with assaulting their wives on some ground or other.

Traditional views on marriage which dictate that a woman must be (sexually) submissive to her husband continue to be common in many parts of the world. Sexual violence within marriages in India is also quite common. The UN Population Fund states that more than 2/3rds of married women in India, aged between 15- 49 have been beaten, raped or forced to provide sex. In 2011, a similar study released by the International Center for Research on Women, said one in every five Indian men surveyed admitted to forcing their wives into sex. Marital rape (forced-sex or non-consensual sex) is one of the under-reported violent crimes in India because it is socially tolerated. Some abused women are afraid to report the violence because they rely financially on their husbands for their upkeep and children's maintenance. Others feel unable to speak out due to fear and humiliation. Marital rape causes public health problems including poor maternal and child health, repeat-infections with Sexually-Transmitted Infections (STIs) and long-term exposure to the risk of HIV infection. Marital rape happens frequently, causing health problems, pain and distress to abused women. In the households where marital rape occurs, children often suffer from the psychological effects of witnessing violence, and because it can undermine the ability of their mothers to care for them.

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In India, cultural and social factors play an important role in developing and promoting violence against women. With the socialization process at different phases of life, men usually tend to take up the stereotyped gender roles of domination and control, whereas women grow up to follow the path of submission, dependence and respect for the authority throughout her life. The home, which is supposed to be the most secure place, is where women are most exposed to physical and sexual violence.

Its prevalence and causes have been extensively discussed in both the social science literature and the popular media. The economic, social, and psychological effects of domestic (i.e., marital or spousal) violence have also received considerable attention from researchers. One focus of this attention has been the possible effects on children who witness violence within the family, including effects on their own tendency to perpetrate or experience domestic violence as adults.

Alongside, violence in society greatly increases the costs of health, welfare and criminal justice services; reduces productivity; decreases the value of property; and generally undermines the fabric of society. It includes a range of acts from bullying and physical fighting, through more severe sexual and physical assault to homicide. Generally young men are more likely to be perpetrators of violence and aggression, especially in cases of sexual victimization and homicides. For all youth, exposure to violence at home or in the community is associated with aggression later in life, the development of supportive attitudes toward aggression and violence, psychological distress, school absenteeism, academic dysfunction, family and community sufferings, subsequent injury and indulgence in crime.

The gender gap in the attitudes towards violence against women is shaped by attitudes towards gender. Traditional gender-role attitudes, whether held by women or men, are associated with greater acceptance of violence against women, while egalitarian attitudes are associated with less acceptance of violence. If one can confirm that effects of witnessing violence between parents based on the probability that children will experience violence in their own marriages, either as perpetrators or as victims then one can conclude that the major part of gender roles accepted by women in India today are the effects of transmission of gender roles from the earlier generation. Similarly, witnessing violence in community has a serious, often life long, impact on a person's psychological and social functioning.

Therefore, it remains important for the researchers to identify the existence and extent of these inherent risk factors of spousal violence against women in India.

Moreover, the social environment within a community is, however, usually more important than the physical surrounding. How deeply entrenched in a community beliefs in male superiority and male entitlement to sex will greatly affect the likelihood of sexual violence taking place, as will the general tolerance in the community of sexual assault and the strength of sanctions, if any, against perpetrators.

While the incidence of youth violence in community and parental violence at home and its relation with perpetration of physical and sexual violence against their wives at home are both major public health problems, little research exists on the positive associations between the two. Although there is increasing evidence of risky consensual sex among young people in developing countries, non-consensual sexual experiences and forced sex among them have rarely been studied and few interventions have been designed to protect them from the risks

of such experiences. However, only a paucity of research in India has examined the risk factors for violence and almost no studies are available on the ill-effects of violence across domains relevant to young men using longitudinal data.

With this interest, this paper using “Youth in India: Situation and Needs Study, 2006–2007” data set, this study tried to examine the association between youth aggressive behavior of married men aged 15-29 and their perpetration of non-consensual sex and spousal violence against their wives. Internalizing behaviors, deviant affiliation, and exposure to parental violence and community violence were examined as moderators of the association between the two among young men in India.

Review of literature:

This section tries to critically review few literatures on spousal violence, the concept and theory of inter-generational transmission of violence and then a brief focus on the past researches on spousal violence against women in India.

The most extensive empirical research on domestic violence has been that of Murray Straus and Richard Gelles. In general studies during 1990’s show that spousal violence against women are indicators to the acceptance of violence, gendered attitudes and sex role inequalities in the society. (Anderson, 1997; Caron & Carter, 1997). Despite many-fold attempts to reduce spousal violence against women, it continues to be widespread (Feder, 1999; Pence & Paymar, 1993).

Inter-generational transmission of spousal violence is often explained in terms of social transmission of behavior where the behavior of one individual enhances the likelihood that a second individual will adopt a behavioral trait characteristic of the first one. Thus, it can be said that what is actually transmitted is an "idea" about the benefits of adopting a particular behavior and that such ideas motivate particular behaviors later in life when appropriate circumstances arise (Bandura 1977). The high frequency of violence in the families of origin of men who are domestically violent has been found in a number of studies like by Rosenbaum and O’Leary 1981, Straus, et al. 1980. The explanation of the inter-generational transmission of violence is often framed in terms of acquisition of aggressive behaviour (Bandura, 1977). In a study by Kalmus (1984) the exposure to inter-parental violence was found to be more strongly related to the enactment of violence than was the experience of being abused; this modelling of aggression was not sex specific.

Grych and Fincham (1990) found witnessing inter-parental violence leads to problems in adjustment, behavior and emotional well being of the children and it continues to persist even when they grow up, and similarly Johnson and O’Leary (1987) found associations between aggression and symptoms of conduct disorder, depression and anxiety. A meta analysis by Stith et al. (2000) found children who have exposure to violence in their childhood are more likely to enact or experience violence in their adult couple relations.

According to studies by Bowlby (1977), Johnson and Williams-Keeler (1998) and Rosenbaum and O’Leary (1981) witnessing inter-parental violence have comparable psychological and behavioral outcomes that hamper healthy emotional development and relational bonding in adulthood. When children are exposed to these methods of conflict resolution, they never learn pro-social alternatives to solve family problems and, therefore, lack strong alternative means for solving problems throughout life (Eron, 1997). Margolin,

1997 and Christensen, 1987 in their study showed that children who witness family violence are more likely to enact violence on one another.

In India, research on spousal violence in recent times has slowly changed its attention from understanding the causes to understanding the cultural patterns and the meaning of violence for women. Researchers like Karlekar, 1998 have tried to explore family image and family security which defines a woman’s constructions of femininity and that make women acceptable to cultural violence and abuse. In a study Karlekar (1998) found that in India, there exists a wide societal acceptance for wife-abuse, which is very often even considered justifiable under certain circumstance: disputes over dowries, a wife’s sexual infidelities, her neglect of household duties, and her refusal to obey her husband blindly are all considered legitimate causes for wife-beating.

Previous studies on domestic violence have clearly shown that spousal violence against women is pervasive and deeply rooted in socio cultural norms (Mitra 1999; Rao 2000; Visaria 1999). Kishor and Johnson (2004) indicated several socioeconomic and cultural risk factors of domestic violence in their “multi-country” empirical study of prevalence of domestic violence, which included India.

Like some of the studies highlighted that higher socioeconomic status levels and higher levels of education among women acts as a protective factors against women’s risk of domestic violence (Jejeebhoy,1997; Visaria,1999). Demographic factors such as age, number of living male children, and extended family residence are negatively associated with risk of spousal violence in South India (Rao, 2000). Also, studies have shown lower levels of dowry is associated with significantly higher subsequent risks of violence in India (Jejeebhoy, 1998). The association of substance abuse by men and indulgence into spousal violence has also been cited as risk factor of spousal violence in India (Rao,2000; Kishor, 2004).

But one of the inherent risk factor of spousal violence against women in India has not been covered at length. The silent transmission of spousal violence from generation to generation in India has not received much attention of the researchers though it is one of the most risky predictor of spousal violence. Few studies at regional level have tried to give some picture on this phenomenon in India.

For example, a study by Koenig, Stephenson et al. (2006) tried to examine various individual and community level influences on domestic violence in Uttar Pradesh, India. Along with many other risk factors like childlessness and economic pressure, they confirmed the positive link between the inter-generational transmissions of spousal violence against women in India. Jeyaseelan et al. (2007) also confirmed that substance abuse, childhood exposure to physical violence by parents and witnessing of parental spousal violence increases the risk of perpetrators/victims of spousal violence in adulthood. Similarly, another cross-sectional study of physical spousal violence against women in Goa, India by Kamat, Ferreira et al.(2010) found that women who witnessed inter-parental violence were more likely to accept it as a „normal“ behavior, and were more likely to be victimized.

The experience of non-consensual sex has adverse short- and long-term health, behavioral, emotional, psychological and social consequences. Health consequences include unwanted pregnancy and consequent abortion, gynecological and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV (Koenig et al. 2005; Mulugeta et al.1998; Patel and Andrew 2006; Worku and

Addisie 2002). Findings suggest close associations between early non-consensual sexual experiences and the experience of sexually transmitted infections, and subsequent risky behaviors, including unprotected sex, multiple sexual partners, subsequent consensual risky sex and drug and alcohol abuse (Jejeebhoy and Bott 2006).

A Ugandan study of 575 sexually active women ages 15 to 19 found that those who had experienced sexual coercion, compared to those who had not, were significantly more likely to be nonusers of contraception, to have unintended pregnancies, and not use condoms at last intercourse. The study also found that after controlling for other risk factors, coercive first sex was associated with a 71 percent higher risk of subsequent HIV acquisition (Koenig, Lutalo , Zablotska, et al.)

Studies have found that women who experience sexual violence are more likely to suffer severe physical violence and violence in pregnancy (Ellsberg, 2003).A study in Thailand found that of women who had first sex by force, 65 percent had later experienced intimate spousal violence, compared to 37 percent of those with a first sex experience where the degree of force was ambiguous, and 25 percent of those who did not have first sex by force.

Sexually abused women and men have significantly higher risks for suicidal ideation and behavior than those who were not abused (Ellsberg, 2003). A qualitative study in India among 33 female survivors of incest, which occurred between the ages of 10 and 24, found that these women experienced a wide range of mental health issues that needed to be addressed in order to help them overcome their fear of intimacy and sexuality, and their isolation. Many of the women reported mutilating themselves or contemplating suicide to cope with the memories of the abuse (Gupta A, Ailawadi A. 2006).Many other studies also documented that mental health outcomes such as feelings of worthlessness and powerlessness, depression and suicidal thoughts (Mulugeta et al. 1998; Patel and Andrew 2006; United Nations ESCAP et al. 2001; Worku and Addisie 2002). A few researchers have explored help-seeking behaviors of young people who experience non-consensual sex. Most stay silent and do not seek help, whether from family, friends, healthcare providers or the police (Gupta and Ailawadi, 2006).

Although researchers have paid increasing attention to risky consensual sex among young people in developing countries, less emphasis has been placed on sexual experiences without consent. The issue of sex without consent among young people has considerable gender and public health implications (Heise et al. 1999; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine 2005; Jejeebhoy et al., 2006) and programs require a special focus on their experiences and needs.

Non-consensual sex among young people encompasses behaviors that range from unwanted touch to unwanted penetrative sex; and from exercise of force to non-contact forms of abuse that may be experienced through threats, emotional manipulation and deception. Above all, the victim lacks realistic choices to prevent or redress the situation without facing severe physical or social consequences (Jejeebhoy and Bott 2006).Among the sexually experienced, a recent study of adolescents (10-19) from slum sites in Addis Ababa notes that of the sexually experienced, one quarter of females and 18 percent of males reported they were coerced into their first sex (Erulkar et al 2005a). In the Philippines, a national study shows that 27 percent of young sexually experienced females did not want to have sex the first time but went along and 4 per cent reported that first sex was forced (Natividad and Marquez

2004). Coercion is also experienced by young women within marriage, as evident in several studies conducted in South Asia; in these largely qualitative studies, several recently-married, usually adolescent women typically described their first sexual experience as traumatic, distasteful, painful and frequently forced (Santhya and Jejeebhoy 2006).

Though most of the studies concludes that exposure to parental-spousal violence is linked with many negative outcomes like intimate partner victimization (Cappell, C., Heiner, R. B. (1990) & Feerick, M. M., & Haugaard, J. J. (1999). But also there are few studies which show that there is no positive relationship between witnessing parental aggression and spousal violence in their own married life (Capaldi, D., & Clark, S, 1998.) and rare studies that show the association in terms of sexual violence.

In India there is deficiency of research on spousal violence against women and especially on forced sex within marriages, due to lack of data and sensitivity of the issue. Moreover, these paper fail to consider the impact of social learning of violence which could throw much light that could identify the transmission of spousal violence as an absolute and inherent factor of violence against women. Therefore there is a need to refine predictive models of spousal violence and forced sex within marriage among individuals who have been exposed to parental violence and community violence.

With this aim, there is a need to understand the gravity and extent of this phenomenon at India level, this paper attempts to focus on the inherent risk factors of spousal violence and non-consensual sex in India.

Hypothesis and Objectives of the Study:

It is assumed that young men who were exposed to witnessing parental violence in their childhood or violence in their community are more likely to perpetrate spousal violence and forceful sex (non-consensual sex) against their wife within marriage.

The present paper addresses the following aspects:

1. To find out the level and trends of spousal violence and forced sex perpetrated by married men against their wives under different socio-demographic settings in India.
2. To examine the different degrees of spousal violence by various socio-economic and demographic characteristics in India.
3. To investigate the association of witnessing parental violence in childhood and violence in community with men perpetrating spousal violence and non-consensual sex within marriages in India.

Data Source and Methodology:

According to the World Health Organization (2002) violence is “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.”

The present study is based on the data from “Youth in India: Situation and Needs Study, 2006– 2007”, a survey jointly conducted by Population Council, New Delhi and International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai. *This study investigated key transitions facing young people, including education and livelihood opportunities and experiences, and the magnitude and patterns of sexual and reproductive practices, key factors underlying the sexual and reproductive health, knowledge, attitudes, and life choices of young people in India (Population Council, India).* The study focused on unmarried youth and married females aged 15–24 and married males aged 15–29, (because there are few married males who are 15–24 years old). It was conducted in six states in two waves and involved a survey of total of 50,848 married and unmarried young men and women from 174,037 households. The study was conducted in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu; these states were purposively selected to represent the different geographic and socio-cultural regions within the country.

Analysis is restricted to male population aged 15-29, who are referred as “young men” and female population aged 15-24 who are referred as “young women” in this paper. **This paper includes the sample of only married men and married women for analysis.**

Here “**spousal violence**” has been used only in terms of “**physical form of violence**” that is ever perpetrated by men or experienced by women within marriage. In the paper “spousal violence” and “physical violence” are interchangeably used. In this paper “**non-consensual sex**” refers to “coerced or unwanted sex and sexual touch, any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual advances by husband towards his wife”. In this paper “non-consensual sex” is often referred as “**forced sex**”.

To estimate spousal violence the following question were used, so that all forms of physical violence could be well captured.

- *Slapped wife*
- *Twisted wife’s arm or pulled her hair*
- *Pushed/shook or threw something at wife*
- *Punched wife*
- *Kicked, dragged or beat wife*
- *Choked or burnt wife on purpose*
- *Threatened or attacked wife with knife/gun*
- *Perpetrated/experienced at least one of the above forms of violence*
- *Perpetrated/experienced more than one of the above forms of violence*

Moreover by **witnessing parental violence** it strictly refers to **witnessing physical violence between father to mother** by married men and women in their childhood and **not** witnessing sexual violence.

Similarly, married men and women **witnessing violence in community** refers only to **witnessing of young men engaged in violence** (only physical fights) in the community.

Various predictors have been used to understand other risks factors of spousal violence and non-consensual sex like demographic, socio-economic factors, lifestyle related and attitudinal factors. Three major variables were computed to understand the inherent causes of spousal violence or forced sex by men against their wives. *Witnessing violence in community* which is referred as **moderate risk**, *witnessing parental violence* in childhood as **high risk** and

exposure to both as severe risk. Based on these variables various assessments were made with the help of different statistical tools. Binary logistic regression was also carried out with different models of background characteristics in order to study the effect of moderate, high and severe risk factors on the outcome variable.

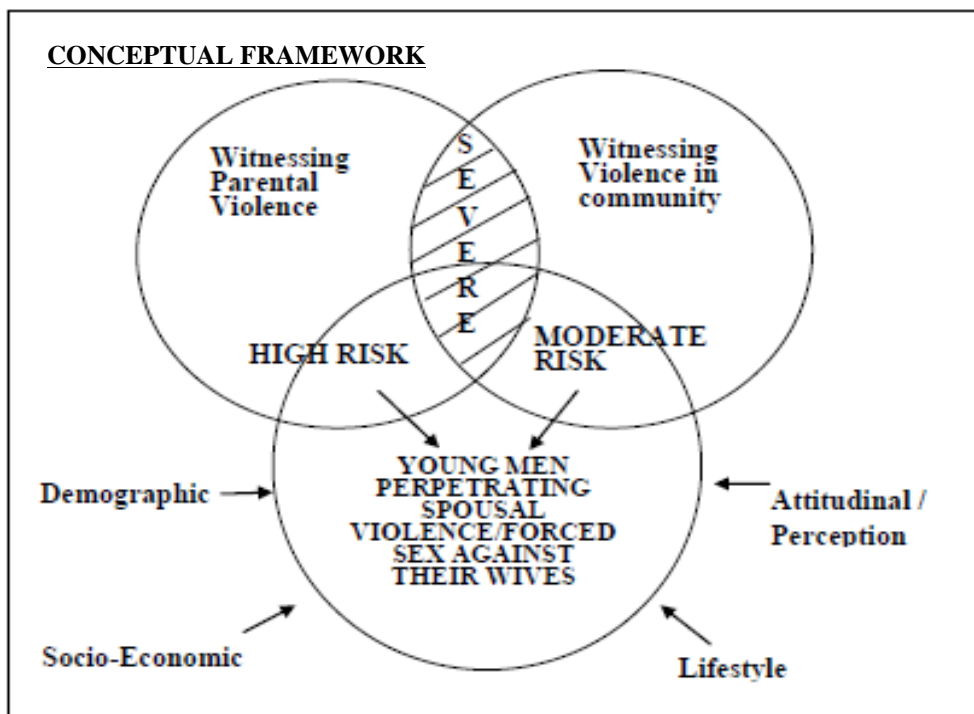
Conceptualization of the process:

Parallel to the hypothesis, this paper also try to look at severity of violence by separately analyzing for spousal violence, forced sex, either of the two event or both. This will help us in understanding the determinants of violence and how much it varies with different degrees of violence. Along with the level, trends and determinants of violence within marriage an attempt to conceptualize different inherent risk factors of spousal violence and forced sex within marriage. It is formulated that witnessing inter-parental violence or violence in community has comparable psychological and behavioral outcomes that hamper healthy emotional development and relational bonding in adulthood between the husband and wife. It is assumed that witnessing violence gets transmitted through acquisition of aggressive behavior and it is manifested in terms of violence against wife. **Those young men who witness violence in home or community are more likely to use physical, and/or sexual violence at home to establish power and control over their wives.** Since in India, mostly men perpetrate violence at home against women and not vice-versa; in society, it becomes a gender norm among men and more acceptable to women too. It can be said that violence is transmitted through generation to generation and from society to personal life where men witnesses violence as the most common way to control woman. In childhood, when a child watches his/her father beats the mother and in society when he/she sees men using forms of physical violence to resort problems or conflicts in the community, it internalizes within him/her as a norm.

Possibly, there could be three cases: If men have exposure to community violence that is; if they have witnessed violence in their community, it will affect his personal marital life. If some conflict arises between husband and wife; husband may or may not resort to physical violence at first but eventually he may adopt other ways of solving problems and there will not be any future episodes of spousal violence. Therefore, among these couples there will **moderate risks** of spousal violence.

Secondly, if husband had the childhood exposure to parental violence, then if some conflict arises, he may immediately resort to violence but in each incidence he may or may not take up violence as the resolution to solve conflicts and when every time this happens, the episodes of spousal violence will be reduced. Therefore, among these couples there will **high risks** of spousal violence.

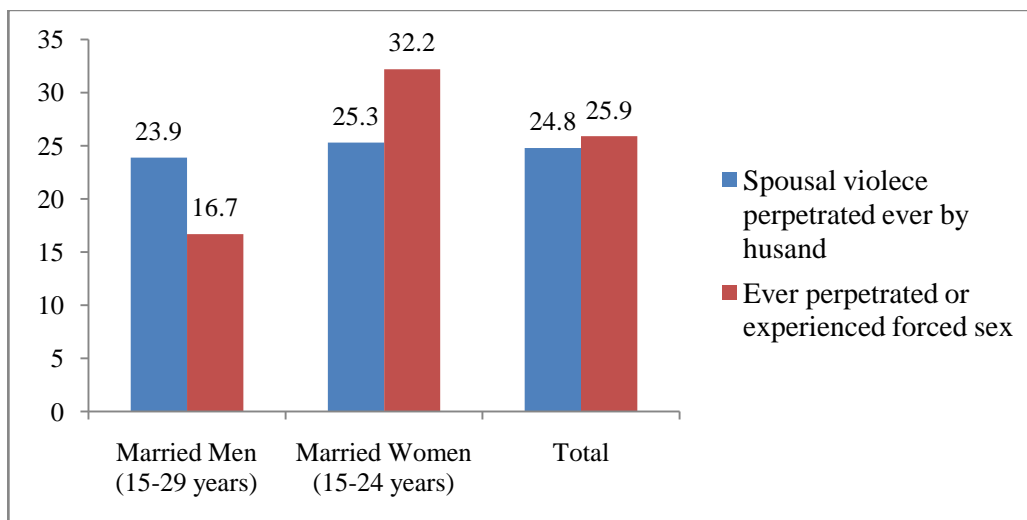
Third case could be where husband had both the childhood exposure to parental violence and witnessing community violence. In this case, if some conflict arises between the husband and wife, and husband right away initiates the violence and every time there is a conflict he does the same and it will becomes an approved act of solving any conflicts among the couple and episodes of spousal violence will continue. Therefore, among these couples there will be **severe risks** of spousal violence. The above said mechanism will also work for forced sex when wife may deny sex to his husband and based on different severities of exposure, husband will forcefully have sex. Though, the above three cases will vary with different background characteristics.



Results and Discussion:

The results of the study are shown with the help of figures and tables below followed by discussion about the findings.

Figure1: Percentage of married youth perpetrating (men)/ experience (women) of physical violence and non-consensual sex (forced sex) within marriage in India



The incidence of spousal violence and non-consensual sex (forced sex) among married youth in India is 25 percent and 26 percent respectively on an average (figure1). But there is much difference in the incidence when reported by men and women separately. According to NFHS 3, reporting of spousal violence is 37 percent at all India level which is quite higher. Many surveys have reported much higher levels of spousal violence which shows reporting bias in the society.

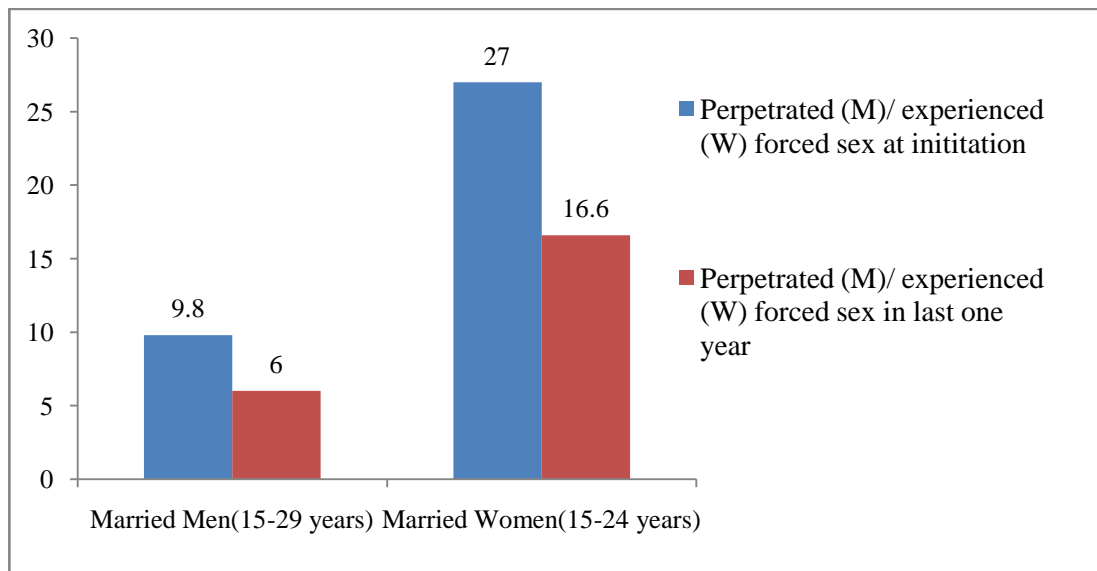
Around 17 percent married young men reported that they have perpetrated forced sex on their wives while 32 percent women reported that they have experienced forced sex ever in their life. It is surprising that the reporting by women is just double of what reported by men. This difference reveals the attitude of men towards women. Forced sex is generally acceptable in the society. Men do not consider it a form of violence which may be one of the reasons of low reporting by men.

Table1: Percentage of married youth reporting perpetration (men)/ experience (women) different types of physical violence within marriage in India

Types of Spousal violence	Married Men (15-29 years) N=7812	Married Women (15-24 years) N=13549
Slapped wife	22.9	24.2
Twisted wife’s arm or pulled her hair	7.1	11.4
Pushed/shook or threw something at wife	4.1	7.2
Punched wife	3.4	5.4
Kicked, dragged or beat wife	2.6	6.3
Choked or burnt wife on purpose	0.2	1.2
Threatened or attacked wife with knife/gun	0.1	0.4
Perpetrated/experienced at least one of the above forms of violence	23.9	25.3
Perpetrated/experienced more than one of the above forms of violence	9.1	13.3

Table 1 shows the percentage of reporting perpetration (married men)/experience (married women) by different types of physical violence within marriage in India. Around 23 percent married young men have reported that they have slapped their wives. Around 11 percent of women experienced twisting of arms or pulling of hair while only 7 percent men reported that they have twisted wife’s arm or pulled her hair. This difference in reporting again highlights that most of the men do not consider these acts as a form of violence, but a general norm. Around a quarter of them reported to have perpetrated/experienced at least one of the above forms of violence.

Figure 2: Percentage of married youth reporting perpetration (men)/experience (women) non-consensual sex (forced sex) within marriage in India



In figure 2, around 10 percent married young men perpetrated (men) forced sex at initiation whereas 27 percent married young women reported to have experienced (women) the same. The difference in reporting may be because men do not want to disclose it or they may consider it a normal behaviour which is quite acceptable in the society. Similarly, the reporting of forced sex by women in the last one year is around 3 times more than by men.

Figure 3: Percentage of married youth reporting perpetration (men)/experience (women) (either or both) spousal violence and non-consensual sex (forced sex) within marriages in India

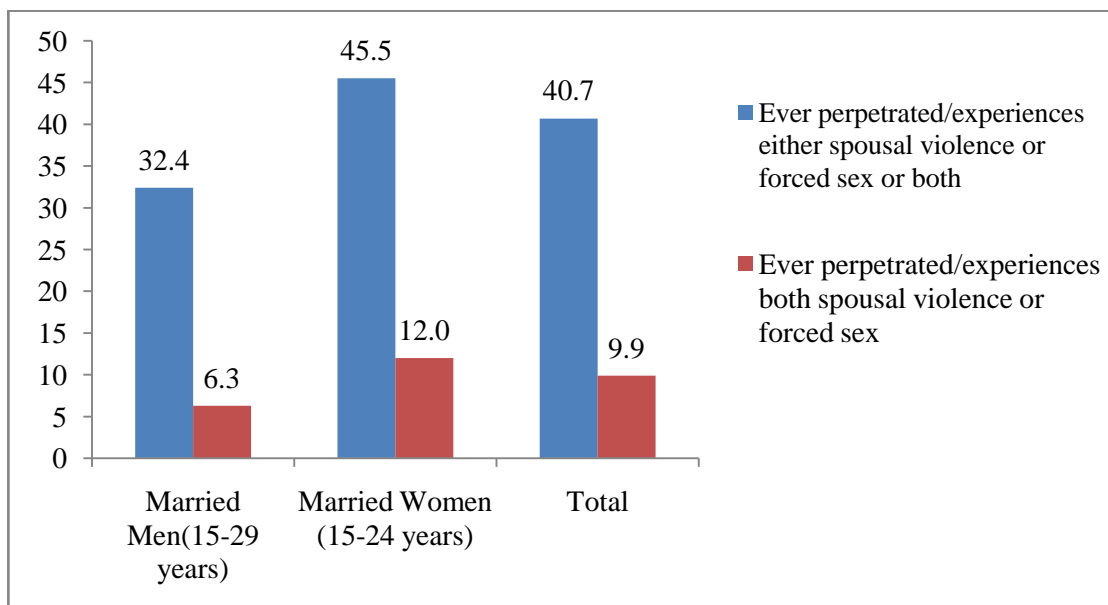


Figure 3 highlights the incidence of either spousal violence or forced sex and both spousal violence and forced sex being perpetrated/experienced. The figure shows around four times higher incidence of either spousal violence or forced sex or both compared to both spousal violence and forced sex among married youth. Further considering men and women separately; women (46 percent) reported higher incidence of either spousal violence or forced sex or both compared to men (32 percent). Incidence of both spousal violence and forced sex reported is twice by women (12 percent) compared to men (6 percent) .This difference again shows different outlook of men and women towards spousal violence in the society.

Table 2: Percentage of married youth reporting perpetration (men)/ experience (women) physical violence and forced sex within marriage by different risk factors in India

		Perpetrated/ experienced spousal violence		Perpetrated/ experienced forced sex		Perpetrated/ experienced either spousal or forced sex violence or both		Perpetrated/ experienced both spousal and forced sex violence	
Risk Factor		MM (15-29 years)	MW (15-24 years)	MM (15-29 years)	MW (15-24 years)	MM (15-29 years)	MW (15-24 years)	MM (15-29 years)	MW (15-24 years)
Exposed to moderate Risk	No	15.6	15.3	10.8	25.2	23.5	34.6	2.9	5.9
	Yes	27.3	29.0	16.5	34.9	36.0	49.6	7.7	14.3
Exposed to high Risk	No	11.2	14.4	12.2	25.3	20.6	33.9	2.9	5.8
	Yes	32.1	29.4	16.6	35.2	40.3	50.1	8.4	14.4
Exposed to severe Risk	No	7.6	10.4	7.8	19.5	14.6	26.7	0.8	3.2
	Yes	34.4	32.6	17.8	37.1	42.7	53.3	9.5	16.4
<p><i>Note:</i> MM (married men), MW (married women) Moderate Risk : Witnessed only violence in community High Risk: Witnessed only parental violence Severe Risk: Witnessed both violence in community and parental violence</p>									

The study finds that those who are exposed to different levels of risk (moderate/high/severe) are more prone to perpetrate and experience spousal violence (table 2). Around 27 percent of married men who are exposed to moderate risk perpetrated spousal violence compared to 16 percent of those who were not exposed. Women exposed to moderate risk and experiencing spousal violence is twice compared to women not exposed. This indicates that the women who are exposed to moderate risk are more likely to accept spousal violence as a gender norm compared to those who had no such exposure.

Men exposed to high risk are three times more perpetrating spousal violence than those who are not exposed while women exposed to high risk experience spousal violence two times more than those who are not exposed. It shows that men have greater effect of exposure to spousal violence which results into their own violent behaviour against their wives. Spousal violence was found highest when youth are exposed to severe risk both for men and women though it is more in case of men. Men who are exposed to severe risk perpetrate spousal violence around five times more compared to those who were not exposed. The experience of

spousal violence is three times more among women who were exposed to severe risk than the ones who were not exposed.

More women report the experience of forced sex within marriage in India while very few men accept that they perpetrate forced sex. The reporting by women is double the reporting by men showing wide difference in the perception of forced sex among men and women. Apart from it, among women those who were exposed to any of the risk factors experienced forced sex more compared to those who were not exposed. The perpetration/experience of forced sex among both men and women were highest (more than double) among those who were exposed to severe risk. The study finds higher incidences of either spousal violence or forced sex or both within marriage in India, in general. In particular, this is seen to be more among women compared to men in all the categories of risk factors. Most of the women who had such exposure in the past accept either of these violence compared to those who had no such exposure. It shows the strong influence of exposure to violence forms which translates into their acceptance towards similar forms of violence. It is important to note that those men who were exposed to severe risk perpetrated both spousal and forced sex 12 times compared to those without such exposure. It clearly shows that witnessing both violence in community and violence by parents have greater influence on men which leads to demonstration of violent behavior in their own marital relationships.

Table 3: Percentage of married men reporting perpetration of spousal violence and forced sex against wife by different background characteristics

Background characteristics		Spousal Violence	Forced Sex	Either of them	Both
Selected States	Rajasthan	16.5	30.2	38.3	8.4
	Bihar	29.7	42.4	55.7	16.4
	Jharkhand	27	33	47.6	12.5
	Maharashtra	25.9	19.5	36.4	9.0
	Andhra Pradesh	21.8	11.3	28.2	5.0
	Tamil Nadu	29.2	20.9	41.4	8.7
Residence	Urban	20.5	18.0	31.8	6.7
	Rural	26.1	28.2	43.3	10.9
Current Age	15-19	20.9	34.4	44.9	10.4
	20-24	25.8	27.8	42.4	11.2
	25-29	25.5	14.3	33.3	6.5
Caste	SC/ST	30.9	27.7	46.4	12.1
	OBC	23.6	26.8	40.6	9.7
Religion	General	18.0	20.4	31.4	7.0
	Hindu	26.4	26.0	40.7	9.8
	Muslim	24.7	27.5	41.4	10.7
	Christian/Sikh/Jain/Others	28.8	20.8	39.5	10.1
Family Type	Nuclear	32.1	26.3	46.2	12.1
	Joint	21.4	25.6	38.1	8.9
Level of education	No education	31.9	37.0	53.5	15.3

	Primary	26.5	25.1	41.4	10.3
	Secondary	20.1	19.9	33.6	6.4
	Higher	13.0	12.8	22.2	3.7
Income quintile*	Poorest	34.0	37.7	55.3	16.5
	Poorer	30.3	29.0	47.2	12.1
	Middle	25.3	24.1	40.1	9.3
	Richer	19.2	19.3	32.1	6.3
	Richest	14.0	19.1	28.0	5.2
Total		25.9	24.8	40.7	9.9

*Household economic status was measured using a income index composed of household asset data on ownership of selected durable goods, including means of transportation, as well as access to number of amenities. Thereafter, households were ranked according to the index score and further based on them households were divided into five income quintiles as lowest, lower, middle, higher and highest respectively.

*From hence forward, the **analysis is restricted to married men only** because in Indian societal structure where patriarchy is the norm; men are generally seen as perpetrators of the violence against their wives. Even this study finds higher incidence of spousal violence and forced sex being perpetrated by men. Surprisingly, there is wide gap between the reporting of men and women which makes it further interesting to study the risk factors of perpetrating spousal violence and forced sex by men.*

Perpetration of spousal violence and forced sex by married young men according to different background characteristics is shown in table 3. Bihar registered highest (56 percent) incidence of either of spousal violence or forced sex followed by Jharkhand (48 percent) and Rajasthan (38 percent). Spousal violence is highest in Bihar (30 percent) followed by Tamil Nadu (29 percent), Jharkhand (27 percent), Maharashtra (26 percent). Similarly, forced sex is highest in Bihar (42 percent) followed by Jharkhand (33 percent) and Rajasthan (30 percent). Perpetration of both spousal violence and forced sex both by married men is comparatively lesser. Such incidences are highest in Jharkhand (19 percent) followed by Tamil Nadu (13 percent).

The incidence of violence under different categories is higher in rural areas compared to the urban areas. Forced sex is highest in the age group 15-19 compared to other age groups. Spousal violence and forced sex are highest among SC/ST compared to OBC and general category of caste. Spousal violence and forced sex is found more in nuclear family compared to joint family. Men with no education are found to be perpetrating more such violence compared to the educated ones. Similarly, the incidence of spousal violence and forced sex is seen more among the poorest income quintile.

Table 4: Odds ratio for spousal violence/force sex or both according to background characteristics

Predictors		Odds Ratio	95% C.I.	
			Lower	Upper
DEMOGRAPHIC		Rajasthan ®		
		Bihar	1.37**	1.169 1.613
	Selected States	Jharkhand	1.38**	1.112 1.719
		Maharashtra	1.043	0.9 1.21
		Andhra Pradesh	0.464	0.395 0.544
		Tamil Nadu	1.017	0.861 1.203
	Residence	Urban ®		
		Rural	1.22**	1.099 1.347
	Current Age	15-19 ®		
		20-24	0.78**	0.691 0.882
		25-29	0.535**	0.455 0.628
	Family Type	Nuclear ®		
		Joint	0.76**	0.688 0.836
Type of Marriage	Arranged ®			
	Love	0.536**	0.455 0.628	
SOCIO-ECONOMIC	Caste	SC/ST ®		
		OBC	0.82**	0.736 0.908
		General	0.73**	0.641 0.829
	Religion	Hindu ®		
		Muslim	1.00	0.857 1.171
		Christian/Sikh/Jain/Others	0.93	0.773 1.112
	Level of education	No education ®		
		Primary	0.84**	0.759 0.922
		Secondary	0.59**	0.509 0.689
		Higher	0.24**	0.145 0.473
	Level of education of the spouse	No education ®		
		Primary	1.108	0.964 1.274
		Secondary	1.02	0.89 1.17
		Higher	0.86*	0.727 1.012
	Income quintile	Poorest ®		
		Poorer	0.898	0.759 1.062
		Middle	0.82*	0.7 0.972
Richer		0.79**	0.665 0.931	
Richest		0.79*	0.658 0.957	
Currently working status	Working ®			
	Not working	1.094	0.893 1.682	
LIFESTYLE	Substance abuse (tobacco/drugs/alcohol)	No ®		
		Yes	1.43**	1.272 1.61

	Frequency of watching television	No ®			
		Yes	1.035	0.888	1.207
	Frequency of accessing internet	No ®			
		Yes	0.836	0.434	1.611
ATTITUDE/PERCEPTION	Those who justify beating wife	No ®			
		Yes	1.38**	1.259	1.502
	Husband wanted is wife to be pregnant to ensure her child bearing capability	No ®			
		Yes	1.33**	1.21	1.456
	Experienced childhood violence	No ®			
		Yes	1.68**	1.438	1.732
Think that watching violence in media makes a person violent too	No ®				
	Yes	1.07	0.975	1.175	
Level of significance: ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ® = Reference category					

Table 4 shows the odds ratio for spousal violence/forced sex or both by different background characteristics. It has been separately done to clearly identify the demographic, socio-economic and other risk factors of spousal violence/ forced sex which will help in comparing and restricting further analysis for inherent risk. Paper has tried to categorize various risk factors in groups like demographic, socio-economic, lifestyle and attitude related.

Incidences of spousal violence/forced sex are more likely to occur in Bihar and Jharkhand as compared to Rajasthan. Rajasthan, Bihar and Jharkhand have low socio-economical status as compared to other states. Rural areas have 1.2 times stronger likelihood of perpetrating spousal violence/forced sex as compared to the rural areas. With increase in age the probability to perpetrate spousal violence/ forced sex reduces. It may be because of higher incidences of forced sex by married men of younger age group 15-20. As compared to the nuclear families it is more likely to happen in joint families. Perhaps because of presence of other family members in the joint household, married men gets less chance to perpetrate violence against their wives.

Young men who had love marriages as compared to those who had arranged marriages are less likely to perpetrate violence. Love marriages are based on more equal and understanding principles as against arranged marriages which are fixed by parents and family and the bride and groom have not much say either in choice of partner selection, age at marriage. As compared to scheduled caste/ scheduled tribes married men of all other caste categories have less likeliness to perpetrate spousal violence or forced sex whereas religion does not show any significant association with perpetration of spousal violence/forced sex.

Level of education plays an important role in constraining men to engage into violence against their wife. Men having only primary level education are more likely to take on spousal violence/forced sex, whereas men with higher levels of education shows strong likelihood to perpetrate spousal violence/forced sex. Only women with higher (college and above) education shows slightly less likelihood being victims of perpetration of violence as compared to women with no or less education.

Married men from middle class and richer class have less likelihood to perpetrate violence as compared to those from poorer or poorer income groups. But this probability is lowest among the men from richest income quintile. Men’s current working status does not show any suggestive relation towards their involvement to spousal violence/forced sex. Consumption of alcohol/drugs/tobacco products reduces men’s controlling power on their cognitive abilities and hence provokes them to indulge into aggressive behavior. This holds true in case of spousal violence/forced sex also, like those men who consume tobacco/drugs/alcohol are more likely to get into spousal violence with their partners. Surprisingly, other lifestyle factors like exposure to mass media (newspaper, T.V., internet) does not show any significant relation with chances of perpetrating spousal violence/forced sex. It is thought that mass media exposure creates awareness on various issues including women’s rights but exposure to any form of mass-media do not seem to work on men’s perception towards spousal violence/forced sex. Perhaps mass media has become very common and fails to make any further difference in educating them regarding violence or may be it could not capture the attention of men.

In order to understand whether attitudes or perceptions have any association with actual behavior, odds was taken out for those men who justify beating wife. Those men who think that wife-beating is justified for any reason also considerably show higher likelihood of perpetrating violence against their wives.

Due to India’s rigid social structure a women’s primary role in society is to provide children to the family, soon after the marriage. Society and family member’s tend to put pressure on the women to reproduce children, preferable son. On similar lines, those men who wanted their wife to be pregnant to ensure her child bearing capability are more likely to perpetrate spousal violence/forced sex than those men who do not think so. Married men who have been beaten by their parents in childhood are more likely (almost 2 times more) to commit spousal violence/forced sex in their own marriages.

With these evidences, it becomes easy to confirm the risk factors that influences married men to perpetrate spousal violence/forced sex against their wives.

Table 5: Results of step-by-step models of logistic regression analysis for either spousal violence/forced sex perpetrated by married men and different risk factors

Predictors	MODEL I	MODEL II	MODEL III	MODEL IV	MODEL V
	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
Moderate Risk	1.83**	1.78**	1.74**	1.60**	1.47**
High Risk	2.60**	2.57**	2.38**	2.14**	2.09**
Severe Risk	4.35**	4.17**	3.85**	3.063**	2.88**
Controlled variables		<i>Demographic</i>	<i>Demographic</i>	<i>Demographic</i>	<i>Demographic</i>
			<i>Socio-economic</i>	<i>Socio-economic</i>	<i>Socio-economic</i>
				<i>Lifestyle</i>	<i>Attitude/Perception</i>

The variables used in table 5 as controlled variables used the in step by step model are the risk factors that have been identified in table 4. Risks factors of spousal violence and forced sex perpetrated by men in India have been clubbed together based on different characteristics. They have been controlled to find the true association between the inherent risk factors (moderate, high and severe) and probability of married men to perpetrate spousal violence/forced sex/both in their conjugal relationship. Logistic regression analysis for either spousal violence or forced sex, or both perpetrated by married men and different risk factors has been shown by controlling different factors so as to know the determinants of different risk factors (table 5).

Model I does not control any of the demographic, socio-economic, lifestyle or attitude/perception related risk factors. Without controlling any factor it is observed that the odds for severe risk is highest (4.3 times) compared to high and moderate risk. Model II is estimated by controlling demographic variables which includes region, residence, current age, spousal age, type of marriage and family type. The odds of moderate risk is 1.7 times, high risk is 2.5 times and severe risk is 4.1 times in model II which is slightly lesser than model I. This shows little change occurs in risk factors with different demographic characteristics.

Model III controls the demographic as well as socio-economic factors. Socio-economic factors include caste, religion, education, wealth index, currently working status. Model IV controls demographic, socio economic as well as lifestyle factors i.e. exposure to T.V., newspaper, internet, substance abuse (alcohol or smoke or drugs), whereas model V controls demographic, socio economic, lifestyle and attitudinal risk factors which includes indicators like weather wife beating is justified, weather if husband wanted wife to be pregnant to make certain her childbearing capability, men who have been beaten by their parents in their childhood and perceptions of men who think weather watching violence in media also influences the behavior of people. All the values in the table are significant at 99 percent. The table shows that the odds remain high for all the models with severe risk being the highest. Controlling the risk variables decreases the odds ratio. The odds of all the risk factors remain highest without any control group. It indicates that the married young men perpetrate either spousal violence or forced sex irrespective of their different demographic, socio-economic background, different lifestyle and attitude/perception if they have witnessed community

violence (moderate risk), parental violence (high risk), and the perpetration by them is more when they have witnessed both community and parental violence (severe risk).

Summary and conclusion:

From the analysis it is clear that the hypothesis that was conceptualized in the beginning of this paper holds true. Explicitly, it reflects the impact of childhood exposure to parental violence and witnessing violence in community in shaping conformation to the set gender role norms. These finding suggests that witnessing violence between parents while growing up is an important risk factor for the perpetration of partner violence in adulthood. Women’s exposure to physical and sexual violence at home and community seems to have more devastating effect on building her understanding towards her gender norms. As compared to men, women are more susceptible to this phenomenon of transmission. Women become more acceptable to violence as compared to men whose risk of perpetrating spousal violence increases. This is clear from the statistics in Table 2, where women report more violence as compared to men and the percentages reported by women are more among those women who have witnessed parental violence and violence in the community.

The incidence of spousal violence and forced sex among married youth is quite high in the Indian society. On an average, spousal violence and forced sex is perpetrated/experienced in India is 25 percent and 26 percent respectively. But the incidence of forced sex is around double as reported by married women (32 percent) compared to married men (17 percent). This difference indicates that married men either refrain to disclose that they perpetrate forced sex on their wives or they do not consider it worth mentioning considering it a normal norm in the society and not a form of violence.

The different form of spousal violence being practiced in the marriages in India are recorded as slapped wife, twisted wife’s arm or pulled her hair, pushed/shook or threw something at wife, punched wife, kicked, dragged or beat wife, choked or burnt wife on purpose and threatened or attacked wife with knife/gun. Around, a quarter of them reported to have perpetrated/experienced at least one of the above forms of violence, though the reporting by married women is more. Forced sex at initiation is found to be 27 percent as reported by women. Surprisingly, only 9 percent men reported that they perpetrate forced sex at initiation indicating different perception of men towards forced sex. It appears from these findings that they do not consider it wrong and violent behaviour or they do not want to disclose it. This may be a reason for low reporting of such cases by men. The study also finds quite higher perpetration/experience of either spousal or forced sex (41 percent) by young married youth in general, though there is large difference between the reporting by men and women.

Perpetration of spousal violence/forced sex by men is more in Bihar and Jharkhand as compared to other selected states. Men from rural area, with no or low education, from SC/ST castes are more likely to perpetrate violence against their wives. Men who consume alcohol/drugs/tobacco are found to be perpetrating spousal violence more than those who do not have such habits

It is clearly evident from the study that those who are exposed to parental violence (high risk) in childhood tend to perpetrate/experience more spousal violence/forced sex compared to those who have witnessed community violence (moderate risk). Such violence are highest among those who have witnessed both parental and community violence (severe risk). It is also found that married women who are exposed to parental and community violence or both experienced more spousal violence/forced sex compared to those who were not exposed. This indicates that in

Indian society, women tend to accept spousal violence as they have grown up witnessing such violence in their family and community. Similarly, it is also found that men have greater influence of such exposure which in turn leads to their own violent behavior against their wives.

Moreover, it is observed that the impact of exposure to parental violence and witnessing violence in community or both does not varies largely under different settings of socio-demographic and cultural characteristics but remains an intrinsic risk factor to spousal violence in adulthood under all models. With different social, economic, life-style and attitudinal factors there is slight decline in its effect though it remains a strong predictor of spousal violence.

Therefore, the aim of this paper was to “*find the missing link*” of inherent causes of violent behavior among married men. Apparently it was observed that exposure to parental violence or violence in community or both are the most significant and inherent factors determining the violent behavior among married men in India making them perpetrators of physical and sexual violence against their wives.

Policy Recommendation:

The finding in the study requires urgent attention of the policy makers to make supportive efforts to reduce spousal violence against women in India and also towards minimizing children’s exposure to parental violence in order to break the inter-generational cycle of violence. Interventions are required that not only promote parents to develop skills to strategically solve conflicts in the family but also, to cultivate healthy parent-child relations.

Schools can play a key role in education and counseling the children that violence against anyone is a serious offense. They should be taught to avoid violence and ways of conflict resolutions and also develop positive attitudes and values towards their parents and all other intimate relations.

Education and programmes on spousal violence especially physical and sexual violence against women should focus on creating awareness of its negative implication on women, children and to the society, with special focus of reaching to the men.

The above suggestions if followed could only reduce the effect of parental violence on children or impact of witnessing violence in the community among children and adults but will not reduce the incidence of spousal violence. So, it is important that in future there are no cases of spousal violence against women, with this direction, Government and other social service organizations should take steps to reduce the incidences of spousal violence. Legislative policies and laws should be passed to strengthen the message that spousal violence or violence of any type against women is a hideous crime and that perpetrators will be severely punished.

Increase in education and training programmes on spousal violence and promote communication and referrals units for women to complain and sought help at community level can help women to raise their voices and protect their children from the ill-effects of spousal violence. Last, but not the least more and more studies should be conducted on violence against women in India, particularly domestic and spousal violence. It will help to pool information on this sensitive issue and will allow policy makers to take actions to root out this social evil from society.

Therefore, at the end this paper suggests to the policy makers and public health experts to recognize violence against women as a critical priority within programs and policies of public health and make rigorous efforts to increase women’s status and autonomy in India before it becomes too late to rectify.

Limitations of the study:

Though this paper has been able to give some light on the phenomena and impact of transmission of parental violence and community violence but there are also few limitations in the study.

In this paper, the experience of spousal violence/forced sex does not give the severity of violence, which is in terms of its frequency. This paper has only looked into those cases of spousal violence where men have ever perpetrated physical violence in their marital relationships. If a separate analysis could be done based on a complete history of spousal and sexual aggression then it will help to substantiate whether exposure to parental violence or exposure to community violence also increases the episodes and severity of violence among the couples.

The evidence of violence in the previous generation has been estimated on the basis of retrospective data, which is what has been reported by the couples for their parents. The recall of parental spousal violence may produce strong negative emotions (anger, fear, sadness, shame, guilt) about the matter, therefore hiding it from reporting. Moreover, recollections of events are purely based on past memories and memories could be fallible. Therefore, there are fair chances that the parental violence is massively under-reported or at least lacks accuracy. Similarly since the data set does not provide, the exposure period or frequency of witnessing violence in the community remains unknown and neither is it clear whether violence is between men and men or men against women or severity of violence. Even there may be under-reporting of physical/sexual violence by men. This is clear from the differences in reporting of violence among men and women. Perpetrators may deny or minimize their involvement while reporting for violence and victims may lie out of fear of reprisal if known to husband or out of feeling of shame. Therefore, the incidence of violence may be much large than what has come out into lime light through this paper.

Lastly, it could not understand the clear mechanisms through which witnessing violence in community affects young married men to perpetrate physical and sexual violence against their wife. Though, in this paper it is found that witnessing violence in community has significant impact on perpetrating violence at home.

But definitely, given the apparent pervasiveness of the problem the childhood exposure to parental violence in India remains an important area for social, legal and public policy concern.

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