

QUALITATIVE STUDY ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG MARRIED 18-49 YEARS MEN AND WOMEN IN HLAINGTHARYAR TOWNSHIP, YANGON REGION

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Violence against men and women is now widely recognized as a violation of human rights and a major public health concerns. It can cause physical, mental, social and reproductive health problems. Violence against men and women now become a growing public health problem. But, there is no research for violence against men in Myanmar and only limited number of research for domestic violence against women in Myanmar. Aim of this study is to explore the reasons of domestic violence among married 18 to 49 years old men and women in Hlaingtharyar township, Yangon region. A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted by using qualitative approach. This research was conducted in Hlaingtharyar Township, Yangon. For In-depth Interview, 13 respondents who had experienced moderate to severe abuse in at least one form of domestic violence were chosen. Key Informant Interview was done to the 3 Key Informants who are actively take part in the anti-violence activities for both men and women in Hlaingtharyar township. Most of the respondents reported that the most common action of psychological violence was using abusive language and controlling behaviors such as accused of having affairs and not allowed to go out. The most common reasons were drinking alcohol, gambling and financial difficulties or insufficient income. Some of the IDI respondents reported that their reasons of domestic violence were having a mistress and for revenge. In this study, financial difficulties, gambling and alcohol consumption caused most of the intimate partner violence among study population. Community-based studies on domestic violence by intimate partner should be carried out in order to know the prevalence of domestic violence by intimate partner in Myanmar.

Keywords: qualitative study, domestic violence, Hlaingtharyar.

INTRODUCTION

Violence against men and women is now widely recognized as a violation of human rights and a major public health concerns. It can cause physical, mental, social and reproductive health problems. Domestic violence can be described as the power misused in adult relationship in order to control another. It is perpetrated by and on both men and women. However, most commonly the victims are women and the perpetrators are their husbands.¹

People who are suffering domestic violence physically as well as mentally are incapable to make their own decisions, to express their views.² Domestic violence by intimate partner is major obstacle in progress of achieving development targets. Without addressing it, anybody have very few chance of meeting development.³

People who suffer physical, mental and social violence linked with a number of adverse health outcomes such as the poor

physical and mental health, a disability preventing work, arthritis, chronic pain, migraine, other frequent head- aches, sexually transmitted infections, chronic pelvic pain, stomach ulcers, spastic colon and frequent indigestion, diarrhea, or constipation.⁴ These adverse health outcomes may increasing burden on the health care system.

Violence against men and women now become a growing public health problem. However, there is no research for violence against men in Myanmar and only limited number of research for domestic violence against women in Myanmar. But there will be many underreported cases in the public. So, it needs timely recognition and intervention to stop such type of violence in Myanmar in order to reduce social and economic burdens.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted by using qualitative approach. The

data collection was done in May 2017. This research was conducted in Hlaingtharyar Township, Yangon. For In-depth Interview (IDI), 13 respondents who had experienced moderate to severe abuse in at least one form of domestic violence were chosen. Key Informant Interview (KII) was done to the 3 Key Informants who are actively take part in the anti-violence activities for both men and women in Hlaingtharyar Township. The research team included one investigator and two interviewers. Before starting the interview, the interviewer obtained the informed consent from eligible person. In-depth Interview and Key Informant interview started in the place that was ensured for privacy of the respondent. No other person should be present in the interview room. Explain about the purpose of the study. Any question can be asked prior to the interview. Verbal informed consent was taken from the respondents before conducting interview. For qualitative methods, In-depth Interview and Key Informant Interview, pre-tested guides are used. For qualitative study, the recorded tapes from In-depth Interview and Key Informant Interview were transcribed by the researcher and double checked to ensure accuracy and consistency in the data generated before analysis. A coding manual was prepared for coding purposes. Qualitative data analysis was performed manually, according to the themes and sub-themes. This study was done according to the guidelines issued by the Research and Ethics Committee of University of Medicine 1, Yangon.

RESULTS

According to IDI, most of the respondents reported that the most common action of psychological violence was using abusive language and controlling behaviors such as accused of having affairs and not allowed to go out.

“I feel most hurt for being accused of having affairs with someone which is not true. As I am doing social work, sometime I have to out

with other men. When I return he starts making problems.”
(53 years, female, community volunteer, IDI)

“What upsets me is abusive language. He abuses me with my father in front of other people. Even grandmother is abused.”
(24 years, female, house wife, IDI)

“Everyday I have to get angry. He does not work. He gets drunk and whole day he is using abusive language, so I feel hurt. I also feel hurt for making me upset. There is not one day I have mental peace. All the time I am feeling mentally disturbed.”
(48 years, female, vendor, wife of heavy alcohol drinker, IDI)

“I feel most hurt because he says "You are useless. You are illiterate." I feel most hurt if something unjust is said to me. The worst hurt is when he tells me to leave the house.”
(42 years, female, primary education level, IDI)

“I cannot go out if I want to. When I am selling he tells me to close down even before the market is closed. He does not like it if I speak to others. I feel mentally restrained. He controls me too much and I feel I have I have more mental injuries.”
(42 years, female, vendor, IDI)

“Once he threatened me with a knife. I said I will go back to my mother. He said he will make trouble for my mother and even make trouble for the child.”
(24 years, female, house wife, IDI)

During IDI, the common actions of physical violence reported in IDI are slap or hit, punch with fist and kick which is similar to the quantitative findings.

“It was like this, hitting and beating. If I say anything, he says Shut up your mouth, I will stab you with whatever I see.”
(24 years, female, IDI)

“He was saying nonsense things, and then he started physically abuse. He repeatedly hit my face, slapped me and kicked me.”
(53 years, female, community volunteer, IDI)

“There was an argument regarding money, while working. He flung a water mug at me and my head was broken.”
(22 years, female, odd job, IDI)

“When he becomes drunk, he pulls my hair and hit my face (weeping voice). He hit my head with a stick. Once my eyes became black and there were bumps on my head. I could not even take food. He beats me frequently every time we fight.”
(28 years, female, vendor, IDI)

According to Key Informant Interview, there are both physical and psychological violence by intimate partner were found in Hlaingtharyar township. Psychological violence occurred more than physical violence in this study area.

“Not give household money, come home drunk, beats, talking to make upset. In both cases it can be seen. Hitting with the fists kicking, pulling of hair and slapping. This is the majority of the cases. Some don't beat. But this is rare.”
(Member of Women Affair, female, KII)

“The women gambles on numbers, the husband is a car driver. He only eats betel quid. He is simple. If he goes far, the wife as affairs with other men in the house. When the husband finds out, he cannot say anything because of the child, so he turns into a drunkard.”
(Ten household leader, male, KII)

Regarding the reasons of domestic violence, the most common reasons were drinking alcohol, gambling and financial difficulties or insufficient income. Some of the IDI respondents reported that their reasons of domestic violence were having a mistress and for revenge.

“He drinks. So if I do anything good he says I am doing bad things an always makes a problem”
(53 yars, female, community volunteer, IDI)

“He says what he likes when he comes back drunk. If I say anything in return, a fight ensues. I think it is because of financial.”
(48 years, female, vendor, wife of heavy alcohol drinker, IDI)

“He looks towards his side of family very much. He also plays chicken fights. I think also because of drinking.”
(29 years, female, wife of gambler, IDI)

“I try to make everything to run smoothly. Even while I do everything, when he gets drunk he starts behaving badly and tortures me.”
(28 years, female, wife of heavy alcohol drinker, IDI)

“He gives me only Kyats1500 a day. It is not sufficient for the child's food, house rent etc. If I ask for more money, he starts torturing me.”
(24 years, female, house wife, IDI)

“I think it is because my poor communication with his mother before married. I think it is for revenge.”
(28 years, female, tailor, IDI)

In KII, the reasons of domestic violence reported were financial difficulties, drinking alcohol, gambling and lack of reasoning power.

“The main reason is for financial difficulties and there are the social disturbances. Husband does not go to work after he drinks and he also gambles. Some gamble”

(Member of Women Affair, female, KII)

“They don't want to work, so there are financial difficulties. When he drinks then all this happen?”

(Social support service organization staff, female, KII)

DISCUSSION

According to Key Informant interview in this study, psychological violence by intimate partner was more common in Hlaingtharyar Township. According to In-depth Interview, the common action were hitting, beating, slapping, kicking, punch with fist and the action of hitting with knife and stick was included in the physical violence by intimate partner.

According to qualitative analysis, financial difficulties, gambling and alcohol consumption caused most of the intimate partner violence among study population. The qualitative study conducted by Gender Equality Network in 2015 also showed that partner spending money on other activities caused the intimate partner violence.⁵ This shows that alcohol consumption and gambling may worsen the financial difficulties.

CONCLUSION

In this study, financial difficulties, gambling and alcohol consumption caused most of the intimate partner violence among study population. Community-based studies on domestic violence by intimate partner should

be carried out in order to know the prevalence of domestic violence by intimate partner in Myanmar.

LIMITATION

Sexual violence cannot be asked in this study because of cultural factor.

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