

## Nature and Types of Abusive Behavior against Women

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### ABSTRACT

**Background and Objectives:** A wide range of studies show that women who have experienced physical or sexual abuse. Therefore, the present study aims to assess the nature and common types of abusive behaviors (physical& psychological) which are imposed up on the women in Bab- Al-Moudham center and to find the relationship of such behaviors with the woman's demographic characteristics.

**Material and Method:** A descriptive study was conducted in Bab- Al-Moudham center in Baghdad city during the period from 15<sup>th</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

A convenient (non probability) sample of (200) women at age (20) years and older was selected. The data was collected through the constructed questionnaire and interview technique was employed for the purpose of the study. Data were analyzed through frequency, percentage, chi- square, use cut of point and scoring level: physical abuse\ high 14, moderate 11-13, low 8-10, psychological abuse\ high 20, moderate 16-19, low 11-15.

**Results:** Distribution of demographic characteristics showed that the greater number of these women were ( 20-24) years old, college graduate, not work, married and coming out from extended family, abusers consanguinity was the husband.

**Conclusions:** The study concluded that most of the women were exposed to some extent of abusive behaviors and the most common ones were screaming and yelling.

**Keywords:** nature, types, abusive, behaviors, women.

### INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is any act of gender- based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical or sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary, whether in public or private place. World wide, one of the most common forms of violence against women is abuse by their husbands or other intimate partners (WHO, 2011; Lundwall, 2009). A wide range of studies show that women who have experienced physical or sexual abuse, whether in childhood or adulthood, are at greater risk of subsequent health problem. Violence has been linked to many serious health problems, both immediate and long- term, these include physical health problems, such as injury, chronic pain syndromes, and gastrointestinal disorders, and range of mental health problems, including anxiety and depression. Violence also undermines health by increasing a variety of negative behaviors, such as smoking, alcohol and drug abuse (Dickinson, 1999).

Violence kills women. World wide, an estimated 40% to over 70% of homicides of women are committed by intimated partners,

often in the context of an abusive relationship (Gilbert, 1995).

Most abused women are not passive victims but use active strategies to maximize their safety and that of their children. Some women resist, others flee, and still others attempt to keep the peace by capitulating to their husband's demands, what may seem to an observer to be lack of response to living with violence may in fact be strategic assessment of what it takes for the women to survive in the marriage and to protect herself and her children. A woman's response to abuse is often limited by the options available to her. Women consistently cite similar reasons that they remain in abusive relationships: fear of retribution, lack of other means of economic support concern for the children, emotional dependence, lack of support from family and friends, and an abiding hope that " he will change". In developing countries women cite the un acceptability of being single or unmarried as an additional barrier that keeps them in destructive marriages (Basemore, 2002).

The main ideology of Islam with regard to the status of women is that women should be equal to men in rights and responsibilities. This is reflected in the marriage contract that

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necessitates the consent of both the bride and bridegroom. The two contracting partners have equal rights to continue the relationship or nullify the contract or divorce. In so far as the man is concerned, this is termed Talaq (divorce). In so far as the woman is concerned, this is termed Khula.<sup>3</sup> Islam outlines detailed rules concerning the building of marriage contracts and subsequently terminating them. Islam has endowed upon women several rights. Some of these rights are: to retain her maiden name after marriage and to maintain and carry out her financial or business income independently. Islam also allows women to keep their nationality, keep custody of children after divorce and it obligates the husband to pay alimony (family support). There are several versions in the Qur'an and Hadith<sup>4</sup> that stress on the rights of women. The following section clarifies the causes of the overlapping cultures of the Muslim countries with the teachings of Islam with regard to women's Rights (Baobaid, 2002).

## RESULTS

**Table(1): Distribution of women's demographic characteristics.**

Demographic characteristic	frequency	%
<b>1-women's age</b>		
20-24	57	28.5
25-29	30	15
30-34	37	18.5
35-39	31	15.5
40 and above	45	22.5
<b>2-Educational level</b>	<b>f.</b>	<b>%</b>
1-college graduate and over	50	25
2-Institute graduate	40	20
3-Secondary school graduate	22	11
4-Intermediate school graduate	21	10.5
5-Primary school graduate	37	18.5
6-Able to read and write	12	6
7-Illiterate	18	9
<b>3-Occupation status</b>	<b>f.</b>	<b>%</b>
1-Work	73	36.5
2-Not work	127	63.5
<b>4-Marital status</b>	<b>f.</b>	<b>%</b>

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

A descriptive cross- sectional study to assess the most common types of abuse that imposed up on women in Bab- Al-Moudham center in Baghdad city during the period from 15<sup>th</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011. A convenient( non- probability) sample of 200 women at age of 20 years and older was selected. The data was collected through constructed questionnaire and interview technique was employed for the purpose of the study. The questionnaire was comprised of two main parts. The first part included the demographical characteristics which were related to the sample of the study. The second part consisted of questions related to the nature and type of abusive behavior physical and psychological. Frequency, percentage, chi-square, montocarlo test, use of cut of point at 90<sup>th</sup> percent, 50<sup>th</sup> percent and 30<sup>th</sup> percent by using percentile were used for statistical analysis. The coring level were as the following; physical abuse\ high 14, moderate 11-13, low 8-10, psychological abuse\ high 20, moderate 16-19, low 11-15.

1-Single	54	27
2-Married	126	63
3-Divorced	7	3.5
4-widow	13	6.5
<b>5-Auser's consanguinity</b>	<b>f.</b>	<b>%</b>
1-Husband	127	63.5
2-Father	46	23
3-Brother	23	11.5
4-Son	4	2

**Table(2): Distribution of women according to physical abuse as nature and type of abusive behavior.**

physical abuse	Yes	%	No	%
1-Hits with fist	65	32.5	135	67.5
2- Hits with nearest objects	40	20	160	80
3- Hits with lethal weapon	0	0	200	100
4-Slapping	81	40.5	119	59.5
5-Pushing and shaking	77	38.5	123	61.5
6-Kick's with feet	14	7	186	93
7-Burning	3	1.5	197	98.5

**Table (3): Distribution of women according to psychological abuse as type and nature of abusive behavior**

Psychological abuse	Yes	%	No	%
1-Screaming and yelling	149	74.5	51	25.5
2-Lock up indoors	52	26	148	74
3-Belittling	61	30.5	139	69.5
4-Criticizing	118	59	82	41
5-Negligence	69	34.5	131	65.5
6-Name calling	42	21	158	79
7-Intimidation	96	48	104	52
8-Humiliation	57	28.5	143	71.5
9-Coercive sex	46	23	154	77
10-Monitoring her movement	45	22.5	155	77.5
11-Restricting her access to resources	61	30.5	139	69.5

**Table (4): Association between age of the women according to physical and psychological abuse.**

Age	Physical score			Total
	L(8-10)	M(11-13)	H(>14)	
(20-29)	12 13.6%	21 23.9%	55 62.5%	88 100.0%
(30-39)	19 27.5%	19 27.5%	31 44.9%	69 100.0%
(40-50)	7 16.3%	16 37.2%	20 46.5%	43 100.0%
<b>Total</b>	38 19.0%	56 28.0%	106 53.0%	200 100.0%

P>0.05 (NS)

Age	Psychological score			Total
	L(11-15)	M(16-19)	H(>20)	
(20-29)	12 13.6%	36 40.9%	40 45.5%	88 100.0%
(30-39)	18 26.1%	28 40.6%	23 33.3%	69 100.0%
(40-50)	8 18.6%	22 51.2%	13 30.2%	43 100.0%
<b>Total</b>	38 19.0%	86 43.0%	76 38.0%	200 100.0%

P>0.05 (NS)

**Table (5): Association between education level according to physical and psychological abuse.**

Education	Physical score			Total
	L (8-10)	M(11-13)	H(>14)	
1-college graduate and over	4 7.8%	12 23.5%	35 68.6%	51 100.0%
2-Institute graduate	3 7.7%	13 33.3%	23 59.0%	39 100.0%
3-Secondary school graduate	2 9.1%	5 22.7%	15 68.2%	22 100.0%
4-Intermediate school graduate	8 38.1%	7 33.3%	6 28.6%	21 100.0%
5-Primary school graduate	12 32.4%	10 27.0%	15 40.5%	37 100.0%
6-Able to read and write illiterate	5 41.7%	2 16.7%	5 41.7%	12 100.0%
7- Illiterate	4 22.2%	7 38.9%	7 38.9%	18 100.0%
<b>Total</b>	38 19.0%	56 28.0%	106 53.0%	200 100.0%

MCP<0.01 (HS)

Education	psychological score			Total
	L(11-15)	M(16-19)	H(>20)	
1-college graduate and over	7 13.7%	15 29.4%	29 56.9%	51 100.0%
2-Institute graduate	3 7.7%	21 53.8%	15 38.5%	39 100.0%
3-Secondary school graduate	1 4.5%	8 36.4%	13 59.1%	22 100.0%
4-Intermediate school graduate	8 38.1%	8 38.1%	5 23.8%	21 100.0%
5-Primary school graduate	12 32.4%	16 43.2%	9 24.3%	37 100.0%
6-Able to read and write illiterate	5 41.7%	4 33.3%	3 25.0%	12 100.0%
7- Illiterate	2 11.1%	14 77.8%	2 11.1%	18 100.0%
Total	38 19.0%	86 43.0%	76 38.0%	200 100.0%

MCP&lt;0.01 (HS)

Table (6): Association between occupation according to physical and psychological abuse.

Occupation	Physical score			Total
	L(8-10)	M(11-13)	H(>14)	
Work	6 8.2%	18 24.7%	49 67.1%	73 100.0%
Not work	32 25.2%	38 29.9%	57 44.9%	127 100.0%
Total	38 19.0%	56 28.0%	106 53.0%	200 100.0%

P&lt;0.01 (HS)

Occupation	Psychological score			Total
	L(11-15)	M(16-19)	H(>20)	
Work	8 11.0%	28 38.4%	37 50.7%	73 100.0%
Not work	30 23.6%	58 45.7%	39 30.7%	127 100.0%
Total	38 19.0%	86 43.0%	76 38.0%	200 100.0%

P&lt;0.01 (HS)

Table (7): Association between marital status according to physical and psychological abuse.

Marital status	Physical score			Total
	L(8-10)	M(11-13)	H(>14)	
1-Single	34 27.4%	39 31.5%	51 41.1%	124 100.0%
2-Married	3 5.4%	11 19.6%	42 75.0%	56 100.0%
3-Divorced	1 12.5%	4 50.0%	3 37.5%	8 100.0%
4-Widow	0 .0%	2 16.7%	10 83.3%	12 100.0%
Total	38 19.0%	56 28.0%	106 53.0%	200 100.0%

MCP&lt;0.01 (HS)

Marital status	psychological score			Total
	L(11-15)	M(16-19)	H(>20)	
1- Single	24 19.4%	55 44.4%	45 36.3%	124 100.0%
2-Married	8 14.3%	20 35.7%	28 50.0%	56 100.0%
3-Divorced	2 25.0%	6 75.0%	0 .0%	8 100.0%
4-Widow	4 33.3%	5 41.7%	3 25.0%	12 100.0%
Total	38 19.0%	86 43.0%	76 38.0%	200 100.0%

MCP> 0.05 (NS)

Table (8): Association between family type according to physical and psychological abuse.

Family type	Physical score			Total
	L(8-10)	M(11-13)	H(>14)	
1-Nuclear	18 19.1%	22 23.4%	54 57.4%	94 100.0%
2-Extended	20 18.9%	34 32.1%	52 49.1%	106 100.0%
Total	38 19.0%	56 28.0%	106 53.0%	200 100.0%

P>0.05 (NS)

Family type	psychological score			Total
	L(11-15)	M(16-19)	H(>20)	
1-Nuclear	15 16.0%	39 41.5%	40 42.6%	94 100.0%
2-Extended	23 21.7%	47 44.3%	36 34.0%	106 100.0%
Total	38 19.0%	86 43.0%	76 38.0%	200 100.0%

P>0.05 (NS)

Table (9): Association between abuser's consanguinity of women according to physical and psychological abuse.

Abuser's consanguinity	Physical score			Total
	L(8-10)	M(11-13)	H(>14)	
1-Husband	35 26.7%	42 32.1%	54 41.2%	131 100.0%
2-Father	2 4.9%	5 12.2%	34 82.9%	41 100.0%
3-Brother	1 4.3%	9 39.1%	13 56.5%	23 100.0%
4-Son	0 .0%	0 .0%	5 100.0%	5 100.0%
Total	38 19.0%	56 28.0%	106 53.0%	200 100.0%

MCP<0.01 (HS)

Abuser's consanguinity	psychological score			Total
	L(11-15)	M(16-19)	H(>20)	
<b>1-Husband</b>	25 19.1%	60 45.8%	46 35.1%	131 100.0%
<b>2-Father</b>	6 14.6%	11 26.8%	24 58.5%	41 100.0%
<b>3-Brother</b>	5 21.7%	12 52.2%	6 26.1%	23 100.0%
<b>4-Son</b>	2 40.0%	3 60.0%	0 .0%	5 100.0%
<b>Total</b>	38 19.0%	86 43.0%	76 38.0%	200 100.0%

MCP>0.05 (NS)

## DISCUSSION

Violence against women has been recognized as an important social and human rights issue that affects all cultures and societies (Moore, 2008).

Throughout the course of data analysis of the present study, the findings of the study showed that the greater number of the women was between (20-24) years old and they were accounted for (28.5%). With respect to educational level on quarter of women were college graduate, while(63.5%) of them were not work, (63%) of the sample were married, more than one half of the women were coming from extended family, (63.5%) of women were abused by their husbands. This data is in line with study conducted by Gossaye et. al. (2003) who reported that 3000 women more than two thirds of respondent who suffered domestic violence were below 35 years of age with mean age& standard deviation(SD) of 29.87 ±9.24 years (Gossaye et. al., 2003).

Alhabib et.al. (2009) reported that a total of 134 studies in England on the prevalence of domestic violence against women, the majority of the studies were conducted in North America (41%) followed by Europe (20%) especially women aged 18-65 years, but excluding women with specific disabilities or diseases (Alhabib et.al., 2009).

Johnson, et.al. (2003) stated that(95% response rate) of domestic violence with highest in the age group(26-30) years (Johnson, et.al., 2003). Goodwin and others(2000) who considered a higher rate of abuse were reported by women who were younger and less educated (Johnson et.al., 2003). The study conducted by Ezegwui and others (2003) who found that(17.7%) financial problems, (4.4%) un employment, were the risk factors for being the

victim of domestic abuse to total of 424 women (Ezegwui et. al., 2003).

Levinson analysis of ethnographic data from 90 peasant and small- scale societies indicates that in 86% of these there is violence against wives by husbands (Levinson, 1989). The result from the feasibility study in Butajira conducted in January 2000. Husbands usually are the perpetrators of physical violence against married women (Moore, 2008; Gossaye et. al., 2003).

Poverty and oppression are cited as being significant factors in violence behavior, low income with subsequent stress and limited resources add to the potential for violence (Gelles, 1995; Hanrahan, 2000). Johnson, et. al. (2003) concluded from their study that the prevalence of domestic violence was(17%) in the North of England punching and slapping were the common pattern of violence, and(10%) of women experiencing domestic violence had forced sexual activity (Johnson et.al., 2003).

Gossaye et. al. (2003) reported that over 3000 women(49%) of them suffered from physical violence, the common form of violence are beating with stick; forceful slap to the face; burn with flaming sticks; kicking; beatings with fists or house hold objects. Wife battering is one of the most common forms of domestic violence that occur in the home context (Gossaye et. al., 2003).

Yoshi Hama and Sorenson(1994) stated that the greatly accounted one was for psychological- abuse- yelling and screaming(184) women, while burning in physical abuse took the lowest account(6) women (Yoshi, 1994).

The finding of the present study revealed that there were no significant differences between age of women and abusive behaviors imposed against the women. The finding of this study



coincide with a survey conducted by Hassan and others (2002) who stated that a sample consisting of 300 individuals with equal presentation of male and female participants most often experience intimate violence were middle- aged group(31-40) years female and(21-30) years for male (Hassan, et. al., 2002).

There were statistically a significant association between educational level and abusive behaviors against the women. The findings of the study coincide with Khairi (2006) and AlBadayneh (2012) reported that women with higher and lower educational level were significant association between types of domestic violence( physical, psychological and sexual) and educational level except social domestic violence (Khairi, 2006; AlBadayneh, 2012).

Kuning et. al. (2004) who stated that physical abuse was associated with parity, marital status, and length of relationship (Kuning, 2004).

Finally, the results of the study indicate that there were significant differences between physical abuse and abuser's consanguinity of women and no significant association with psychological abuse.

In the United States, a women is beaten every 18 minutes. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury among women of reproductive age in United States (Anonymous, 1996a). Besides this results there was at least one in six wives is hit a husband sometimes during their relationship (Stuart, 2001).

## CONCLUSION

The study concludes that most of the women were exposed to some extent of abusive behaviors and the most common one's were screaming and yelling. Most of abusers were spouses. Abuse was greatly associated with young college graduate, not work, and living in extended family.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study recommends that a considerable attention is needed from the health care to stress on questioning the women on such behaviors during their visits to the health centers seeking for health care, due to it direct effect on their physical and psychological wellbeing. Further studies are recommended to determine the contribution of these factors to the presence of such stressful behaviors.

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