

Understanding the Risk Factors of Domestic Violence against Women in Bangladesh: A Case Study

Tarana Begum¹

Abstract: Domestic violence is a worldwide problem that affects people of all genders, including children. This study aimed to look at the risk factors for domestic violence, especially among urban middle-class women in Bangladesh's Mohammadpur Metropolitan regions. The study sought to comprehend these risk factors from the victims' point of view. A total of 66 women were interviewed to determine the risk factors they thought related to their domestic violence experiences. The study focused on domestic violence against women in the Mohammadpur Metropolitan region and used qualitative purposive sample methods to investigate various risk factors and their connections. Among the variables examined were mobility constraints, pregnancy, socioeconomic position, extramarital relationships, expectations for the birth of a male child, the birth of a daughter, and help-seeking behaviours under domestic abuse legislation. The study intends to fill the knowledge gap by providing information on the current prevalence of domestic violence, risk factors, and gender differences.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Prevalence, Risk Factors, Victims' point of view.

1. Introduction

A woman's close partner is more likely to mistreat her than anybody else. Domestic violence has far-reaching implications that affect not just the victims themselves, but also their children and society. This study investigates the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Bangladesh and the risk factors that contribute to it. Domestic violence is a serious public health issue in Bangladesh, affecting many women and girls from all socioeconomic backgrounds and geographical areas (Afrin, 2017). Gender inequality, patriarchal norms, poverty, a lack of education, and social acceptance of violence are all variables that lead to domestic violence (Flury, & Nyberg, 2010). The government, non-governmental organisations, and other stakeholders have put in place legal frameworks, awareness activities, and support services to combat and prevent domestic abuse (Vyas & Watts, 2009). However, due to the sensitive nature of the subject, varied definitions, and a lack of extensive systematic data, precise estimates of the prevalence of domestic violence are difficult to come by. Furthermore, because there has been little empirical study on this issue, there is a need to explore the relationship between power and harassment in intimate relationships. Understanding the risk factors and dynamics of

¹ Associate Professor, Department of Government and Politics, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh, Email: taranalopa@juniv.edu

domestic violence in Bangladesh is crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies to safeguard the safety and well-being of women and girls.

According to estimates, 35% of all women worldwide have suffered either physical and/or sexually intimate relationship violence or non-partner violence in their lives (Chikhungu, Amos, Kandala, & Palikadavath, 2021). Domestic abuse is a major public health concern that affects women all over the world (Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise & Watts, 2006). The study looks at the elements that contribute to domestic violence in these areas. The World Health Organisation (2006) provided some studies on the risk factors for domestic violence in developing countries. It is critical to understand the risk factors that led to domestic violence against women in various circumstances. There have been various research on the risk assessment of domestic violence in developed countries. The World Health Organisation, the National Demographic Survey, and government and non-government development partners in developing countries have conducted risk assessment studies. Domestic violence risk assessment is critical in Bangladesh. Concentrate on the variables that impose extra strain on women in their home lives in this research. In Bangladeshi society, a woman experiences many humiliations from her in-laws after marriage for her family's faults such as low financial position, body colour, height, family status, higher education of family, skill in-home tasks, dowry or gift, and so on. If any of her family members have divorced or had any marital or extra-marital affairs, it becomes a risk point for that bride to be pinched or humiliated by their in-laws when they wish to down her in any disagreements. A bride's female family heritage is also a danger factor. If the husband's family has a superior financial and social status than the bride, it becomes a source of pride for the husband's in-laws' family, and the in-laws' family frequently picks on the bride for coming from a weaker family background. If the bride works or studies, she runs the risk of being humiliated by her husband's family. In most situations, they wish to limit their mobility to the outside. If a woman has a study or test, they may wish to interrupt school or college to demonstrate their dominance over her. In most situations, the mother-in-law encourages her son to discontinue her education in order to keep control over her. They believe that if they lose control of her, she would flee or refuse to follow her in-laws and spouse. They believe it is best to clip her wings in the start to assure her loyalty to her family and husband. If a woman has a greater degree of education than her husband, she is more likely to be victimised by her husband. If his wife had better traits than him, he used to feel inferior. To maintain his guardianship and control over the family, the husband begins to defame his wife or accuses her of being gloomy. Gender parity in DV victimisation is associated with high levels of women empowerment. Higher education helps reduce the prevalence of violence against women; nonetheless, many women in Bangladeshi families are humiliated by their husbands if they are more educated and competent than their husbands. Because of her inferiority complex, her husband and in-laws used to belittle and degrade her.

Domestic violence against women and gender discrimination are common in Bangladesh. Domestic violence is a big issue in Bangladesh, with figures suggesting that the vast majority of women endure attacks in their homes (Hadi, 2000; Koenig, Ahmed, Hossain, & Mozumder, 2003). Domestic violence is a serious issue in Bangladesh, affecting a great number of women and girls. Domestic abuse is widespread in Bangladesh, impacting both rural and urban regions and spanning a wide range of socioeconomic

origins and geographies. It primarily affects women and girls, although men can also be victims. Gender inequality, cultural norms, and patriarchal institutions can all contribute to the continuance of domestic violence. Patriarchal standards, gender inequality, poverty, a lack of education, and social acceptance of violence are all factors that contribute to domestic violence in Bangladesh. Through legislative frameworks, awareness programmes, and support services, the government, non-governmental organisations, and other stakeholders are striving to address and prevent domestic violence (Hadi, 2000). Bangladesh ranks 133rd out of 189 countries in the most recent 2020 Human Development Report. Dowry-related violence, child marriage, and acid attacks are all examples of negative cultural practises that contribute to the prevalence of domestic violence. Domestic violence prevention initiatives in Bangladesh have taken numerous forms, including legislative measures, public awareness campaigns, and the establishment of support services. The Dowry Prohibition Act of 1980 in Bangladesh recommends up to five years in prison and penalties for giving, accepting, or abating the giving or taking of dowry. Demanding money from the bride's family is likewise punishable. The Prevention of Oppression Against victims and Children Act of 2000³², as well as the most recent Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act of 2010, provide an excellent safety net for victims while punishing abusers harshly. Domestic abuse punishments are governed by the country's Penal Code of 1860, which, despite its age, remains current legislation (Afrin, 2017). Bangladesh has signed the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Due to the sensitivity of the subject, varying definitions, and a lack of comprehensive systematic data across nations, precise estimations of the frequency of sexual assault are rare (Gauge & Hutchinson, 2006). Despite the widespread belief that power and control underpin various forms of violence in intimate relationships (Jewkes, 2002; Johnson, 1995; Pence & Paymar, 1985), few empirical studies have examined the relationship between power and sexual violence in intimate relationships (Gauge & Hutchinson, 2006).

2. Methods of Research

The study investigates the variables that contribute to domestic violence against spouses among women in the Dhaka metropolitan region. This study collects data using semi-structured interviews, case studies, and in-depth interviews. The study included 66 married women of various ages, as well as single mothers, women separated due to domestic abuse, and divorced and widowed persons. The interview took place in Mohammadpur Town Hall and the Bosila Area. Domestic violence and criminal records from local police stations, as well as statistics from non-governmental organisations on domestic abuse against women, were utilised to choose these two locations. A total of 100 reported and unreported cases were carefully picked from various age groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, and marital contexts. Purposive selection methods were used to choose 66 domestic abuse victims from a sample of 100 women. The current study uses data from a sample of 66 married women who had experienced domestic abuse in their marriage. What kinds of maltreatment do they face? What is the frequency of physical abuse, especially beatings or slaps, perpetrated on abusers? What are the risk factors associated with cases of abuse?

2.1 Significance of Research

The need of doing risk factor analysis research on domestic violence in Bangladesh is critical, especially given the literature gap in comparison to other nations. While various studies have investigated domestic violence in Bangladesh, there is still a scarcity of comprehensive research focused on the risk factors associated with domestic violence against women. There has been no study that used a systematic analysis of the many levels of factors that cause abuse among married women in the Dhaka Metropolitan region. This study will give vital insights into the complex dynamics of domestic violence in Bangladesh by analysing the various types and intensities of abuse experienced by married women in Dhaka. Understanding domestic violence risk factors and underlying causes is essential for designing successful intervention tactics, policy efforts, and victim support networks. This study can guide the creation of targeted interventions and preventative strategies to reduce domestic violence in the Dhaka Metropolitan region and safeguard married women.

2.2 Review of the literature

Domestic violence is a complex issue that affects individuals and communities all around the world. Understanding the risk factors for domestic violence is essential for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies. The goal of this literature review is to compile and examine existing research on domestic violence risk factors in order to give insight into the many variables that contribute to the prevalence of domestic violence. A systematic search of academic databases and research articles was done to discover the risk factors of domestic violence throughout the world and in Bangladesh. Previous risk factor research discovered risk factors at the person, relationship-based, protective, and society levels. Gender parity, age, power imbalance, Low Socioeconomic Status, drug-alcohol addiction, relationship conflict, ignorance, extramarital affairs, Social Isolation, cultural and social norms, Weak Legal and Criminal Justice Systems, and economic conditions all contributed to domestic abuse (Berrios & Grady, 1991; Gayford, 1975; Rew, Gangoli, & Gill, 2013; Wathen, Jamieson, Wilson, Daly, Worster, & Macmillan, 2007). Younger adults, particularly those between the ages of 18 and 30, are more prone to domestic violence, according to Hunting (2014). Alcohol or other drug addiction is a major cause of marital abuse (Hunting, 2014). Poverty, unemployment, and low socioeconomic and educational attainment, according to research from the Indian subcontinent, are associated with a greater prevalence of domestic violence (Mahapatro, Gupta, & Gupta, 2012). Unemployed husbands who relied on the salaries of their wives or others would occasionally harass their wives and steal household items to sell. Domestic violence is more likely when controlling behaviour and dominance are present (Gauge & Hutchinson, 2006). Poor communication, physical and mental distances, interpersonal conflict, an unwillingness to accept violence, established gender norms, and ideas encouraging masculine dominance can all lead to mental abuse between intimate partners. Inadequate legal and justice systems, as well as insufficient enforcement, can all contribute to the perpetuation of domestic abuse (Hilton, 2021).

According to Mathews, Abrahams, Jewkes, Martin, Lombard, & Vetten (2008), in many scenarios with prior partners, rejection from a valued ex-partner ended in domestic violence. A multitude of risk factors, including jealousy, infidelity, drug or alcohol use, legal separation, custody problems, mental illness, and socioeconomic status, can

contribute to violent conduct in women (Campbell, Gladd, Sharps, Lagon, & Bloom, 2007). Both developed and developing countries have conducted risk factor analysis studies. A study in Canada looked at risk factors and exposure to intimate relationship violence. According to the study, having an alcoholic husband and being jobless were risk factors for women experiencing domestic violence injuries (Wathen, Jamieson, Wilson, Daly, Worster, & Macmillan, 2007). Berlin-based research focused on domestic violence (DV) and its impact on women's health. According to this study, 57% of people had at least one DV episode after the age of 16. As a result of the abuse, 52% of these victimised women reported long-term health difficulties (Brzank, Hellbernd, & Maschewsky-Schneider, 2004). The World Health Organisation conducted a large-scale study in ten different countries and reported that the prevalence of physical or sexual abuse from partners ranged from 15% to 71% among women during their lifetime (Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2006). This highlights the widespread nature of domestic violence and the crucial need for global effort to eradicate it.

Gauge and Hutchinson (2006) investigated how power and control in intimate relationships affected women's vulnerability to sexual assault. Husbands' jealousy and controlling conduct, as well as women's acceptance of traditional norms regarding a husband's authority to abuse his wife, had a substantial positive influence on intimate partner sexual assault (Gauge & Hutchinson, 2006). Domestic violence costs money in both direct and indirect ways, such as medical treatment, counselling, welfare and social services, housing, legal services, law enforcement, criminal justice, property damage, medicine, hospital stays, therapy, and the impact on the labour force, including days off. In Bangladesh, however, there is limited detailed data on women's help-seeking practices.

2.3 Domestic Violence and Risk Factors

The numerous risk variables include restricted mobility, skin colour, family income, male child expectancy, female child birth, education, family income, infertility, and the number of children born. Women, on the other hand, have been found to benefit from advanced age and higher levels of education, improved mobility options, residency in metropolitan regions, and better economic resources, but with considerable fluctuation. Controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, aggression, or abuse are all examples of domestic violence and abuse. Abuse can take many forms, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse. Psychological abuse refers to mental manipulation, control, or intimidation of the victim. Threats, humiliation, seclusion, and relentless criticism may all be part of it. Bodily abuse is defined as the use of force to cause bodily harm, injury, or agony to the victim. Any non-consensual sexual act or unwelcome sexual behaviour is considered sexual abuse. Controlling or manipulating the victim's financial resources, limiting their access to money or property, or stopping them from working or making autonomous financial decisions are all examples of financial abuse. Emotional abuse includes behaviours such as frequent denigrating, intimidation, and isolation that damage the victim's self-worth, confidence, and emotional well-being.

Domestic violence is not confined to violence between intimate partners; it can also include aggression amongst other members of the home, family members, and friends. In Bangladesh, fathers or husbands frequently rule family structures, and the culture is patriarchal, with male dominance common. When a woman marries, she usually moves

in with her husband's family. While many women are warmly welcomed into their husband's house, in certain circumstances, humiliation and cruelty begin on the first day. One of the factors leading to this abuse is the bride's judgement by others. Relatives who attend the wedding ceremony frequently begin appraising the bride's traits, forecasting her future conduct, and assessing her family's social standing. Everyone in the groom's family provides suggestions on how to govern the bride in order to live peacefully with the in-laws. This judgmental and intrusive environment might gradually cause a husband to become unpleasant to his wife, even if he had no intention of being abusive in the beginning. It is usual for a wife to be under her husband's authority and to provide enough services to her in-laws. If the bride does not cook well or fails to fulfil household standards, she may endure criticism and pressure from the very first day of their marriage. Furthermore, if the bride's family is impoverished, her in-laws may try to belittle her because of her family's socioeconomic condition. They may even try to cut off her links to her paternal home by limiting her movement and preventing her relatives from visiting. Numerous relatives, in-laws, and extended family members can serve as both a protective factor and a possible source of intimate partner violence (Clark, 2010; Eswaran & Malhotra, 2008). This is also true for Bangladesh. The chance of violence diminishes if the bride's family greets her warmly, refrains from meddling in her personal life, and allows the pair room to understand one another. A willing spouse and a supportive family may protect wives from all sorts of violence.

2.4 Demographic information about the participant

The findings of the study are presented below, beginning with the demographic information collected through interviews.

Table 1: Marital Status of women

Marital Status	number	Frequency %
Married	38	57.58
Single	11	16.66
Separated	9	13.64
Divorced	5	7.58
Widowed	3	4.54
Total	66	100.0

Table 1 presents the distribution of marital status among the participants. Out of the respondents, 16.6% were identified as single, 57.6% were categorised as married, 13.6% reported being separated, and 7.5% indicated that they were divorced.

Table 2: Age distribution of the participants

Age	number	Per cent
15-24	08	12.1
25-44	51	77.3
45-64+	07	10.6
Total	66	100.0

Table 2 displays the distribution of participants based on their age groups. Eight participants were from the 15-24 age group, while 51 women were from the 25-44 age group. The highest number of interviews were conducted within the 25-44 age group.

Table 3: Education of the participant

Education	number	Per cent
Upto class 5	13	19.70
6 to class 8	17	25.76
SSC	10	15.15
HSC	18	27.27
Graduate	08	12.12
Total	66	100.0

Table 3 shows the range of education from class one to higher studies among vulnerable women. 19.7% of women have primary education, 25.76% went to school up to class 8, and 12.125 women have higher education.

Table 4: Types of violence and risk factors faced by women.

Types of Violence		Per cent
Verbal Abuse	Mocking	43.3%
	Humiliation	57%
	Shouting	65.9%
	Restrict mobility	25.5%
	Threat of divorce	17.1%
	Feel little	32.2%
Physical abuse	Slapping	62%
	Twisting hair	22%
	Slap on wrist	14%
	Kicking	3%
	Throwing things	18%
Sexual Abuse	Unwanted or forced sex	15%
	Humiliating sex	12%
	Forced abortion	2.0%
Economic abuse	Stop working outside	18%
	Do not provide any daily expenses	62%
	Deprived of property or money	80.5%

Table 4 displays the many sorts of abuse that women have experienced throughout their lives. Most of the women experienced verbal or emotional abuse, such as ridiculing, verbal humiliation, yelling and restrictions on mobility. These types of violence are the most common and increase the risk of depression in victim women. Only a few women are prepared to confess their sexual humiliation behind closed doors. Victims who have been divorced or separated are more likely to be open about the humiliation they have experienced in their sexual lives. Even married women face sexual humiliation and forced sex at some point in their lives.

Table 5: Weapons Used During the Abuse of Wife

Weapons	number	Per cent
Hand/leg	35	53.03
Household object	20	30.30
Stick/wood	17	25.76
Shoes/belt	15	22.72
Knife/hammer	13	19.70
Cigarette burn	04	12.12
Other	01	0.5%

Table 5 contains information on the weapons used by men to abuse their wives. The data shows the number of instances and the percentages for each weapon category. The most commonly used means of abuse were the use of hands or legs, accounting for 35 instances or 53.03% of all cases. With 20 cases (30.30%), household items were the second most regularly utilised weapons. In addition, in 17 cases (25.76%), spouses used sticks or wood from the kitchen, while in 15 cases (22.72%), they used shoes or belts. Knives or hammers were used in 13 of the cases (19.70%), whereas cigarette burns were seen in four (12.12%). Finally, one instance (0.5%) included the employment of an undetermined weapon.

Case Study 1:

Sabina, a 19-year-old woman living in the Mohammadpur Town Hall area, originally hails from the countryside of Nabaganj district. She got married at the young age of 16 in a love-come-arranged marriage. Initially, her mother-in-law was reluctant to accept her but eventually agreed to the marriage. Sabina's husband, who is very loyal to his mother, tends to treat his wife angrily whenever there are family disputes between Sabina and her mother-in-law. Sabina shared her experiences, stating, "My spouse shouts at me in every conversation. Even if I ask him for something as simple as food, help when he's sick, or about his return home, he becomes furious and responds aggressively and harshly. I don't understand why he gets so loud and aggressive only when talking to me. He is polite to everyone else except me." She expressed her confusion about her husband's aggressive behaviour towards her while being polite to others.

Furthermore, Sabina revealed, "My husband even starts yelling at me when our one-year-old child starts crying, gets injured, or breaks any toys or utensils. He blames me for not properly taking care of our child." She recounted an incident where her son had a nosebleed, but her husband's yelling prevented her from promptly attending to the situation. Sabina recalled, "One day, while I was in the kitchen preparing breakfast for my husband and children, my spouse and son were in the bedroom. Suddenly, my eight-month-old baby slipped off the bed and started bleeding from his nose. I hurried to my son's side to comfort him, but instead of coming to our aid, my husband began yelling at me, accusing me of being careless. His yelling distracted me, and I couldn't focus on stopping the bleeding. It made me cry later because if he had quickly come to us with a piece of ice, I could have stopped the bleeding sooner. As a result of the incident, my children fell ill with a fever. Gradually, I realised that my husband's nature was to yell at his wife, even when there was no reason to. Now, I am getting accustomed to his behaviour."

Case Study 2:

During an in-depth interview, Bina Hashem (44), a housewife from Bosila, Mohammadpur area shared her experience of enduring severe emotional abuse during the first half of her married life. Bina attributed the abusive situation to her husband's mother and married sister, who influenced him to become rude and gain control over everything. They imposed restrictions on her mobility, preventing her from going outside or visiting her parental home. Bina's parents had a lower economic status compared to her husband's family. Her mother-in-law would often hurt her by referring to her as "chotoloker meye" (daughter of the poor) when her husband was not around. Bina (44) described the difficulties she faced in visiting her maternal home due to the actions of her mother-in-law. On festive occasions, her mother-in-law would invite her own daughter and son-in-law's families, and Bina would be burdened with the responsibility of cooking all day and night. When Bina asked her husband for permission to go to her parental home, he would refuse, using the excuse of entertaining the guests who required food and attention. He stressed the importance of prioritizing her husband's family's reputation over her personal connection to her parents' house, reminding her that as a bride from a prestigious family, her loyalty should lie with her husband's family.

Case Study 3:

In a detailed interview, Anisha Akhter (32) discloses that her husband married her solely because of her family's wealth, a fact he revealed within the first year of their marriage. He would often tell her, "I am nothing without my family's financial conditions. I married you only because your family agreed to support my business." Throughout their marriage, Anisha's father provided her husband with a motor vehicle, furniture, and electrical appliances, and covered their wedding expenses. However, a year after the marriage, Anisha's father passed away, and her husband started pressuring her to sell the paternal property she would inherit soon. He wanted to use the funds from selling the land to invest in his family's business. Anisha, however, was determined to preserve the property as a financial asset for her two daughters' future, refusing to sell it. Her husband and mother-in-law continuously abused her, aiming to gain control over her family's wealth and assets. Anisha's spouse used to emotionally abuse her, making her feel little and insignificant in the absence of her family's financial prosperity. They Emotionally drove her and made her feel nervous that if she does not bring money from her father, her marriage will end. They used to persuade her into demanding additional funding from her parents. Anisha's refusal to give up her paternal land, which her husband and mother-in-law wanted to exploit, triggered more violence. These reports demonstrate that domestic violence may occur regardless of economic status. Women from lower-income households may experience abuse owing to their weakness and reliance, whereas women from higher-income families may become targets as a method of getting access to their financial resources.

3. Findings of research

Domestic abuse may occur in a variety of socioeconomic circumstances. While some women were abused because their families were disadvantaged, women from more affluent households were targeted by spouses and in-laws who wanted to exploit their financial standing. Marital status, location and type of habitation, women's education

level, and household work abilities all had influences on domestic violence. The study identified the primary risk factors associated with emotional abuse as the dominant behaviour and taking the wife-for-granted attitude of husbands. The husbands would often yell at their wives due to stress from work or other sources. The research also revealed that 62 women endured regular nonviolent abusive behavior from their partners in different aspects of family life, including discussions, children's education, financial decisions, grocery shopping, cooking, and serving the in-laws. They were slapped, kicked, beaten, and verbally abused while attempting to resolve family matters. For no apparent reason, 35 ladies were slapped and scolded by their spouse.

The study's findings indicate five major risk factors: verbal and emotional abuse, physical abuse, lack of emotional support, accusations and blaming, and a pattern of chronic abuse. However, it is important to note that these findings are based on a small sample size of 66 women and may not represent the entire population. Domestic abuse is a complex issue influenced by multiple factors, and experiences can vary. To address domestic violence effectively, it is crucial to implement holistic interventions, support services, and initiatives aimed at changing cultural norms that perpetuate violence and abuse.

According to the study's findings, 38.7% of women have encountered physical violence throughout their lives as a result of a range of circumstances including their family's lower economic level. 6.6% of women have experienced maltreatment as a result of their family's higher socioeconomic status. In these cases, husbands and in-laws emotionally and physically assaulted women to extort money and gifts from their parents' home. In-depth interviews provided insights into the experiences of women who were mistreated based on their families' socioeconomic standing. These findings underscore the importance of addressing power dynamics, economic dependence, and gender inequalities within marriages.

During the research, it was discovered that 70% of women experienced mistreatment and assault from their husbands and in-laws during pregnancy. The study also revealed that the desire for a male child placed additional pressure on women, as 25% of them were anxious about not having a son. According to NGO and police records, around 10% of pregnant women from low-income families experienced domestic abuse or divorce, or were abandoned by their husbands in order to avoid child-rearing responsibilities.

One participant, Bina, a mother of three girls, shared her own experience during the research. She mentioned her husband's indifference towards having three daughters and his preference for a son. Bina underwent ovarian surgery at the age of 38 after having her ovary removed due to a miscarriage. She described her husband's lack of concern for the consequences this had on their marriage. Her mother-in-law would scold her for not carrying on the family legacy by not having a son. Although there have been positive developments, Bina will never forget the severe abuse she endured during her marriage. Her husband still does not respect her elderly parents and has prohibited them from visiting their house since their marriage began. Bina also shared her struggles with not being able to support her parents financially or invite them to her house after marriage. These personal stories shed light on the complex dynamics within marriages, where violence can be inflicted not only by husbands but also by other family members like mothers-in-law. They also underscore the influence of societal expectations regarding the birth of male children and the pressures women face to fulfill those expectations. Bina

said, “my mother-in-law passed away two years ago. May Allah bestow Jannat to her. Now, we don't have so much mental abuse. My husband, who is now 65 years old and is ailing and dependent on me, has become more silent than before. My daughters and grandchild are now his pride and joy. However, I will never forget the violent treatment I had from my husband and in-laws during my marriage. My mother-in-law provoked him by avoiding letting my father, mother, and siblings welcome at my husband's house. They used to suspect that I was sending all of my husband's valuables and money to support my poor parents. It was not correct. My spouse never gave me any money or allowance from our marriage. Before any festival or Eid, he used to purchase Sharee's clothing and shoes based on his preferences, or he would bring me to the market with him to purchase clothing for the entire family. But he never asked if I wanted to offer my mother a sharee or not. He's changed completely now. It is now my responsibility to decide what we will buy and deliver to my in-law's children. People's conduct changes as time passes. Now I have no complaint against my husband. We had a lot of informal family Shalish and they undermine me and my family every Shalish. They wanted to get rid of me. I had no space to go back to my parental home. So, I become dumb and used to stop my mouth and prayed to Allah. Bad times passed away. Now I am happy by seeing that my daughters are doing good in their life. I'm also pleased with my daughter's achievement.”

These personal tales emphasise the complicated relationships that exist inside marriages, where violence can be perpetrated not just by husbands but also by other family members such as mothers-in-law.

Mobility restrictions as a risk factor for domestic violence against women, particularly in Bangladesh, is an important issue that requires attention. After marriage, women in various cultures and communities, including Bangladesh, typically need permission from their husbands or in-laws to go abroad or visit their maternal home (Rew, Gangoli, & Gill, 2013). This limitation on movement might contribute to a power imbalance within the marriage and make women more vulnerable to domestic abuse. The need for permission from the spouse to go outside or visit the maternal home is a recurrent risk factor mentioned by approximately 20 of the 66 study participants. When these women visited their parents' residences without their spouses' consent, they were subjected to violence. It is crucial to highlight that even when permission was granted by the spouses, the mother-in-law or sister-in-law occasionally set limits on the wife's movement, further limiting her independence. In some cases, after experiencing a violent beating, husbands would further restrict their wives' movements to prevent them from seeking medical treatment at a nearby clinic. The husbands' aim is to keep their abusive actions hidden from society, and they often involve female members of their family, such as their mother, sister, or sister-in-law, to help conceal the abuse.

For instance, Bristy, from the Mohammadpur Boshila district, who filed a dowry violence case against her spouse in 2022, shared in an in-depth interview that her husband used to physically assault her. Her mother-in-law and sister-in-law would monitor her daily activities at home while her husband was at work. They would conduct flawed investigations and present their spouse with fabricated information. This would lead to her husband yelling at her and blaming her for their family's problems. Bristy's in-laws and husband criticized her based on her complexion, education, mannerisms, behavior with children, cooking and cleaning. Bristy mentioned that her in-laws had promised before her wedding that they would treat her like their own daughter, allowing her to

complete her secondary certificate examination and pursue higher education. However, after her marriage, they discouraged her from taking the exams, and she ultimately stopped going to school. When she pleaded with her husband and mother-in-law for permission, they told her that completing her SSC would not make her a judge or barrister, implying that education was unnecessary for her.

4. Conclusion

The research found that domestic abuse can occur across different socioeconomic circumstances, affecting women from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as those from more affluent households. Risk factors included verbal and emotional abuse, physical abuse, lack of emotional support, accusations and blaming, and a pattern of chronic abuse. Financial conditions, societal expectations around male offspring, and restrictions on mobility were also identified as risk factors. Research suggests that the presence of relatives, in-laws, and other extended family members can be both a protective factor and a cause of intimate partner violence in Bangladesh. Additionally, societal expectations around male offspring and restrictions on mobility are risk factors for domestic abuse. To effectively address domestic violence, comprehensive interventions are needed to address underlying gender imbalances, economic dependency, and cultural norms. These interventions should include education, awareness, support services, legal measures, and changes in cultural norms.

References

- Afrin, Z. (2017). Combating Domestic Violence in Bangladesh: Law, Policy and Other Relevant Considerations. *Annual Survey of International & Comparative Law*, 22(1), 161-173.
- Berrios, D. C., & Grady, D. (1991). Domestic violence. Risk factors and outcomes. *Western Journal of Medicine*, 155(2), 133.
- Brzank, P., Hellbernd, H. & Maschewsky-Schneider, U. (2004). Domestic violence against women: negative health consequences and need for care-results of an inquiry among first-aid patients, *Gesundheitswesen*, 66 (3), 164–169.
- Campbell, J. C., Gladd, N., Sharps, P. W., Laghon, K., & Bloom, T. (2007). Intimate partner homicide: Review and implications of research and policy. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 8(3), 246–269.
- Chikhungu, L. C., Amos, M., Kandala, N., & Palikadavath, S. (2021). Married women's experience of domestic violence in Malawi: New evidence from a cluster and multinomial logistic regression analysis. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 36(17-18), 8693-8714.
- Clark, C. (2010). The role of the extended family in women's risk of intimate partner violence in Jordan. *Social Science & Medicine*, 70, 144-151.
- Eswaran, M., & Malhotra, N. (2008). Domestic violence in developing countries: Theory and evidence. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada: University of British Columbia.
- Flury, M., & Nyberg, E. (2010). Domestic violence against women: definitions, epidemiology, risk factors and consequences. *Swiss medical weekly*, 140(3536), w13099-w13099.
- Gage, A. J., & Hutchinson, P. L. (2006). Power, control, and intimate partner sexual violence in Haiti. *Archives of sexual behavior*, 35, 11-24.
- Garcia-Moreno, C., Jansen, H. A., Ellsberg, M., Heise, L. & Watts, C.H. (2006). Prevalence of intimate partner violence: findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence. *The Lancet*, 368 (9543), 1260–1269.
- Gayford, J. J. (1975). Wife battering: a preliminary survey of 100 cases. *Br Med J*, 1(5951), 194-197.

- Hadi, A. (2000). Prevalence and correlates of the risk of marital sexual violence in Bangladesh. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 15, 787–805.
- Hilton, N. Z. (2021). *Domestic violence risk assessment : tools for effective prediction and management* (Second edition.). American Psychological Association.
- Hunting, S. (2014). *Intimate Partner Violence: Perceptions from Victims and Batterers on the Risk Factors Associated with Becoming Victims of Murder-Suicide*. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- Jewkes, R., Levin, J., & Penn-Kekana, L. (2002). Risk factors for domestic violence: findings from a South African cross-sectional study. *Social science & medicine*, 55(9), 1603-1617.
- Jewkes, R. (2002). Intimate partner violence: Causes and prevention. *Lancet*, 359, 1423-1429.
- Johnson, M. P. (1995). Patriarchal terrorism and common couple violence: Two forms of violence against women. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 57, 283–294.
- Koenig, M. A., Ahmed, S., Hossain, M. B., & Mozumder, A. K. A. (2003). Women's status and domestic violence in rural Bangladesh: individual-and community-level effects. *Demography*, 40(2), 269-288.
- Mahapatro, M., Gupta, R. N., & Gupta, V. (2012). The risk factor of domestic violence in India. *Indian journal of community medicine: official publication of Indian Association of Preventive & Social Medicine*, 37(3), 153.
- Mathews, S., Abrahams, N., Jewkes, R., Martin, L. J., Lombard, C., & Vetten, L. (2008). Intimate femicide–suicide in South Africa: A cross-sectional study. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 86, 552–558.
- Pence, E., & Paymar, M. (1985). *Power and control: Tactics of men who batter*. Duluth, MN: Domestic Abuse Intervention Project.
- Rasoulilian, M., Habib, S., Bolhari, J., Hakim Shooshtari, M., Nojomi, M., & Abedi, S. (2014). Risk factors of domestic violence in Iran. *Journal of environmental and public health*.
- Rew, M., Gangoli, G., & Gill, A. K. (2013). Violence between female in-laws in India. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 14(1), 147-160.
- Vyas, S., & Watts, C. (2009). How does economic empowerment affect women's risk of intimate partner violence in low and middle-income countries? A systematic review of published evidence. *Journal of International Development: The Journal of the Development Studies Association*, 21(5), 577-602.
- Wathen, C. N., Jamieson, E., Wilson, M., Daly, M., Worster, A., & Macmillan, H. L. (2007). Risk indicators to identify intimate partner violence in the emergency department. *Open Medicine*, 1(2), e113–e122.

