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Corresponding Author Email: [drmizafar@hotmail.com](mailto:drmizafar@hotmail.com)**Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to explore both the social/cultural factors that influence or lead to domestic violence against women (DVAW), and the consequences that arise from it in the province of Punjab, Pakistan. This research identifies DVAW within a broader multi-faceted conceptualization of structural inequality, patriarchal family structure and psychosocial dynamics; and acknowledges that DVAW represents a chronic public health and human rights issue. In the quantitative approach a cross sectional survey was conducted to collect data from 600 married women of aged 18 to 49 years from three Districts of Punjab, namely Faisalabad, Lahore and Gujranwala. Multistage random sampling was used for the selection of the 600 respondents. The sampling based upon four stages, Districts, Tehsils, Union Councils and the respondents. At each stage, random sampling was used to ensure the scope of the study findings and generalization. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive, inferential and multivariate to assess the effect of socio-economic and demographics such as education level, age of the respondent, income of the family and number of children on domestic violence. The findings indicate that domestic violence is caused by culturally held attitudes toward gender roles, family honor, and male dominance. Also, the study found that income of the family, respondents' education, and age at marriage, number of children, family income, dowry practices and mother-in-law attitude dynamics are the contributing factors of domestic violence against women. The effects of this type of violence are very negative and include social isolation, emotional distress, physical injury, and worsened mental health. Although there are laws in place, the participants were unaware of their rights as women, how to seek help, etc. The study emphasizes the need for culturally appropriate intervention strategies that challenge gender stereotypes, increase women's autonomy, and provide psychosocial support through policy and practice. There should be counseling at community level for the men for overcoming their issues and psychological problems i.e., emotional dysregulation, low self-esteem, and aggression, to overcome their perpetuation of violence. There is a dire need of personality screening and counseling of the partners to make them aware about the violence against women. On the other hand, it is also required for better adjustment of both the partners.

**Keywords:** Domestic violence, dowry practices, mother-in-law attitude, social isolation, society and acceptance, emotional distress, physical injury, health, Punjab, Pakistan.

**Introduction**

Globally, violence against women is a problem for both health and human rights. The fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) issued by the United Nations (UN) is to "achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls." Article 5.2 (Errami, et al., 2021) says

that the goal is to “eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls, including trafficking, sexual and other types of exploitation” in both public and private life. The World Health Organization (WHO) said in 2021 that about 27% of women aged 15 to 49 who have ever been married or in a relationship have been physically or sexually abused at least once in their lives. In the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region, on the other hand, the lifetime prevalence in this cohort was 31%. The WHO Western Pacific and European regions had the lowest rates of prevalence, with 20% and 21%, respectively. But the WHO areas of South-East Asia and Africa had the highest rates of infections, with 33% of cases coming from each.

Since its inception, violence against women has remained a systematic concern. It is impossible to do a full factual and legal study of VAW because up to 32% of women today have been victims of violence, and that is simply the number that has been recorded (True, 2021). More than half of these women do not tell anybody about the domestic violence, acid attacks, and honor killings that ruin their lives. Even though laws like the one that makes the two-finger rape test illegal have been passed, there is still not enough help for women who have been abused or cultural stigma in the criminal justice system, which keeps the abuse going (Cepeda et al., 2022; DeKeseredy, 2011).

Violence against women and girls has always been hidden, ignored, and accepted all around the world. Sexual abuse of minors is still a taboo subject. The victim of rape has often been the one who has been shamed, not the person who did it (Kardam, 2017). Domestic violence has traditionally been regarded as a private issue. There have been head turns and eye closures, even though figures from throughout the world say that one in three women may experience physical abuse, sexual assault, or both from an intimate partner or someone else at some point in their life. The extent of abuse is considerably greater due to the prevalence of many forms of violence worldwide that often go undetected and inadequately researched (Heise, 2018; Mathews et al., 2020).

People are starting to understand how often violence happens to women and girls, how it hurts the victims, and how it affects society. An empirical analysis of policy evolution across 70 nations reveals that independent women's movements were the principal catalyst for progressive governmental measures against violence towards women (Peterman et al., 2020). People are only just starting to care about violence against children. 15 both boys and girls can be sexually abused, emotionally and physically abused, or neglected. Girls, on the other hand, are 2.5 to 3 times more likely than boys to be sexually abused. 16 Other forms of violence driven by gender inequality, including forced and early marriage, sex trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM), and other harmful practices, disproportionately impact girls (Dills et al., 2016).

Violence of any kind, especially against men and children, is very bad for both public health and human rights. Men and boys are more likely to be hurt by violence than women and girls. Violence perpetrated by men in street and gang contexts is notably prevalent, resulting in significant detrimental effects on public health (Coid et al., 2020). The institutions that should deal with the violence that this group faces often don't see it or deal with it properly, and it's okay for it to be hidden (Carpenter, 2017).

Sadly, there is still not enough money going toward violence against women, even though it is becoming a major issue on both national and international levels. The UN Trust Fund has set aside only \$100 million for violence prevention projects by 2015. This is a little amount compared to the billions of dollars that countries spend on sports, entertainment, and political campaigns (the 2010 FIFA World Cup, for example, cost about US\$3.5 billion). Globally, services for men, women, and children who have been abused are not getting enough money. In fact, due of the economic slump, government funding for services relating to domestic and sexual abuse has gone down in many places.<sup>18</sup>

Moreover, financial support for initiatives designed to mitigate violence against women is often markedly insufficient (Karn & Kumar, 2024; Mofokeng et al., 2024; Stavrevska et al., 2023).

Violence against women has many serious psychological and physical effects that may last for a short time. Exposure to violence can reduce women's control over their sexual and reproductive choices and lead to long-term effects such as a higher risk of HIV, babies with low birth weight, unwanted pregnancies, and unsafe abortions (Lutwak, 2024). Moreover, there is increasing molecular evidence that the cumulative impact of trauma-related responses, chronic stress, and expedited cellular aging contribute to these enduring consequences. It is hardly surprising that women who have suffered abuse use health services much more often than women who have not, even years after the violence stops (Cunliffe, 2016).

Research on violence and child abuse constitutes the primary evidence concerning the detrimental health impacts of violence against women and girls. Female genital mutilation is associated with long labor, obstetric incisions, bleeding, difficult birth, and death of the mother. There is significantly less evidence for alternative forms of violence (Spencer et al., 2023). Experiencing violence in childhood can have several health repercussions, some of which might last a long time. For example, it can make people more likely to abuse drugs, drink too much, hurt themselves, or be a victim in the future. Nevertheless, limited prospective research exists regarding the health trajectories of survivors, with the majority of data being from cross-sectional analyses. There is an even greater paucity of research concerning the origins and health implications of rape, human trafficking, honor-related violence, and intimate relationship homicide (Carr et al., 2020).

### **Violence Against Women in Pakistan**

The prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV), which includes both physical and non-physical abuse such as emotional, sexual and financial, is widespread in Pakistan, and it is supported by various societal factors including: the dominant structure of society in Pakistan, the gendered expectations of men and women, and a woman's reliance on her husband for economic support, while also being significantly limited by a lack of institutional support for women experiencing IPV; further, the level of under-reporting of IPV is high due to a variety of reasons including but not limited to: a woman's sense of shame, and/or the societal stigma associated with being a victim of IPV, and a lack of legal recourse available to women who have experienced IPV. While there is significant evidence supporting the idea that IPV occurs in an overwhelming majority of marriages in Pakistan, as indicated in the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2017-2018 data, 28 percent of all married women between the ages of 15-49 reported having experienced physical abuse from their husbands/partners at some point during their marriage, and 6 percent reported experiencing sexual abuse (National Institute of Population Studies [NIPS], & International Center for Research on Women [ICF], 2019). Nevertheless, some researchers believe that the percentages above are likely to be underestimates of the actual prevalence of IPV in Pakistan due to both under-reporting of IPV experiences and the exclusion of unmarried women, and/or women living separately from their partners (Ali et al., 2021).

Research inside of communities has identified significantly higher rates than studies outside of communities. A cross-sectional study in Karachi found that fifty-six percent of married women experienced at least some form of intimate partner violence (IPV) with the most common type of violence being physical (43%). In addition, a population-based study in Punjab found that one in every three women has experienced at least one form of intimate partner violence (IPV); emotional/psychological violence is commonly occurring simultaneously with physical violence (Zakar et al., 2016). The discrepancies between the

two studies are attributed to methodological variations including sample size, definition of violence and the social/cultural context in which each study was completed.

The prevalence of physical IPV is significantly high in Pakistan. Most women report being slapped, pushed, hit or subjected to other forms of physical violence including burning or strangling (Karmaliani et al., 2008). The frequency of reporting sexual IPV is low due to the shame and taboo associated with discussing sexuality in marriage; however, studies indicate that coerced sexual behavior does occur in marriages. According to Shaikh (2024), 20 percent of married women in the Punjab area have been forced into having sexual intercourse with their husbands. Psychological abuse, which includes making threats, humiliating a person, controlling behavior and restricting freedom of movement, is often normalized as part of the marital relationship. Therefore, it may be underestimated as an example of intimate partner violence (Zakar et al., 2016). The difficulty of quantifying emotional abuse makes it difficult to quantify its contribution to negative mental health outcomes such as depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation (Ali et al., 2017). Economic abuse, defined as denying a person access to financial resources, or limiting access to income from employment, is a significant aspect of intimate partner violence (IPV) in the context of Pakistan and specifically in families who reside in lower socioeconomic status households (Shafiq et al., 2025).

### **Significance of the Study**

The present study is unique in its examination of violence against women within a socio-cultural context in Pakistan. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no study has previously examined violence against women within a socio-cultural context. Consequently, the present study seeks to contribute novel insights to existing literature. Furthermore, the present study encompasses both theoretical and practical dimensions. The study enhances the foundational comprehension of violence against women in Pakistan. Additionally, theoretical frameworks from the study may be utilized in formulating policy suggestions. People who work to protect women from abuse and improve their lives may also get ideas based on evidence for how to do their jobs better. Consequently, the present study held promises for both policy and practice.

### **Research Objectives**

The present study aims to achieve following research objectives.

1. To study the socio-economic and demographic factors of the respondents' families.
2. To explore the extent of different types of violence, such as physical, verbal and psychological violence against women.
3. To identify the rights of the respondent against violence.
4. To explore the challenges and the problems faced by the respondents in seeking help against women.
5. To identify the role of socio-economic demographic, dowry practices and mother-in-law attitude dynamics in affecting violence against women.
6. To suggest measures to frame workable, viable policies to address the issues of violence against women.

### **Methodology**

A cross-sectional survey was conducted in three randomly selected District of Punjab namely Lahore, Faisalabad, Gujranwala as these District are also culturally, demographically and administratively important. The researcher used a multi-stage random sampling method to ensure the sample was representative, and to reduce or eliminate sampling error. At the first stage, the researcher selected randomly three District mentioned as above, and at the second stage one tehsil from each District has been selected randomly. Then, at the next stage four union councils were taken using simple random sampling technique and at the last stage fifty (50) married women of age 18 to 49 years

were selected using systemic random sampling (one woman from ten households). If there were more eligible respondents in the household, one respondent was selected at random. An equal sample size of 300 married women were selected from rural and urban areas. A comprehensive questionnaire has been prepared and pre-tested to examine its suitability and workability. Univariate, bivariate and multivariate techniques are used to explore the research objectives.

## Results and Discussion

### Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. These characteristics are presented in the form of frequencies and percentages. The results indicated that most of the respondents, 54% were above 33 years of age and about 46% were below 33 years of age. On the other hand, about 38% of the respondents reported primary education and 36% reported secondary education but only 26% reported higher education. About 44% of the respondents married before their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday and 32% married between 26 to 30 years of age. Only 20% married after their 31<sup>st</sup> birthday. More than 50% of the respondents reported 2 male children in their family and 22% reported 4 male children. On the other hand, 50% reported two female children and 26% reported three female children in their families. When asked about their per month family income, about 34% reported less than 40,000 per month family income. In addition, about 40% reported 40-60 thousand per month family income. However, the area of residence indicated that equal number of the respondents were selected from both urban and rural areas of residence (Table 1).

**Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents (B=600).**

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Respondents age</b>		
18-27 years	132	22.0
28-37 years	144	24.0
Above 38 years	324	54.0
<b>Respondents' education</b>		
Primary	228	38.0
Secondary	216	36.0
Higher secondary	156	26.0
<b>Age at marriage</b>		
16-20 years	144	24.0
21-25 years	144	24.0
26-30 years	192	32.0
31 and Above	120	20.0
<b>Number of male children</b>		
One child	72	12.0
Two children	312	52.0
Three children	84	14.0
Four children	132	22.0
<b>Number of female children</b>		
One child	72	12.0
Two children	300	50.0
Three children	156	26.0
Four children	72	12.0
<b>Per month family income</b>		
Less than 20000	84	14.0
20001-40000	120	20.0

40001-60000	120	20.0
60001-80000	120	20.0
80001-100000	156	26.0
<b>Place of residence</b>		
Urban	300	50.0
Rural	300	50.0

### Descriptive Analysis of the Scales

This section of the chapter presents results of the scales used in the present study. The researcher used multiple standardized scales to measure variables in the current study. Therefore, it was very important to present the responses of the respondents to each item of the scale. For presented these results, the researcher calculated frequencies of responses, and the results were presented in the forms of tables. Each scale was presented in different tables for clear and concise presentation of the results.

### Spousal Violence

This section presented the results of violence faced by the women and its categories. Results in table 2 presents the frequencies of physical, psychological and sexual violence against women. Results indicates that 120 out of 600 reported that they were slapped and thrown something at them many times. About 199 respondents reported that they were pushed or shoved many times. In addition, about 134 women were hit with fist or something that hurt them many times. About 181 women reported that they were kicked, dragged and beaten most of the time and about 111 women reported that they never faced these treatments. About 157 women claimed that they were choked or burnt most of the time and 123 claimed that they never faced these issues. Moreover, about 154 women claimed they were never threatened to use knife or gun and 174 women claimed that they were threatened by knife or/and gun. About 231 women reported that they were insulted or swore at them most of the time and about 97 women did not faced it. Results also indicated that about 148 women faced shouting and yelling most of the time and about 120 women did not face it. It was also found that 192 women were threatened by the name of those who were their special like maternal family members and/or siblings most of the time and 81 women did not report it. On the other hand, 135 women claimed that they were forced into sexual intercourse against them well by their husbands most of the time and 166 claimed that they did not face it. It was also found that 192 women reported that they were forced to do something against their desires and well which they do not like most of the time by their partners and 180 women did not face it. In conclusion, significant women were facing violence i.e., physical, sexual and psychological most of the time and sometimes.

**Table 2: Frequency of physical, psychological and sexual violence among women.**

Statements	Never	Once	Sometimes	Many time
<b>Physical violence</b>	134	120	221	125
Slapped you or thrown something at you that could hurt you	120	96	264	120
Pushed or shoved you	129	108	164	199
Hit you with his fist or with something else that could hurt you	130	88	248	134
Kicked, dragged, or beat you	111	120	188	181
Choked or burned you	123	96	124	157
Threatened to use or used a knife or gun on you	154	108	164	174
<b>Psychological violence</b>				

Statements	Never	Once	Sometimes	Many time
Insulted or swore at you	97	108	164	231
Shouted or yelled at you	120	84	284	148
Threatened to hurt you or someone you care about	81	120	207	192
<b>Sexual violence</b>				
Forced you to have sexual intercourse against your will	166	51	148	135
Forced you to do something sexual that you did not want to do	180	100	160	192

### Demographic Determinants of Spousal Violence

For determining the demographic determinant of spousal violence, the researcher applied binary logistic regression analysis and calculated odds ratios (Exp (B) at 95% confidence interval. For this purpose, the outcome variable with two categories i.e., yes and no was used against all those variables which were categories like age, education, number of children, family income and area of residence. On the other hand, correlation was calculated between those demographic variables which were numerical along with the categories of the violence faced by the women.

### Relationship between demographic variables and spousal violence

Table 3 presents the demographic determinants of violence against women. The variable included in this analysis were age, education, age at marriage, number of children, family income and area of residence. The determinants' results indicated that age of the respondents was not a significant determinant of violence. On the other hand, education of the respondent was a significant determinant of violence and the result indicated that lower odds of experiencing violence (Exp .623 Sig. 024) as compared to those with primary education. In addition, odds of experiencing violence were significantly higher among those women who were 31-35 years of age (Exp. 2.857 Sig. 000) as compared to 16-20 years old women who worked as a reference category. In addition, odds of experiencing violence were also higher among the women with 6 and above children as compared to reference category of 3 and less than 3 children at 99% confidence interval. Per month family income of the women also significantly determined violence. It was found that odds of experiencing violence were significantly lower among those with 40-60 thousand family income as compared to those with less than 20,000 family income. On the other hand, area of residence did not determine the violence against women at 95% confidence interval. It means that education, age at marriage, number of children and per month family income significantly determined the violence against women (Table 3).

**Table 3: Demographic determinants of violence against women.**

Variables	Exp (B)	Sig.
<b>Respondents age</b>		
18-27 years	1	
28-37 years	.800	.367
Above 38 years	.714	.114
<b>Respondents' education</b>		
Primary	1	
Secondary	1.455	.057
Higher secondary	.623	.024
<b>Age at marriage</b>		

16-20 years	1	
21-25 years	.714	.156
26-30 years	.714	.130
31-35 years	2.857	.000
<b>Number children</b>		
3 and less children	1	
4-5 children	.627	.098
6 and above children	3.333	.000
<b>Per month family income</b>		
Less than 20000	1	
20001-40000	.933	.826
40001-60000	.267	.000
60001-80000	.933	.826
80001-100000	.343	.000
<b>Place of residence</b>		
Urban	1	
Rural	.781	.137

### Dowry Pressure and Demand

Table 4 presents the results of dowry pressure and demand by in-laws. This pressure and demand were reported by women at five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The results indicated that 170 women strongly agreed that their husbands expected better dowry from their in-laws, 196 women strongly agreed that their husband expressed anger when they brought insufficient dowry, 278 women strongly agreed that their husbands believe that dowry reflects the respect of husbands and their families. 206 women strongly agreed that improper down is a dishonor of their in-laws as considered by their husbands and 228 women also strongly agreed that their husbands consider that they should be respectful to their husbands because they were not harassed over insufficient dowry.

**Table 4: Dowry pressure and demands by in-laws.**

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I expected a better dowry from my wife's family.	13	17	98	302	170
When the dowry is insufficient, the husband has a right to express anger.	16	24	160	206	196
I believe dowry reflects the respect a bride's family has for the groom's family.	11	19	110	182	278
If a woman doesn't bring a proper dowry, it's a dishonor to her in-laws.	21	29	112	232	206
A wife should be grateful if she was not harassed over dowry.	7	13	50	302	228

Table 5 reported the results of correlation between continuous variables and four major types of violence against women. The results indicated a negative association between women age and physical violence (-.186), sexual violence (-.237) and overall violence (-.139) at 99% confidence interval. It means that there was a negative correlation between age of the respondents and types of violence i.e., higher the age, higher the violence. The results also indicated a negative association between women education and physical

violence (-.102) and sexual violence (-.182) at 95% confidence interval. It means that there was a negative correlation between education of the respondents and types of violence i.e., higher the age, higher the violence. However, age at marriage was not significantly correlated with any type of violence. The results also depicted a positive correlation between number of children and physical violence (.150), sexual violence (.199) and overall violence (.131) at 99% confidence interval. It means that there was a negative correlation between number of children of the respondents and types of violence i.e., higher the age, higher the violence. However, family income was negatively correlated with psychological and positively correlated with sexual violence against women and per month family income of the respondents at 95% confidence interval (Table 5).

**Table 5: Correlation between demographic variables and violence against women.**

Variables	Physical violence	Psychological violence	Sexual Violence	Overall violence
Women' age	-.186**	.002	-.237**	-.139**
Education	-.102*	.027	-.182**	-.075
Age at marriage	.063	.041	.057	.060
Number of children	.150**	.038	.199**	.131**
Family income	-.062	-.082*	.100*	-.045
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**				

#### **Impact/Role of Mother In-Law in Spousal Violence**

The results mentioned in Table 6 indicated a significant multivariate significant effect of independent variables i.e., role of mother-in-law on the combined dependent variables with 9.53 F value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .046. It means that role of mother-in-law significantly influences every type of violence. The table also presents univariate tests too for indicating the proposed relationship between in-dependent variable and dependent variable. There is a significant relationship between role of mother-in-law and physical violence with 16.54 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .027. In addition, there is a significant relationship between family norms and psychological violence with 0.77 F-value and p-value .379 and partial eta value of .001. The data also indicated a significant relationship between role of mother-in-law and sexual violence with 5.28 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .009. The results found that there is a significant relationship between role of mother-in-law and overall violence with 7.97 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .013. The coefficient of determination indicated a value of .027 for physical, .001 for psychological, .022 for sexual and .013 for overall violence. It means that 1.3% of the variance is explained in overall violence by husband's family norms (Table 6).

**Table 6: Impact of role of mother in-law on violence against women.**

DV / Test	F	df (Hypothesis)	df (Error)	p-value	Partial $\eta^2$	$R^2$	Adj. $R^2$
Multivariate Test							
Wilks' Lambda	9.533	3	596	.000	.046	—	—
Univariate (DV-level) Tests							
Physical Violence	16.544	1	598	.000	.027	.027	.025
Psychological Violence	0.775	1	598	.379	.001	.001	.000
Sexual Violence	5.277	1	598	.022	.009	.009	.007
Overall Violence	7.969	1	598	.005	.013	.013	.012

### Dowry Demands and Violence Against Women

The results mentioned in Table 7 indicated a significant multivariate significant effect of independent variables, i.e., husbands' dowry demands on the combined dependent variables with 47.85 F value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .194. It means that husband's dowry demands significantly influence every type of violence. The table also presents univariate tests too for indicating the proposed relationship between in-dependent variable and dependent variable. There is a significant relationship between dowry demands and physical violence with 16.66 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .027. In addition, there is a significant relationship between dowry demands and psychological violence with 0.90 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .002. The data also indicated a significant relationship between dowry demands and sexual violence with 88.54 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .129. The results found that there is a significant relationship between dowry demands and overall violence with 11.58 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .019. The coefficient of determination indicated a value of .027 for physical, .002 for psychological, .129 for sexual and .019 for overall violence. It means that 1.9% of the variance is explained in overall violence by husband's family norms (Table 7).

**Table 7: Impact of dowry demands on violence against women.**

DV / Test	F	df (Hypothesis)	df (Error)	p- value	Partial $\eta^2$	$R^2$	Adj. $R^2$
Multivariate Test						—	—
Wilks' Lambda	47.857	3	596	.000	.194	—	—
Univariate (DV- level) Tests							
Physical Violence	16.666	1	598	.000	.027	.027	.025
Psychological Violence	0.906	1	598	.342	.002	.002	.000
Sexual Violence	88.540	1	598	.000	.129	.129	.128
Overall Violence	11.583	1	598	.001	.019	.019	.017

### Impact/Role of Mother In-Law in Spousal Violence

The results mentioned in Table 8 indicated a significant multivariate significant effect of independent variables i.e., role of mother-in-law on the combined dependent variables with 9.53 F value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .046. It means that role of mother-in-law significantly influences every type of violence. The table also presents univariate tests too for indicating the proposed relationship between in-dependent variable and dependent variable. There is a significant relationship between role of mother-in-law and physical violence with 16.54 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .027. In addition, there is a significant relationship between family norms and psychological violence with 0.77 F-value and p-value .379 and partial eta value of .001. The data also indicated a significant relationship between role of mother-in-law and sexual violence with 5.28 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .009. The results found that there is a significant relationship between role of mother-in-law and overall violence with 7.97 F-value and p-value .000 and partial eta value of .013. The coefficient of determination indicated a value of .027 for physical, .001 for psychological, .022 for sexual and .013 for overall violence. It means that 1.3% of the variance is explained in overall violence by husband's family norms (Table 8).

**Table 8: Impact of role of mother in-law on violence against women.**

DV / Test	F	df (Hypothesis)	df (Error)	p-value	Partial $\eta^2$	$R^2$	Adj. $R^2$
Multivariate Test							
Wilks' Lambda	9.533	3	596	.000	.046	—	—
Univariate (DV-level) Tests							
Physical Violence	16.544	1	598	.000	.027	.027	.025
Psychological Violence	0.775	1	598	.379	.001	.001	.000
Sexual Violence	5.277	1	598	.022	.009	.009	.007
Overall Violence	7.969	1	598	.005	.013	.013	.012

### Conclusion and Recommendation

The respondent education, age at marriage, specifically 31 to 35 years, large family size (6 plus) and monthly family income ranging from 40 thousands to 60 thousands and 80 thousands to one lac were the important determinants of violence against women, identified by multivariate analysis (logistic regression). Expectations regarding dowry remain a dominant contributing factor to violence toward women, specifically in terms of physical and sexual violence. There were some indications of psychological violence, however, those expectations seemed to contribute less significantly to the manifestation of psychological violence, suggesting that material grievances will most likely result in more obvious, forceful forms of control. Observed patterns indicate the continued presence of patriarchal traditions, the commodification of women and gendered power differentials as contributing factors to IPV in marital contexts.

Although illegal in many places, dowry continues to be a long-standing social tradition in Pakistan particularly in the cultures of the more conservative and traditional families. Dowry expectations are not met by the groom's family, the bride and her family may experience retribution in the form of physical violence, threats and/or sexual coercion. This study's findings support other studies in South Asia that find a direct correlation between dowry and domestic violence. A study conducted by Tahir (2017) indicated that women in Pakistan who had dowry expectations not met by their grooms experienced a significantly increased risk of physical and sexual abuse. In cases where the bride's family fails to deliver the expected dowry, men who believe their status has decreased, may resort to violence to demonstrate their dominance over their spouse, and to reassert their image of masculinity.

There may be several explanations for the relatively weak link to psychological violence, one explanation is that dowry-related issues are typically transactional and tangible, and therefore lead to more explicit forms of control, such as physical or economic abuse. Emotional manipulation, humiliation and threats of abandonment occur together in the qualitative data, although they may not always appear to be immediately related to the lack of satisfaction with dowry. Thus, dowry becomes a catalyst for social dynamics and creates conflict and rationalizes violence. Based on these findings, dowry should not be viewed solely as a cultural artifact, but as a representation of systemic and gender-based violence. Therefore, legal prohibitions alone will not eradicate a cultural practice that is so ingrained into the societal and marital transactions. Dowry is a significant contributor to spousal violence, not simply because of the unmet material expectations, but because of the symbolic, cultural and gendered implications. In many multi-generational households,

the mother-in-law holds both practical and symbolic power over the daughter-in-law based upon long-standing family patterns and power dynamics. The power dynamics are maintained by older women through the adoption and maintenance of patriarchy, as described by Kandiyoti (1988) in terms of patriarchal bargains. According to Kandiyoti, in patriarchal societies women typically gain power by accepting existing structures and as part of this process they often will exercise control over younger women in the household. As such, mothers-in-law can be involved in supporting or rationalizing the husband's abusive behavior to uphold traditional family values, promote discipline, or protect the family status.

The data illustrates that in addition to being a personal issue, violence in these homes is also a structural issue that is frequently encouraged and reinforced by the larger extended family system. Some dynamics allow the mother-in-law to encourage conflict by providing critical comments, isolating the daughter-in-law, etc., and as a result, the husband can use these opportunities to reinforce his position of authority in the relationship. These types of activities can be considered "abuse by proxy," and although the mother-in-law does not engage in direct abuse, she enables and/or encourages the abuse of the husband toward his wife (Gill, 2004). The data supports Bandura and Walter's (1977) social learning theory that states that aggression is modeled and legitimized within the family environment. Men raised in an environment where mothers were dominant and punished women for infractions, raise children who model those same aggressive behaviors and support them in their own marriages, particularly if the behaviors are accepted or contribute to maintaining harmony in the family.

Although somewhat less obvious than physical abuse, there is a disturbing connection to sexual violence. The data indicate that the mother-in-law can exert influence or pressure on daughters-in-law to comply sexually; thus, supporting the patriarchal notion of male entitlement to a woman's body. In some situations, victims describe having been silenced or ignored by their in-laws; because of these interactions, victims experience greater distress related to marital rape or coercion. Alternatively, psychological abuse may be less apparent or difficult to relate to the mother-in-law, particularly in qualitative studies where the nuances of emotional abuse are often difficult to distinguish from normal interpersonal disagreements.

Qualitative data collected during the study provide support for the above interpretations, as many women reported experiencing conflicts with their mothers-in-law prior to the emergence of physical violence, or that the mother-in-law's involvement in conflict created a power dynamic that allowed the husband to assert control over his wife. The mother-in-law's active endorsement justified the husband's aggression. The cultural position of the daughter-in-law claims that they must obey their in-laws along with their husbands (Gill, 2004). Therefore, there should be gender sensitive and appropriate interventions for the couples and in-laws. The goals of these interventions would be to dismantle harmful beliefs that equate discipline with care and control with tradition.

### **Recommendations**

1. There should be counseling at community level for the men for overcoming their issues and psychological problems i.e., emotional dysregulation, low self-esteem, and aggression, to overcome their perpetuation of violence.
2. There is a dire need of personality screening and counseling of the partners to make them aware about the violence against women. On the other hand, it is also required for better adjustment of both the partners.
3. There should be awareness complains and proper litigation against the practices of dowry to protect women from the sufferings related to dowry.

4. There is a need for proper programs for the literacy of couples before their marriage. These awareness programs are more important in rural areas compared to urban areas.
5. Counseling and interventions at family level are also required to make the family members to understand their role as in-laws, practically mother in law to promote and/or decrease violence against women.

**Note:** This research article has been derived from my PhD research work topic “Causes and Implications of Domestic Violence against Women within Socio-cultural Framework in Punjab Pakistan”.

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