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## Self-Esteem and Suicidal Ideation among Victims of Violence Women Southern Punjab

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### Key Words

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**Abstract:** The aim of the current study was to examine self-esteem and suicidal ideation among victims of violence in southern Punjab. The sample for the study consisted of 132 victims of violence women. The sample was taken by using a purposive sampling technique from the shelter home and NGOs (Bahawalpur City, Kanpur, Multan, and NGOs). To collect data, two main instruments were used: (1) to assess self-esteem, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965); and (2) to assess suicidal ideation, the Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation (Beck, 1988). This research is based on a quantitative, cross-sectional research design, and a purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data. SPSS tool has been used to analyze the data, and the comparison has shown that married women participants have a higher level of suicidal ideation as compared to unmarried. There was a significant difference in self-esteem and suicidal ideation among rural and urban area victims of violence women. The comparison has shown that urban women participants have a slightly higher level of self-esteem as compared to rural. The current study findings are applicable only in the selected area, and these can be used to develop social reforms for the victims' women of violence.

## Introduction

It is not easy to grasp the complexity of the issue of violence against women. Various definitions of relevant terms have been provided to facilitate comprehension of the phenomenon. It is clear from reviews of research conducted worldwide that violence against women persists; however, the specific forms this takes vary greatly from one country to the next (Htun & Weldon, 2012).

In addition, the most widely accepted definition of "violence against women" is a pattern of harmful acts performed by current or previous intimate partners towards their women partners. Close relationship violence, domestic abuse, partner violence, spouse abuse, marital rape, battering, and dating violence are all examples of the world's minimal human rights violations (Heise, 1993).

Tasie (2013) stated that violence against women is a worldwide epidemic that causes countless people physical harm, emotional distress, mental torture, and financial deprivation every year. To add insult to injury, the abuse of power is one of the leading causes of human suffering. It deprives victims of their most fundamental freedoms. To add insult to injury, the vast majority of assaults against women occur within the home, yet it is rarely reported because it is so easily hidden even though it cuts across demographics such as culture, socioeconomic status, race, and age. More cases demonstrate that men in positions of trust, intimacy, and authority, such as spouses, partners, dads, grandpas, grandpas-in-law, stepfathers, brothers, sons, and other family members, engage in domestic violence against

women (WHO, 2019). Recognizing the variety of forms in which violence against women can take is crucial in various forms, beginning in childhood and continuing throughout a woman's life. Girls may be subjected to sex, selective abortion, or physical or emotional abuse in civilizations where son preferences are common. Therefore, violence against girls throughout childhood may include starvation, Ignorance, neglect, poverty, lack of access to health care, insufficient education, infidelity, female genital mutilation, underage marriage, forced marriages, trafficking, and teen pregnancy are all significant factors. Assaults in the home can take numerous forms, such as physical contact (such as hitting, kicking, biting, shoving, or restraining) or psychological control (such as isolating) (Azunwo & Kalio, 2018).

Violence against women varies widely from country to country, as has been discussed at length above. In this regard, WHO (2019) has that the discussing situations in numerous nations throughout the globe. Most women in Japan, for instance, have suffered some form of intimate relationship abuse, either physical or sexual, at any phase or another in their lives. The highest rates of violence against women have been documented in rural areas of Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Peru, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Throughout the globe, women face oppression and danger. People's reluctance to disclose violent crimes to the police tends to lessen the seriousness of the situation (McCarthy, 2016). UNICEF Report (2016) Women's genital mutilation is a global problem, affecting an estimated 200 million girls and women. Most occurrences are found in Africa, although the practice is common in the Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern regions. It is common for young girls in patriarchal countries to internalize the concept of honour and shift the burden of responsibility for "sexual harassment" and other forms of gendered violence onto women (Ouis, 2009).

As a growing nation in Asia, Pakistan is not immune to the problem of violence against women. Rural and tribal areas dominate Pakistani society, like southern Punjab, and within these communities' people of varying castes, creeds, linguistic groupings, etc., live in isolation from one another. Therefore, there is a significant gap between rural and urban residents of the major lenders. As a result, some customs are more widespread in specific regions while others are not. Almost everyone is poor, and literacy rates are very low. Pakistani culture has always been a synthesis of various ethnic groups and traditions.

People nowadays live in a culture where sexism and other forms of discrimination against women are so commonplace they are almost expected, but this is a disgrace that reflects poorly on us all. Women account for over half of Pakistan's population, but they face appalling conditions there. Women are not treated as human beings or even as equals to males in our society. Women are still exploited in the guise of numerous ceremonies. Women in our society continue to face many sorts of violence, including mental and physical assault, for bringing less material "dowry" with them after marriage. It has been reported that acid has been used in multiple incidents, but no one is in custody for any of them. However, outdated norms from the past have kept women in their harsh grasp despite the fact that they have not yet been imprisoned. KARO KARI, VANI, and SWARA, all of which are considered to be "traditions," are still very much a part of our culture and daily lives. Customs like this are responsible for the deaths of thousands of women every year (Naseem et al., 2021).

Similar reports have been mentioned by Ali and Gavino (2008) about the violence against women in Pakistan, like southern Punjab, and how honour killing is an additional form of domestic violence against women. According to them, Karo Kari is recognized to occur in many parts of the world. This is also supported by the work of Leigh and Miller (1998), that recognized

that more than 4,000 people, including 2800 women, died from 1998 to 2004. In one of the studies conducted by Allen (2007), there were 86 Karo Kari murders in Larkana, Sindh, in 1997, with 53 of the victims being women. The whole thing showed that violence against women is a big social problem in Pakistan that hasn't been taken care of properly (Salam et al., 2006).

Due to these crimes, women suffer from different problems; as explained in another study by (Nasrullah et al., 2009), they narrated that a violent act committed by an intimate partner causes certain mental, psychological, and physical problems. As a result, the affected woman may feel shame/guilt and low self-esteem. Moreover, thoughts may be disturbed in the form of suicidal ideation. Therefore, the current study is aimed at the effect of self-esteem and suicidal ideation among victims of violence against women in southern Punjab. Apart from all situations regarding the violence rate in developing countries like Pakistan, there is a dire need to make some policies to overcome violence against women in Pakistan.

It seems important to explain the variables under study. Many variables related to women have been studied worldwide, but violence victims are common in studies, particularly in Pakistan, and are rare. So, there is a need to address such problems with other possible variables, low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, etc.

### **Self-esteem**

Self-esteem is a term used to describe how someone feels about them. It is an individual's personal assessment of his high and low worth, importance, or abilities (Rosenberg & Pearlin, 1978). Self-esteem is a range that varies widely from quantity to level and from person to person. Some individuals have high self-esteem, while others have low self-esteem. The differences between these people could be more understandable but evident in comparing their thoughts and feelings about their values (Singelis et al., 1999).

### **Suicidal ideations**

Recent research has uncovered three primary categories associated with suicidal behaviour: suicidal ideations (also known as thoughts), suicidal communications, and suicidal behaviours (Silverman et al., 2007). Suicidal ideation was defined in this study as women who said they had considered suicide and planned to commit suicide. Suicidal behaviour in women is explained by a variety of hypotheses. Therefore, Joiner's Interpersonal Theory of Suicide is the most relevant for investigating the connection between suicidal ideation and physical, physiological, intellectual, and behavioural violence against women (Joiner et al., 2012).

Women who experienced sexual and physical violence were more likely to suffer from mental health problems than other survivors of domestic violence, according to a study by Naz and Malik (2018) explained that this was because family and socioeconomic factors played a large role in different frightening types of domestic violence and that the main mental troubles faced by the survivors had been poor self-concept, low self-esteem, shame/guilt, and negative body image. The results showed that the women were victims of multiple forms of mistreatment and abuse, including physical assault, humiliation, helplessness, and deprivation (Sultan et al., 2016).

Ali and Ali (2019) through their studies, they found that many respondents who had been victims of violence also had serious thoughts of suicide. Critical suicidal pull has been strongly indicated by signs and indicators of frustration, hostility, and self-critical behaviour. It's clear that the key concerns that have heightened the suicide threat for these people are the physical and emotional pain they've endured as a result of the enormous strain of social hostility, the form of familial and social disconnection, and a history of violence and burdensomeness.

According to research conducted by Khan et al. (2009), estimates of intimate partner violence range from 30% to 79%. Women in Pakistan are

especially vulnerable to domestic abuse due to a number of circumstances, including a lack of education and empowerment, widespread misperceptions about Islamic beliefs and social mores, the torture of women perpetrated in the name of honour killing, poverty, and the prevalence of honour killings.

Studies have examined the biological and psychological causes of suicide, with a particular emphasis on the link between suicide and depression in women, as well as the role of self-aware emotions and negative emotions like low self-esteem (Sharafutdinova et al., 2021).

There is an alarmingly high percentage of violence against women across all of Pakistan's provinces and throughout their lifetimes. However, despite their superiority being acknowledged, little progress was made in devising methods to reduce violence at the individual, family, and community levels (Iqbal et al., 2012).

### The Rationale of the Study

In a patriarchal society like southern Punjab, women are always very weak, neglected, and vulnerable segments of society. Violence against women is increasing alarmingly. Issues related to women are under-investigated and treated. Violence may lead to social, physical and psychological problems outcomes like insecurity, depression, anxiety, and conduct disorders, and as a result, the women may have different emotional and psychological problems along with shame, guilt, low self-esteem, and suicidal ideation.

### Objectives of the Study

The following are the main objectives of the study:

- To investigate the difference between self-esteem and suicidal ideation among married and unmarried victims of violent women
- To find out the difference between self-esteem and suicidal ideation among rural

and urban area victims of violent women.

### Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses are generated to find the answers scientifically.

- There will be a significant difference between self-esteem and suicidal ideation among married and unmarried victims of violent women.
- There will be a significant difference between self-esteem and suicidal ideation among rural and urban area victims of violent women.

### Method

#### Participants

The sample for the present research was taken from different shelter homes and organizations in metropolitan cities (Bahawalpur, Kanpur, Multan, and NGOs) in southern Punjab. The total number of participants who participated in this research was 132. They were chosen using a method known as purposive sampling. The participant's age range was from 20 to 45 years, with different demographic variables such as education, urban or rural location, marital status, family system/structure, and socioeconomic status background.

#### Instruments

The following scales were used in this research:

- The Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale.
- Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation (BSSI)

#### The Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale

Rosenberg self –esteem scale (SES) was produced by Morri Rosenberg (1965). It was prolonged to apply in the extensive U.S. Ponders for the adjustment of youth (Rosenberg, 1965; Rosenberg and Simmon, 1972). The scale introduced high evaluation in unwavering quality territories and ranged in the area of 0.77 and 0.88, and the measured ability is 0.55. It takes just about one minute to fill the form. The ten things are replied to on a five-point Likert Scale. The scale ranges



from 0–30 with a five invert score. When rating 1, 3, 4, 7, and 10, a score of 3 indicates strong agreement, 2 indicates agreement, 1 indicates disagreement, and 0 indicates strong disagreement. Strongly Agree = 0 for items 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9 (reversed scores), Agree = 1, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 3. Low levels of self-esteem are also common across the ages of 25 and 30 (Blashcovich & Tomaka). A score of less than 15 indicates a problem with poor self-esteem. Suicidal ideation and attempts have been connected to low self-esteem (Gray et al., 1997). The unwavering quality of Cronbach's alpha in the original study was discovered at .877.

### Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation (BSSI)

The presence and severity of suicidal ideation in the week prior to evaluation can be measured with this 19-item scale (19). Beck and Steer (1988) established the self-reporting version of the measure, with each item evaluated on scoring from 0 to 2 on an ordinal scale, with a possible range of 0 to 38. People provide responses to the five most important questions. If the character's response to the fifth item earns excellent scores

of 1 and 2, the character continues to solve the remaining items; otherwise, the survey is complete. There was no threshold applied to divide the results into groups (35).

### Research Design

The sampling technique was used in a quantitative cross-sectional study design.

### Procedure

Different shelter homes and organizations (NGOs, Dar-ul-Aman,) were randomly selected from metropolitan cities (Bahawalpur, Kanpur, Multan, and NGOs) in southern Punjab. First, informed consent was distributed to participants with a debriefing that their data was kept confidential throughout the research. For data collection, two measures in Urdu version (The Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale and Beck Scale for Suicidal Ideation) were given to the victims of violence women.

### Data Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23 was used to analyze the collected data.

## Results

**Table 1**

*Comparison of Marital Status*

Variables	Marital status	Mean	S.D	T	95% CI		P
					LL	UL	
Self-Esteem	Married	20.18	5.68	-0.31	-2.65	1.93	0.758
	Unmarried	20.53	5.20				
Suicidal Ideation	Married	17.56	12.58	1.04	-2.41	7.72	0.30
	Unmarried	14.90	11.41				

The above table shows a comparison of variables among married and unmarried women participants to check the significance of difference using a T-test. For Self-Esteem, the mean score of married women is 20.18, with a standard deviation of 5.68, and the average score of unmarried women is 20.53, with a standard deviation is 5.20. The comparison shows that

unmarried women participants have a slightly higher level of self-esteem as compared to married. The T-score is -0.31 with a p-value is 0.758 showing the test is not significant. Same as the average suicidal ideation score of married women is 12.58, with a standard deviation of 1.04, and the average score of unmarried women is 14.90, with a standard deviation is 11.41. The

comparison shows that married women participants have a higher level of suicidal ideation as compared to unmarried. T-score is

1.04 with a p-value is 0.30 showing the test is not significant.

**Table 2**

*Locality Comparisons*

Variables	Locality	Mean	SD	T	95% CI		P
					LL	UL	
Self-Esteem	Urban	20.45	5.35	0.44	-1.50	2.36	0.662
	Rural	20.02	5.84				
Suicidal Ideation	Urban	17.11	12.14	0.16	-3.95	4.64	0.872
	Rural	16.76	12.67				

The above table shows a comparison of variables among urban and rural women participants to check the significance of difference using a T-test. For Self-Esteem, the mean score of urban women is 20.45 with a standard deviation of 5.35, and the average score of rural women is 20.02 with a standard deviation is 5.84. The comparison shows that urban women participants have slightly higher levels of self-esteem as compared to rural. T-score is 0.44 with a p-value is 0.662 showing the test is not significant. Same as the average suicidal ideation score of urban women is 17.11, with a standard deviation of 12.14, and the average score of rural women is 16.76, with a standard deviation is 12.67. The comparison shows that rural women participants have a higher level of suicidal ideation as compared to urban. T-score is 0.16 with a p-value is 0.872 showing the test is not significant.

## Discussion

The goal of the study was to investigate the issues of low self-esteem and suicide ideation among victims of violence women in southern Punjab. H1. The hypothesis of the study was to investigate the difference between self-esteem and suicidal ideation among victims of violence in married and unmarried women. "There will be a significant difference between self-esteem and suicidal ideation among married and unmarried victims of violence women." The present result

shows that the comparison shows married women participants had a slightly higher level of suicidal ideation and low self-esteem as compared to unmarried victims of violence.

The findings support this concept, which is consistent with prior studies Ien-Degaard et al. (2021), for instance, discovered that married victims of assault were more likely to have suicidal thoughts than single women. As with the concept itself, various researchers have found similar findings. According to Assaf and Chaban (2013), Married women are more likely to have experienced victims of violence than single women, and they are less likely to have positive self-perceptions or to have suicidal thoughts. (Assaf & Chaban, 2013) It was also confirmed that married women developed higher levels of suicidal ideation and low self-esteem than unmarried women due to their experiences as victims of violence (Niimi, 2022). In addition, the researchers note a considerable distinction between the experiences of married and single women who have been victims of violence.

HII hypothesis of the study was aimed to find out the difference between self-esteem and suicidal ideation among rural and urban area victims of violent women " There will be a significant difference between self-esteem and suicidal ideation among rural and urban area victims of violent women. The comparison shows that urban women participants have a slightly

higher level of self-esteem as compared to rural women.

The findings support this concept, which is consistent with prior studies. Gamache (2012) conducted an international study and discovered that victims of violence actually exhibited higher levels of self-esteem than urban women. As with the concept itself, various researchers have found similar findings. Similarly, the findings of the hypothesis are supported by a number of research. Asayesh et al. (2017) found that there was a considerable distinction between urban and rural women based on their findings. Poverty, aspirations of becoming a strong woman, and domestic violence are all issues that affect rural women just as much as they do urban dwellers. However, rural women's isolation from others compounds the effects of these issues. The outcome is frequently pervasive stress, which shows itself as persistent feelings of inferiority. This study focuses on the cultural factors that contribute to chronic stress and low self-esteem among rural women and addresses the mental health resources available to them.

## Conclusion

The study's goal was to take an appearance at how low self-esteem and thoughts of suicide affected women who had been victims of violence in southern Punjab. The study concluded that the current results show that married women participants have a slightly higher level of suicidal ideation and low self-esteem when compared to unmarried victims of violence. Moreover, both urban and rural areas are considered in the final analysis. The results comparison shows that urban women participants have a slightly higher level of self-esteem as compared to rural women.

## Limitations of the Study

The study has certain limitations, such as:

- The current research only included women from southern Punjab; therefore, this study

cannot assume that the findings are representative of Pakistan as a whole.

- This was the first study done on restricted women, so it needs to be repeated with a large sample.

## Recommendations of the Study

This study increases the awareness in women that they should take a serious stand against violence for their mental health and demand the government for it. After reviewing the current study, it proposes that the government should widespread community-level awareness about the rights of women, about the bad psychological impact of violence on women. Government should be aware of the root cause of violence against women and try to change that behaviour through a proper action plan. Society should create a protective environment for women and should avoid blaming victim women.

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