

Research Article

Assessment of prevalence of domestic violence and mental health profile of adolescents exposed to domestic violence in an urban slum in Mumbai

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ABSTRACT

Background: Domestic violence in adolescent age group with prevalence of 22.5% is a major cause for causing depression and other behavioral changes. These changes caused due to domestic violence in adolescent age group may persist or worsen in later life as adult resulting in substance abuse or criminal mentality or depression or phobias. Purpose of current study was to assess the prevalence of domestic violence among the adolescents and to compare the mental health in terms of behavior, self-identity & depression among those with and without domestic violence and assessment of the contributory factors fueling domestic violence in the family.

Methods: The study was conducted in Cheetah camp, an urban slum of Mumbai during Jan-March, 13. Study population includes subjects aged from 15-19 years fulfilling inclusion/exclusion criteria, a sample size of 74 (99% CL) was derived, using EPI Info software. Subjects were selected by random sampling & 7 households were visited for data collection from each sector. Scales such as AAMR-ABS, Hamilton depression scale and memory recall of the subjects were used in the study.

Results: The prevalence of domestic violence in adolescence in cheetah camp urban slum was found to be 38.15% with various reasons. As the maladaptive behavior in the adolescent population increased the emotional violence against them also increased and was found to be statistically significant.

Conclusions: Domestic violence is a major causal factor for causing depression of varying degree from mild to severe in adolescents. This depression or behavioural changes occurred during adolescent age group may persist life long and affects their life as adult resulting in failure for social and economic growth of them and of their family.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Adolescent, Depression, Behavior changes

INTRODUCTION

In India 5.7 million adolescents are exposed to domestic violence each year. According to NFHS-III, Prevalence of Domestic violence in Adolescents in India is 22.5%.¹ Domestic violence against adolescents may result in substance abuse and many other problems causing disturbances in society.^{2,3} Most adolescents in these families are not currently identified and treated through

existing intervention programs and this has not been studied in detail. This can have significant negative impact on their emotional, social and cognitive development.

Objective

Objective of the study is to assess the prevalence of domestic violence among the adolescents and to compare

the mental health in terms of behaviour, self-identity & depression among those with and without domestic violence and assessment of the contributory factors fuelling domestic violence in the family.

METHODS

The study was conducted in Cheetah camp, an urban slum of Mumbai during Jan-March, 13. Study population includes subjects aged from 15-19 years fulfilling inclusion/ exclusion criteria. The cheetah camp slum has a total census population of 88,000, which consists of 9680 (11%) adolescents. With the prevalence of 22.5% domestic violence (NFHS III), a sample size of 74 (99% CL) was derived, using EPI Info software. Subjects were selected by random sampling & 7 households were visited for data collection from each sector. Approval was taken from institutional ethics committee. Written informed consent was taken from all participants and their parents before study. A predesigned and pretested questionnaire was used to collect data during interview. Interviewer was trained before taking interview of subjects. A semi structured interview was used to collect the relevant information. Scales such as AAMR-ABS, Hamilton depression scale and memory recall of the subjects were used in the study.^{4,5} Data is collected in SPSS software trial version 17 and analyzed using descriptive statistical methods.

RESULTS

The prevalence of domestic violence in adolescence in cheetah camp urban slum was found to be 38.15% with various reasons observed (Figure 3). As the age increases it was found that, there was decrease in physical violence and its consequences (Figure 4). As the depression score increases the physical consequences and emotional violence increases and was found to be statistically significant (Figure 6). It was also found that as the maladaptive behaviour in the adolescent population increased the emotional violence against them also increased and was found to be statistically significant (Figure 7). Employment was found to have no significant difference with domestic violence aspect. Similarly gender, literacy, employment and type of family had no significant difference (Figure 1, 2 and 5).

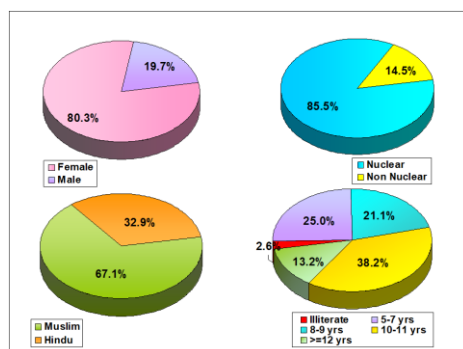


Figure 1: Socio-economic profile of subjects.

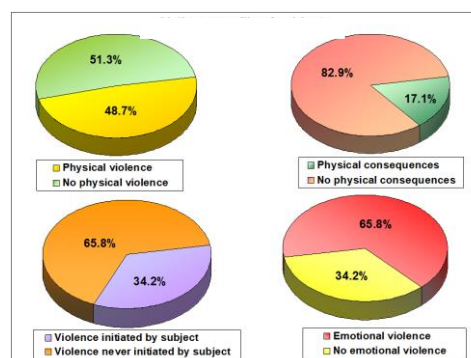


Figure 2: Violence profile of subjects.

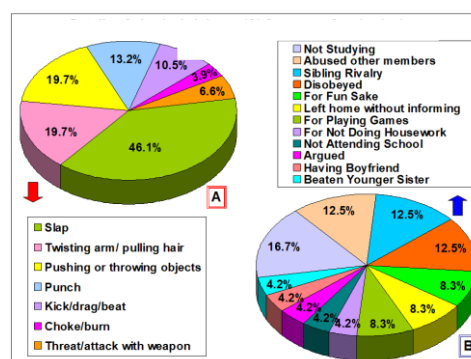


Figure 3: Details of physical violence (A) & reasons for physical violence (B).

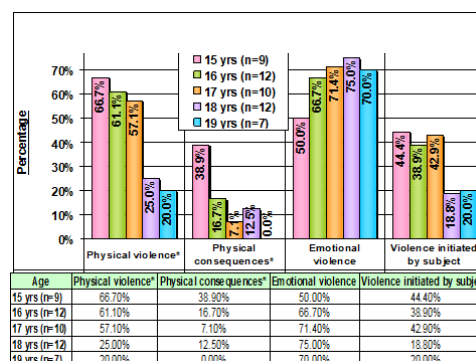


Figure 4: Age wise distribution of various violence of related variables (only 'yes' response).

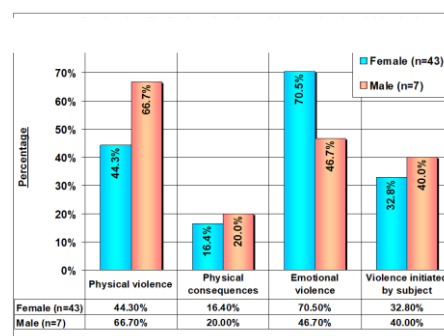


Figure 5: Gender wise distribution of various violence related variable (only 'yes' response).

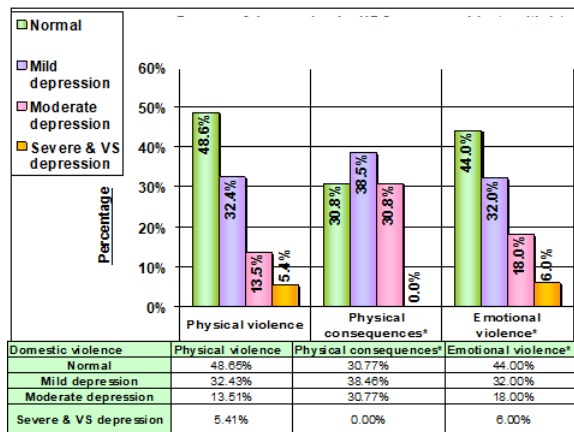


Figure 6: Degree of depression by HDS among subjects with h/o physical violence, its physical consequences with emotional violence.

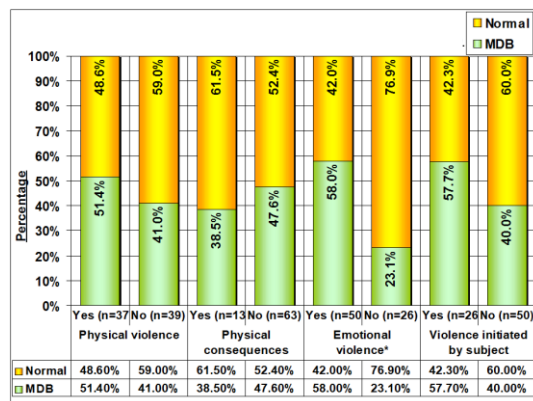


Figure 7: Maladaptive behaviour by AAMR-ABS in subjects with physical violence, its physical consequences and with emotional violence.

DISCUSSION

Based on study result it is evident that prevalence of domestic violence is drastically increasing, as per (NFHS III) it is 22.5% and now observed by our study it is 38.15%. Domestic violence against adolescents is of varying degree from slapping to attack with weapon which is a major concern for society. Domestic violence against adolescents may result in various serious and life threatening complications also. It may cause behavioural changes, personality changes, substance abuse and violence in nature or depression in these children's. Domestic violence is a major causal factor for causing depression of varying degree from mild to severe in adolescents. This depression or behavioural changes

occurred during adolescent age group may persist life long and affects their life as adult resulting in failure for social and economic growth of them and of their family.

Recommendation

The health system responses to domestic violence include training on domestic violence as a health issue, early identification of victims of domestic violence. Health infrastructure should be developed so as to identify and support adolescents suffering from domestic violence. Direct support to the providers through counselling, legal services and changing community attitude. Law against domestic violence should be made stricter and should be implemented. Periodic assessment and counselling of children's exposed to domestic violence should be responsibility of Government. Mental health of children's should be given more importance in education system and every child should undergo a psychological assessment every academic year.

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Conflict of interest: None declared

Ethical approval: The study was approved by the institutional ethics committee

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