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Factors Affecting Domestic Violence against Rural Educated and Uneducated Women in Bangladesh: A Sociological Analysis

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ABSTRACT

All societal and economic strata are negatively impacted by the problem of domestic violence. Although the government of Bangladesh is making efforts to address the problem of domestic violence, the nation is ranked fourth worldwide for violence against women. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explore the pattern and causes of domestic violence against rural educated and uneducated women in Bagerhat district of Bangladesh. In this study, district and upazila were selected purposively whereas union, village and respondents were selected using simple random sampling technique. Using random sample procedures, a total of 100 rural women were chosen. The data was analyzed using tabular, graphical, and descriptive statistics. It is found from the socioeconomic analysis of the study that the mean age of the rural women in the study area is 29.05 years. In terms of educational status, it is seen that 13% respondents had primary education while 19% had secondary education with the average years of schooling of women is 6.23 years. It is observed that 35% women were housewife, 15% were NGO worker and 10% health worker. Findings of the study reveal that husband was the main culprit for committing domestic violence against women in 64% cases while sister-in-law are responsible for committing violence in 16% cases. Findings of the study indicate that 28% educated women experienced physical violence whereas 78% uneducated women experienced physical violence in their life. In case of women affected by psychological violence, it is seen that 58% educated women affected by psychological violence while 64% uneducated women affected by physical torture violence. In terms of women affected by economic violence, it is seen that uneducated women (86%) are more affected than educated women (42%). Result of the study shows that 38% educated women and 56% uneducated women believe that poverty is responsible for committing domestic violence against women. Considering media violence as a cause of domestic violence, it is observed that 56% educated women and 55% uneducated women believe media violence is responsible for domestic violence against women. In addition, 57% educated women and 59% uneducated women believe that marital conflict is a main factor which are contributing domestic violence against women.

INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence against women has become a common phenomenon in both urban and rural Bangladesh, impacting the quality of life of many women. Violence against women refers to a situation in which women experience physical, psychological, or sexual abuse that is perpetrated against them. Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior by one or both partners in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family, or cohabitation (Shipway, 2004). Besides, domestic violence means denying the equality, security, dignity, self-worth, and fundamental freedoms of both women and girl's. Physical, sexual, economic and psychological violence are the most common types of domestic violence in Bangladesh (Sarker and Yesmin, 2013). Women trafficking, incest, injury and murder resulting from dowry demands, rape, injury and murder, female infanticide, abuse of women sanctioned by fatwas, divorce, prostitution and sexual abuse are the primary kinds of violence against women. Women are found to kill, torture, and maim in case of domestic violence

which usually put their lives in danger (UNICEF, 2000). Bangladesh has ranked fourth in the world for intimate partner violence against women (WHO, 2021). Based on an estimation conducted by World Health Organization, half of the nation's women between the ages of 15 and 49 reported having been physically or sexually abused by their partners at some point in their lives. A study jointly conducted Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2015 found that more than 70% of married women or girls in Bangladesh have experienced some forms of intimate partner abuse, with roughly half reporting physical assault by their partners (Alam, 2021). The existence of domestic violence has found in different spheres of life ranging from family level to state level. Violence against women in Bangladesh is caused by a number of factors including unequal social status, discrimination in the area of social rights, subordination of women in a society dominated by men, the dowry system, early marriage, disputes over inheritance property, rituals and practices, and manners and customs. Post-traumatic stress disorder, characterized

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by uncontrollable thoughts, extreme anxiety, suicidal thoughts, dreadful dreams and backstory, is the final outcome of psychological assault against women. Some common side effects of physical abuse against women include chronic exhaustion, problems with sexuality, menstrual cycle disruption, shortness of breath, bruising around the eyes, red or purple signs at the neck, and sprained or broken wrists. Domestic violence against women is an issue that affects all social and economic groups in a country and it has gained worldwide interest among sociologists, policy makers in both developed and developing countries. The issue of domestic violence has also focused in the discussion of different national and international organizations like Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, UNESCO and World Health Organization etc. A study released in 2021 by Bangladesh Mohila Parishad states that 3,703 women and girls were victims of rape and other violent crimes. In the United States, roughly one-quarter of women have at some point suffered domestic abuse at the hands of a partner. Furthermore, research has shown that over half of women in developing countries experience physical abuse at the hands of their spouses or partners. This percentage is 45% in India, 47.2% in the Philippines, and 52% in Kenya (UNESCO, 2000). A study conducted by CPD in Bangladesh in 2009 found that 93% women had encountered physical abuse, 13% had experienced sexual violence, 91% experienced economic violence and 84% reported psychological violence from their husbands (Centre for policy dialogue, 2009). The World Health Organization concluded that the proportion of women who had ever experienced physical or sexual violence or both by an intimate partner ranged from 15% to 71%, with the majority between 29% and 62% (Mollah, 2018). The sustainable development goals (SDG) have made domestic violence a prominent issue particularly for developing countries. One of the SDGs that directly relates to the research issue is the fifth objective which is to empower all women and girls and achieve gender equity. Finding patterns and socioeconomic factors influencing violence against rural women in Bangladesh is the main aim of this article. The following are the precise objectives established for this paper:

- i. To describe the socioeconomic characteristics of rural women in Bagerhat district.
- ii. To identify the nature of domestic violence against rural women in the study area.
- iii. To explore the causes of domestic violence against rural women in Bagerhat district.

There are five sections in the paper. Section two presents a review of the literature following the issue of introduction in section one. Section three presents the methodology of the study. The findings of the study are presented in section 4. Section five concluded with a few observations.

Review of Previous Literatures

There is an extended body of literatures that dealt with the issues related to the nature and causes of domestic violence against women both in domestic and abroad. The findings of these studies differed widely from each other.

Khatun and Rahman (2012) conducted a study on domestic violence against women in Bangladesh from a socio-legal perspective. The study found that domestic violence against women impediments women's well-being and overall development of society. They also found that violence against women has a direct impact on women's physical, mental, sexual and reproductive as well as economic costs, and afterwards adverse effects on the psychological development of children. Using primary data collected from 178 respondents, Ameh and Abdul (2004) operated a study on the prevalence of domestic violence amongst pregnant women in Nigeria. Results found from the study indicate that 36% of women were beaten up while 22% were forced to have sex among 50 women who had experienced domestic violence in their life. The study confirms that the spouse was the commonest culprit in cases of domestic violence against women. In addition, thirty-nine women felt domestic violence was excusable under certain conditions and 36% would keep domestic violence as secret.

Utilizing in-depth interview and newspaper reports, Abayomi and Olabode (2013) aimed to explore the depth and causes of domestic violence in Nigeria. Result of the study found that the patriarchal nature of society which tends to give ownership of the women to the men is largely responsible for the brutalization of women in Nigeria. Bates *et al.* (2004) conducted a study on the socioeconomic factors responsible for domestic violence in Bangladesh. The study found that 67% women had ever experienced domestic violence and 35% had done so in the past year. The findings of the study indicates that women with more education and income to be less vulnerable to domestic violence. They also found that having a dowry or a registered marriage could strengthen a women's position in her marriage. Sambisa *et al.* (2011) investigated the frequency and associated factors of physical violence against women in metropolitan Bangladesh, both in slum and nonslum regions. Result of the study indicates that the prevalence of physical spousal violence in the previous year was greater in slums (35%) than in nonslums (20%). Semahegn and Mengistie (2015) conducted a study on the magnitude of domestic violence against women and associated factors in Ethiopia. The authors used thirteen peer reviewed papers and two consecutive Ethiopian demographic and health surveys data for systematic review. Results found from the study indicate that the lifetime domestic physical violence by husband or intimate partner against women ranged from 31 to 76.5%. The mean life time prevalence of domestic emotional violence was 51.7%. Owusu and Agbemaflle (2016) conducted a study with the aim to investigate the determinants of domestic violence against women in Ghana. Data from Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (GDHS), 2008 were used in the analysis. In addition, multivariate logistic model was used for analyzing the data. Result of the study suggests that 33.6% had ever experienced domestic violence among 1524 ever married women. The study also concluded that women whose husbands drink alcohol were 2.5 times

more likely to experience domestic violence as compared to women whose husbands do not drink alcohol. Kocack and Erselcan (2007) investigated how social, economic, and psychological factors affected domestic violence in Turkey. Having a personal income and graduating from college both lower the occurrence of violence, as predicted by logistic regression analysis. But domestic abuse is more common among working women and those who have children. Using primary data from 500 women, Derakhshanpour *et al.* (2014) aimed to determine the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Iran. Authors of the study concluded that domestic violence was reported in 460 women. According to the report, psychological abuse of women accounts for the majority of cases (54%), with verbal abuse coming in second (31%), physical abuse (24.8%), and sexual abuse (6.8%). Babu and Kar (2009) looked into the frequency of different types of domestic violence against women in the eastern region of India, as well as other connected concerns. The study found that husbands were primarily responsible for violence in the majority of cases, and some women reported the participation of their husbands' parents. Although some research on the determinants of domestic violence against women have been conducted in the setting of other nations, studies on this topic are not readily available in the case of Bangladesh, particularly in the context of the study area. Furthermore, it is frequently ignored. As a result, country and region-specific studies are required to shed more light on the on the determinants of domestic violence against women. This type of research would be extremely beneficial for policy purposes. As this sort of study is not available in the case of Bangladesh, especially in the case of Sothern Bangladesh, this paper tries to fill this gap and aims to investigate the determinants of domestic violence against educated and uneducated rural women in Bagerhat district of Bangladesh.

Theoretical Framework

A number of different theories address the pattern and causes of domestic violence against women.

Mental Illness and Violence

It is stated in different research works that depression, a relatively common disorder among youth, may be related to aggression. It also suggests that a particular type of mental illness including schizophrenia is more associated with violent behavior. In sum, research gives tentative support for the idea that mental disturbance or illness may be a root or underlying cause of violent behavior.

The Family Conflict Model

According to this model, both the man and the women contribute to violence in an intimate relationship. This model assumes either that the relationship characterized by mutual violence or that in many cases a wife provokes her husband by 'below-the-belt arguments prompting a violence response from her husband. The women's behavior contributes to the build-up of tension in the man, until the man explodes in a violent rage, followed by a honeymoon period.

Marxist Feminism

Marxist feminism is sub-type of feminist ideology which focuses on the dismantling of capitalism as way to liberate women. Marxist feminism states that private property which gives rise as economic inequality, dependence, political confusion and ultimately unhealthy social relations between men and women is the root of women's oppression. Contemporary gender inequality is determined by mode of production. Gender oppression is class oppression and the relationship between men and women is similar to their relations between bourgeoisie and proletariat. Under capitalism women are responsible for unpaid work of maintaining the labor force, work directly

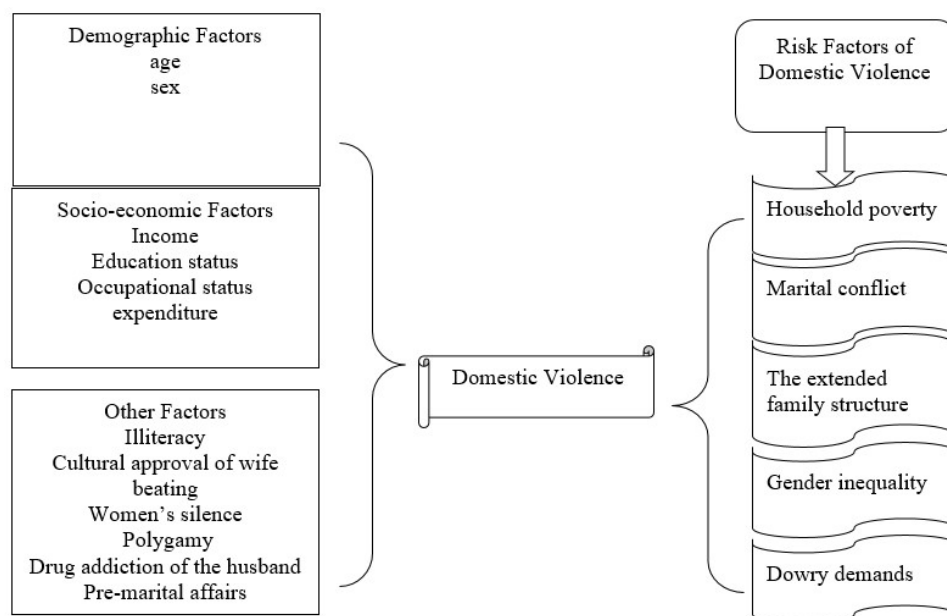


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

profits capitalist. In Bangladesh female are suppressed in many such as in labor markets. The capitalism and patriarchy, both are destroying female rapidly, by not providing their basic needs. Marxist feminist argue that women's oppression in the family is linked to exploitation of the working class.

The conceptual framework related with this study consists of risks factors of domestic violence and the determinants of domestic violence against women. It is evident from figure 1 that domestic violence is caused by demographic, socioeconomic and others factors. In addition, household poverty, marital conflict, extended family structure, gender inequality and dowry demand are some of the risk factors of domestic violence.

METHODOLOGY

Selection of the Study Areas and Sampling Technique

This investigation was carried out in Chitalmari upazila

under Bagerhat district. In this study, district and upazila were selected purposively whereas union, village and respondents were selected using simple random sampling technique. Thus, among five unions, Chitalari union was selected randomly and then five villages namely Kurmoni, Kalshira, Srirampur, Ruiyerkul and Sonakhali were chosen using simple random sampling. Finally, 20 respondents were selected randomly from each village and a total of 100 respondents were chosen. Interview schedule has been used in the case of collecting data from the respondents. Prior to commencing the interview, a concise overview of the objectives of the study and nature was provided to each participant. Data for the study were collected from March to July of 2022. The link between the essential variables was expressed using both tabular and graphical ways. To examine the acquired data, simple statistical techniques such as frequency distribution, percentage, maximum, minimum, and mean were utilized.

Table 1: Selection of the Study Area

District	Upazila	Union	Village	Number of Respondents
Bagerhat	Chitalmari	Chitalmari	Kurmoni	20
			Kalshira	20
			Srirampur	20
			Ruiyerkul	20
			Sonakhali	20

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socioeconomic Characteristics of Women in Bagerhat District

The socioeconomic characteristics of rural women are examined in terms of women's age distribution, educational background, marital status, occupation, family size, person responsible for committing violence against women, and so on. The results show that the sampled women's mean age in the research area is 29.05 years. The study found that 37 percent of the rural women are aged between 26-35 years, while only 9 percent of the workers are aged between 46-55 years (Table 2). In case of marital status of the respondents, it is found that 79% of the respondents were married while 14% were divorced. With respect to religion status of the respondents, it is evident that 63% of the rural women were Hindu while 37% were Muslim. Based on their degree of education, rural women in the current study were divided into five groups. Of the women, roughly half had no formal

education, 13% had completed basic school, 19% had completed secondary school, and 11% had completed upper secondary education. Regarding education, rural women typically complete 6.23 years of schooling (Table 2). According to Table 2, 14% of families had seven members or more, while 51% of families had between one and three members. Furthermore, 35 percent of the workforce had families with four to six members. Table 2 also reveals that 45% of respondents were married for the first time between the ages of 21 and 25 while 10% said they got married for the first time between the ages of 31 and 35. In terms of occupational status of the rural women, it is found that 35% women were housewife while 15% were NGO worker. In addition, the number of primary school and high school teacher were 15% and 10%, respectively. Table 2 show that husbands are responsible for committing violence against women in 64% cases while in 16% cases, sister-in-law are responsible for committing violence against women in the study area.

Table 2: Socioeconomic Characteristics of Rural Women in Bagerhat District

Variable	Description of variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age Structure (in years)	15-25	25	25
	26-35	37	37
	36-45	29	29
	46-55	9	9

Marital Status	Married	79	79
	Divorce	14	14
	Separated	6	6
Religion	Muslim	37	37
	Hindu	63	63
Education	Illiterate	50	50
	Primary education	13	13
	Secondary education	19	19
	Higher secondary	11	11
	Graduate	7	7
Family size (in number)	1-3	51	51
	4-6	35	35
	7 and above	14	14
Age at first marriage	15-20	30	30
	21-25	45	45
	26-30	15	15
	31-35	10	10
Occupational Status	Housewife	35	35
	Primary school teacher	15	15
	High school teacher	10	10
	Health worker	10	10
	NGO worker	15	15
	Shopkeeper	4	4
Person responsible for committing violence against women	Husband	64	64
	Father-in-law	7	7
	Mother-in-law	13	13
	Sister-in-law	16	16

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Pattern of Domestic Violence Against Women in Bangladesh

Domestic violence against women in Bangladesh can be broadly classified into four categories by CPD (2009): physical, psychological, economic, and sexual violence. In contrast to psychological violence, which includes things like insulting someone, limiting their freedom of movement, abandoning them, and threatening physical harm, physical violence includes things like hitting, choking, burning, acid throwing, punching, kicking, and

hitting with a weapon. Sexual violence includes items like marital rape, forced prostitution, refusal to have sex and economic violence includes some sets of violence like stopping food, stopping maintenance for victim, stopping maintenance for children, dowry demand, not permitting to earn income, forcing to earn.

Nature of Physical Violence Against Women

Table 3 presents the nature of physical violence against women in Bagerhat district.

Table 3: Nature of Physical violence against women in the study area

Responses	Educated Women		Uneducated Women	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Women affected by physical violence	14	28.0	39	78.0
Women do not affected by physical violence	36	72.0	11	22.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

It is found from Table 3 among educated women, 28% women experienced physical violence whereas 72% did not experience physical violence. In case of uneducated women, it is found that 78% women had experienced

physical violence while 22% ever experience domestic violence in their life. The nature of physical violence with respect to educated women and uneducated women is shown in Figure 1. It is evident from Figure 2 that

uneducated women are more affected by physical violence than educated women in the study area. This could be due

to the fact that educated women are more conscious about their rights and has economic solvency in many cases.

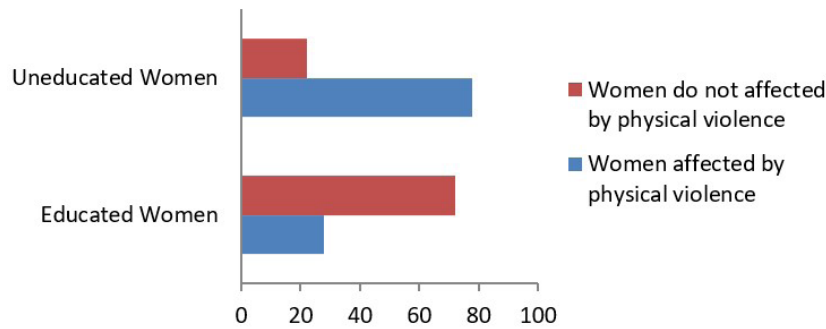


Figure 2: Nature of Physical violence against women in the study area

Nature of Psychological Violence Against Women

Table 4 reveals the nature of psychological violence against women in Bagerhat district of Bangladesh. Table 4 shows that in case of women affected by psychological

violence, it is seen that 58% educated women affected by psychological violence while 64% uneducated women affected by psychological violence.

Table 4: Nature of Psychological violence against women in the study area

Responses	Educated Women		Uneducated Women	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Women affected by psychological violence	29	58.0	32	64.0
Women do not affected by psychological violence	21	42.0	18	36.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In addition, 42% educated women and 36% uneducated women did not experience psychological violence. Figure 2 represents the position of educated and uneducated women in response to psychological violence. It is seen from the Figure 3 that uneducated women are more affected by psychological violence than uneducated

women. This may be due to uneducated women are either illiterate or lower level of education.

Figure 3 also illustrates that 42% educated women do not affected by psychological violence whereas the same is 36% for uneducated women.

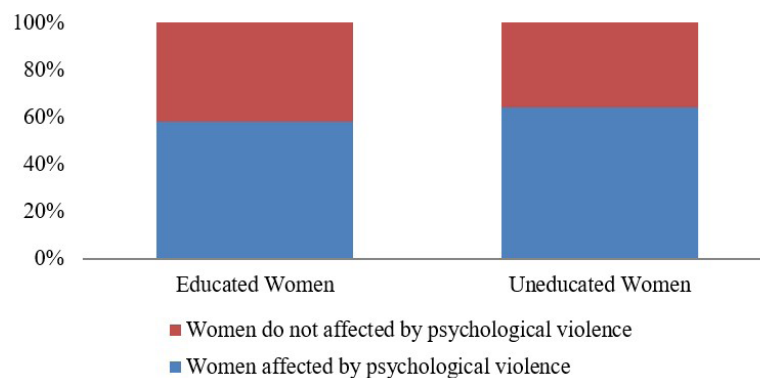


Figure 3: Status of Women in response to Psychological violence

Nature of Economic Violence Against Women

Table 5 depicts the nature of economic violence against women in the study area. In terms of women affected by economic violence, it is seen that 54% educated women affected by economic violence while 86% uneducated

women affected by economic violence. In case of women do not affected by economic violence, it is found that 46% women do not affected by economic violence while 14% uneducated women do not affected by economic violence in the study area (Table 5).

Table 5: Nature of economic violence against women in the study area

Responses	Educated Women		Uneducated Women	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Women affected by economic violence	27	54.0	43	86.0
Women do not affected by economic violence	23	46.0	7	14.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

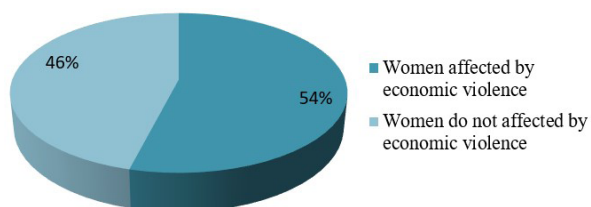


Figure 4: Status of educated women in response to economic violence

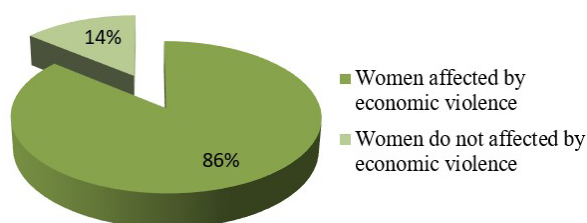


Figure 5: Status of uneducated women in response to economic violence

Figure 4 and 5 show the status of women in response to economic violence in Chitalmari upazila of Bagerhat district. It is seen from the figures that uneducated women are more affected by economic violence than educated women. In contrast, educated women are less likely to affect by economic violence than uneducated women in the study area.

Nature of Sexual Violence Against Women

Table 6 shows the nature of sexual violence against women in the study area. It is seen that educated women are more affected by sexual violence than uneducated women (Table 6). The value is 58% for educated women and the same is 44% for uneducated women. On the other hand, uneducated women are less likely to victimize by sexual violence than educated women in the study area. Figure 6 illustrates the status of educated women as well as uneducated women in response to sexual violence in the study area. It is found that sexual violence is widely seen among educated women in comparison to uneducated women in the study area.

Table 6: Nature of Sexual violence against women in the study area

Responses	Educated Women		Uneducated Women	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Women affected by Sexual violence	29	58.0	22	44.0
Women do not affected by Sexual violence	21	42.0	28	56.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

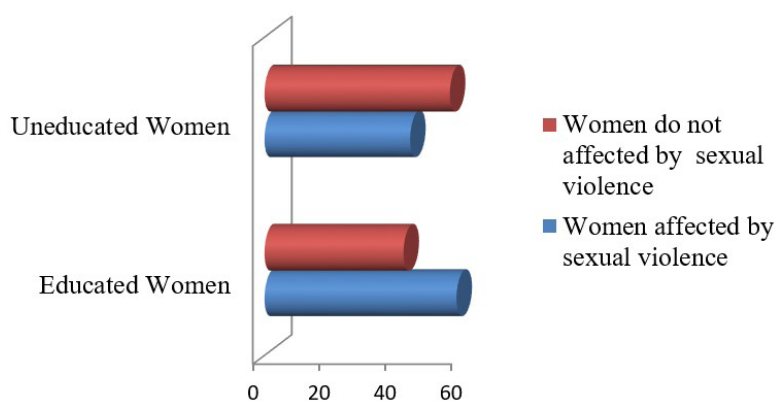


Figure 6: Status of Women in response to sexual violence

Causes of Domestic Violence against Women

Table 7 presents the causes of domestic violence against women in the study area. The current study investigates eight major factors which are responsible for occurring domestic violence against women in the study area.

The causes behind conducting domestic violence against women are Poverty, Patriarchal social structure, Marital conflict, Lack of education, Lack of proper implementation of laws, Dependency of women, Superstition, and Media violence. It is seen form Table 8 that 38% educated

women, 56% uneducated women believe that poverty is responsible for committing domestic violence against women in the study area. Analyzing media violence as a cause of domestic violence, it is found that 56% educated women and 55% uneducated women think media

violence is responsible for conducting violence against women in the study area. 57% educated women and 59% uneducated women believe that marital conflict is a factor which are responsible for occurring domestic violence in the study area.

Table 7: Causes of Domestic Violence against Women in the Study Area

Causes of Domestic Violence	Responses of the Educated Women (in percentage)		Responses of the uneducated Women (in percentage)		Responses of all Women (in percentage)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Poverty	38.0	62.0	56.0	44.0	42.0	58.0
Patriarchal social structure	23.0	77.0	67.0	33.0	39.0	61.0
Marital conflict	57.0	41.0	69.0	31.0	59.0	41.0
Lack of education	12.0	88.0	78.0	22.0	46.0	54.0
Lack of proper implementation of laws	61.0	39.0	68.0	32.0	63.0	37.0
Dependency of women	27.0	73.0	69.0	31.0	57.0	43.0
Superstition	5.0	95.0	34.0	66.0	27.0	73.0
Media violence	56.0	44.0	45.0	55.0	48.0	52.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

The main objective of the present article was to identify the pattern and causes of domestic violence against educated and uneducated rural women in Bagerhat district of Bangladesh. It is found from the descriptive analysis that the mean age of the sampled women is 29.05 years. The study also found that 37 percent of the rural women are aged between 26-35 years while only 9 percent of the women are aged between 46-55 years. In terms of educational status of the respondent, it is found that 13% respondents had primary education while 19% had secondary education with the average years of schooling of women is 6.23 years. Results related with the occupational status of the rural women, it is seen that 35% women were housewife while 15% were NGO worker. In addition, the number of primary school teacher and high school teacher were 15% and 10%, respectively. Outcomes of the study reveal that husbands are main culprit for committing domestic violence against women in 64% cases while sister-in-law are responsible for committing violence in 16% cases. Findings of the study also indicate that 28% educated women experienced physical violence whereas 78% uneducated women experienced physical violence in their life. In case of women affected by psychological violence, it is seen that 58% educated women affected by psychological violence while 64% uneducated women affected by psychological violence. In addition, 42% educated women and 36% uneducated women did not experience psychological violence in Bagerhat district. In terms of women affected by economic violence, it is seen that uneducated women (86%) are more affected than educated women (42%). Result of the study indicates that educated women are more affected by sexual violence in comparison to uneducated women. The value is 58% for

educated women and the same is 44% for uneducated women. It is found from the analysis that 38% educated women and 56% uneducated women believe that poverty is responsible for committing domestic violence against women in the study area. Analyzing media violence as a cause of domestic violence against women, it is found that 56% educated women and 55% uneducated women consider media violence is responsible for domestic violence against women in the study area. In addition, 57% educated women and 59% uneducated women believe that marital conflict is a factor which are contributing domestic violence against women. Based on the findings obtained from the study, the following recommendation can be made:

- i. In terms of the causes of the domestic violence against women in the study area, it is found that 59% women believe marital conflict is the cause of domestic violence against women. Hence, problems associated with marital conflict should be resolved.
- ii. Since, 42% women believe poverty is a cause of domestic violence against women in the study area, thus domestic violence against women in the study area, thus employment opportunities should be offered both in the formal sector and informal sector in order to increase the economic solvency of the rural women which, in turn, will be helpful in reducing domestic violence against women.
- iii. In general, uneducated women are more affected by domestic violence in comparison to uneducated women with respect to physical, psychological and economic violence. In 64% cases husband are the main culprit for committing violence against women in the study area followed by sister-in-law 16% and mother-in-law 13%. So, people in the study area should be made conscious about the bad impact of these violence and they should be aware about the rules and regulations related with domestic violence.

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