

## In – Laws Related Aspects Compelling Women to Take Asylum in Sheltered Homes: A Case Control Study in Lahore

Zunirah Asad,<sup>1</sup> Maaz Ahmad,<sup>2</sup> Tajammul Mustafa,<sup>3</sup> Shahid Mahmood<sup>4</sup>

### Abstract

**Background:** The role of in – laws in domestic violence against women is quite prominent, not only in Pakistan but worldwide. In particular, joint family system provides a dominating environment to husband's family and easy violence approaches too. Women who co-reside with their mothers – in – law are more prone to suffer beating from their husbands than are other women. There was need to know the factors related to the in – laws involved in violence.

**Objective:** To study various in – laws related factors compelling women to take asylum in sheltered homes in Lahore.

**Materials and Methods:** This case control study was conducted in Darulamans of Yateem Khana and Chorburi Lahore. 200 Interviews (100 cases, 100 controls) were made; Data was collected on pretested questionnaire and analyzed with in SPSS.

**Results:** When history of in-laws was collected among both groups, an equal and pretty negative contribution of in – laws was found to torture and destruct women's life. Among cases, there were 65% females who were  $\leq 25$  years old, Among controls, there were twenty 4% females who were  $\leq 25$  years old, Mean age of cases was  $24.24 \pm 6.44$  years and mean age of controls was  $34.59 \pm 10.63$ . Fifty nine percent cases and 51% controls were illiterate. Fifty % cases and 36% controls were house wives. Forty six % cases and 49% controls were married to some of their relatives.

**Conclusion:** Factors like physical abuse, demanding in – laws, In – laws tease due to dowry, taunting for no son and women don't like to live with in – laws are evident to compel women to leave for shelter homes.

**Keywords:** In – laws abuses, shelter houses and domestic violence.

### Introduction

After marriage, women are assumed to be property of their husbands and in laws. The vicious acts by prejudiced in laws are not focused much that initiate by humiliating, battering, physically and sexually abusing women. Most of the stove burnt killings; honor killings and other type of murders are reined directly or indirectly by husband's family.<sup>1,2</sup>

The vital basis for all this violence include less dowry, typical saas – bahu arguments, motive to sustain dominance, economic supremacy, forced to prosti-

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Asad Z.<sup>1</sup>  
Assistant Professor of Community Medicine, SIMS, Lahore

Ahmad M.<sup>2</sup>  
Prof. Maaz Ahmad, Dean Institute of Public Health, Lahore

Mustafa T.<sup>3</sup>  
Professor of Community Medicine, Fatima Jinnah Medical College, Lahore

Mahmood S.<sup>4</sup>  
Professor of Community Medicine, SIMS, Lahore

tution and other.<sup>3,4</sup> The most customary role is to be that of mother in law (Saas). Moreover, the parents of a female victim would direct her stay at the husband's house, no matter how harsh the circumstances are. Thus both the controlling attitude of Saas and dictating parents add to the intensities of cruelty.<sup>5,6</sup> Due to cultural trends, mostly women living in a joint family system suffer from invariable taunts and disapprovals on their cooking, washing or cleaning, irrespective of their hard work. Saas and sister in laws treat women as a slave while kicking, slapping, and beating of women on a day – to – day basis is a widespread. In fact, it would be a true and accurate statement that at least four out of five women in Pakistan face such treatment in the households of their husbands. In a national research it appeared that 72% of married women had conflicts with spouse and in – laws.<sup>7</sup> The incidence of domestic violence is greater in lower class families than upper class ones.<sup>8</sup>

Violence by in laws against women has largely increased both in numbers and intensity over the last decade. In India, it is estimated that more than 5,000 women are killed each year because their in – laws consider their dowries inadequate. A tiny percentage of their murderers are brought to justice.<sup>9</sup> In Morocco; it was found that 95.8% of violence against women is suffered from some kind of violence by the victim's close relatives, mostly by husband's family. In another international study (72%) and more than four in ten women had been hit, slapped, kicked or subjected to some other form of physical violence by male perpetrators other than a husband (father or brother) in 2005 EDHS.<sup>10</sup> This gives an overview of how penetrating the situation of violence has become.

Lapses in the judicial systems and ineffective police performance have added up to these.<sup>11</sup> Those women who dare to revolt this cruelty upon them and rise for justice are considered as stigmatic and are abandoned from society. Parents do not accept them to assure their commitment with typical think bank of community and consequently no place of safety remains for them. Asylums have been established in Pakistan where such women can take shelter. But some women who run away when this violence crosses tolerance limits, and seek asylum in shelter homes.

**Table 1:** Socio-demographic characteristics of study participants.

Factors	Cases (n = 100)	Controls (n = 100)
Age (Years)		
25	65	24
26 – 35	30	35
36	5	41
Mean ± SD	24.27 ± 6.41	34.59 ± 10.63
Education of women		
Illiterate	59	51
Primary	15	9
Middle – Metric	11	16
F.A / B.A	12	18
Postgraduate	3	6
Occupation of the respondent		
House wife	50	36
Servant	3	39
Laborer	16	9
Private jobs	29	24
Students	2	0
Married inside family		
Yes	46	49
No	54	51

The extent of the problem cannot be assessed as

neither exact figures of domestic violence in society are available, nor too many wide – ranging studies have been conducted which can show the magnitude of the problem of females facing violence by in-laws. In this context this study focuses to unearth some facts about brutal violence by in laws that enforced these women to escape to asylums. Moreover, this study seeks to shed light on main risk factors and other socio-demographic facts contributing in this regard. Education, true induction of Islamic laws, awareness about women’s status and formulating strict laws in favor of women are immediately required steps to be taken.

## Methodology

This case control study was conducted in Darulaman, Yateem Khana and area of Gawal Mandi Lahore. Sample size was calculated through Epi-info. At 95% confidence interval and 80% power of test, exposure among controls was found to be 40% and exposure among cases was 55%. 200 adult females were selected; 100 cases and 100 controls according to sample size calcu-

lation. Simple random sampling was done to enroll the cases as well as controls. Data was collected using structured and pre-tested questionnaire that contains personal history, family history and past history of the disease if any. Cases were those who were living in sheltered homes while controls were those who were living in their homes.

## Results

In this study a total of 200 respondents were interviewed out of these 100 respondents were cases and 100 respondents were controls. Among cases, there were 65 females who were  $\leq 25$  years old, 30 females were 26 – 35 years old while only 5 females were  $\geq 36$  years old. Among controls, there were 24 females who were  $\leq 25$  years old, 35 females were 26 – 35 years old while only 41 females were  $\geq$

**Table 2:** Univariate association between women taking asylum in sheltered homes and various in – laws related factors.

Factors	Odds Ratio	Confidence Interval	p-value	
				Quarrelsome
				0.850
				0.446 – 1.621
				0.622
				Watta satta tension
				0.759
				0.327 – 1.765
				0.521
				Doubtful about character
				1.826
				0.974 – 3.424
				0.059
				Blame due to issueless
				0.421
				0.125 – 1.416
				0.152
				Married forcibly
				1.396
				0.680 – 2.865
				0.363
				Disliked
				0.779
				0.442 – 1.373
				0.386
				Blame due to no son
				0.335
				0.125 – 0.896
				0.024
				1.379
				0.554 – 3.434
				0.489
				Demanding
				0.276
				0.097 – 0.787
				0.011
				1.170
				0.538 – 2.547
				0.692
				Don't like to live with them
				2.922
				1.641 – 5.201
				0.000
				0.542
				0.235 – 1.252
				0.147
				Teased due to dowry
				1.428
				0.621 – 3.284
				0.400
				0.886
				0.449 – 1.752
				0.728
				Addict
				1.476
				0.539 – 4.047
				0.447

36 years old. Mean age of cases was  $24.24 \pm 6.44$  years and mean age of controls was  $34.59 \pm 10.63$ . Among cases fifty nine were illiterate, and fifty were house wives. Among controls fifty one were illiterate and thirty six were house wives, 49 females reported that their husband were from their family (Table 1).

## Discussion

In our study fifty seven women reported that their in – laws physically abuse them. There was significant association between these two factors. In a similar study it was seen that around the world at least one woman in every three has been beaten, mentally tortured, disliked or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Most often the abuser is a member of her husband's family.<sup>12</sup> In another study it was found that more than four in ten women had been hit, slapped, kicked or subjected to some other form of physical violence by male perpetrators other than a husband (father or brother) in 2005 EDHS.<sup>13</sup> In our study twenty one females reported that their in – laws were demanding indicating significant association between these two factors. In a similar study it was found that dowry demands and inability to meet these demands have resulted in divorce, suicide of women, domestic violence and death.<sup>14</sup> In another study it appeared that more than 5,000 women are killed annually by their husbands and in – laws, who burn them in “accidental” kitchen fires if their ongoing demands for dowry before and after marriage are not met. An average of five women a day are burned, and many more cases go unreported.<sup>15</sup>

In our study twenty six women reported that they were teased by in – laws due to dowry, indicating sig-

nificant association between these two factors. In an international study it appeared that every day 50 cases of dowry related violence occurred in India and more than 5,000 women are killed each year because their in – laws consider their dowries inadequate. A tiny percentage of their murderers are brought to justice.<sup>16</sup>

In our study, fifty nine women reported that they did not like to live with their in – laws, indicating a significant association between two factors. In a similar study it revealed that only one in four women even

**Table 3:** Logistic Regression for In-Laws related factors in cases and control.

Factors	B	Sig.	Exp(B)	95.0% C.I. for EXP(B)	
				Lower	Upper
Physically abuse	2.677	0.000	14.535	4.461	47.350
Addict	-0.310	0.729	0.733	0.127	4.225
Quarrelsome	-1.245	0.018	0.288	0.103	0.804
Doubtful about character	0.718	0.157	2.050	0.759	5.534
Watta Satta Tension	-.156	0.801	0.855	0.253	2.891
Compelled to sell property	1.304	0.107	3.684	0.754	17.990
Teased due to dowry	0.984	0.128	2.676	0.754	9.503
Demanding	-1.310	0.085	0.270	0.061	1.199
Blame due to issueless	-0.535	0.559	0.586	0.097	3.522
Married Forcefully	0.185	0.760	1.204	0.367	3.950
Disliked	-1.450	0.008	0.234	0.081	0.680
Planning for another marriage	0.826	0.219	2.284	0.612	8.526
Insecure at your in – laws	-0.952	0.209	0.386	0.088	1.701
Fear of Cruelty	-1.224	0.097	0.294	0.069	1.250
Don't like to live with in – laws	1.744	0.001	5.723	2.129	15.384
Pulled out by in – laws	-0.326	0.565	0.722	0.237	2.195

liked to live with her mother – in – law. In another study it appeared that nearly two – thirds of women complain they have suffered long – term unhappiness and stress due to in – laws.<sup>17,18</sup>

**Conclusion**

Women among both categories i.e. living in their own homes and shelter homes are almost equally been mistreated and victimized by their in – laws. Factors like physical abuse, do not like to live with in – laws, demanding, taunting for no son and less dowry are evident factors to compel women leave for shelter homes.

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**Table 4:** Factors related to women taking asylum in sheltered home: Multiple Regression Analysis Final Model.

Factors	ODDS Ratio (OR)	95% C.I for OR		P-Value
		Lower	Upper	
Physical abuse by in – laws	8.571	3.294	22.299	0.000
Demanding in – laws	0.092	0.019	0.436	0.003
Don't like to live with them	2.922	1.641	5.201	0.000

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