

Men's Perspective about Domestic Violence in Rural Sindh, Pakistan

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Received: September 19, 2020

Published Online: December 31, 2020

Abstract

This study investigates men's understanding, beliefs, experiences, and responses about domestic violence; their personal consciousness about gender relations, notions of masculinity and patriarchy; and their views about marriage and domestic violence. Men still subscribe to very patriarchal views about the contexts of marriage, family, and society. These three sets of main findings are analysed together to establish connections and inter-relatedness between them that lead to further findings about their attitudes and responses to domestic violence. This also provides inferences about the acceptance and tolerance of domestic violence amongst Pakistani rural men. Methodologically, this study is based on qualitative (inductive) method by its nature, where N=15 - male respondents who ranged from 18 to 65 years age have been interviewed from rural taluka Khair Pur Nathan Shah Dadu, Rural Sindh, Pakistan, while employing (Non-probability) purposive sampling with phenomenological approach. The perception and notion of men for committing domestic violence is as a part of their socio-culture beliefs. Besides, this also comprises men's positive behavioural responses to domestic violence inside and outside of family in rural Sindh, which needs to be re-addressed through the social counselling and demands to be highlighted its impacts on society in general and particularly on women.

Keywords: Masculinity, Patriarchy, Patriarchal Society, Violence against Women, Gender Based Violence, Married Females Experiences, Gender Power and Relations.

1. Introduction

Men's inclination and understanding towards power, force, strength, and forceful attitude weakens the relationship bond between male and female. Like masculine trait of being the breadwinner of the family is believed to give a man the power, control and force over his wife to act and behave according to his wishes and this can lead to domestic violence. Moreover, the social acceptance, family support and patriarchal views and beliefs of rural culture support the ideas of domestic violence in rural settings of Sindh province of Pakistan which has been broadly discussed in this study with the help of narrations of respondents. This study is connecting the discourses that emerge from elements of the research questions and objectives of study shown how rural men of Sindh tend to accept or tolerate violence against women. While the patriarchal views and understanding amongst the males of rural Sindh were strongly entrenched to men's cognitive behaviour to beat the wife, yet it was considered as a cultural right of men. Particularly, in the form of wife's abuse or domestic violence, the acceptance and tolerance by the society are interrelated with their ideas about the masculinity, their patriarchal

understanding about gender relations, marriage, and the family and their experiences of domestic violence.

In the context of Sindh, the domestic violence has been defined as "...violence includes but is not limited to all acts of gender-based and other physical or psychological abuse committed by a respondent against women, children or other vulnerable persons with whom the respondent is or has been in domestic relationship including but not limited to" (Provincial Assembly of Sindh, 2017). Further it has been considered a very serious societal and human rights issue that carries "structural inequality at home, and in the family unit" (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

In Pakistan, the domestic violence is considered as a private and family matter. Therefore, the social intervention by community is lacking and policy changes at governmental level are not effective. Women in Pakistan usually faces all kinds of discrimination and violence on a daily basis in their lives and domestic violence has become a socio-cultural and norm in Pakistani society (Ali & Gavino, 2008; Tunio *et al.*, 2020).

The patriarchal role of men is well established in Pakistan, particularly in the rural areas of the country. This study seeks to contribute towards changing attitude about domestic violence in the society, thus, it focuses on the role of men in remote and rustic patriarchal communities of Pakistan. In addition, since the men are the main perpetrators of domestic violence, they can also be the agents of change and should be involved in a study that hopes to contribute towards achieving a gender equal society.

Previously, there has been extended evidence on women's perspective regarding domestic violence (Bayissa, 2020) but little has been written on views of the other side that is men's perspective. To fill this research gap particularly in rural social contexts, this study aims to explore men's views and beliefs about domestic violence in rural Sindh, Pakistan. The main research question is: what are the views and beliefs of men about domestic violence in rural context of Sindh, Pakistan?

2. Literature Review

In the Indo-Pak tribal and rural cultures, women were used to be treated as the property of men. The role of woman has been submission, to serve as a commodity and to sacrifice herself for the sake of values determined by man. She can be beaten and killed, for the sake of man's ethics and man-made values. Woman is less likely to be beaten in a society, culture respects women in country like Pakistan and India, like older women are given respect, while young women are not, which does not mean that older women are not abused at all (Niaz, 2003). Wife abuse and beating is a normal phenomenon of Pakistani culture, but such cases are not reported (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

Zakar *et al.* (2012) argues that religious leaders must play a constructive role in eliminating domestic violence particularly in Sindh, Pakistan, because Pakistan is a religious society. Although most people may oppose domestic violence or intimate partner violence, yet, they were found in favour of subordination of women as compared to men. Since, subordination of women due to patriarchy is a factor leading to domestic violence, religious leaders should promote a more gender equal and just society.

Shaykh (2016) argued that as a father having a high position over son and that of mother over

her daughter and of a teacher over student, it is the same for the husband overseeing the wife. The wife is bound to oblige her husband in every matter of life, and she must ask permission from her husband wherever she goes, and if not, the solidarity and unity of family will be destabilized. Ibrahim (2017) argues that there are issues of interpretation and translation in English which are taken wrongly, and have no explanation in English words, like *qawwamuna* (Maintainers/caretakers), *nushuzahunna*, (disobedience or rebellion) and *wadribuhunna* (hitting or beating). *Wadribuhunnais* in last resort when you find the breakdown of marriage because of *nushuz* or an established case regarding *nushuz*. This never means that you subjugate control or oppress the women based on religious interpretation.

In another place Ibrahim and Abdalla (2010) argue that wife beating is not endorsed in the Islamic teachings and the verse 4:34 does not allow to hit or perpetrate violence against women, and those who thinks that Islam permit to perform the act of violence misrepresent the Islam exclusively. Whereas the *Wadribuhunna* is meaning to “boycott them” not to “beat them.” This is an individual behavioural response to domestic violence inside and outside family. Religion Islam has nothing to do with that beating neither it encourages the wife beating.

Flood and Pease (2009) stated that the attitudes are key factors for shaping violence against women and the culture and gender norms influence these attitudes. The social and cultural factors in Pakistan prevent its society from accepting this act of violence as a bad act. The public does not make any condemnation of the act at all, but rather, this is viewed as a matter of daily routine between husband and wife. Above all, because of social and cultural acceptance, the respondents understood it as an individual, family, social, and cultural issue of the society.

Gender inequality has been theorized to be fundamentally caused by the ideology of patriarchy that also forms a specific idea about masculinity. Change may be created by investigating and analysing this ideology and thought. In any long-term plan for change of women’s status in society it is lives are necessary to engage and involve the men at levels to get them to understand and to acquaint with women’s issue and to improve the lives of women. The large number of domestic violence incidents in multiple countries is proof that the issue of patriarchy and perception of masculinity are still unresolved (Qayyum *et al.*, 2012).

Connell (2002: 86) discusses that traditionally men and women have been thought of the same category of being, yet the western culture has rejected this view and described the men and women different and opposite in nature. Based on the narratives of men in rural Sindh as presented, socio-cultural norms in the form of patriarchal views about gender relations that promote or tolerate violence against women are pervasive at the family, community and society levels in Pakistan and they influence personal attitudes of men and women. Thus, the present study highlights the understandings, views, beliefs, and perceptions of men about domestic violence in rural Sindh context.

3. Research Methodology

This qualitative study was carried out on (N=15 - Males) to explore the views and beliefs of men and responses about domestic violence in rural Dadu, Sindh. The respondents belonged to rural taluka Khairpur Nathan Shah district Dadu Sindh Pakistan. The respondents age ranged from (18 to 65) years. The male respondents were recruited on the voluntarily basis those who were married or un-married.

3.1. Sampling Procedure

In this study, both (married and un-married males) were selected with purposive sampling for the interview. Thus, purposive sampling (Creswell, 2017) was employed during the field to approach the respondents in rural areas, of Sindh. The data collection procedure included semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews with 15-twelve male respondents.

3.2. Phenomenology Approach

Reitz (1999) states that issue of domestic violence is appropriate to investigate while using qualitative inquiry with phenomenology approach, because it is pivotal to understand the issue from both victims'/ survivors' as well as the perpetrators' perspectives. Moreover, phenomenology fieldwork adds to trustworthiness of the findings (Priya, 2017). Nevertheless, without knowing and understanding the phenomenon of domestic violence, it would be insufficient to know quantitative accounts of domestic violence. The experiences, understanding and perspectives of perpetrator or violent person can only be known through this phenomenology approach adopting the qualitative study. This can be employed on those respondents, who have experienced of being violent, battered, or perpetrators themselves either on individuals who belong to similar social cultural context as the victims or perpetrators including sharing the same gender.

3.3. Interview Techniques

The most probably in-depth interviews with the male respondent continued more than one hour, and interviews were conducted on the given time and venue/place chosen by the interviewee choice, wherever and whenever, they felt comfortable. They had right to discontinue and withdraw the interview any time or had choice not to answer the questions which do not like to give response.

3.4. Ethical Consideration

The respondents were asked to give their written and verbal consent voluntarily. If agreed, they had to sign on an ethical form as well. Principally, the community heads, and persons like teachers, community and religious heads were also taken permission and briefed about the research. Moreover, in this study, the respondents' pseudonyms have been used for the narrations and so on.

3.5. Locale

The locale of the rural Sindh, one rural taluka *Kahir Pur Nathan Shah* (sub-unit of the district) Dadu district was carefully chosen due to the convenience of the researcher, limitation of the time and resources.

3.6. Demographic Details of Respondents

Demographic details of respondents showed in annex-1 describes the high education percentage of respondents and sound source of income in the rural setting of Sindh, yet beliefs and views of the males about domestic violence were extremely patriarchal and based on masculine approach were entrenched over there.

3.7. Analysis of Data

According to Creswell and Miller (2000), for inductive approach, the qualitative data member checking process is the validity procedure that moves from the researchers to participants in the study. There are different forms of data analysis in qualitative research study (Azungah, 2018), but the most familiar and popular is thematic analysis in qualitative data. Thus, data was analyzed by the researcher while using the qualitative software (NVIVO 12.0 Mac) version, by getting the codes, categories, and themes and final writeup. The trustworthiness of data was ensured by employing member check process.

4. Domestic Violence in Sindh: Discussion and Findings

4.1. Men's Views on Rights of Husbands to Beat Wife

The respondents viewed that a husband has the right to beat his wife in a case where she disobeys him. This is for the purpose of corrective punishments, keeping her under control and to teach her a lesson not to repeat mistakes. Some respondents thought that violence by husbands that caused the death of women was justified if the women committed adultery or had illicit relationships. Some respondents even linked domestic violence with religious interpretations to show that it is the right of husbands to beat their wives. Respondents narrated that in the reproductive process “a man's role is like a seed and a woman's is like *Zameen* (farm or field)” (Ikram, 34 years, married).

Based on the narratives of men in rural Sindh as presented, socio-cultural norms in the form of patriarchal views about gender relations that promote or tolerate violence against women are pervasive at the family, community and society levels in Pakistan and they influence personal attitudes of men and women. “It is necessary to teach her a lesson, not to make wrong/mistakes next time or go against the will of the husband. Further, her beatings will be according to the mistakes she has committed. If found in illicit relations than her punishment will be much higher” (Lutuf, 46 years old, married).

The following respondent narrated that wife beating is necessary to ensure women do their household chores and obey their husbands. More profoundly, the respondent also felt that beating one's wife would increase the sense of love between the spouses. “Wife beating is necessary in household works, on the matter of disobeying husband, and punishment increases the love amongst the husband and wife” (Aslam, 56 years old, married).

Another respondent, Kutub also supported the idea of wife beating, and narrated that in rural culture, tradition supports and gives right to men to beat his wife. Above all, he is the breadwinner and he think it is his right to beat his wife on issues related to everyday life, like immoral activities and other matters of honour. “Men have right to beat his wife because he is the breadwinner, to keep her under control and all in all he has power. Moreover, he is masculine, he is strong, and he is the owner of his wife, he must have the right to beat his wife on the immoral activities, on the matter of honour. Culture, tradition and custom of rural society allow him to be authoritative over his wife when she disobeys husband. A man is considered to be the master of wife. He can do anything to her if he thinks she has done wrong. In addition, for correcting her he can punish her” (Kutub, 58 years old, married).

In this study, 12 out of the 15 research respondents were in favour of beating their wives if the

latter makes mistakes such as disobeying the husbands or when they are considered lacking in their cooking, housework, taking care of the children or respect of the in-law. Above all, the respondents feel that husbands beating their wives as a show of *mardangi* (virility/manhood). In rural areas, masculinity can be translated as '*taqat*' (physical strength or power). The '*mardangi*' (manhood) characteristics are necessary for men to live in rural culture. It is necessary for you to fight back, and this is called masculinity and masculine character. If a man lacks this characteristic, people will oppress him. This view that relates wife beating to the idea of masculinity may, thus, explain why, in this study, only five of the rural men interviewed think that wife-beating is immoral, wrong, bad and a nasty act.

Multiple reasons are created in terms of social, cultural, religious, and sometimes even economic excuses are made to perpetrate violence against women. The opinions are the opposite on the issue of whether women have the similar right to discipline their husbands through beating. This is a laughable idea to almost all the respondents. When answering this question many respondents were smirking or laughing and asking back in disbelief: "How can women beat their husbands, especially in these rural environments?" To the respondents, if a wife can beat her husband, then he is not *mursmanho* (a real man), but rather, *bhario* (having less power and social honour) and this is not entirely acceptable in the rural culture. There might be such cases in urban areas, but in these remote areas, such cases of domestic violence are not witnessed, according to the respondents. "Women do not have the right to beat their husbands, because society does not allow that. But the male has the right, you know? Women socially and culturally are not allowed to beat their husbands, and are weaker than men are, in physical strength" (Haji, 64 years old, married).

According to Qadir Bux in a rural set up women neither can beat nor have right to beat a man, because she is weak and vulnerable. "In the rural setup of Dadu, Sindh, this is not possible that women can ever beat, or she has right to beat her husband. She is weak, and man is strong, she cannot beat. Man is the breadwinner, and he must have authority over women, and the real man is he who controls women" (Qadir Bux, 60 years old, married).

4.2. Domestic Violence is Permissible and Justified

The rural men consistently mentioned situations when domestic violence is particularly accepted and justified. This is especially in the case where women are caught in "*aitrazjogihalat*" (compromising sexual situation or having sex outside of marriage). In addition, women who repeatedly argue with men on household matters trigger men to be provoked and aggressive. In such circumstances, domestic violence is thought to be unavoidable, and becomes necessary for men to rein in women. Even amongst respondents who view that domestic violence is generally not permitted, they agree on the opinion that it is permissible in situations where women are found to have illicit sexual relations. In such circumstance, many of the respondents feel that it is even permissible to kill the woman involved because it is a matter of honour in rural culture. "Domestic violence is a wrong act, but it is necessary to a certain extent because it stops too many evils and immoralities, like illegal relations.... if [a woman is] found to do this, then it is a matter of honour, so she must be punished or killed [Like we punish children severely for] drugs or alcohol consumption. Punishment will make the children behave well and a lesson for them in the future" (Mazhar, 57 years old, married).

Mulazim told that there are situations like sexual infidelity cases, which is a matter of honour

for men in his society, where a woman can be killed or hit. In such cases, domestic violence is permissible. In rural culture of Sindh, Pakistan a person, especially a woman, who commits adultery or has illicit relationship can be killed. Adultery and illicit relationship are considered to damage the honour of families, particularly a woman's parents and guardians. In the culture of rural Sindh this is called *karokari* (honour killing). In such cases both the man and woman are killed in the name of honour. Women's talking back/reply/response to men are considered another reason that justifies wife beating. One respondent felt that being hit is a better option than being insulted with words or gestures or being verbally abused: "Some women and men have the notions that physical abuse is better than verbal abuse. In the local culture [there is a saying]: *chamathaan, paar gar na de*; [Hit me, but don't curse (verbally abuse) me]" (Jaffar, 38 years old, married).

Latif condemned domestic violence and believed it is morally wrong, but he also expressed that a man may be justified in beating his wife if she constantly irritates him. "No, there is no situation when violence is permissible; even religion does not allow us to inflict violence. Moreover, it is not good morally. However, women tend to irritate men regarding many household affairs and interfere with certain issues. Men hate this, so they commit violence. In addition, women sometimes reciprocate" (Latif, 38 years old, married).

4.3. Socio-cultural, Religious Acceptance and Tolerance of Domestic Violence

The respondents expressed views that domestic violence is partly influenced by social, cultural, and religious factors. Society, culture, and religion may not have clearly prevented the act of violence, but rather give their own justifications, social endorsements, and religious interpretations to support domestic violence. According to Qalandar, domestic violence is not clearly condemned in the Pakistani society. It is always neglected, and people do not pay heed at this issue. "From a social point of view, violence is part of our society and it will remain like this forever. Society allows us to commit domestic violence, the act is not stopped, and it is not condemned at all, by anyone. Because this is an issue of women; hence, men are not bothered to be involved in the issue" (Qalandar, 65 years old, married).

The socio-cultural influence on the pervasiveness of domestic violence is quite strong since even good education does not seem to prevent men from committing domestic violence in the rural Sindh. According to Ikram, "education level or percentage is not so high in the rural areas, [but even if] people are educated, they also become part of the society, because they have to live here, and the socio-cultural traditions overpower them. [In the end, the educated men] also treat the women with the same manners. There are very few men, like "*aatemein loon barabar*" (a pinch of salt in the flour), who takes care of women" (Ikram, 33 years old, married).

Qadir Bux also believes that it is the sociocultural context that makes men dominant and wants control over women, which influence domestic violence in the rural areas and not socioeconomic issues like poverty. "There is no abject poverty that people are dying [in the rural community]. Every person has a source of income like agriculture. *Sabhko mani mache waro aahe* (They all have meal and fish to eat). Men commits violence to show his power and authority over women (Qadir Bux, 50 years old, married).

The respondents felt that domestic violence was a natural part of the rural lives and was quite a normal occurrence. Ghulam Qadir stated that where there was a husband and wife, there would be acts of domestic violence, like fighting and abusing. "Utensils will make noise" [a

local saying]. This means that wherever the people are living together, there will be issues like fighting, and skirmishes, particularly between husband and wife” (Ghulam Qadir, 42 years old, un-married).

Mazhar explained that in the rural context, wife beating is considered to be a husband's right and it is socially and culturally accepted. This right can be exercised for any reason: “[In our society] A man sometimes beat his wife when the wife does not *Zour* (body massage) on the husband. Domestic violence is part of marital life in [our] rural set up. After marriage, everything is under the control of the man, and he is dominant in all matters” (Mazhar, 57 years old, married).

The respondents admitted that domestic violence is a continuous phenomenon in Sindhi society and has happened for a long time. Sher stated that Sindhi culture supports the act of domestic violence and it is socially and culturally accepted in Sindh to beat women on petty matters inside the home. A woman is not given the same respect and status in the Sindhi rural society and sometimes considered to be less than human and not respected. Sher made a reference to a local saying that the more you beat a woman, the more she will be under your control or will be more obedient to you like a dog: “It is okay from a cultural point of view, to beat a woman in rural Sindh, because Sindhi culture supports domestic violence, this is not bad. “The dog, betel nut and women: the more you beat them, the more they will be smooth” (Sher, 65 years old, married).

The respondents disagreed that religion permits domestic violence but argued that men in the rural areas have used religion as a defence for their abusive behaviour towards their wives. Sardar claims that people think that religion permits and supports domestic violence, but religion does not permit to commit the domestic violence and men only use religion as an excuse to beat women. He referred to the verse in the Holy Quran (*Verse 4:34*) that is commonly used to justify wife's beating and argued that the verse allows some kind of symbolic physical chastisement as a last resort to dealing with conflict in marriage. “Some people exploit religion [in the form of Verse 4:34 of the holy Quran] as a weapon or point of discourse, but it is men's own behaviour and attitude that lead them to beat women. It is their social, cultural, and family history. Religion has nothing to do with wife beating” (Sardar, 39 years old, married).

A respondent, Farhan, discussed that people misinterpret the religion of Islam [all respondents in this study are Muslims] to justify the beatings, as the beating is the last resort stated in the Holy Quran. People sometimes use or exploit the religion for their own vested interests. “People misinterpret the religion of Islam just as a defence to their actions of beating their wives, but, that it should be the last option of punishment that is mentioned in Quranic verses. [The Quran only allowed] to beat your wife to teach her lesson or divorce her” (Farhan, 25 years old, married).

The respondent is referring to the provision in the Quran, verse 4:34 which is translated into English as: “Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth. So righteous women are devoutly obedient, guarding in [the husband's] absence what Allah would have them guard. However, those [wives] from whom you fear arrogance - [first] advise them; [then if they persist], forsake them in bed; and [finally], strike them. Nevertheless, if they obey you [once more], seek no means against them. Indeed, Allah is ever glorious and Majestic”.

Respondents shared that their responses to domestic violence might vary and mostly depending on either the incidents happen in the context of their own family, neighbours, or happen to their own close relatives or friends. In the case of domestic violence that happens to their daughters, the respondents viewed that they should interfere in the issue but would try their best to solve the issues within the family. As far as domestic violence with their neighbours or friends are concerned, respondents informed that they would not interfere because it is a private and personal matter of the friends and neighbours. They regarded it a personal matter as the people mind it when somebody, try to interfere their issue they call it poking one's nose into other affairs. "In family matters, I will make them understand and try my best to stop the domestic violence. Nevertheless, I will not inform the police or tell others, as it is a private matter of family. The sanctity of the family and privacy will be visible to others" (Qadir Bux, 60 years old, married).

Mazhar stated that he would try to solve the matter of domestic violence at family level, because he would have concerns that this issue will be a public talk if he referred to the police or court. "I will try to solve the issue of domestic violence at family level, rather than to refer to police or court. Police and court do not give a solution but add insult to injury. In family matters, people will laugh, and police is corrupted and incapable of solving the matters of family related issues. People also have a fear of dragging the matter into court and make it public" (Mazhar, 57 years old, married).

Qalandar believed that he would not interfere in neighbourhood issue because it is a very private matter of the family. According to Qalandar, there is a concept of privacy in the matter of domestic violence, whereby if we interfere in neighbour's issues, they become angry and ask us not to interfere and call the issue as a personal and private matter. For this reason, the community is less bothered to interfere situations of domestic violence around them. "In the neighbourhood or amongst friends, I will not interfere in most of the cases because it is a personal matter. People mind when we interfere in their private life, such as in the case of domestic violence" (Qalandar, 65 years old, married).

Farhan viewed domestic violence as a personal matter and said that a person might get angry if other people interfered in his/her issues. "I will not interfere in neighbourhood issues, because it is personal. I will just look at [the male neighbour who beats his wife] with scorn and socially boycott him... because it is a personal issue. Our culture does not allow us to interfere with the husband and wife's matter. "Don't poke your nose in others' affairs" (Farhan, 25 years old, un-married).

The behavioural responses to situations of domestic violence related with daughters were quite different and respondents believed that they would react and interfere. Arshad viewed that he shall interfere into matters of such domestic violence, as this cannot be tolerated and because he loves his daughter a lot. He will not respond in the same way if the domestic violence happens to a neighbour or within the extended family. "I will not tolerate anything on my daughter as she is my life" (Sher 65 years old, married).

Jaffar narrated that he will not tolerate anything against her daughter. First, he will try to understand the situation and will ask [his daughter's husband] to behave properly with the women in the family. "In case of a sister or daughter, I will not tolerate it, but I will try to make [the perpetrator] understand that violence is not good and will try to make them behave properly and respect women in the family" (Jaffar, 38 years old, married).

Another respondent, Latif shared his response that he would try to ask his son-in-law to respect women: "I would try to make my son-in-law understand and respect women. I would tell him to stop and if I had done that and got positive results, then it makes a difference" (Latif, 38 years old, married).

In rural communities of Sindh, people do not consider domestic violence a criminal matter and do not pay any heed at this issue. However, some communities and castes residing in urban areas of Sindh are peaceful. Such as (*Khawaja/Ismaili's, Deeplai Memon, and Kathiawar*) have community-based, approach and consider individual issues as a community issue and a result, have achieved their targets of crime-free society where there is zero crime rate, because of them helping and considering individual matter as an issue of the entire community. They play their due roles in their communities to stop any kind of social crime. Family heads like grandfather, father, uncle, maternal uncles can play their role positively to stop domestic violence. However, individual communities, organizations and state can also play their roles to stop domestic violence within families.

Sardar told that: "If rural societies start to deny and consider this domestic violence as a wrong act, then we can stop domestic violence. However, they do not, because it is not on their priority. They do not consider this as a social or criminal issue. There are some communities and castes like (*Khawaja Ismaili, Deepalai, Kathiwar* etc.), in the urban areas, which are serious in ordering or solving the issues" (Sardar, 58 years old, married).

Sher was of the view that domestic violence issue is not an original culture of Sindh, rather, it was brought in the area by the influences of some caste. "Cultural elements have not influenced the pervasiveness of domestic violence. But there are some castes in Sindh, like, *Baloch, Pirs, Syeds, Mir* and so on... [who had brought in the idea to] feel proud to commit domestic violence. Sindhis were and are peaceful people and respect their women, but mostly they had adopted the behaviour [of men of castes]. [Domestic violence is] not a cultural issue" (Sher, 65 years old, married). The castes that are mentioned by Sher are existing in entire Sindh and particularly in rural Sindh and may have influenced directly or indirectly the Sindhi culture because they have been part of the Sindhi community for a very long time.

4.4. Connecting the Discourses on Men's Views about Beating Wife, Domestic Violence as a Justified Act and Socio-cultural, Religious Acceptance

In this study, 12 out of the 15 research respondents were in favour of beating their wives if the latter make mistakes such as disobeying the husbands or when they are considered lacking in their cooking, housework, taking care of the children or respect of the in-laws. Above all, the respondents feel that husbands beating their wives as a part of *mardangi* (virility/manhood). This can be related to their views about masculinity, as in rural areas, masculinity can be translated as '*taqat*' (Physical strength or power). The '*mardangi*' (manhood) characteristics are necessary for men to live in rural culture. And it is necessary for man to fight back, and this is called masculinity and masculine character. If a man lacks this characteristic, people will oppress him. This view that relates wife beating to the idea of masculinity may, thus, explain multiple reasons are created in terms of social, cultural, religious, and sometimes even economic excuses are made to perpetrate violence against women.

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to almost all the respondents. When answering this question many respondents were smirking or laughing and asking back in disbelief: “How can women beat their husbands, especially in these rural environments?” To the respondents, if a wife can beat her husband, then he is not *mursmanho* (a real man), but rather, *bhario* (having less power and social honour) and this is not entirely acceptable in the rural culture. There might be such cases in urban areas, but in these remote areas, such cases of domestic violence are not witnessed, according to the respondents in this study. In nutshell, if we investigate the views, narrations, and beliefs of rural men about domestic violence either it is permissible or justifiable; respondents viewed a male right to beat their wives on the different pretext ranging from masculinity to socio-cultural and religious causes.

5. Conclusion

Men’s inclination towards power, force, strength, and dominant attitude weakens the relationship bond between male and female. A masculine trait of being the breadwinner of the family is believed to give a man the power to control and compel his wife to act and behave according to his wishes and non-compliance can lead to domestic violence. Above all, men still subscribe to very patriarchal views about the contexts of marriage, family, and society. It has shown how rural men of Sindh tend to accept or tolerate violence against women, particularly in the form of wife abuse or domestic violence and these acceptance and tolerance are interrelated with their ideas about masculinity, their patriarchal understanding about gender relations, marriage and the family and their experiences of domestic violence. The men’s personal views, attitudes and responses are further influenced by the multi-dimensional factors that are represented in the socio-ecological model adopted as an additional conceptual framework in this study. Thus, the rural Sindhi men’s narratives in this study shows that their thoughts and behaviour are influenced by the established norms and practices about the gender relations in their families, communities and society which influences the domestic violence in rural Sindh Pakistan.

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Annexures

Annex-1: Demographic Details of Respondents

District	Taluka	Names	Age	Profession	Education	Monthly Income	Marital Status
Dadu	Khairpur Nathan Shah	Sher	65	Teacher	Masters	30,000	Married
		Sardar	39	Asst. prof	Masters	60,000	Married
		Haji	64	Landlord	Primary pass	50,000	Married
		Lutuf	46	Lecturer	Master	50,000	Married
		Qadir Bux	60	Landlord	Primary pass	100,000	Married
		Kutub	58	Policeman	Masters	45,000	Married
		Farhan	25	Student	Intermediate	25,000	Un-married
		Ikram	34	NGO worker	Masters	54,000	Married
		Qadir Bux	60	Farmer	Nil	40,000	Married
		Latif	38	Govt. Servant	PhD	40,000	Married
		Aslam	56	Lecturer	Master	40,000	Married
		Jaffar	38	Ngo Worker	Master	35000	Married
		Mazhar	57	Shopkeeper	Graduate	30000	Married
		Qalandar	65	Professor	Master	45000	Married
G. Qadir	42	Farmer	Nil	25000	Married		

Annexure-2: Respondents Personal Information Form and Interview Guide

Respondent No: _____ Code: _____ District: Dadu Taluka: _____

Section-A: Personal Information

- Name: _____
- Age: _____
- Occupation: _____
- Education: _____
- Monthly income: _____
- Marital Status _____ (if yes)
- Number of children: _____ Male _____ female _____
- Age of children: a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____ e. _____ f. _____ g. _____ h. _____ i. _____ j. _____
- Living structure of Family: _____

10. Wife's background:

- a) Age _____ b) Education: _____ c) Occupation _____ d) Monthly Income _____

11. Mother's background:

- a) Age of Mother _____ b) Education: _____ c) Occupation _____ d) Monthly Income _____

12. Father's background:

- a) Age of father _____ b) Education: _____ c) Occupation _____ d) Monthly Income _____

Section-B: Questions and Probes

- Have you witnessed any form of violence? What, where and how?
- Have you been a victim of any form of violence?
[Probe] If yes, What type of violence? Where at home, or anywhere else? How did it happen?
- How do you feel when violence happened?
[Probe] Afraid, anxious, scared, fearful, troubled, emotional, or any else? Explore the feelings and thoughts.
- Have you recovered from that feeling?
[Probe] While, sharing your feelings with any one like; friend, neighbour, psychologist, Social worker, sociologist, or anyone else? Or you applied any other procedure to recover yourself. Ask in detail.

5. How do you feel about the incident now?

[Probe] Regret, shameful, proud, right, wrong, or any else? Ask in detail.

6. Have you witnessed/have knowledge of your mother/father/sister/brother/ close relatives/

7. Close friends being a victim of domestic violence? What, Where, and how?

8. How do you feel when you witness/know about the violence?

9. In your opinion, why does a man commit violence?

[Probe] Do you think man commits violence because he is stronger, tough, aggressive power, strength, or any other reason? Ask in detail.

10. Do you remember that you have ever committed violence?

[Probe] If yes, what type of domestic violence? If Physical violence than how? while using hand [slap, fist, twisting arm, dragging, pushing, pulling, holding tightly.

With hairs] or using any hurting object, like stick, axe, pipe, knife, gun, etc.

If Psychological than how? Threats, scolding, lock up women/wife within home etc.

If Economic than how? To stop the expenditure and stipend of women and children or send her to parents' home during the conflict period or until settlement takes place, etc.

Abusive language than which type? To use abhorring and repulsive word/language against woman, taunting, and to show sign of contempt like [five fingers] in our culture are considered wrong or erroneous by either side].

11. Have you ever committed sexual violence? If yes, how?

[Probe] Sexual violence: To have sex with wife without her consent, sex during her illness, sex during menstruation period or pregnancy. Even sometimes force her to have anal sex etc.

12. Where did you commit domestic violence?

[Probe]At home, at neighbour's home, at market, at street, at office, or anywhere else?

13. How did you commit domestic violence?

[Probe] Types of injury, serious, slight, lethal etc. Ask in detail.

14. Do you feel the society plays role in stopping domestic violence?

15. What have been the typical responses of family /friends/neighbours/ community leaders to Domestic violence?

[Probe] Responses of family/friends towards the stopping the 16. Domestic violence, any typicality, any step to stop the violence or any movement, awareness, counselling program in your area etc.?

17. Are there cultural elements that influence the pervasiveness of domestic violence?

[Probe] Which cultural elements influence, Ask in detail.

18. Can cultural elements be changed?

[Probe] Which are changed and how are changed, through either education, Ngo's, civil society, and religious leaders such as (moulvis) or any other factor can play role in it.

19. What good practices can be encouraged to stop domestic violence?