



## Research Article

### A Descriptive Study to Assess the Domestic Violence among Married Women in Selected Rural Area at Erode District

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#### Abstract

**Aim:** This study was taken in October 2013. There are several reported cases of domestic violence in a rural area at the Erode District, where women are uneducated and dependent. The objective of this study was to assess the domestic violence among married women in the selected rural area and to find an association between the selected demographic variable and domestic violence. **Methods:** This was a community-based “Descriptive research design” study. The target population was married women who are experiencing domestic violence. It had ten items of demographic data. They are physical, psychological, economical, and sexual abuses. The data collection tool was validated by three nursing experts in community medicine. Reliability was established by the inter-rated method ( $r = 0.97$ ), the non-probability convenient sampling technique was used, and the sample size was 60. Data were collected by a structured interview method with 29 items and the collected data were edited, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using SPSS 13 version. **Result:** The findings of the study showed that the majority of married women, 33 (55%) had severe economic violence, and 35 (58.3%) had moderate psychological violence. There was a significant association between employment status and physical violence ( $P < 0.05$ ), and there was no significant association between the selected demographic variable and other types of domestic violence ( $P > 0.05$ ). **Conclusion:** The study concluded that married women in rural areas were experiencing more than one type of violence and most common was psychological and economical type of violence. It must be prevented by appropriate screening, referring victims, promoting awareness program on issues, maintaining women's privacy, and confidentiality.

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## Introduction

Women are considered as the embodiment of love, care, and sacrifice, since the advent of life on the earth. Despite of the multiple roles enacted by her in this sophisticated era too, the women are still being ill-treated all around the globe. A married woman is the light of her home. In her wedlock, she illuminates her surroundings through her unceasing, ever providing, and self-sacrificing character. Yet women are being exploited and violated everywhere. [MANU 1500B.C].<sup>[1]</sup>

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Gender-based violence is recognized as a major issue on international women rights agenda. Domestic violence and abuse can happen to anyone, yet the problem is often overlooked, excused, or denied. The women may not reveal the domestic violence due to shame, fear, and guilt, or they do not want to be disloyal to their partners and family. State: India.<sup>[2]</sup>

Domestic violence is a threatened physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse of women by their intimate partner. It pervades every aspect of family's life and differs from assault by a stranger. Forms of domestic violence can be broadly divided into physical abuse, psychological/emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and economic abuse. State: India.<sup>[3]</sup>

Domestic violence was recognized as a criminal offense and a public issue in India in 1983. The offense chargeable under section 498 – A of the Indian Penal Code that relates to domestic violence is any form of cruelty by husband or family member toward his wife.<sup>[4]</sup> The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 took effect in

2006 and the key element of the act include the prohibition of marital rape, provision of protection, and maintenance of orders against husbands who are sexually, emotionally, and physically abusive. State: India.<sup>[5]</sup>

Domestic violence can lead to several health problems. It has serious consequences on women's physical and psychological health, including their reproductive and sexual health.<sup>[6]</sup> The women who are victims have a high incidence of stress and stress-related illnesses such as post-traumatic stress syndrome, pain attacks, eating and sleeping disorders, and elevated BP. Injuries, temporary or permanent disabilities, depression, and suicide are also seen among victims.<sup>[7]</sup> Domestic violence may lead to gynecological and reproductive morbidity; it also makes women more susceptible to sexually transmitted disease and HIV infections. The physical and mental outcomes have a social and emotional sequel for the individual, the family, the community, and the society as a large. Domestic violence has devastating consequences for the women who experience it and a traumatic effect on children who witness it. Marriages make women of rural areas remain silent regarding domestic violence.<sup>[8]</sup>

The records maintained at the PHCs and subcenters showed that women are less educated and belong to the low socio-economic, rural background often perceives that married life inevitably involves a certain amount of suffering, and they are expected to endure abuse and cruelty.

## Materials and Methods

### Study design and setting

This was a community-based descriptive research study. Data were collected from the married women between the age group of 18–40 years who are experiencing domestic violence in selected rural areas of Erode district. Data were collected for 4 weeks in the month of March–April 2013; prior permission was obtained from Mr. Balakrishnan, district B.D.O officer. To assess each subject, it took about 15–20 min.

### Sample size and sampling method

The sample for the study was married women who are experiencing domestic violence and the sample size was 60. Erode district has 34 blocks and the Erode block was randomly selected for the study in which three rural areas were selected based on the researchers known locality, and the areas are three villages R.N Pudhur, Perumal Malai, and Elavamalai for screening the domestic violence among married. By convenient sampling technique, 20 married women were selected from three villages for assessing domestic violence.

### Data collection tool and technique

Data were collected by a structure interview questionnaire method. The simple random technique was used to select the

three villages (R.N Pudhur, Perumal Malai, and Elavamalai) for screening, and the convenient sampling technique was used to select a village (R.N Pudhur) for assessing domestic violence and to assess each subject it took about 15–20 min and the purpose and procedure were explained to the women. The information was collected regarding demographic variables from the married women in the absent of her husband and their family members. This phase lasts for 15 min. In the termination phase, the tool was verified for completeness. The married women were assured about the confidentiality of the data. This phase took 10 min for each married women.

### Data management and analysis

The data collected from the subjects were compiled and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The data collected were edited, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted, a findings obtained were presented in the form of tables and diagrams.  $P < 0.05$  was considered to be significant.

The following plan of analysis was developed:

- Distribution of the sample according to demographic variable was explained using frequency and percentage.
- Distribution of frequency and percentage of types of domestic violence among married women.
- Distributions of the sample according to various forms of domestic violence were analyzed using frequency and percentage
- Domestic violence among married women was analyzed using mean and SD
- Association of domestic violence and their demographic variables was analyzed by Chi-square

### Ethical and cultural considerations

The researcher was conducted this study, after obtaining permission from the authorities of Mr. Balakrishnan B.D.O, officer of Erode district. The research problem and objectives were approved by the committee. The purpose of this study was explained to the married women and consent was taken. Participants were given the freedom to quit from a study in between if not willing and the participants were informed that participation in the study was purely on a voluntary basis and that no risks were anticipated.

## Results

Section I: Data on the frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables of domestic violence among married women: Inferred that the majority of married women were in the age group of 26–30 years 29 (48.3%), belongs to Hindus 56 (93.3%), studied up to middle school 29 (48.3%), had arranged marriage 32 (53.3), non-consanguineous in nature 45 (75%), and majority of them were self-employed 32 (53.3%) with the monthly income of Rs. <5000, 41 (68.3%), living in nuclear family 47 (78.3%), and majority of them had two children 49 (81.7%) [Table 1].

Section II: Data on the frequency and percentage distribution of types of domestic violence: Shows that the

**Table 1:** Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables among married women

S. No.	Demographic variables	f	%
1	Age		
	8–25 years	20	30.3
	26–30 years	29	48.3
	31–35 years	8	13.3
	36–40 years	3	5
2	Education		
	No formal	5	8.3
	Primary	10	16.7
	Middle school	29	48.3
	High school	9	15
	Higher education	3	5
	College	4	6.7
3	Religion		
	Hindu	56	93.3
	Christian	3	5
	Muslim	1	1.7
	Others	0	0
4	Duration of marriage		
	Below 1 year	1	1.7
	1–5 years	36	60
	5–10 years	0	0
	Above 10 years	23	38.3
5	Type of marriage		
	Consanguineous marriage	15	25
	Non-consanguineous marriage	45	75
6	Employment Status		
	Housewife	28	46.7
	Government employee	0	0
	Self-employee	32	53.3
7	Monthly income		
	Below 5000	41	68.3
	5000–10,000	19	31.7
	10,000–15,000	0	0
	Above 15,000	0	0
8	Type of family		
	Joint family	13	21.7
	Nuclear family	47	78.3
9	Method of marriage		
	Love marriage	24	40
	Exchange marriage	1	1.7
	Arranged marriage	32	53.3
	Inter caste marriage	3	5
10	Number of children		
	No children	2	3.3
	One child	6	10
	Two children	49	81.7
	Three children	2	3.3
	More than four children	1	1.7

majority of married women experienced both psychological and economical violence 60 (100%) [Tables 2 and 3].

Section III: Data on the frequency and percentage distribution of various forms of domestic violence: Sows that regarding the forms of physical violence among married women, majority of 52 (94.4%) were threatened to beat with any objects. In the psychological violence,

**Table 2:** Reveals frequency and percentage distribution of types of domestic violence among married women

S. No.	Types of domestic violence	f	%
1	Physical violence	55	91.6
2	Psychological violence	60	100
3	Economical violence	60	100
4	Sexual violence	13	13

**Table 3:** Reveals the frequency and percentage distribution of levels of domestic violence among married women

S. No.	Domestic violence	F	Levels of domestic violence					
			Mild		Moderate		Severe	
			f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Physical violence	55	20	36.4	27	49.1	8	14.5
2.	Psychological violence	60	23	38.4	35	58.3	2	3.3
3.	Economical violence	60	2	3.3	25	41.7	33	55
4.	Sexual violence	13	7	53.9	5	38.5	1	7.6

majority of 57 (95%) were frightened, like looking angrily. It was inferred that the economical violence, the majority of the violence 57 (95%) were faced financial problems and withheld the access to finance, and the majority of 12 (92%) are sexual intercourse when need not want [Tables 3 and 4, Tables 6 and 7].

Section IV: Data on frequency, minimum and maximum score, mean, and SD of domestic violence [Table 8]: It was inferred the frequency, minimum and maximum score, mean, and SD, regarding the overall score among domestic violence. The majority score obtained in psychological violence mean score 5.2 (SD=.24), minimum and maximum score 1–10. This study shows that the obtained mean score of psychological violence was significantly more than the other types of violence. Hence, it was found to be common among married women.

Section V: Association between domestic violence among married women with their selected demographic variables: Table 9 shows that there was a significant association between employment status and the physical violence ( $P < 0.05$ ) among married women and there was no significant association between other demographic variables such as age, type of marriage, duration of marriage, employment status, type of family, and the physical domestic violence ( $P > 0.05$ ) among married women

## Discussion

The results of the study were discussed according to the objectives of the study and to assess the domestic violence among married women in selected rural area.

**Table 4:** Reveals frequency and percentage distribution of various forms of physical violence ( $n=55$ )

S. No.	Forms of physical violence	f	%
1	Assaulted by husband	42	76.4
2	Assaulted by family members	31	56.4
3	Scaled or burnt	1	1.8
4	Threatened to beat with any object such as stick, knife, and belt	52	94.4

**Table 5:** Forms of psychological violence ( $n=60$ )

S. No.	Form of psychological violence	f	%
1.	Good relationship with husbands family members	34	56.7
2.	Abusive language	55	91.7
3.	Not send to parents house	43	71.6
4.	Frightened like looking angrily	57	95
5.	Ignored and showed difference	11	18.3
6.	Made deprived of privileges	6	10
7.	Neglected by husband and family members	4	6.7
8.	Denied of personal needs	6	10
9.	Not being involved in decision making	44	73.3

**Table 6:** Shows forms of economical violence ( $n=60$ )

S. No.	Form of economical violence	f	%
1	Faced by financial problems	57	95
2	Permit to handle money	42	70
3	Not allowed to choose/buy things	12	20
4	Allowed to purchase	51	85
5	Withheld the access to finance	57	95
6	Not allowed to go for job	41	68.3

### Domestic violence among married women

Domestic violence is an important problem among married women. This study findings show that the majority of married women experienced both psychological and economical violence 60 (100%). These result findings are similar to S Abd El Maqsooud *et al.* (2011) conducted a cross-sectional study on the prevalence and risk factors of domestic violence against married working women in Alexandria, Egypt. Overall, the prevalence of domestic violence was 67% among psychological abuse was most common, 48% followed physical violence 40%, sexual violence 38%, and financial abuse 30%. The study concluded that domestic violence against women is an important neglected public health problem in the Egyptian community.<sup>[9]</sup>

### Demographic variables of domestic violence among married women

The study findings showed that most majority of married women were in the age group of 26–30 years 29 (48.3%), belongs to Hindus 56 (93.3%), studied up to middle school

**Table 7:** Shows forms of sexual violence ( $n=13$ )

S. No.	Form of economical violence	f	%
1.	Suspect to fidelity	7	53.9
2.	Sexual intercourse when need not want	12	92
3.	Deny or avoid to have sex	1	7.7

**Table 8:** Shows frequency, minimum and maximum score, mean, and SD of domestic violence ( $n=60$ )

Domestic violence	f	Minimum and maximum score	Mean	SD
Physical violence	55	1-7	2.9	0.20
Psychological violence	60	1-12	5.2	0.24
Economical violence	60	1-7	4.6	0.13
Sexual violence	13	1-3	0.3	0.09

29 (48.3%), had arranged marriage 32 (53.3), and non-consanguineous in nature 45 (75%), and majority of them were self-employed 32 (53.3%) with the monthly income of Rs.<5000, 41 (68.3%), living in nuclear family 47 (78.3%), and majority of them had two children 49 (81.7%) [Table 1]. The results are similar to findings by Kocacik *et al.* (2006). The study reported that the average age among women was that 45.3% of women were in 30–34 age groups; 76.5% were housewives and 91.2% were married. The study reported that 52% of women were exposed to at least one type of violence. Verbal violence was the most frequent type of violence 53.8%, followed by physical violence 38.3%, about 45% of women exposed to violence were in the 30–34 age groups. Economic problems were reported as the most important reason for domestic violence -31.4%.<sup>[10]</sup>

This study findings show that the majority of women in the physical violence 52 (86.7%) were threaten or beaten with any objects such as stick, knife, and belt. In the psychological violence, 57 (95%) were frightened, such as looking angrily. In the economical violence, 57 (95%) were faced financial problem and withheld the access to finance. In sexual violence, 12 (20%) were physically forced to have sex. This finding is similar to that by Hunter *et al.* (2004) who document that the two-thirds of the women interviewed reported some forms of psychological or physiological abuse of the total sample. Half reported physical abuse 38%, abuse of the women 38% verbally insulted by their husband, alleged threats 18%, and 12% being reported to threaten by their husband with kerosene oil poured on them to set them on fire.<sup>[11]</sup> The study suggests that it might be due to shame, fear, and beliefs that people will not understand or be able to help them and it is a significant public health problem.

### Association between the selected demographic variable and domestic violence

It was inferred that there was a significant association between employment status and the physical violence ( $P < 0.05$ ) among married women and there was no significant association between other demographic



**Table 9:** Shows association between domestic violence among married women with their selected demographic variables

S. No.	Demographic variables	f	%	$\chi^2$
<b>Physical violence</b>				
1	Age			
	a. 20–25 years	20	30.3	$\chi^2=0.792$
	b. 26–30 years	29	48.3	df=18
	c. 31–35 years	8	13.3	p>0.05
	d. 36–40 years	3	5	NS
2	Type of marriage			
	a. Consanguineous marriage	15	25	$\chi^2=0.383$
	b. Non-consanguineous marriage	45	75	df=6
				p>0.05
				NS
3	Duration of marriage			
	a. Below 1 year	1	1.7	$\chi^2=0.481$
	b. 1–5 years	36	60	df=12
	c. 5–10 years	0	0	p>0.05
	d. Above 10 years	23	38.3	NS
4	Employment status			
	a. Housewife	28	46.7%	$\chi^2=17.05$
	b. Government employee	0	0	df=5.99
	c. Self-employee	32	53.3%	p<0.05
				NS
5	Type of family			$\chi^2=0.845$
	a. Joint family	13	21.7	df=6
	b. Nuclear family	47	78.3	p>0.05
				NS
<b>Psychological violence</b>				
1	Age			
	a. 20–25 years	20	30.3	$\chi^2=0.608$
	b. 26–30 years	29	48.3	df=15
	c. 31–35 years	8	13.3	p>0.05
	d. 36–40 years	3	5	NS
2	Type of marriage			
	a. Consanguineous marriage	15	25	$\chi^2=0.057$
	b. Non-consanguineous marriage	45	75	df=5
				p>0.05
				NS
3	Duration of marriage			
	a. Below 1 year	1	1.7	$\chi^2=0.244$
	b. 1–5 years	36	60	df=10
	c. 5–10 years	0	0	p>0.05
	d. Above 10 years	23	38.3	NS
4	Employment status			$\chi^2=0.73$
	a. Housewife	28	46.7%	df=5.99
	b. Government employee	0	0	p>0.05
	c. Self-employee	32	53.3%	NS
5	Type of family			$\chi^2=0.294$
	a. Joint family	13	21.7	df=5
	b. Nuclear family	47	78.3	p>0.05
				NS

variables such as age, education, type of marriage, type of family, and the physical domestic violence ( $P > 0.05$ ) among married women.

There was no significant association between selected demographic variables such as age, education, duration

<b>Economic violence</b>				
1	Age			
	a. 20–25 years	20	30.3	$\chi^2=0.125$
	b. 26–30 years	29	48.3	df=15
	c. 31–35 years	8	13.3	p>0.05
	d. 36–40 years	3	5	NS
2	Type of marriage			$\chi^2=0.843$
	a. Consanguineous marriage	15	25	df=5
	b. Non-consanguineous marriage	45	75	p>0.05
				NS
3	Duration of marriage			
	a. Below 1 year	1	1.7	$\chi^2=0.965$
	b. 1–5 years	36	60	df=10
	c. 5–10 years	0	0	p>0.05
	d. Above 10 years	23	38.3	NS
4	Employment status			$\chi^2=0.96$
	a. Housewife	28	46.7%	df=5.99
	b. Government employee	0	0	p>0.05
	c. Self-employee	32	53.3%	NS
5	Type of family			$\chi^2=0.616$
	a. Joint family	13	21.7	df=5
	b. Nuclear family	47	78.3	p>0.05
				NS
<b>Sexual violence</b>				
1	Age			
	a. 20–25 years	20	30.3	$\chi^2=0.315$
	b. 26–30 years	29	48.3	df=9
	c. 31–35 years	8	13.3	p>0.05
	d. 36–40 years	3	5	NS
2	Type of marriage			$\chi^2=0.391$
	a. Consanguineous Marriage	15	25	df=3
	b. Non-consanguineous Marriage	45	75	p>0.05
				NS
3	Duration of marriage			
	a. Below 1 year	1	1.7	$\chi^2=0.075$
	b. 1–5 years	36	60	df=6
	c. 5–10 years	0	0	p>0.05
	d. Above 10 years	23	38.3	NS
4	Type of family			$\chi^2=0.278$
	a. Joint family	13	21.7	df=3
	b. Nuclear family	47	78.3	p>0.05
				NS

of marriage, type of family, employment status and the domestic psychological violence, economical, and sexual violence ( $P > 0.05$ ) among married women.

The study findings by Kuntala Roy *et al.* (2012) concluded that little progress in reducing level of violence may be achieved without significant changes in prevailing individual and community attitude toward violence.<sup>[12]</sup>

## Conclusion

The findings of the study showed that the majority of married women, 33 (55%) had severe economic violence, and 35 (58.3%) had moderate psychological violence. There was a significant association between employment status and physical violence ( $P < 0.05$ ), and there was no significant association between the selected

demographic variable and other types of domestic violence ( $P > 0.05$ ).

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