



**Exploring Prespective And Experience of
Domestic Violence Survivors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

**EXPLORING PRESPECTIVE AND
EXPERIENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS**

This research has been made possible with generous support of The Australian Government provided under the project “Policy Advocacy and Research to Strengthen Implementation of Pro-Woman Legislation and GBV Response Services in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa”.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of The Australian Government, Blue Veins or any of its affiliated organizations.

Research Author: **Rubina Shah**
Editor: **Qamar Naseem and Sana Ahmad**
Cover illustration: **Arsalan Ahmad**
Published by: **Blue Veins**
Copyrights: **© Blue Veins**

May, 2019

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Violence against women is a social problem that threatens women's lives and impedes their involvement in social life. Violence against women, exists in different forms and is a problem occurring all over the world despite the policies and implementations on national and international level. It requires a joint and decisive struggle on national level, through multi-dimensional, coherent, inclusive plans and policies.

Domestic violence is one of the most common form of Sexual and Gender Based Violence which is influenced by complex social, cultural, religious, and psychological factors in the Pakistani context especially in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. There has been very less evidence-based research conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to explore the impacts and experience of domestic violence. And this qualitative study is first of its kind in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa exploring women's experiences of domestic violence and challenges with regard to accessing available response services.

I would like to extend my gratitude to all those who have been a part of this empirical and qualitative research. I am grateful to all the participants, my field work assistance, friends, blue veins team and all those who directly or indirectly contributed to this research.

Finally, I would like to thank The Australian Government for their financial support and Blue Veins team for their guidance and assistance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page No
Chapter 1-----	
1.1 Introduction	06
1.2 What is Domestic Violence	07
1.3 Feminist Movement Challenging Domestic Violence	10
1.4 Prevalence of Domestic Violence Worldwide	12
1.5 Domestic Violence in Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	14
1.6 Problem Statement	16
1.7 Demographic of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	18
Chapter 2-----	
2.1 Research Methodology	20
2.2 Significance of the Study	22
2.3 Research Aim	23
2.4 Scope of the Study	23
2.5 Importance of this Study	24
Chapter 3-----	
3.1 Social Issues in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	26
3.2 Key Cultural Issues	27
3.3 Economic Issues	28
3.4 Islam and Gender Equality	29
3.5 Concepts Pertaining to Wife Abuse in Islam	30
Chapter 4-----	
4.1 Literature Review	34
Chapter 5-----	
5.1 Findings and Discussions on Revealing Domestic Violence	39
5.1.1 Women's Reluctance due to Cultural and Societal Norms	39
5.1.2 Protecting the Children and Family Interests	40
5.1.3 Social and Patriarchal Norms and Perspectives Regarding Domestic Violence	40
5.1.4 Women's Lack of Knowledge Regarding Domestic Violence	41
5.2 Findings and Discussions on Barriers in Accessing Response Services	41
5.2.1 Lack of Knowledge About the Services	41

5.2.2 Challenges and Experiences in Accessing the Response Services	42
5.2.3 Problems with the Procedures and Structures	43
5.2.4 Survivors found Devices useless for them	44
5.2.5 Domestic Violence Resources Available for Victims	45
5.3 Service Providers Perspective	46
5.3.1 Viewpoints from the Service Providers	46
5.4 Reporting the Challenges of Domestic Violence	48
5.5 Impacts of Domestic Violence on Women Survivors	48
Chapter 6-----	
6.1 Overall Data Analysis	50
6.1.1 Key Findings	50
6.1.2 Discussion/ Overall Data Analysis	51
Chapter 7-----	
7.1 Conclusion	53
7.1.1 Educating Women, Empowering Lives	54
7.1.2 Capacity Building and Sensitization of Service Providers	55
7.1.3 Collaboration between Service Providers	56
7.1.4 Improving the Quality of Services	56
7.1.5 Improving Resources, Procedures and Structures for Support	58
Chapter 8-----	
8.1 Recommendations	59
References-----	62
Annexures-----	64

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Domestic violence is a traumatic episode which is influenced by complex social, cultural, religious, and psychological factors in the Pakistani context especially in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. While it is clearly not limited to spousal violence it is often referred to as the violence between husband and wife. While persons beyond any sex or gender identity can be affected by the issue of domestic violence. The available data clearly reflects that women are at higher risk of being targeted as a victim, either in marriage or in a domestic relationship.

Furthermore, the domestic violence problem has been identified as occurring across all religions, ethnicities, cultures, ages and economic status all over Pakistan. While there is a large number of studies available on abusive domestic relationships and its impacts, knowledge about abused women's experiences is lacking. Notably, the impact of such victimization experiences may have adverse consequences not only for the survivors/ victims but their children, families, friends as well as the whole of society.

Domestic violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a significant social and public health problem and besides being a tremendous burden to social services, health care, and the criminal justice system. The harm wrought by domestic violence is more problematic in terms of the physical, emotional, psychological and behavioral damage. Thus, issues of domestic violence need to be considered as an urgent and important matter because a substantial proportion of resources are demanded from everyone in dealing with this problem not only in terms of policy making but also in terms of improving response services.

1.2 What is domestic violence

There are various definitions of domestic violence but it is often described as a family-centered problem and generally understood as patterns of abusive and coercive behavior which may cause physical injuries, psychological and emotional disturbances, sexual intimidation as well as financial oppression of the survivor/victim. Some of the experts define it as " acts of violence and abusive behaviors used by adults to control and dominate people in domestic relationships and is thus classified as domestic violence.

There are many definitions for domestic violence, which may differ from one another depending upon the perspective of the definer(s). But we strongly believe that proper definitions of domestic violence is important because without an accurate description of the problems related to the occurrence of violent domestic incidents seem to get more severe.

Domestic violence is a pattern of behavior used to establish power and control over another person through fear and intimidation, often including the threat or use of violence, when one person believes they are entitled to control another.

The World Health Organizations (WHO) defines violence in the following way: "Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation" **(WHO, 2009)**.

In the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, adopted in 1993, violence against women is seen as: "Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere; trafficking in women and forced

prostitution; and physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, wherever it occurs”

The term domestic violence have been used interchangeably by women's advocates, domestic violence educators, and service providers for decades, based on their belief that all incidents of domestic violence involve male battering”. Some of the terms have a gender-specific connotation, for example ‘wife abuse’ and ‘spousal violence’.

In Australia, domestic violence is defined by Family Law Act 1975 as "violent, threatening or another behavior by a person that coerces or controls a member of the person's family, or causes the family member to be fearful". The Act refers to acts of violence that occur between people who have, or have had, an intimate relationship in domestic settings. As such, in Australia domestic violence, depending on the state, it's called "domestic violence", "family violence", "domestic and family violence" and "domestic abuse".

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "UDHR" Although early human rights law enacted by the United Nations did not specially mention violence against women, it is still relevant to domestic violence. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Although this document was not originally binding on member states, it has received such wide acceptance as an outline of foundation.

Article 3 of the UDHR states "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person". This right was re-affirmed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), which protects the right to life (Article 6) and the right to liberty and security of person (Article 9). These rights, as well as others in the UDHR, ICCPR, and the International Covenant on Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), such as the right to equal protection under the law and the right to the highest standard of physical and mental health, are implicated in domestic violence cases. Therefore, States that are parties to these instruments have an implicit obligation to protect women from domestic violence as part of their obligations.

General recommendation no 19 of CEDAW Committee specifically addressed domestic violence as a form of discrimination against women by stating:- “Family violence is one of the most insidious forms of violence against women. It is prevalent in all societies. Within family relationships women of all ages are subjected to violence of all kinds, including battering, rape, other forms of sexual assault, mental and other forms of violence, which are perpetuated by traditional attitudes. Lack of economic independence forces many women to stay in violent relationships. The abrogation of their family responsibilities by men can be a form of violence, and coercion. These forms of violence put women’s health at risk and impair their ability to participate in family life and public life on a basis of equality”

Section 2 of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Domestic Violence against Women (Prevention and Protection Act) 2019 defines domestic violence as the violence committed by the accused against the victim with whom the accused is in the domestic relationship.

While an array of definitions and terminologies have been suggested, throughout this report the term ‘domestic violence’ will be used with the definition “A pattern of assault and coercive behaviors including physical, sexual and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion that adults or adolescents use against persons in a domestic relationship”. This definition is used as it comprehensively addresses the nature of the problems that come under the heading of domestic violence.

1.3 Feminist Movement Challenging Domestic Violence

One of the most important world events of the 1970s was the advent of the women's movement opposing domestic violence against women. Due to the resurgence of the movement, there was greater public awareness about domestic violence and it began to be recognized globally as an important social problem. Great Britain and the United States of America had become the pioneers in providing the foundation to address domestic violence issues with regard to institutional practices, economic segmentation, and cultural beliefs.

Prior to the years of the 70s, domestic violence was thought to be a private matter and any disputes were mainly ignored and left to be settled within the family. Due to the cultural barriers and absence of the legal recognition of the issue women used to face several challenges with regard to reporting of domestic violence and less likely to mainly to safeguard the honor of the family.

In some countries, the growth of the women's movement has helped to raise awareness of the increase in the incidence of intentional injuries which had affected many people, especially women and children. In the mid-1970s, the impetus towards combating domestic violence had penetrated into several countries such as Australia, the Republic of Ireland and Canada. Malaysia, on the other hand, had a later start in acknowledging the issue of violence against women.

In 1976 the Pakistani government passed legislation on dowry and bridal gifts in an attempt to eliminate the custom but, because of cultural and societal norms combined with government ineffectiveness, such killings over inadequate dowries continue. In 1999 the Senate of Pakistan rejected a resolution which would have condemned the practice of murdering women for the sake of family honor. The following year, on 21 April 2000, the national government leader Pervez Musharraf declared that honor killings were "vigorously condemned" by the government and would be treated as murder. The Ministry of Women Development set up ten crisis centers to help the victims of domestic violence and raise the awareness level of the people on this issue.

In 2011 the Senate passed the Acid Control and Acid Crime Prevention Bill to repress acid attacks in the country; the senate also passed the prevention of anti-women practices bill.

1.4 Prevalence of domestic violence worldwide

Global estimates published by WHO in 2017 indicate that about 1 in 3 (35%) of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. Most of this violence is intimate partner violence. Worldwide, almost one third (30%) of women who have been in a relationship report that they have experienced some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner in their lifetime. Globally, as many as 38% of murders of women are committed by a male intimate partner.

It is estimated that 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner (not including sexual harassment) at some point in their lives. However, some national studies show that up to 70 per cent of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime. Evidence shows that women who have experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence report higher rates of depression, having an abortion and acquiring HIV, compared to women who have not. [\(Women\)](#)

According to the report released by World Bank in 2018 more than one billion women lack legal protection against domestic sexual violence. The study, *Global and Regional Trends in Women's Legal Protection Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Harassment*, also found that close to 1.4 billion women lack legal protection against domestic economic violence. Economic abuse entails controlling a woman's ability to access economic resources (money, education or employment) as a form of intimidation and coercion. In addition, women are often not legally protected against specific types of sexual harassment outside the home, such as at work, school, and in public places.

The report, supported by the Children's Investment Fund Foundation and the Global Partnership for Education, examines laws against domestic violence and sexual harassment across 141 countries covered by the World Bank Group's Women, Business and the Law program.

Based on an analysis of 141 countries, the share of countries with laws to protect women against domestic violence increased from 71 percent to 76 percent between 2013 and 2017. But

legal protection remains much weaker for specific types of domestic violence. For sexual violence experienced at home at the hand of an intimate partner or family member, laws are lacking in more than one in three countries. For domestic economic violence, half of the countries do not have specific legislation. For two in three countries, unmarried intimate partners are not protected under the laws.

While the available data is very alarming the real magnitude of the domestic violence problem has remained unclear as available data on violence against women varies depending on the sampling procedures, the research methods applied and the parameters used to define the term 'domestic violence' itself.

Also, another major obstacle in identifying the extent of this issue is the unreported cases of domestic violence. Hence, statistics on violence in families are still a matter of some dispute. Some experts believe domestic violence is increasing. Others believe that there has been a slight decrease, but that more women are reporting abuse. Either way, the numbers prove that it still happens far, far too often.

Women right's advocates see domestic violence as a major gender issue because women are more prone to be the victims of assaults compared to men. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa the magnitude of this social evil is huge and it has been put forward as part of the women's rights agenda.

1.5 Domestic violence in Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Pakistan has its roots in a patriarchal social structure under which women are considered inferior to men and are viewed as property. Illiteracy, ignorance and blind faith in clergy provide a fertile ground for the maintenance of the status quo, and encourages this extreme form of patriarchal society. This issue is further compounded by discriminatory legislation and a dysfunctional criminal justice system. Acts of violence committed against women including, inter alia, sexual violence, intimate partner or spousal abuse (domestic violence), sexual harassment, harmful traditional practices (forced marriage, vanni, karo kari), and other discriminatory practices based on gender all fall within the ambit of GBV.

According to the USAID report (2010), 1,988, or a quarter of all reported cases of gender based violence in 2009, were murders or honor killings. While only 50 cases of stove burning were reported, a decrease of 18 percent from the previous year, acid throwing had increased substantially. Abduction and kidnapping were the second highest reported incidence of gender-based violence, with, 1,987 cases. Reports of rape and gang rape increased by 19 percent and numbered 928 cases. Suicide also reached a new high with 683 cases reported, an increase of 14 percent. Under reporting is a serious problem, particularly for crimes such as domestic violence, of which only 281 cases were reported. The dearth of data is also indicated in the 1,977 cases clubbed as “miscellaneous”, including vanni, swara, custodial violence, torture, trafficking, child marriages, incest, threat of violence, sexual harassment and attempted murder.

Similarly, 7516 is the total number of reported cases of violence against women (VAW) from four provinces as well as FATA (tribal districts) and Islamabad Capital territory (ICT) between January to December 2012. From these incidents, nearly 63% cases were reported from Punjab. Sindh had the second highest instance of reported VAW cases with a total 1628 cases which form 22% of the total reported cases. 674 cases were reported from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and FATA (tribal districts). Islamabad was noted for 281 cases of VAW, which is a very high number compared to the size of the region which is much smaller and dwells a small ratio of population

as opposed to the other regions. Baluchistan had a total of 167 reported cases. Murder, kidnapping, rape/gang rape, honour Killing and suicide were the highest among offences reported against women in 2012. A total of 1745 murders, 1607 cases of abduction, 1134 miscellaneous forms of the VAW, 989 cases of domestic violence, 822 cases of rape/gang rape, 575 incidents of suicide and 432 cases of 'honour killing' were reported.

According to Aga Khan University (AKU), every second woman in Pakistan suffers from some form of domestic violence that has an extremely damaging effect on her physical and mental well-being. [_\(Ilyas, 2016\)](#)

Pakistan ranked 150th out of 153 in the Women, Peace and Security Index. Around 27 per cent of women in Pakistan experience intimate partner or domestic violence in their lifetime and only 51 per cent perceive themselves to be safe in their communities. [_\(Rashid, 2018\)](#)

According to the World Report 2018 of Human Rights Watch, 180 cases of domestic violence were reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in 2017, which included killings of 94 women who were murdered by close family members. [_\(Watch, 2017\)](#)

According to Health and Demographic Survey Pakistan 2017-2018, the percentage of women who have experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence is highest in FATA (66%), followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (52%) and Balochistan (49%). The percentage is lowest in Sindh (18%). [_\(Studies, 2019\)](#)

1.6 Problem Statement

Despite legal recognition of the issue of domestic violence at the local, national, regional and international level, the problem has continued to escalate, at the time of this publication Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remains the only province in Pakistan which does not have any special laws to curb and response to the issue of domestic violence while the province of Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan has already enacted law against domestic violence in 2016, 2013 and 2014 respectively. Because of the absence of the law, many cases remain unreported and the reported cases are not prosecuted. Despite the fact that domestic violence is reported regularly the issue is still viewed with little interest by the general public.

According to Health and Demographic Survey Pakistan 2017-2018, the percentage of women who have experienced spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence is highest in FATA (66%), followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (52%), Balochistan (49%) and Sindh (18%). From the perspective of the violence disclosure, the recent data shows a positive improvement which reflects more openness among Pakistani women regarding disclosing domestic violence issue.

There is increasing recognition of domestic violence issue as a social problem in Pakistan after Pakistan has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1996.

Even though various strategies, campaigns, and legislation have been set up in order to tackle the problem, the wide patriarchy system practiced in the society remains as a cultural barrier. The absence of special and comprehensive legislation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa about domestic violence is not the only challenge. The knowledge about this social problem is also not explored to a great extent. The fundamental issues such as the nature, causes, and consequences of domestic violence, are still under-researched. These obstacles may have prevented the huge potential of new knowledge and an in-depth understanding concerning domestic violence.

We anticipate this study will inspire more research in the future to examine various aspects of domestic violence in the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

1.7 Demographic of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is one of the four administrative provinces of Pakistan. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's provincial capital and largest city is Peshawar, with Mardan being the second-largest. It shares borders with the Tribal Districts (previously known as FATA) to the west; Gilgit–Baltistan to the northeast; Azad Kashmir, Islamabad and Punjab to the east and southeast. It also shares an international border with Afghanistan, to which the province is linked via the historic Khyber Pass. [\(contributors, 2016\)](#)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the third-largest province of Pakistan by the size of both population and economy though it is geographically the smallest of four. It comprises 10.5% of Pakistan's economy, and is home to 11.9% of Pakistan's total population, with the majority of the province's inhabitants being Pashtuns, Hazarewal, Chitrali, and Kohistani.

KP has an estimated population of about 30,523,371 million, according to 2017 estimates, which includes 15,467,645 are males, 15,054,813 are females and 913 are transgenders. The average annual growth rate is 2.89 over a period of 1998 -2017. As per the provincial results, the urban population shows a growing trend with 18.77 % of the population living in urban areas.

According to latest Pakistan social and living standards measurements (PSLM) survey 2015, the literacy rate of population 60%. Province wise data suggests 53% in KPK : 71 % are male and 35% are females.

There are over 625 basic health units (BHU's) across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and in tribal districts (previously known as Federally Administered Tribal Areas). [\(Contributers, 2018\)](#)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has the third largest provincial economy in Pakistan. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's share of Pakistan's GDP has historically comprised 10.5%, although the province accounts for 11.9% of Pakistan's total population. The part of the economy that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa dominates is forestry, where its share has historically ranged from a low of 34.9% to a high of 81%, giving an average of 61.56%. Currently, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa accounts for 10% of Pakistan's GDP, 20% of Pakistan's mining output and, since 1972, it has seen its economy grow in size by 3.6

times. Agriculture remains important and the main cash crops include wheat, maize, tobacco (in Swabi), rice, sugar beets, as well as fruits are grown in the province. [_\(contributors, 2016\)](#)

The Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa police is responsible for law enforcement and policing in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. As provided by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government there are almost 265 police stations, working in KP. [_\(Police\)](#)

On April 2017, Dawn Newspaper reported that, the percentage of women working in the police is as low as 1 percent, with 683 policewomen working in a force of 68, 106 personnel. [_\(Reporter, 2017\)](#).

According to the Directorate of prosecution in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa there are only 23 Assistant Public Prosecutors and 5 District Public Prosecutor which is very low ratio.

Chapter 2

2.1 Research Methodology

This study is exploratory and descriptive in nature because the research focuses on the less investigated and explored area. Hence, the purpose of this study is to contribute new knowledge regarding the experiences of domestic violence from the perspectives of domestic violence survivors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It was assumed that there may be one or many factors that underlies why most of the abused women are keeping the violence experience to themselves. The questions that require further examination via the present study are: “What impact does domestic violence has on abused women?”, “What are the barriers that inhibit violence disclosure?” and also “What is the nature of the assistance that may useful for abused women?”

The approach to empirical research adopted for this study is one of a qualitative, semi-structured interview methodology. A semi-structured approach was chosen because it offers the researcher an interactive approach as well as providing in-depth research data. The primary source of the present study was drawn from face to face interview with 25 women who identify themselves as experiencing domestic violence at some point in their life. All of the participants were aged between 20 and 60 years. While 5 service providers were interviewed. Which included people representing shelter home, women rights organization, legal aid center, helpline counselor.

Almost half of the total sample were the residents and ex-residents of private and government-owned shelters, remaining are introduced by Dastageer legal aid center and other women groups. Apart from the interviews with abused women, the researcher also made some extra effort to enrich the research data by obtaining invaluable inputs from the professionals who work with domestic violence service providers police, NGOs, health officials, helplines which made a great contribution to the study.

The methods employed were designed to be explanatory, descriptive as well as providing empirical evidence, which was therefore useable for this research. Due to the ethical issues in

relation to the sensitive nature of the investigation, the researcher was obliged to take full responsibility regarding research implementation during the fieldwork as well as protecting the privacy and confidentiality of the data.

Pre-Test

Before the final data was collected, a pre-test was carried out in order to ensure that the data collection instruments and questions were appropriate for the research.

Data collection

As the research involved qualitative methodological approach, the Data were collected from primary and secondary sources to get the research objectives.

Primary data

Primary data in this research was collected through semi-structured interviews with the women who were identified as the respondents for the research. The interviews were organized with prior consent taken from the respondents. Pre-interview meetings were conducted with the respondents in which all details about the research were shared and the respondents were informed about the ethical consideration and their voluntary participation. All the interviewees were asked open ended questions covering the research scope and key objectives. Some follow-up questions were also asked to get concrete primary data.

Secondary data

A secondary source of the data collection was the literature which was published as journals, researches, reports, articles, books etc. which was read in depth to find out already known facts about the research problem and it also helps to structure theoretical framework. Major studies, publications and researches which were read for the research included National Research On Domestic Violence Against Women In Georgia” conducted in year 2010, Domestic Violence against Women in Bangladesh: A Review of the Literature and the Gaps to fill-in by Future Interventions 2015, Strategies and recommendations for prevention and control of domestic violence against women in Pakistan by Agha Khan university in 2007, Domestic Violence Against Women: A

Complex Issue in Pakistan” by Rukhshanda Zarar, Long-Term Physical and Mental Health Effects of Domestic Violence 2014, Role of Women in Perpetuating Violence against Women: Case Studies of Domestic Violence Victims by gender studies department, university of Punjab 2016, policy option paper titled “Policy Options on Domestic Violence Gender-based Violence in Kosovo* Finding Solutions to End DV/GBV” in 2013 by UNICEF, and Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence: Expressions and Strategies by Sida, in 2015.

Ethical consideration

Considering the sensitivity of the topic and purpose of the research, there was high need to ensure the protection and confidentiality of identity of the respondents throughout the research period from any kind of harm, therefore, ethical issues were taken into account very rigorously. Thus, first and foremost, consent from relevant authorities like shelter homes, organizations, legal aid center etc. and the respondents was taken. The researcher and team ensured full and consented participation of the respondents. Written Consent was taken for which consent forms were developed in collaboration with Blue Veins team. Also, keeping in view the best interest of participants and following the safeguarding principles of minors, all the respondents above age of 18 years were interviewed with their consent and willingness. To ensure the voluntary participation of the respondents, all the participants were informed about the objectives, aim and other information related to the research before interview in pre-interview meetings. Information or experience shared, name, identity and other details of the respondents not shared between them and even not used in the research. To keep the best interest and protection of the respondents anonymity and confidentiality highly ensured throughout the research.

2.2 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would help to identify the key challenges faced by the domestic violence survivors and help to better reshape the prevention and response services by the government and non-government service providers. The information generated from the study would also add to the already existing body of knowledge.

2.3 Research Aim

The central aim of the study is to explore and better understand the experiences of women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who has faced/ facing domestic violence. We anticipate that this study will be useful in terms of forming part of the emerging literature on this subject and to add to the growing body of knowledge on domestic violence against women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In fact, the outcomes from this study aim to contribute to knowledge enhancement, raising awareness along with the policy developments and practices concerning the problem of domestic violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In particular, the key objectives of the study to be addressed are as follows:

- To investigate the impact on abused women who experience domestic violence.
- What aspects of the abused women's lives have been affected due to the experiences of violence?
- To identify the barrier that inhibits abused women from disclosing and seeking assistance from formal and informal support networks.
- What obstacles restrain abused women from disclosing domestic violence incidents? How can the under-reporting of cases of domestic violence be overcome?
- To explore underlying issues faced by women survivors in relation to their needs and the support of domestic violence service providers.
- What are the issues highlighted by women survivors pertaining to local support systems?
- What are the women's suggestions in terms of improving the provision of services?

2.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study covers the experiences of domestic violence faced by women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This investigation is aimed at understanding the dynamics of families with violent relationships and rectifying the problem so as to address this sensitive issue more efficiently in the future. The findings are based on data gathered from qualitative interviews with the women survivors and the professionals who work in related service sectors. Taken together, it is worth

mentioning that the problem of gaining access as well as recruitment of the participant was very challenging. Although the small number of participants may not be representative of all survivors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the results may not be generalized.

This study focuses on the women's view who faces domestic violence, the need for a better understanding of the perpetrator's perspective is strongly recommended for future work. The 'check-and-balance' process may explain these two different outlooks and perhaps enhance the extent of awareness and recognition of the problem.

2.5 Importance of this study

This study is of great significance it provides reflections of the experiences of women who face and survive domestic violence. The issue of domestic violence and its impacts on women, families and society is under-researched. At the moment there is still little empirical data on domestic violence against women in the cultural context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly on the experiences of survivors. Little information is available about the impact that such violence has on a woman's sense of well-being, about their violence disclosure and also on their experiences of seeking professional assistance while dealing with the abuse.

Based on the latest statistics released by Health and Demographic Survey 2017-2018, urgent attention is needed to study this matter because the data showed that cases of domestic violence are increasing every year, and has been recorded as the highest form of violence against women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

This study aims to dig a bit deep into the social issues around domestic violence. Even though at the moment the service provisions for abused women are in place, the study was interested in looking at the ways in which the services provided had affected the women, as well as possible downsides to such engagement and the need to extend these survivors. We hope that this study will reduce a gap in the growing body of knowledge on domestic violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Current practices by governmental and non-governmental service providers reflects that information and records regarding domestic violence are non-integrated and disconnected from

one another such as police, health department, social welfare, media as well as with non-governmental organizations.

This study provides valuable information in relation to the impact of domestic violence on the women survivors and reason why some of them are reluctant to disclose and report domestic violence.

At the same time, it is important to identify the key factors which inhibit women survivors from seeking service and support by government and non-government service providers. We anticipate that this study will:

- Increase knowledge about the impact of domestic violence on the women survivors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- Increase understanding of the factors that inhibit the women from seeking outside help and suggest some practical solutions to overcome this situation.
- ▲ Increase the understanding of the resources that are perceived as being helpful to the women while dealing with the domestic violence problem.
- Provide guidelines for the establishment and development of useful mechanisms that can facilitate women's access to the full range of available services.
- Raise awareness of the damage caused by domestic violence at a societal level.
- Influence future policy development and practices concerning the problem of domestic violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

We are hopeful that this study will highlight the key areas for improvement in the domestic violence prevention and response services. The study also reflects that shelter both by the state in the non-governmental organizations is only a temporary strategy; by separating the victims from the offenders. However, there are other aspects to be considered as further support, including legal interventions, healthcare, interventions, social service interventions and collaborative interventions, which may improve the existing services as well as developing new services in the future for women experiencing domestic violence.

Chapter3

3.1 Social issues in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Pashtun social structure is what anthropologists term a segmentary lineage system. In such a system, there is a hierarchy of social groupings starting at the local level, then proceeding upward through various levels to an entire ethnic group. These relationships are based on kinship and shared culture.

Social life in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is influenced by a diverse mix of ethnic origins as well as the numerous religious groups. The difference is also very much apparent between the lives of the urban, semi-urban and rural population. In general terms people living in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa preserve the value of family and marriage institutions with strong ties among its kin. The common family unit is defined with the figure of a father, a mother, and children in a household. The extension of this structure may also include the presence of grandparents, uncles and aunts, cousins as well as other relatives. In relation to this, family members are addressed according to their position in the family to show seniority as well as the higher-ranking of an individual.

Marital life in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is of great religious and social value. Men and women regardless of all ethnic groups or religions are bound to a legal relationship upheld with religious ceremony or custom before they can live together as a couple. Traditionally, married men and women are specified with gender roles in the family, for example, men as the head of the family with the responsibility to earn money so as to support the family. Meanwhile, the women are expected to take charge of domestic responsibilities and be obedient to her husband as well as to the parents-in-law.

Love marriage or marriage by choice is an emerging phenomenon but still does not have the social endorsement and acceptance at large. With increased urbanization and digital age, the family structures and the social values are changing rapidly which has affected many of the people in relation to the social aspects of their lives as well as their psychological well-being.

3.2 Key Cultural Issues

To understand the legal and social challenges towards the recognition and response to the issue of domestic violence it is important to understand the traditional and cultural practices and their dimensions which does not only affect the behavior of society but the policy formulation and its implementation. The existing patriarchal cultural and traditional practices emphasize the subordination of women and the superiority of men. The discrimination and low status of women in society is guided by the patriarchal notion that the man is the head of the household, owns and controls everything in it including the wife and children. Most traditional and customary practices regard women as minors to men and hence both their gender and sex roles perpetuate the stereotype view of women.

Cultural and harmful traditional practices like Swara, exchange marriages, early child and forced marriages and Ghag emphasizes on the less social status and value of women in our society. A woman or wife is conditioned to make her marriage a success by preserving her marriage and keeping her marriage problems secret which may lead to failure to report and disclose domestic violence cases.

It is observed that because of beliefs and the socialization process, most women are brought up to tolerate men's behavior including indecent practices just to stay in marriage, "women would rather protect their husbands and relatives in order to remain in marriages because they think they are only respected when they are married and not single. Also, there is a common belief among of women and girls that women can only remain safe with men.

The traditional perception of values is that women constitute a sector of society which has low status and are expected to be subordinates. As such, whenever a woman seeks to establish her human rights, customary law would be very reluctant to appreciate that, the patriarchal principles of women's subordination within the family form the principles of family law. Various components of customary law treat women as properties of their husbands. Most customs

embedded in customary law are now a conduit for rampant violence against women. Violence in marriage is cemented by the traditional belief that a husband is allowed to chastise his wife once in a while as a form of disciplinary measure. In most traditional settings, beating a wife or women family member was considered to be normal custom which is held strongly by the majority demands that wives should be submissive and not reveal domestic squabbles including beatings.

3.3 Economic issues

Family income in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is based on social class which is divided into three categories, namely the upper class, the middle class, and the lower-class income group. The province hit with terrorism and instability managed to grow fastest in terms of economy. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa saw a growth of 5.1% in the financial year 2016-17 as compared to 4.9% growth it had in the year 2008. The transport for trades through the province also contributed to the economic growth of the province. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remained close to a 5% growth rate during the past 15 years which is the highest among all four provinces. [_\(Hassan, 2018\)_](#)

As one of the countries strongly accustomed to a patriarchal social system, men as the leader has taken over the role of 'breadwinner' in the family. Despite the growing economy, a small number of women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has a little space in the formal job market. Women who do not have a job are financially dependent on their men for household expenditures.

Pakistan has held the second-to-last spot on the Global Gender Gap Index for five years in a row (2012-17). Though women constitute 49% of Pakistan's population, they constitute only 24% of the labor force. The ILO data indicates that Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for men (82.5%) is more than three times higher than women (24.8%). The gender gap in LFPR is one of the world's highest, making Pakistan comparable with Arab states and countries of North Africa. Even when women want to participate in the labour force, they are unable to find employment. There is a noticeable gender gap in the unemployment rate. It is 5% for male workers and 9% for female. In the urban areas, the female unemployment rate rises to 20% while that of males is 6%. [_\(Ahmad, 2018\)_](#)

Domestic violence is not limited to any particular class, social status, income group or educational level but at the same time links between domestic violence and education is complex for example, educated households are less likely to experience stress due to poverty (a possible cause of domestic violence), because more educated people tend to have better-paid jobs.

3.4 Islam and Gender Equality

According to the teaching of Islam and Qur'an, both men and women are equal, and this has been emphasized in respect to their duties, rights, virtues, and merits. They are also promised the same reward for good conduct and the same punishment for evil conduct: "Whoever commits a sin is requited for just that, and whoever works righteousness - male or female - while believing, these will enter Paradise wherein they receive provisions without any limits." (Qur'an 40:40)

The concept of equality in the Muslim woman's life is well preserved by Sha ria law. This concept provides the women with equitable rights in terms of marriage, divorce and the inheritance of property. Even though in a Muslim society the man has full responsibility for the maintenance of his family, the women, on the other hand, may also contribute anything that she earns if she wishes. Thus, the rights of the women encompass economic, educational, political as well legal aspects of life. Nevertheless, Muslim women are expected to obey their husband in his role as the head of the family. This is the meaning of obedience in the context of marriage in Islam. As the Qur'an states:

"Men are the protectors and maintainers of women because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other and because they support them from their means. Therefore, the righteous women are devoutly obedient and guard in absence what Allah would have them guard." (Qur'an 4:34) In line with this, Islam also has attached a very high status to Muslim women. A few sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are also cited about the honor of being a mother:

“Your heaven lies under the feet of your mother.” (Ahmad, Nasai)

“Verily, God forbade for you, rudeness to mothers.” (Muslim)

A man asked the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to whom he should show kindness and he replied: “Your mother”. He asked who comes next and he replied, “Your mother”. He asked who comes next and he replied, “Your mother”. He asked who comes next and he replied, “Your father, then your relatives in order of relationship.” (Tarmizi, Abu Da’ud) “Do not leave your mother unless she gives permission or death takes her, because that is the greatest (deed) for your rewards.” (Al-Kabir)

In conclusion, it was stated in the Qur’an that muslim women are granted certain privileges over men, for instance in relation to their religious duties, financial liabilities, the inheritance of property. Further, significantly the women enjoy higher recognition in the sight of the Islamic religion by virtue of being a mother. Although men are given the role as ‘the protectors and maintainers of women’ in verse (4:34

The teaching of Islam does not indicate in any sense that women are inferior to men. In many instances, the verses of the Qur’an emphasize the element of equality between men and women incorporating a wide range of various aspects of life. Nonetheless, it is believed that there is a strong necessity for muslim women to be well informed in regards to their rights and obligations according to the Sharia because the demands as well as the challenges of modern-day living has increasingly put pressure on Muslim women worldwide.

3.5 Concepts pertaining to wife abuse in Islam

Pakistan is an Islamic country, most of the inhabitants of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa profess Islam, with a Sunni majority and significant minorities of Shias and Ismailis. Therefore, the requirement of understanding the Islamic approach on various aspects of its people lives is pivotal. This includes the teachings on the structure of the Muslim family. In Islam, domestic violence can be seen as a

careless attitude towards responsibilities between husband and wife, without any unlawful reasons which are solemnized by the Hukum Shara' (Sharia Law).

According to the Islamic view, marriage entails certain obligations, rights, and duties between a husband and wife. These foundations have been laid for the couples to achieve a happy marriage as well as to enjoy a stable married life equally. Both man and woman should be learning the responsibility of becoming a proper husband and wife for each other.

The Noble Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, indicates that both men and women have similar rights and shared duties in a marriage. As the Qur'an says: "And among His signs is this: That He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest, peace of mind in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo, herein indeed are signs for people who reflect." (Qur'an 30:21). "...Your wives are your garments, and you are their garments." (Qur'an 2:187)

Furthermore, Islam stresses the importance of men understanding their responsibilities in a family unit. Although the man is considered as a head of the family as well as the 'breadwinner', the role of women is not to be neglected. Muslim women have equal rights in terms of strengthening the home and supporting the family well-being.

The Qur'an thus states: "And they (women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them, and men are a degree above them." (Qur'an 2:228).

In respect to marital violence per se, Islam prohibits the husband to use any form of violence against the wife when disagreements arise. There are three stages to be followed in order when the arguments worsen. For whatever reason, wife abuse is not allowed although the Qur'an acknowledges the light battering of a wife for the purpose of disciplining. The husband must avoid severe and harsh punishment in his treatment of his wife. The Qur'an states about such circumstances:

As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them means (of annoyance).” (Qur’an 4:34)

The verse stated above does not portray that Islam belittles women. The striking in particular served as the last resort and also as a curative measure. The husband, in any situation, may not beat his wife in wild or savage manner. In fact, he must avoid attacking her in the face at all times. Only a ‘siwak’ (a tiny stick that is used for cleaning teeth) can be used for the hitting with the condition that no damage is done to the wife’s body and no mark is left on her. Similarly, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also forbade wife beating,

“Give her (your wife) food when you take food, clothe when you clothe yourself, do not revile her face, and do not beat her.” (Sunan Abu-Dawud, Book 11, Marriage (Kitab Al-Nikah), Number 2139)

The laws of Islam provide the woman her right to seek an end to a marriage if the husband has ill-treated his wife, for example in domestic violence cases. Initially, the reconciliation procedure may be introduced with the couple in order to attempt to save the marriage. However, if the relationship is no longer reconcilable, the wife may proceed with the process of divorce. Allah says in the Holy Qur’an Chapter 4, Surah Nissa verses 128 and 129:

"If a wife fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part there is no blame on them if they arrange an amicable settlement between themselves; and such settlement is best; even though men's souls are swayed by greed. But if you do good and practice self-restraint Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do."

“You are never able to be fair and just as between women even if it is your ardent desire: but turn not away (from a woman) altogether so as to leave her (as it were) hanging (in the air). If you come to a friendly understanding and practice self-restraint Allah is Oft-Forgiving Most Merciful.”

The dissolution of marriage or divorce is the final termination of a marital union between men and women. In Islamic law, divorce is referred to as talaq. Although Islam promises women protection from a husband's propensity to violence for example, the reality in some Muslim women's lives is different. Nevertheless, no one has to remain in those abusive conditions. Thus, divorce is permitted. As Muslim women cannot verbally divorce their husband (unlike the men), they are granted the right to terminate their relationships through the divorce process in the court.

To summarize, even though the light beating of the wife is permissible in Islam if the husband may refrain from it that would be a much better option. When reflecting on the wife abuse situation, typically none of the conditions above are met. Therefore, the beatings perpetrated by the husband in these circumstances are not considered as permissible in accordance to the Sharia. The word 'beat' in the verse (4:43) does not convey the meaning of batter or abuse. In short, the Islamic religion does not condone any forms of violence against women. Therefore, in due course divorce is allowed for Muslim women as stated in the Holy Qur'an in order for them to seek constructive change in their future lives.

Chapter 4

4.1 Literature Review

According to the research “National Research On Domestic Violence Against Women In Georgia” conducted in year 2010, domestic violence against women deprives them of their right to participate in societal life as a whole and holds them prisoners under the special conditions set by the immediate social setting such as family, kinship, social norms and values shared by the majority. The practice of violence against women and particularly domestic violence is a constant variable that deviates depending on societal vectors like social and economic development of the country as well as the societal norms perceived as a “normal” for the current culture of the nation-state. The major impact domestic violence has on women is hindering their full inclusion and participation in social life. Combating gender-based violence is important for building a truly democratic society founded on the principles of human rights. [\(UNFPA\)](#)

In year 2015 study was conducted in Bangladesh titled “Domestic Violence against Women in Bangladesh: A Review of the Literature and the Gaps to fill-in by Future Interventions” to identify the major gaps in literature on domestic violence against women. According to the study, Domestic violence often occurs in private spaces and is often tacitly condoned by society as a private or family matter. Though some feminists are critical of the use of the term domestic, spousal and family violence as they hide the gendered nature of the problem. The term domestic violence is widely used in many parts of the world as violence by a man against a woman. The concept of domestic violence is often considered gender specific because it is most commonly experienced by women and perpetrated by men and that any type of woman can experience domestic violence regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, class, disability or lifestyle. Most importantly, domestic violence is repetitive, life-threatening, and destructive to the lives of women and children.

The study also included about women's Coping Strategies or Help-seeking Practices in cases of domestic violence. The study provides that only a very few studies have focused exclusively on various aspects related to women's help-seeking behaviors or coping strategies in the event of domestic violence. Some studies focused this issue as part of other objectives. The researcher referred to the study conducted by WHO in this regard and reflected that the study of WHO identified Bangladesh as one of the lowest self-reporting countries in terms of reporting to different agencies and service providers about incidents of domestic violence. The most common reason for not seeking help was either the women considered violence as normal or that they feared consequences such as; further violence, losing their children, or bringing shame to their family. Some women felt they would not be believed or that it would not help. [_\(Anisur, 2015\)](#)

A study conducted by Agha Khan University in 2007 titled "Strategies and recommendations for prevention and control of domestic violence against women in Pakistan" says that there are many common precipitating factors which are responsible for domestic violence in Pakistan. Some example are domestic violence against women due to daily conflicts, family related problems, disagreements between women and men on any decision, choice preferences, conflicts of the two genders, etc. All of those factors are quite broadly discussed in majority of studies as they are globally applicable to any social make up. In Pakistan, there are some distinguished factors which make women prone to domestic violence like women's low educational levels, least participations in political activities due to low empowerment, existing misconception about Islamic thoughts and traditional norms, misuse of women in the name of honor justifying honor killing, low socioeconomic levels and poverty, existence of unjust traditional dowry system in the society, the common beliefs in the inherent superiority of males ignoring the women's autonomy, and even the alcoholic addiction of men which is not even allowed in Islam. [_\(Ali\)](#)

The study "Domestic Violence Against Women: A Complex Issue in Pakistan" by Rukhshanda Zarar says that in 48 population-based studies from different parts of the world, ten to sixty nine percent (10-69) of the women reported having been physically assaulted by an intimate partner during their life time. A woman is battered, usually by her intimate partner; every 15 seconds and

more than three women are murdered by their intimate partners every day in the United States. Domestic violence exists in both societies whether it is developing or developed. It is common concept that women in developed and advanced countries are enjoying their lives and liberty, but it is not true the truth is that every woman practice this experience in her life it can be less or more according to her situation, even women do not protest against these tortures and violence. God created man and woman equally nobody can claim that woman is inferior to man but unfortunately when we talk about particularly Pakistani society a woman considered only a subordinate, so she deserves maltreatment from males and society. She has to bear violence and torture from family and outside and no one can challenge and change this ill behavior. A woman performs her role as a mother, sister, daughter and wife in a well manner but despite this she faces different kind of physical violence and mental torture and when she wants to raise her voice against these acts then she is threatened for divorce. [_\(Zarar, 2018\)](#)

In year 2014 the study “Long-Term Physical and Mental Health Effects of Domestic Violence” was conducted with the purpose to explore the presence of domestic violence in heterosexual and homosexual relationships, examine the effects of domestic violence on short- and long-term health, and present potential policies and procedures to combat domestic violence. The study, about the impacts of domestic violence on health of women, reflected that women suffer many physical injuries from domestic violence, some life threatening, but research has proven that emotional injury is more damaging to long-term health. Psychological disorders can make women prone to repeat victimization, which can further impact their long-term health and put them at higher risk of suicidal behavior.

The study further reflected that although domestic violence causes more long-term health problems in women than men, it is important to know the consequences that everyone involved faces. Understanding the reasons why domestic violence occurs, and learning how to stop it is also important. Continuously conducting research on the prevalence of domestic violence and its related health problems is a necessity. [_\(Alejo, 2014\)](#)

In 2016, the study “Role of Women in Perpetuating Violence against Women: Case Studies of Domestic Violence Victims” was conducted by lecturers of department of Gender Studies University of Punjab Lahore with the objective to study the involvement of women relatives in inflicting violence on women and to investigate violence against women between larger social structures and its practice in households. The study showed various reasons of violence against women in premises of household. Dowry was the foremost reason for perpetrating violence against women, while power gaining and sharing, delay in birth of child or male-issue and nonperformance of household chores were also reasons for verbal abuse and physical violence. Our findings also observed that the female violence against female was justified on the pretext of history of facing violence by perpetrators themselves. It was also found that it brought physical and psychological health effects on women and their children and also deteriorated relationship of wife and husband.

The study findings further concluded that women were directly involved in perpetrating domestic violence against other women in the family. According to the study, women were also involved in inciting the male members to resort to violence against other female members out of her jealousy or insecurity. Though hidden, the phenomenon of female to female violence was prevailing in the social fabric of families. The enormous stress over “male to female” violence was not the adequate strategy to root out domestic violence against women rather the involvement of women must be acknowledged in such violence. The female to female violence was rarely highlighted and no radical steps were taken to control it in the society. The causes of domestic violence in case of female to female violence should be highlighted and adequate measures should be taken to control the occurrence of domestic violence. [_\(PJSS, 2016\)](#)

A policy option paper titled “Policy Options on Domestic Violence Gender-based Violence in Kosovo* Finding Solutions to End DV/GBV” issued in 2013 by UNICEF provides for policy points on various aspects of addressing Domestic Violence /Gender Based Violence, and systemic responses to address the rights and needs of Domestic Violence /Gender Based Violence clients to. The document provides that Responses to DV/GBV victims require giving priority to their

safety, basic needs and financial security so women and children can build a life without violence. Specifically, the focus is on developing immediate to long-range plans involving protection (safety – having access that is private and confidential, and being informed and supported in selecting reporting options, safety planning & interventions options and referrals; rehabilitation(basic needs – gaining access to services, including health care, counseling, support, shelter-accommodation and, in extreme cases, relocation);and reintegration (financial security – being supported in accessing job training and placement with support measures as needed, child care and transport, educational opportunities, counseling, social assistance when needed as part of financial security). Each plan and approach taken should fit women’s and children’s different situations. ([Unicef, 2013](#))

Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Violence: Expressions and Strategies by Sida, in 2015 says that in the immediate term, the effects of Gender Based Violence have to be tackled. Survivors have rights to protection and access to services. The thematic overview document suggest that strengthening and enhancing multi-sectorial services at all levels is one of the key strategy to tackle the impacts of violence against victims/survivors. Services must be based upon survivors’ needs and safety. Although the state is responsible for the safety of survivors, it is important that not only the state but also women’s organizations are provided with resources to give support. Women’s organisations often have a deep knowledge and long experience of support and service to survivors of gender-based violence. Services must be effectively coordinated in development and humanitarian contexts and include:

- Health sector response to Gender Based Violence including reproductive health, medical and psychosocial support;
- State run shelters and counselling centers in order to provide safe place to survivors of Gender Based Violence Shelters and counselling centers run by independent actors such organizations
- Adequate police and justice response including legal aid to survivors;
- Economic services.

Chapter 5

5.1 Findings and discussions on revealing the domestic violence

It was one of the objectives of the research to explore the experience and perspective of the domestic violence victims/survivors that what obstacles restrain women, who is a victim of violence in the household, from disclosing domestic violence incidents. Various reasons were shared by the respondents. Common perspective which emanated from the interaction with majority of the respondents was the stereotypical cultural, societal and patriarchal norms which restraints women to reveal violence. Following are the key findings on the topic:

5.1.1 Women's reluctance due to cultural and societal norms

Pakistani society especially Pashtun society is highly influenced by cultural and social norms which are highly influential in shaping individual behavior, including the use and acceptance of violence. Norms can protect against violence, but they can also support and encourage the use of it. During the interaction with respondents the women expressed their frustration regarding negative stereotypes together with social stigma and cultural attached to the marital relationship which inhibits violence survivor/victim to disclose the perpetration of violence against them in the household. Respondents shared that due to the influence of cultural perceptions in the societal context, women generally do not dare to speak against domestic violence. They feared that others would not support their issue and would probably blame them for causing the perpetrator's violent behavior.

In the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where life is controlled by religious beliefs and tribal values, where women are considered as commodities, it certainly takes a lot of courage for women to reveal the cases of domestic violence. If a woman reports a case of domestic violence it is considered that she has brought shame to the family by taking out a family matter to the police and the court. Furthermore, thinking about other people's perceptions is also a major concern among people in the community. traditions, whether or not taken into consideration the

cultural background and the influence of religion is associated with this social problem. It was reported that survivors of domestic violence in both places have found it difficult to disclose violent incidents for various reasons. Some women reported being afraid that they would not be believed, they blamed themselves for what had happened, were afraid losing or harming the children, and also the women did not want to embarrass the family when they revealed the real situation in their relationships.

5.1.2 Protecting the children's and family's interests

We live in the society where women is considered solely responsible for house making and retention of family and children peace and interest. During the interview's respondents shared that domestic violence victims and survivors face many barriers when they are making up their minds to leave an abusive relationship. In our society women has to take on the responsibility to hold the family together for the sake of the children. The norms and values inculcated in the communities have made the abused women believe that the children's interests should be put above all other matters.

The respondents shared that protecting the interest of kids and family is also one of the major reasons which hinders the disclosure of domestic violence. In most of the cases even the families of victim do not support and advise them to treat and deal the issue as a private matter to protect their family life and honor. Women shared that they face this fear that on disclosing the violence incident if situation gets worse then it can affect their kids interest and well-being.

5.1.3 Social and patriarchal norms and perspectives regarding domestic violence

The interviews with the domestic violence survivors as well as with the professionals who work with domestic violence victims and survivors revealed that domestic violence and especially when its perpetrated by the husband is considered within the domain of a family matter in Pakistani society. The findings of the research and interviews of respondents conclude that the cultural perspective among the Pakistani society in relation to protecting the family's honour and being secretive about their personal life are interdependent with barriers to disclosing violence.

The respondents interview also revealed that it is the general perspective that domestic violence is somehow not to be discussed openly in public and it was mainly due to men's and family's dignity as well as not daring to take the risk of being judged by the community. Societal and cultural norms existing in our society consider domestic violence as a private and personal issue which should not be discussed or disclosed out of the house boundary. And this factor has always inhibit victim of domestic violence disclosing the incident.

5.1.4 Women's lack of knowledge regarding domestic violence

The interaction with SGBV survivors and the service providers reflected that a large number of women and girls who are the victims of domestic violence or who seek any response service of SGBV have low literacy ratios. The interviews revealed women respondents have little knowledge about rights guaranteed under the constitution of Pakistan, laws and mechanisms for the protection of their rights. The findings concluded another major barrier which inhibits the victims of violence from disclosing and seeking help was the issue of the lack of knowledge about availability of domestic violence resources. They are not aware of any particular legislation and protection mechanism which could contribute to their access to justice, they are not sensitized about the different forms of violence they face. Women have very little or no knowledge that what are their rights, how their rights are protected under the laws and laws dealing with sexual and gender-based violence.

5.2 Findings and discussions on barriers in accessing response services

The second major objective of the research was to found out the personal experience women and barriers while contacting the service providers either government or non-government for help and protection. Following are the findings revealed from interviews of the respondents:

5.2.1 Lack of knowledge about the services

Data gathering and literature review over the topic of utilization and accessing response services it was revealed that major reason or barrier which inhibits victim from seeking services. Data

gathered from the research fieldwork has shown lack of women's knowledge on issues related to domestic violence and why they had to tolerate the violent behavior and relation because they were not well informed about how to get access to the variety of services available and utilization.

The results of interviews conducted with women survivors strongly reflect that the majority of the women were not aware of any law or and its availability which can protect them from domestic violence. Similarly, there was a lack of information among women regarding the available response services, their utilization, access, and contact. The interviews revealed that majority of women are not aware of any helpline by the government or nongovernmental organizations which could offer them referral and support. SGBV survivors are often stigmatized and blamed for the violence preventing them from effectively pursuing legal remedies. This is compounded by a lack of awareness among women and girls about their rights, as well as a lack of knowledge within communities and on the part of service providers about how to respond to such cases.

5.2.2 Challenges and experience in accessing the response services

The interviews with the women respondents who were the victims of domestic violence revealed that women had very little or no knowledge about the available response services of SGBV the only information and understanding they had about the services to reach and access was the police, hospital (in cases of physical harm), non-government organizations and the shelter homes. Many women shared encountering unfriendly and hostile experiences when they attempted to access some of the services provided.

Some of the women, respondents of the current study, shared their experience that how they faced discriminatory and gender unfriendly behavior while accessing and seeking help from the police stations and shelters. In addition, many of the interviewees reported their disappointment as well as frustration because what they have experienced was not what they expected from the agencies. The major challenges highlighted by the respondents while seeking assistance was the challenges and unpleasant situations at the medical facility and police station. Along with the

challenge of accessing to police station, women shared that due to the absence of female police officers at the police station it was very much difficult and uncomfortable to interact with male police officer and shared the incident details. As due to the patriarchal norms and cultural challenges it is very difficult to convince male police officer to lodge FIR against, he family members or husband for perpetrating violence in the boundaries of house. Similarly lack of information about the legal processes is also one of the major reasons which restraints women to seek legal assistance and protection. Same are the challenges of hospitals and shelters where the staff or responsible people lack of knowledge about the gender-based violence and how to deal with the survivors.

Insufficient knowledge, less sensitization, absence of SOPs and the influence of cultural perceptions on domestic abuse problems are among the contributing factors to the service providers' poor response in handling violent relationship cases. Which results in hesitancy among victims of violence to access and seek assistance from service providers.

5.2.3 Problems with the procedures and structures

The interviews with the women respondents also revealed procedural problems when seeking assistance with some of the service providers. For instance, although they had lodged a police report against the abusive husband, no further action was taken by the police (i.e. whether to arrest the abuser, place him on remand or interrogate the abuser for the offence). This situation happened because the women were not properly advised about the next possible step of the process. Common practice demonstrates that the police usually worked toward mediation to reconcile the couple since the case was culturally perceived as the issue of marital discord.

Women reported that in most of the cases they did not get justice and the police investigation reports did not support their stance due to the reason of insufficient proof and evidence from the complainant and were classified as family disputes. Women also shared that no action was taken in whatever way toward their husband/ex-husbands even though the incident of violence had been reported. Domestic violence is a major cause of physical injuries and mental health problems; therefore, the health care system may become a perfect medium of contact between

professional help and battered women but traditionally there is no culture of seeking mental health support. Many women do not seek medical attention after incidents of domestic violence. This was because many of them considered the abuse as 'not bad enough', or they had limited access to seek medical treatment, and also some were thinking that it was best not to drag the issue any further for the sake of the family.

5.2.4 Survivors found services useless for them

Along with the procedural issues as well as ineffective implementation of the services involving government and non-government service providers who work with domestic violence victims and survivors, the study and interviews of the respondents also revealed the complex, long, time consuming and too formal procedures of the services as one of the major cause which inhibit women in accessing the assistance and services. Most of the interviewees reflected disappointed with the prolonged judicial, legal, and government procedures on responses upon the applications for assistance. As the interview went in-depth around this topic, many interviewees revealed that they were actually afraid of going through the exhausting 'court' experience and yet at the end the abusers remain unpunished.

- Knowing the variety of services available and how accessible they are can make a great deal of difference for the women survivors (and their children). Firstly, the synergy between various helping agencies should be improved in order to offer more effective service provisions for this group of women. The findings also revealed that women need step to step guidance and support regarding the services and procedures which the services providers fail to provide especially the services provided by the government.

However, women also suggested the importance of integration between the related government and non-government service providers and effective implementation of the services in order to facilitate disclosing and seeking help for women (and children) who experience domestic violence. The idea was to avoid confusion and to assist women in getting the appropriate help depending on their individual needs. In addition, mutual co-operation between relevant service providers may well enhance the reporting level of domestic violence cases and may provide a

smooth, non-bureaucratic and hassle-free experience for women survivors of domestic violence in the future.

5.2.5 Domestic violence resources available for victims

Resources regarding the women's help-seeking options were explored by the participants of the study in two categories, namely formal supports and informal support networks. The formal supports consist of government and private organizations that provide services to assist women survivors in dealing with the violent situations. On the other hand, the availability of family, relatives, friends and neighbors can be an option for some of the women survivors facing domestic violence.

These informal supportive networks can be of much help, however bounded by some limitations. These types of resources are usually in the form of providing immediate practical supports such as accommodation, transportation as well as monetary aid. During the interviews, the women were asked about helpful resources that they received during these traumatic episodes (i.e. formal and informal supportive networks). The findings conclude that some women received help from family, friends, relatives and neighbors as well as their employers. Some women claimed they received no support from members of informal networks. Based on the interviews, it was found that some of the women purposely did not want to disclose the matter to any member of their family for various reasons including shame, fear of being disbelieved as well as to avoid the involvement of the family. In contrast, some had chosen to tell people closest to them about the violent incidents in the relationships yet received no help in return.

Other than the governmental organizations many of the service providers who work with women survivors are run by non-governmental (NGO), non-profit organizations who provide immediate and on-going supports, generate greater awareness within the public concerning the elimination of violence against women (and children) as well as promoting gender equality in the province. The response provided by the government departments and institutions is more viable and sustainable while there are challenges with the response provided by the NGOs because, in terms of their financial means, they are highly dependent on the donations of foreign funding, corporate bodies, government agencies and individual contributions in running their activities.

The services offered by the government are safety and temporary shelter, while the service provided by the Nongovernmental organizations includes residential support, psychosocial support, counseling and legal advice in order to develop awareness and the building of self-esteem and confidence in the women themselves.

The following is the currently existing formal support system for sexual and gender-based violence victims/survivors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:

- NGOs
- Police
- Health
- Social Welfare & Women Empowerment Department
- Accident and emergency departments of government hospitals
- District Legal Aid Committees
- Women commission
- Dar Ul Amans
- Private shelter homes

5.3 Service providers perspective

5.3.1 Viewpoints from the service Providers

In the data collection phase interviews were also carried out with the organizations who work with domestic violence victims and survivors. Specifically, the interviews were conducted with the person-in-charge of domestic violence cases at that particular organization, for example, directors, social workers, and helpline counselors. A set of guided questions had been asked during the interview because the researcher believed that inputs, thoughts, and viewpoints from the organizations and service providers were very important to supplement the women's perspectives on the issue of domestic violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The findings showed some similarities with the women's accounts and as well there was some new knowledge also gathered through the discussions. The service providers agreed that there were a number of explanations regarding barriers to disclosing and reporting the abuse among

women. One of the highest reasons given was that the woman wants to protect the privacy and sanctity of her family affairs. Women are made believe that family matters are strictly private and should be kept within the home.

According to the service providers, women survivors of domestic violence are commonly in fear of retaliation by the family members if they disclose the violence they are facing, majority of women financially dependent on their male family members, a large number of women in our society are not aware of their legal unconstitutional rights, despite increased visibility of the issue still majority of the women are not aware of the protection mechanism and the service providers who they can reach for support and protection, From the professionals' experience they have identified several reasons why the women finally disclose the violence. It was found that most women come and seek help with the intention of filing for a divorce from the partner, asking assistance in terms of monetary and financial aid as well as seeking shelter and refuge. Very few women wanted to file charges against the perpetrators.

According to the service providers, the women survivors of domestic violence were prone to show lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem as a result of domestic violence. Service providers are aware of the issue of the under reporting of cases, they have suggested a number of strategies in order to encourage women to come forward and disclose their abusive relationships. The majority of agencies realized that enhancing woman's knowledge and awareness, or in short that educating women, is the key. This education can occur by various means such as through workshops, seminars, exhibitions and broadcast on television, radio as well as through other mass media. They also have opinions on providing proper training for officers, for instance the police, nurses, doctors and other supporting staff working in the organizations in order to handle domestic violence cases appropriately. In addition, the professionals thought that interaction between service providers should be improved to avoid redundancy of roles.

The organizations were also asked regarding their resources to publicize and enhance awareness of domestic violence issues in society. It was learned that beside using awareness raising strategies, some of the organizations provide other established facilities including individual,

family and group counselling, peer-support groups, self-empowerment courses, for example cake and baking classes, handicraft courses, sewing lessons, child development courses, parenting courses and basic computer classes. Additionally, the organizations also organized activities for outreach programs such as visits to primary schools, secondary schools, higher learning institutions, and also visits to many small villages and rural areas to educate masses

The above-mentioned services however can easily be affected due to a number of limitations faced by the service providers. Many professionals at non-governmental organizations revealed staffing issues in relation to financial constraints. It was believed that a lack of volunteering culture among people has worsened this problem. Furthermore, the agencies felt that poor linkages with other service providers had restricted the helping process in running smoothly. Adding to the list was government bureaucracy issues and their reluctance to engage with non-governmental organizations due to several legal and procedural challenges

5.4 Reporting Challenges of Domestic Violence

In most of the cases, the acts and incidents of domestic violence often occur within the home boundaries with no witnesses other than the survivor/victim and the offender. That's why, in many cases even if victims take stand to initiate legal or any other action against the perpetrator, it becomes very difficult to prove the case and present fact based evidence. If the survivor does not wish to report the case of domestic violence because of the social and cultural pressures the data, frequency and contextual realities remain unreported, even in cases when the cases are reported the women are often unprepared for the number of court appearances, economic dependency also often pushes them to withdraw from their right to get justice and get into negotiations for the rehabilitation with the same abusive relationship. In many instances dissatisfaction with the system and lack of support during the proceeding compel victims to request dismissal of charges.

5.5 Impacts of Domestic Violence on Women Survivors

The long-term effects of domestic violence are far-reaching and often devastating for victims – most often women and children. Women and children, who live in an environment where

domestic violence commonly occurs, face increased risks because of the tumultuous atmosphere in their lives. Women may develop an impaired ability to nurture their children and contribute to their positive development. The effects of domestic violence on women go beyond the immediate physical injuries they suffer at the hands of their abusers. Frequently, domestic violence survivors suffer from an array of psychosomatic illnesses, eating disorders, insomnia, gastrointestinal disturbances, generalized chronic pain, and devastating mental health problems like posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

It was found from the study that most of the women reported having experienced psychological and emotional effects due to domestic violence. Women admitted facing a great deal of stress and depression and that their lives were full of sadness and constant despair. As well, these violent occurrences have made them feel traumatized. Some had blamed themselves as the source of the violence.

The women also noted that their children were less bonded with the father and developed feelings of hate toward the abusers. Furthermore, some respondents said that the battering frequently escalates during pregnancy. Other psychological and emotional effects reported by the women in the study include a sense of regret regarding the marriages, fear of the abuser, a sense of hatred and revenge, sleeping problems with nightmares, feelings of isolation from social networks as well as suffering from low self-esteem and a lack of self-confidence. In addition, the impact of domestic violence reached the extent of making women feel 'crazy' and result in suicide attempts.

Domestic violence survivors also shared that they suffered migraines and frequent headaches as a result of long-term physical health effects of domestic violence. Women recounted about their back/abdominal pain, chronic neck pain and vivid external physical marks due to burning injuries. Other impacts on physical health narrated by these women encompass the experiences of respiratory system problems such as severe coughs and shortness of breath as well as having asthma symptoms.

Chapter 6

6.1 Overall data analysis

6.1.1 Key findings

Key findings emanated from the study are the following: -

- Almost all of the women interviewed reported that they were abused psychologically by their partners.
- The results found that the contributing factors to domestic violence had varied from financial problems, substance abuse to feelings of jealousy and family interference.
- ▲ Findings from the current study support the view that a family's economy instability is also major risk factor contributing to abusive relationships in which a poor financial situation may create interpersonal conflict within the family members
- Women are exposed to not only physical and psychological violence, but also sexual, social and financial abuse.

The following is a list of key barriers identified that inhibit domestic violence survivor from making a disclosure of violent incident or relationship:

- Protecting children's interest and well-being
- Internal family affairs and family pressures
- Shame and embarrassment
- Social stigma within society
- Cultural and patriarchal norms in support of domestic violence as a private matter
- Lack of knowledge on needs, rights, laws legal proceedings, supportive response and preventive services

- Feelings of guilt and self-blame for being considered responsible for home making and peace
- Preserving the men's honour and being an obedient wife
- Challenges in accessing and utilizing available services
- Structural and procedural challenges of services available

6.1.2 Discussion / Overall data analysis

The issue of domestic violence and patriarchal culture is a constant debate but little is explored about the reasons that inhibit the women victims from disclosing domestic violence and subsequently seeking appropriate help from others. The interviews with the survivors reflect that some of the key barriers towards reporting domestic violence include economic reasons, lack of supporters, considering it a family affair, transportation problems, shortages of service providers, fear of losing the children, shame and embarrassment as well as self-blaming attributes

The survivors suggest improvements in terms of emotional support, socio-legal assistance and community healthcare provision to encourage violence disclosure and help-seeking attempts among domestic violence survivors/victims. In the patriarchal society of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, women face several social and societal pressures to safeguard and protect their family lives. The blame of breaking the family can be immensely painful for the women to bear alone. Therefore, many would prefer to keep silent about those incidents.

Overall, the study had identified four reasons for not disclosing the violence, namely lack of support, feelings of shame, the abuse is not serious enough and the problem is a private matter. The reflection from the interviews with the survivors/ victims and service providers reflects that the majority of women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa considers domestic violence as part of their family lives. At the same time, many of the abuse cases go unreported due to fear of stigmatization from society.

Hence, by keeping the problem to themselves, women have reverted to saving the honor of their family. The researcher found there were several stages that the victim lived in and these stages were unique to each woman according to their situation as well as the surroundings. In one of

the stages of violence, many women claimed to be guilty and blamed themselves as being provocative towards the abuser. The denial phase has unconsciously held up these women from disclosing the violence to anyone and seeking appropriate assistance sooner.

Also, the researcher found out that most respondents had experienced symptoms of physical, behavioral, personal, social and psychological abuse. The common reasons that make them not disclose the violence incidents involved fear of losing the custody of the children, the feelings of shame and lack of knowledge to seek help. Respondents reflect that the presence of children may contribute to unreported cases of domestic abuse, it is typical for the female parent to keep the violence problem to themselves for the reason of safeguarding the youngsters' interests, particularly because the women were economically unviable.

The other barriers that inhibit women from disclosing abuse are lack of awareness of domestic violence resources amongst the women. Some of them were even unsure whether they were qualified in getting help as a victim/survivor. Discouragement to disclosure was also initiated by incorrect perception regarding the service provisions. As many interventions were involved in the help-seeking process, women sometimes had misinterpreted the assistance. that the violent incidents were not serious enough to get help. In fact, for a few women, interventional programs such as counseling sessions could not be of much help to them.

Chapter 7

7.1 Conclusion

This study has explored women's experiences of domestic violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Returning to the research questions posed at the beginning of this study, it is now possible to state that the impacts of domestic violence include physical injuries, mental health problems, social exclusion, grow in self-faith, erosion of self-identity and self-esteem as well as having adverse effects on the children involved. The second major finding was that there were a number of barriers that inhibit women victims/survivors from disclosing the abuse. The study has found that generally violence disclosure was discouraged by the cultural belief of concealing their marriage matters at all cost, by thoughts of safeguarding the children's interests, by disadvantage of women's misapprehension about Islamic tenets on their husband's cruelty, by feelings of self-blame and guilt as well as the women's lack of knowledge on domestic violence resources in the province. It is also shown in the study that four major issues were identified by the women in relation to the effectiveness of the current service provisions relating to domestic violence. Firstly, the unpleasant experiences when the women accessed the services. Secondly, the struggle of overcoming the procedural hassles during the disclosing and help-seeking process, third about the usefulness of services and fourthly the needs and support mechanisms which those women perceived as helpful in dealing with their violence experiences.

The evidence from this study highlights the value of research that provides an opportunity for survivors of domestic violence to express their feelings as well as sharing their stories with the purpose of making other people better understand their violence experiences.

The current findings add to a growing body of literature on the experiences of women survivors of domestic violence. It is clear from this research that the context of cultural and religious beliefs among our society play an important role in determining how these women perceived their experiences of violence, as well as the challenges they are facing pertinent to this matter. However, with a relatively small sample size caution must be applied, as the findings may not be transferable to the general population of domestic violence victims and survivors in the province. As a final remark, it should be stressed that it is paramount to integrate interventional strategies,

increased public awareness and the formulation of national policy with the aim of preventing and combating domestic violence in our society.

This study reveals that many cases of domestic violence go unreported because women facing domestic violence are financially dependent on their abusers and had no income to sustain themselves. The study revealed that the majority of the victims who went to report instances of violence at home were of low educational status. The aforementioned factors combined would easily be grounded into women's economic dependence on men as the major reason for increasing domestic gender-based violence. Caution should, however, be taken not to solely rely on these economic factors in the quest for solutions.

The absence of legislation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province is also a leading cause of low the prosecution in domestic violence cases. Despite available support by the government and nongovernmental service providers, their efforts are usually frustrated by the victims' insistence to withdraw such cases or failure to testify.

The study also revealed that there is a need for the special law to prevent and response to the cases of domestic violence but besides the adoption of the law, some other forms of intervention also need to be introduced with the primary focus of providing rehabilitative services to the assailants. It is important to note that applying the wrong intervention to a problem only brings about undesired results and hence perpetuating the problem. Need thus arises to come up with appropriate legal-social interventions in domestic violence cases.

7.1.1 Educating Women, Empowering Lives

The results of this study clearly reflect that the majority of the domestic violence survivors had little/ no knowledge about domestic violence resources, help-seeking procedures as well as options pertinent to legislation, social welfare and supportive network mechanisms available for victims and survivors of domestic violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Poor/little and absence of credible information is one of the key reasons that survivors of domestic violence seem to be trapped in abusive relationships and feel unable to escape. Therefore, it is vital to educate women and girl about their legal and constitutional rights and at the same time make them aware of the available protection mechanism and resources available for their help.

Society as a whole also needs to be aware of how unacceptable domestic violence is and adopt a zero-tolerance policy toward this matter. There are several mediums of communication which can be used in order to disseminate domestic violence knowledge, to women specifically and to the community at large. Knowledge education about women's rights, gender equality, religious concepts pertinent to violent behavior, male-female role attitudes as well as the availability and access to domestic violence service provisions would be beneficial to all women. The education programs should include advertising campaigns via electronic media such as television and radio networks, internet access as well as through the print media, for instance, newspapers, magazines, books, posters, pamphlet, and brochures. These public campaigns will help to raise awareness on domestic violence among the community and subsequently act as a preventive measure to combat the problem. This strategy may also contribute to the education of informal supportive networks, such as family, friends, and neighbors, to effect appropriate intervention and facilitate the victims (and their children) in getting assistance according to their needs in relation to abuse disclosure, reporting the violence and seeking professional help.

7.1.2 Capacity building and sensitization of service providers

Apart from providing education for women and the public, frontline workers and domestic violence service providers' staff should also undergo professional training and programs to enhance their capability and keep their knowledge updated about domestic violence developments. In regards to the administrative workers, the importance of effective communication in delivering services is paramount. This is to build up the trust of the women that they will be helped accordingly and their case will be handled in a confidential manner. For career proficiency among the professionals, education can also be encouraged through continuous learning, for example undertaking further study (i.e. graduate studies, certificate programs) in related fields to improve staff competency and professionalism. In addition to ongoing professional development matters, domestic violence as a subject should be incorporated into the curricula at university level for a number of related disciplines such as counselling, social work, psychology, education, law, nursing, medicine, law enforcement study (the police force) and other fields that are more likely to deal with domestic violence cases.

7.1.3 Collaboration between service providers

Some of the issues emerging from the findings of the study relate specifically to the integration of multidisciplinary agencies in relation to the exchange of information, knowledge, resources, and expertise. Integration between domestic violence service providers would improve the quality of the services because inefficiencies are present due to the roles overlapping, the limitation of resources and case workloads. These inefficiencies can be reduced significantly through effective collaboration. Sessions, debates, conferences and workshops on the issue of domestic violence for stakeholders and service providers must be scheduled on a regular basis in order to allow continuous discussion on related issues around domestic violence cases from different perspectives. Via the conferences, the professionals will be able to respond effectively based on the dialogues with other professionals from various settings

7.1.4 Improving the quality of services

During the interviews, the usefulness and challenges of support and response services offered by domestic violence resources in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) were discussed by women participants as well as the professionals. The result of thematic analysis has identified various types of services available to women survivors of the domestic violence present. The participants further shared usefulness as well as shortcomings encountered by them. The findings describe the women's preferences with resources that they found supportive while dealing with a domestic violence situation.

The findings in the study showed that the majority of the abused women were not aware of the social and legal resources available around them and demanded guidance, support and follow up monitoring from the organizations and service providers during the help-seeking process. In fact, domestic violence service providers should also be prepared in terms of their knowledge provision as well as updated information concerning the domestic issue.

As well, the professional interviewees recommended adoption of provincial law to prevent and respond to the cases of domestic violence concerning domestic violence. They conceded that there was leniency regarding the offender as well as local authorities' poor response towards the reporting of cases of violent incidents.

In providing the services mentioned above by the service providers, the reality of the limitations faced by those organizations were apparent. Some of the professionals recalled the lack of manpower and funding as the major drawbacks in their services delivery. In line with the above discussion, the importance of integration between relevant agencies in order to facilitate disclosing and the facilitation of providing help to women was also raised during the conversations.

Indeed, formal supportive networks are in a key position to assist women survivors of domestic violence in many respects including psychological and emotional aspects, legal consultation, accommodation and housing as well as health care resources.

On the same subject, the professionals had identified a number of domestic violence provisions which specifically can be very helpful and even proved in past to be very effective resources to women survivors. The services include in-house activities (i.e. motivational talks, religious education and vocational training) as well as outreach programs such as workshops, conferences and exhibitions targeting the community at large. These activities aim at empowering women's sense of self and capabilities.

Findings of this research reflect that despite services are available many women survivors of the domestic violence are still struggling to receive the right support they needed. It seems possible that these results are due to several limitations encountered by the organizations, for example, lack of manpower and financial constraints (particularly for the NGOs). Thus, administrative reforms are suggested in order to enhance the efficiency and performance of the government and non-governmental service providers. Firstly, there should be an increase in the number of organizations (i.e. governmental and non-governmental) providing a wider range of appropriate services to women with domestic violence experiences.

Professionals who work with domestic violence victims and survivors should be equipped with knowledge relating to recent developments on domestic violence locally as well as at an international level, and be familiar with domestic violence information including policy reviews, legislative changes and the debate pertaining to the key problems of this subject.

7.1.5 Improving resources, procedures and structures for support

Most of the resources available to the domestic violence survivors today are mostly based on the investigations on how the assistance and support mechanism can benefit the survivors. Therefore, a regular review should be conducted to ensure its effectiveness as well as suitability for use in different settings. Regular reviews and follow up should be conducted with the beneficiaries of government and private shelter houses to determine the satisfaction experience, the interviews carried out for the purpose of this study reflects that legal provisions were seen to be problematic for some of those women which they identified as a contributing factor to their negative experiences with social services.

The single most striking result to emerge from this study is that the participants urged the justice system to make the public aware of the service provisions and assistance offered, so as to encourage disclosing domestic violence and help-seeking attempts among victims with domestic violence problems.

In relation to women's experiences while dealing with domestic violence service providers, some women reported that healthcare providers were not sensitive, blaming and unsupportive towards them. Majority of women did not report the cases in the initial stages of domestic violence to the police because they were afraid the abusers might retaliate. Some women wanted to protect the abuser and the few reflected that the actions taken by the police were considered unhelpful and ineffective in resolving their problems.

For the improved response strategies, all the service provided by the government and nongovernment service providers needs to be holistic and based on the fact that this is what women find helpful in dealing with abusive relationships. Women who have gone through the experience of domestic violence strongly believes that women and their children were most at risk of harm due to poor law enforcement, the ineffectiveness of social services as well as further harassment and intimidation from the perpetrators.

Chapter 8

8.1 Recommendations

- There is an urgent need in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to adopt legislation to prevent and response to the cases of domestic violence, otherwise, efforts that have gone in public awareness campaigns to sensitize women on the need to report cases of domestic violence will be in vain.
- An effective approach to dealing with any problem is to tackle it before it happens. It is undeniable that gender-based violence has been perpetuated by culture through the agents of socialization, it is, therefore, important to note that the problem can only be addressed by changing people's mindsets. An effective instrument in this quest is to engage in extensive sensitizations and awareness campaigns in communities especially the younger generation (pupils and students).
- Darul Amans (Government shelters) should be established in all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and more resources should be allocated to improve the services.
- In order to keep track of habitual abusers, there is a need for proper record keeping of perpetrators whether a case goes to court or not. This is important because the appropriate course of action to take in any particular domestic violence case.
- In addition to ongoing professional development matters, domestic violence as a subject should be incorporated into the curricula at university level for a number of related disciplines such as counselling, social work, psychology, education, law, nursing, medicine, law enforcement study (the police force) and other fields that are more likely to deal with domestic violence cases.

- Government should take initiatives to ensure high-quality response and referral services for the women victims of domestic violence in accordance with the internationally adopted standards.
- Service providers must introduce quality assurance mechanisms for the referral system.
- Government as well as non-government organizations should take steps to raise public awareness on gender equality and the domestic violence against women, in order to eliminate the opinions and practices that generates and supports discrimination and domestic violence.
- Cooperation with the media should be enhanced for mainstreaming the gender equality, and highlighting the negative impacts of sexual and gender-based violence in order to facilitate the change into the public attitude towards gender equality.
- Strengthen the cooperation with the media for providing clear information to the public on the issues of gender equality and domestic violence; introduce a cycle of special TV-programs on these issues via the high-rating channels, among them, especially – via the public broadcaster.
- Multi-sectorial services (e.g. medical and psychosocial support) can help both survivors and perpetrators of SGBV to avoid further violence.
- Supporting women's legal rights to property, land, inheritance, employment and income can increase women's ability to leave abusive relationships and take an action against the perpetrator without any fear of dependency.
- Strengthen the legal and policy framework for both prevention and response to SGBV.

- Challenging the societal and cultural norms to prevent sexual and gender-based violence is very important. Prevention efforts should start early in life and be directed at girls and boys at early age. Both non-formal education and formal education are important sites for normative change and have the potential to address gender inequalities and prevent SGBV.
- More efforts need to be made to increase women's economic, social and legal empowerment that enhance women's bargaining power and ability to leave abusive relationships.
- Increase awareness of the scope of the problem and its impact and strengthen preventive efforts.
- Establish and expand free and independent awareness and advice programs countrywide which are easily accessible to the public and wherefrom survivors can get advice and information regarding the legal assistance required, available services, information regarding their utilization and access.
- Increase the capacity of service providers to meet the growing and diverse needs of the victims/survivors for services.
- Increasing the number of institutions such as women's consultancy centers and shelters, which will empower women in their struggle with violence against women and improving the quality of the personnel who provide service in these institutions are recommended.
- Include issues on gender equality and sexual and gender based in all grades of education within the scope of formal education and include academia in the trainings carried out in this field are recommended.

REFERENCES

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures#notes>)

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/02/01/more-than-1-billion-women-lack-legal-protection-against-domestic-sexual-violence-finds-world-bank-study>)

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1294475>)

<https://www.policyforum.net/ending-violence-women-pakistan/>

<https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/pakistan>

<https://www.dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR354/FR354.pdf>

https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Khyber_Pakhtunkhwa&oldid=897290400

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People%E2%80%99s_Primary_Healthcare_Initiative_KP

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khyber_Pakhtunkhwa#Major_cities)

http://police.kp.gov.pk/page/police_station_police_posts

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1329292>

<https://propakistani.pk/2018/02/13/kp-becomes-fastest-growing-economy-pakistan/>

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/1655699/6-no-country-working-women/>

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/GEO/INT_CEDAW_AIS_GEO_13538_E.pdf

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320549118_Domestic_Violence_against_Women_in_Bangladesh_A_Review_of_the_Literature_and_the_Gaps_to_fill-in_by_Future_Interventions

https://ecommons.aku.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1170&context=pakistan_fhs_son

<https://crimsonpublishers.com/igrwh/pdf/IGRWH.000540.pdf>

<https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1016&context=themis>

<https://www.bzu.edu.pk/PJSS/Vol36No22016/PJSS-Vol36-No2-49.pdf>

https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/Final_Policy_Options_English_web.pdf

<https://www.sida.se/contentassets/3a820dbd152f4fca98bacde8a8101e15/preventing-and-responding-to-gender-based-violence.pdf>

ANNEXURES

Annexure 1: Consent form

“Exploring the Perspective and Experience of Domestic Violence Survivors”

You are being invited to participate in a research study about exploring the perspective and experience of domestic violence survivors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, supported by The Australian Government under the project “policy, advocacy and research to strengthen Implementation of Pro-Woman Legislation and GBV Response Services in KP.

The objective of this research project is to explore and better understand the experiences of women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who has faced/ facing domestic violence and identified the challenges with regard to response services.

You have been identified as a respondent for this research. There are no known risks associated or costs for your participation, if you decide to participate in this research. Your participation completely depends on your willingness. We assure your complete confidentiality and anonymity. The information or viewpoints you provide will be completely confidential and will not be used with your identity in the research nor will be shared with other participants.

You have been provided with all information about research and your participation in this study is voluntary. It is also to inform you that you can withdraw from the interview or research anytime and the data you will shared or provided will not be used in the research. If you choose to participate, please sign this consent form and handed it over to the researcher. In case of any issue or query you can contact Blue Vein team as well. Once you confirm your participation and sign the consent form, you will be interviewed.

If you have any questions or concerns about this consent form or about this study, you may contact the researcher at ruby_shah@outlook.com

Name:

Department:

Signature:

Date:

Annexure 2: Questionnaire

Questions for women survivors

- What kind of violence or abuse you faced?
- What was your response to violence?
- Did you share with someone from your family about the incident when it took place for the first time? If yes! What was their reaction?
- What do you think what were the causes of violence? was it your mistake or someone else?
- How did you feel? What were the impacts of violence? how it affected you?
- Did you know that what forms of abuse you were facing simultaneously?
- What were the challenges for you to disclose the issue or abuse?
- When you disclosed for the first time about violence what was the reaction of your family, friends or acquaintances.
- What are the challenges which hinders victims to disclose violent relations and behaviors according to you?
- are you aware about the laws, guaranteed rights and available support services.
- Did you contact to any response service of SGBV for assistance? What were the challenges of access for you?
- What kind of services you availed or contacted to seek help and protection?
- What were the challenges of services? how was your experiences?

Annexure 3: Questionnaire

Questions for service providers

- What are common challenges for victims/survivors of domestic violence according to you.
- What are the challenges for victims which hinders them to disclose violent experiences?
- What kind of challenges service providers face while assisting the victim/survivor?
- What do you think what are the challenges for victims while accessing or seeking assistance from different service providers?
- What are the structural barriers which obstructs effective provision of services for victim of domestic violence?
- What are the most needed services for victims of sexual and gender-based violence?
- How the preventive and response services can be improved?
- How reporting can be improved and what are your suggestions regarding the capacity development of media persons on sexual and gender-based violence and responsible reporting over it.
- What are the basic challenges and needs to improve the delivery of services in relation to sexual and gender-based violence?

