



Original Article

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Awareness and Experience of Violence among Adolescents

Abstract:

Introduction: Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a violence that is directed at an individual based on his or her gender identity. In Nepal, little is known about awareness and experience of violence among adolescents.

Objectives: To identify awareness and experience of violence among secondary level students of selected schools of urban and rural area of Kathmandu and Sindhupalchok.

Methodology: A descriptive comparative cross-sectional study was done and purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. Total 189 students participated, out of which the number of students in rural were 99 and urban were 90. The data was collected using semi-structured self-administered questionnaire technique. The data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics such as; frequency, percentage and chi-square.

Results: Majority of respondents had adequate knowledge in both rural (64.6%) and urban (56.7%). Majority of respondents had experienced psychological violence (95.95% and 65.55%), followed by physical violence (94.94% and 52.22%), and sexual violence (63.63% and 33.33%) in rural and urban respectively. Friends were major perpetrators of physical violence (90.4% and 83.0%) and psychological violence (86.3% and 84.7%) in rural and urban respectively whereas unknown people were major perpetrators of sexual violence in both urban (80%) and rural (71.4%). Residence was found significantly associated with all form of violence (Physical [P=0.001, psychological [p=0.001] and sexual [P= 0.001]) at P<0.05. There was significant association between sexual violence and gender (P=0.001) at P<0.05.

Conclusion: Ensuring adolescent period free of violence is an important investment in their future. Generating awareness and support services to school and community level is very crucial.

Key Words: Awareness, Experience, Violence, Secondary level students, urban and rural school.

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Introduction

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a violence that is directed at an individual based on his or her biological sex, gender identity, or perceived adherence to socially defined norms of masculinity and femininity. It includes physical, sexual, and psychological abuse; threats; coercion; arbitrary deprivation of liberty; and economic

deprivation, whether occurring in public or private life.¹

Gender-based violence can be applied for both men and women.²

There are various forms of violence against women and girls that are physical, sexual, emotional (psychological) and economical. The most universally common forms include domestic and

intimate partner violence (IPV), sexual violence (including rape), sexual harassment, and emotional/ psychological violence. Other include: sexual exploitation, sexual trafficking, and harmful practices, such as forced and child marriage, feticides, prenatal sex selection, female infanticide, political violence, elder abuse, dowry-related violence, acid-throwing, polygamy, witchcraft, lack of Pre- and post-partum service and kamlari.³ The form of violence against men and boys includes physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence, intimate partner violence and domestic violence^{4,5}.

A mixed-methods approach was used to conduct a study on violence against girls in educational institutions among 300 girls of 4 rural and 1 urban schools, lifetime prevalence of any violence (emotional, physical and sexual), for girls in school estimated at 91 percent in Nepal. Emotional violence was mentioned by about 47 percent of girls, 46 percent mentioned physical violence and 8 percent experienced sexual violence.⁶

In a same mixed-method research on violence on violence against girls in educational institutions among 300 girls of 4 rural and 1 urban schools of Nepal, perpetrators of both physical violence and emotional violence were family members (41%), friends (25%), teacher (11%), unknown (10%) and boyfriend (7%). Perpetrators of sexual violence were boyfriend (36.4%) followed by unknown person (27.3%), friends (9%), other students (9%) and relatives (4.5%).⁶

The prevalence of GBV is high whereas awareness regarding GBV is low. A study was done on gender-based violence conducted in selected rural districts (Nawalparasi, Makawanpur, Sindhupalchok, Siraha, Dadeldhura and sankhuwasabha) of Nepal among 900 samples. Majority of women (61.3%) were unaware of any laws that address GBV. Only 9% of the 900 women in the community-level surveys were aware that rape within marriage is illegal, and only 13% were aware of a specific law against domestic violence. More women were aware of laws

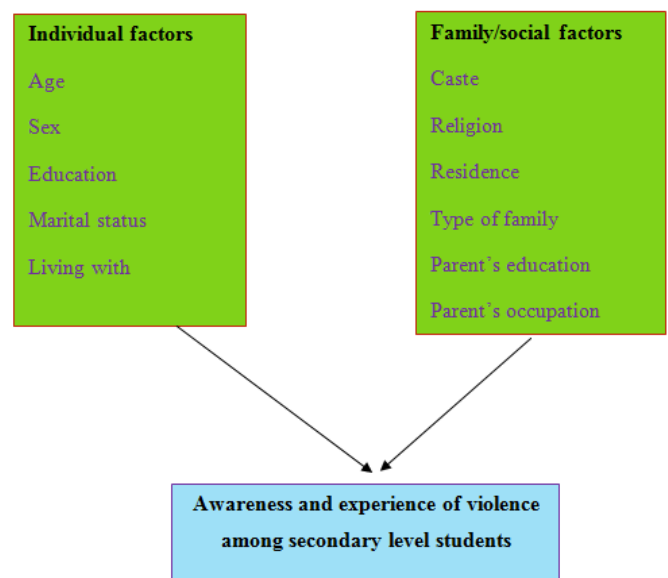
combating trafficking (35%) and protecting “untouchables” (45%).⁷

GBVs remain one of the most serious social, legal and health challenges for the 21st century. It is a major public health problem and has a serious impact on health and well-being. It happens in all the settings like family, community and state hence, has to be dealt with involving all the sectors. Raising awareness level of all the settings involving all the mechanisms of society have to be encouraged.⁸

As GBV is high in Nepal⁶, so, to increase the awareness level among adolescents, the topic of GBV is also included in curriculum of secondary level (class 8, 9 and 10) in School. This study will measure the awareness regarding GBV among secondary level students. Most researchers have found to focus on violence against women only, although, the gender-based violence against men and boys is prevalent too. Moreover, researches are mainly focused on violence of adults and children while adolescents are in shadow. This study has included both male and female adolescents to identify the awareness and experience of violence.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework on Awareness and Experience of Violence among Secondary Level Students



Methodology

Descriptive comparative cross-sectional design was adopted to find out the awareness and experience of violence among secondary level students of urban and rural schools.

The study population consisted of all students of class 9 and 10 studying at two selected schools; Saraswati Secondary School (urban) and Shree Setidevi Sarada Higher Secondary School (rural). In Saraswati Secondary school, the number of students in class 9 and 10 were 255, whereas in Setidevi Sarada Higher Secondary School, class 9 and 10 had 114 students. To meet the sample size of 188, simple random sampling was done to select the class sections and all the students from those sections were included in the study.

Semi-structured questionnaire was developed and translated into Nepali language which was self-administered for data collection. The study questionnaire was divided into three parts.

Part I: Description of demographical variables such as age, educational status, religion, ethnicity, marital status, educational status of father, educational status of mother, occupation of mother, occupation of mother.

Part II: Questions related to awareness on Gender Based Violence (GBV).

Part III: Questions related to experience of Gender Based Violence (GBV).

The total score of awareness questionnaire was 38. The awareness score was categorized as follows.

- Inadequate awareness - Score less than 19 (<50percent).
- Moderate awareness- Score between 19-29 (50-75percent)
- Adequate awareness- Score above 29 (>75percent)

The content validity was maintained through consultation with the subject expert as well as research advisor, literature review and peers. Prepared questionnaire was checked and verified by advisor and subject expert. For the reliability, pre-testing of the instrument was done in 10% secondary level students of another secondary school.

With the permission of the school Principals, the data was collected on different days in both the schools. The purpose of the study was explained and verbal/written informed consent was obtained from the respondents prior to data collection. The respondents took approximately 60-70 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Data was collected in one class per day. At the end, questionnaire was checked for the completeness and accuracy. Collected data was coded and analyzed using computer software package SPSS (statistical Package for Social Science) version 20. Data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage and inferential statistics such as chi-square test association of variables.

Result

Figure2: Respondent's Level of Awareness on Gender Based Violence n=189

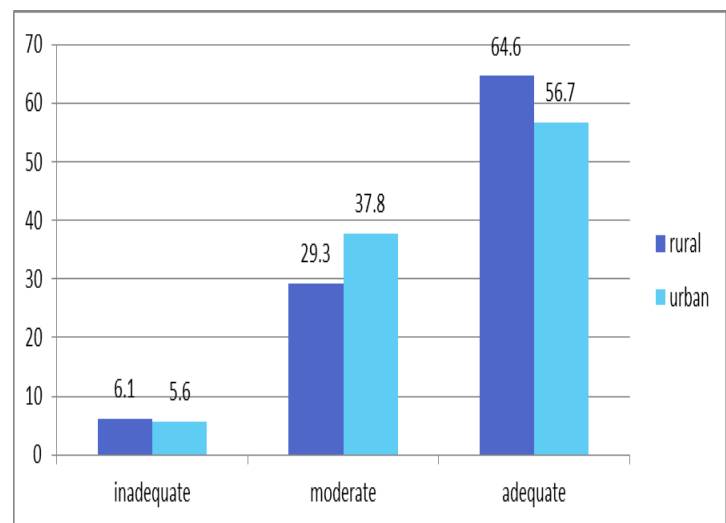
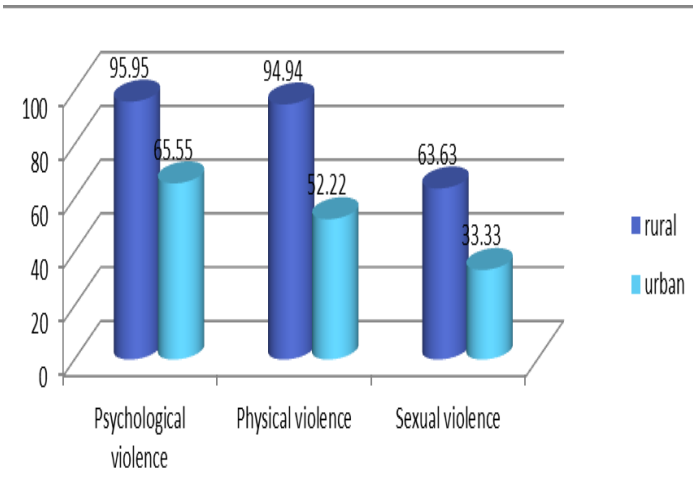


Figure 2 illustrates that majority of respondents had adequate knowledge in both rural (64.6%) and urban (56.7%).

Figure 3: Experience of Type of Violence

n=189



*Multiple responses

Figure 3 clarify that the majority of respondents had experienced psychological violence in rural (95.95%) compared to urban (65.55%), followed by physical violence (94.94%) and (52.22%), and sexual violence (63.63%) and (33.33%) in rural and urban respectively.

Table 1: Experience on Psychological Violence

n=154

Characteristics	Rural(n=95) (%)	Urban(n=59) (%)
Types*		
Yelled at	92.6	91.5
Irritated	91.6	91.5
Degrade/dishonoured	91.6	88.1
Humiliated	82.1	78.0
Threatened at	76.8	84.7
Insulted	72.6	79.7
Perpetrator*		
Friends	86.3	84.7
Family	84.2	67.8
Unknown	48.4	50.8
Teacher	41.1	55.9
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	41.1	32.2
Other	34.7	30.5
Age of first experience (in years)		
≤12.00	57.89	52.5
≥13.00	42.1	47.5
Experience within 6 months		
Yes	32.6	39.0
No	67.4	61.0

*Multiple responses

According to table 1, the most common type of psychological violence experienced by respondents was yelled at rural (92.6%) compared to urban (91.5%). Most of perpetrators were friends in both rural (86.3%) and urban (84.7%). More than half of respondents had experienced violence in rural (57.89%) and urban (52.5%) before 12 years of age. Majority of respondents had not experienced violence within 6 months in both rural (67.4%) and urban (61.0%).

Table2: Experience on Physical Violence

n=141

Characteristics	Rural(n=94) (%)	Urban(n=47) (%)
Types*		
Pushed away	92.6	91.5
Beaten by hands	88.3	87.2
Slapped	75.5	83.0
Pulled hair	70.2	76.6
Twist hand	59.6	70.2
Beaten by weapon	29.8	38.3
Perpetrator*		
Friends	90.4	83.0
Family	70.2	53.2
Teacher	48.9	51.1
Unknown	18.1	42.6
Other	12.8	25.5
Boyfriend/Girlfriend	10.6	27.7
Age of first experience		
≤ 12.00	67.1	59.6
≥13.00	32.9	40.4
Experience within 6 months		
Yes	37.2	29.8
No	62.8	70.2

*Multiple responses

Table 2 demonstrates that majority of rural and urban respondents (92.6%) and (91.5%) were pushed away followed by beaten by hands (88.3%) and (87.2%). The major perpetrator of physical violence was friends in both rural (90.4%) and urban (83.0%). Most of the respondents experience violence before the age of 12 years in rural (67.1%) compared to (59.6%) in urban. The majority of respondents did not experience violence in urban (70.2%) compared to rural (62.8%).

Table 3: Experience on Sexual Violence

n=93

Characteristics	Rural(n=65)	Urban(n=30)
	(%)	(%)
Types*		
Teased	95.2	96.7
Looked at in inappropriate way	74.6	93.3
Touched in inappropriate way	42.9	80.0
Attempted forced sex	12.7	6.7
Forced sex	12.7	3.3
Perpetrator*		
Unknown	71.4	80.0
Friends	57.1	56.7
Boyfriend/girlfriend	15.9	6.7
Teacher	1.6	10.0
Other	30.2	16.7
Age of first experience		
≤12.00	20.6	40.0
≥13.00	79.4	60.0
Experience within 6 months		
Yes	52.4	63.3
No	47.6	36.7

*Multiple responses

The result of table 3 shows that majority of urban and rural respondents (96.7%) and (95.2%) had experienced teased. Forced sex was experienced by (12.7%) in rural and (3.3%) in urban. Most of the perpetrators of sexual violence were unknown person in both urban (80%) and rural (71.4%). Majority of respondents had experienced sexual violence first as teenage start in both rural (79.4%) and urban (60%). Majority of respondents had experienced sexual violence within 6 months in both urban (63.3%) and rural (52.4%).

Table 4: Association of Awareness Level and Education, Caste, Residence and Gender

n=189

Variables	Awareness regarding GBV			Chi-square value	-value
	Inadequate	Moderate	Adequate		
^aEducation					
9	8	43	48	12.152	.001*
10	3	20	67		
^aCaste				0.233	.630
Bramhin	2	10	21		
Chhetri	6	23	41		
Dalit	1	4	12		
Janajati	2	24	36		
Not-mentioned	0	2	5		
^bResidence				1.532	0.465
Rural	6	29	64		
Urban	5	34	51		
^bGender^a				1.352	0.245
Female	6	35	74		
Male	5	28	41		

^aLinear-by-Linear Association; ^bChi-square; *Significant at 0.05 level of significance

The data presented in table 4 shows that awareness regarding Gender Based Violence was significantly affected by respondent's education ($p = 0.001$). Awareness level was not significantly affected by respondent's caste, residence and gender.

Table 5: Association of Psychological Violence and Respondent's Residence, Marital Status and Type of Family

n=189

Variables	Psychological Violence		Chi-square value	p-value
	Yes	No		
^aResidence			28.728	0.001*
Rural	95	4		
Urban	59	31		
^aMarital status			8.847	0.003*
Married	0	2		
Unmarried	154	33		
^bType of family			8.894	0.003*
Nuclear	99	25		
Joint/Extended	55	10		

^aLinear-by-Linear Association; ^bChi-square; *Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 5 reveals that the variables that came significant during the analysis were residence, marital status and type of family at $p \leq 0.05$.

Table 6: Association of Experience of Physical Violence and Parent's Occupation and Marital Status and Residence n=189

Variables	Physical Violence		Chi-square value	p-value
	Yes	No		
^aFather's occupation				
Labour	79	16	6.375	0.012*
Service	16	6		
Business	32	20		
Others	11	4		
Unavailable (death)	3	2		
^aMother's occupation				
Labour	32	6	6.308	0.012*
House maker	87	25		
Service	10	10		
Business	9	7		
Others	2	0		
^aMarital Status				
Married	0	2	5.906	0.015*
Unmarried	141	46		
^bResidence				
Rural	94	5	45.424	0.001*
Urban	47	43		

^aLinear-by-Linear Association; ^bChi-square; *Significant at 0.05 level of significance

Table 6 shows that experience of physical violence was significantly associated with parent's occupation ($p=0.012$), marital status ($p=0.015$) and residence (0.001).

Table7: Association of Sexual Violence and Respondent's Residence, Gender, Mother's Literacy and Father's education Level n=189

Variables	Sexual violence		Chi-square	p-value
	Yes	No		
Residence				
Rural	63	36	17.320	0.001*
Urban	30	60		
Gender				
Female	81	34	52.958	0.001*
Male	12	62		
Mother's Literacy				
Illiterate	41	27	5.224	0.022*
Literate	52	69		
Father's education level				
Primary	46	29	6.391	0.011*
Secondary	24	42		
Higher Secondary	9	13		
Bachelor or higher	2	4		

*Significant ($p \leq 0.05$)

Data presented in table 7 provides the information that there was significant association between experience of sexual violence and selected variables like residence ($p=0.001$), gender ($P=0.001$), mother's literacy ($p=0.022$) and father's education level ($p=0.011$) at $p < 0.05$.

Discussion

Regarding the level of awareness on GBV, majority of respondents had adequate knowledge in both rural (64.6%) and urban (56.7%), followed by moderate knowledge in rural (29.3%) and urban (37.8%). Whereas only 6.1% in rural and 5.6% in urban had inadequate knowledge. This result demonstrated that psychological violence is most common among all forms of violence followed by physical violence and sexual violence. This is similar to the study conducted among 2000 girls in 7 districts of Nepal⁹.

Findings of the study revealed that most of perpetrators of physical and psychological violence were friends followed by family. However, the findings reported in the study of violence against girls demonstrated that major perpetrators were family members (relatives), followed by friends. Most of the perpetrators of sexual violence were unknown person followed by friends⁶. Similar findings were reported in the study of sexual abuse among school childrens¹⁰.

Findings of the study revealed that awareness regarding Gender Based Violence was significantly affected by respondent's education at p value < 0.05 . Awareness level was not significantly affected by respondent's caste, age, religion and marital status, residence, gender and Parent's education. The variables that came significant with psychological violence were residence, marital status and type of family. Experience of physical violence was significantly associated with parent's occupation, marital status and residence. There was significant association between experience of sexual violence and selected variables like

residence ($P=.001$, gender ($P=.001$, mother's literacy ($P=.022$) and father's education level ($P=0.011$) at $P<0.05$.

Conclusion

The findings showed that large number of respondents had adequate awareness regarding GBV in both urban and rural areas. Regarding the experience of form of violence, majority of students had experienced psychological violence followed by physical violence and sexual violence more in rural areas than urban areas. The study finding showed that perpetrator of both physical and psychological violence were mainly friends followed by family, teacher, unknown and boyfriend/girlfriends whereas perpetrators of sexual violence were unknown followed by friends and boyfriends/Girlfriends. Thus, despite the enactment of laws to protect the children and adolescents, the cases of GBV are still evident among adolescents. Hence, community awareness regarding violence should be increased especially to family member as well as friends to stop violence by changing their attitude. In addition, social security as well as awareness to self-defense measures to prevent sexual violence is also crucial.

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Ethical Consideration

Study was conducted after written permission from authority concerned of Institutional Review Board (IRB), T.U.I.O.M, Maharajgunj. The selected school authorities were also informed and permission was obtained. Respondents were explained the objectives of the study and verbal and written consent was taken before administering questionnaire. Respondents were informed that they can leave the study anytime they want and anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents was maintained.

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