



Domestic Violence Against Women: A Comparative Study Of Select Rural And Urban Mandals In Kadapa District Of Andhra Pradesh

***Dr. A. Kusuma**
Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology
S.V. University
Tirupati – 517501

**** C. Venkata Subbaiah**
Research Scholar,
Department of Social work,
Vikrama Simhapuri University,
Kakuturu,
Nellore

Abstract

Domestic violence remains a widespread issue, significantly impacting women's physical, psychological, and economic well-being worldwide. This study examines its multifaceted effects among 385 married women in YSR Kadapa district, Andhra Pradesh, India. A stratified random sampling method was employed, ensuring a representative sample of 131 urban and 254 rural respondents. Primary data were collected through self-structured interviews, complemented by secondary data from official reports and academic studies. Statistical tools, including percentage distribution, Spearman's correlation, and chi-square analysis, were utilized. The findings reveal a higher prevalence of domestic violence among rural women and those aged 26–35 years, alongside substantial rural-urban disparities in forms of abuse, education, and occupation. Urban respondents reported greater levels of physical, psychological, verbal, and financial violence, while rural respondents exhibited higher awareness of the Domestic Violence Act, 2005. The study underscores the necessity of targeted interventions addressing sociocultural norms, economic empowerment, and education to mitigate domestic violence and support survivors effectively.

Introduction

Violence against women is a widespread issue around the globe, which seriously impacts women's health and well-being. Domestic violence refers to a pattern of abusive behavior of the partner or any person used to control, dominate, or maintain power against their partner or another person. It can be in various forms, including physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, or financial abuse that influences another person. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) report on the world estimates of intimate partner and non-partner sexual violence, approximately 35 percent of women across the globe reported experiencing either physical or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence (WHO, 2021). Moreover, the effects of domestic violence can be long-lasting, and victims have serious

consequences on their physical and mental health, including their reproductive and sexual health (Sinha et al., 2013). It increases the risk of mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and suicidal ideation (Deb et al., 2018), and also experiences social and financial difficulties, such as loss of employment and difficulty obtaining housing. In India, 33% of the ever-married women aged 15-49 experienced physical violence, 7% had experienced sexual violence, and 13% had the experience of emotional violence by their current or former husband throughout married life (IIPS and ICF. 2017). National Family Health Survey-5 report found that nearly one-third of women in India have experienced physical or sexual violence. While domestic violence against women has declined from 31.2% to 29.3% in the country, 30% women between the age of 18 and 49 have experienced physical violence since the age of 15 years, while 6% have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. Only 14% of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence by anyone have brought the issue up.

The experience of physical violence is more common among women in rural areas (32%) as compared to their counterparts in urban areas (24%) and a woman's experience of violence declines sharply with increased schooling and wealth, both for the female victim, as well as the male perpetrator. Physical, sexual, and emotional violence, and what are the determinants associated with violence against women. Physical violence is the first form of spousal violence involving the use of physical force with the intention of causing fear, injury, or harm, including hitting, slapping, pushing, choking, kicking, strangling, or any other similar actions. Thus, this can have wide-ranging and enduring repercussions on people, families, and entire communities. Sexual violence is the second form of spousal violence that refers to any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person's sexuality using coercion by any person, regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting which includes rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and any other non-consensual sexual activity (WHO, 2021). According to the World Health Organization (2013), 7 percent of women globally have been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner. Still, there is less data on the health impact of non-partner sexual violence. Emotional violence is a form of abuse that can devastate individuals and their relationships. Unlike physical violence, emotional violence is not always obvious and can be more difficult to recognize and address. Therefore, the victim is often vulnerable and dependent on the abuser, leaving them with limited options for escape. The effects of emotional violence can be long-lasting and profound, impacting mental and emotional health, relationships, and overall quality of life. Victims experience low self-esteem, guilt and shame, and a sense of hopelessness.

Methods and materials

The primary aim of the study is to investigate the multifaceted impact of domestic violence on women's physical, psychological, and economic well-being. The study seeks to highlight how domestic violence affects women in different settings and provide a comprehensive understanding of its implications. YSR Kadapa district in Andhra Pradesh was purposively selected for its proximity, allowing efficient data collection and closer observation of sociocultural and economic dynamics. A stratified random sampling method ensured a representative sample, with stratification based on rural and urban demographics. Using Krejci and Morgan's technique, the sample comprised 385 married women (131

urban and 254 rural), enabling comparative analysis between these settings. Primary and secondary data were utilized to address the study's objectives. A self-structured interview schedule, designed and pre-tested in a pilot study, included questions covering various dimensions of domestic violence. Data collection was conducted personally by the researcher through face-to-face interviews to ensure consistency and capture contextual nuances. Secondary data from official reports, academic studies, and government statistics provided additional insights. The study's sampling and data collection methods ensured a balanced representation of urban and rural populations, offering a thorough analysis of domestic violence's diverse impacts in these distinct settings.

Results

All 385 respondents provided complete responses to all items in the schedule. The analysis is therefore presented using percentages of respondents, Spearman's correlation, and chi-square analysis.

Table no. 1

Percentage Distribution of the Respondents by locality and their age

Age		Locality		Total
		Rural	Urban	
22 to 25 Years	N	46	14	60
	%	18.1	10.7	15.6
26 to 30 Years	N	85	55	140
	%	33.5	42.0	36.4
31 to 35 Years	N	77	54	131
	%	30.3	41.2	34.0
36 to 40 Years	N	46	8	54
	%	18.1	6.1	14.0
Total	N	254	131	385
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0

The table no. 1 reveals a significant difference in the distribution of respondents by locality and age group. Rural respondents constitute 66.0% of the total sample, significantly outnumbering urban respondents at 34.0%. The age group 26 to 30 years is the largest, representing 36.4% of the total, with rural respondents (33.5%) contributing more than urban ones (42.0%). Similarly, in the 31 to 35 years group, rural respondents (30.3%) remain dominant but are closely followed by urban respondents (41.2%). However, in the youngest (22 to 25 years) and oldest (36 to 40 years) age groups, the rural-urban gap widens significantly, with rural respondents comprising 76.7% and 85.2%, respectively, of those age groups. These differences highlight a disproportionate representation of rural populations, particularly in the extremes of the age spectrum, suggesting potential demographic or sampling biases.

Table No. 4.2

Percentage Distribution of the Respondents by locality and their type of family

Type of Family		Locality		Total
		Rural	Urban	
Nuclear	N	176	102	278
	%	69.3	77.9	72.2
Joint	N	78	29	107
	%	30.7	22.1	27.8
Total	N	254	131	385
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0

The family system is a fundamental and enduring social institution in Indian culture, playing a pivotal role in understanding demographic and societal structures, especially in rural settings. Based on the data, the nuclear family is the predominant type, comprising 72.2 percent of the total respondents. A higher proportion of nuclear families is observed in urban areas (77.9 percent) compared to rural areas (69.3 percent). On the other hand, joint families account for 27.8 percent of the total respondents, with a slightly higher prevalence in rural areas (30.7 percent) than in urban areas (22.1 percent). These findings align with broader trends of nuclear families being more common in urban settings due to urbanization and economic factors. This suggests that nuclear families are more prevalent in urban areas, whereas rural areas still have a significant proportion of joint families, reflecting traditional family structures. The trend highlights the growing dominance of nuclear families in urban settings, likely due to factors such as migration, economic independence, and lifestyle changes.

Table No. 4.3
Percentage Distribution of the Respondents by locality and their Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification		Locality		Total
		Rural	Urban	
Literate	N	26	15	41
	%	10.2	11.5	10.6
Primary	N	18	8	26
	%	7.1	6.1	6.8
Secondary	N	128	14	142
	%	50.4	10.7	36.9
Intermediate	N	50	40	90
	%	19.7	30.5	23.4
Graduate	N	22	23	45
	%	8.7	17.6	11.7
Postgraduate	N	2	16	18
	%	.8	12.2	4.7
Professional Degree	N	8	15	23
	%	3.1	11.5	6.0
Total	N	254	131	385
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0

Education plays a crucial role in shaping an individual's social and economic development. The table no.4.9 presents the educational qualifications of respondents across rural and urban localities. A majority of respondents in both areas have completed secondary education, with 50.4 percent in rural areas and 10.7 percent in urban areas reported thating this level of education. Intermediate education follows, with 19.7 percent in rural and 30.5 percent in urban areas having completed it. The data shows that higher educational qualifications, such as graduation, post-graduation, and professional degrees, are more common in urban areas. For instance, 17.6 percent of urban respondents are graduates, compared to only 8.7 percent in rural areas, and 12.2 percent of urban respondents have a post-graduate education, compared to just 0.8 percent in rural areas. In contrast, the proportion of literate respondents in rural areas (10.2 percent) is slightly lower than in urban areas (11.5 percent). This pattern reflects the higher educational attainment levels in urban areas, indicating the influence of urbanization on access to and emphasis on education, while rural areas exhibit a greater concentration of respondents with secondary education.

Table No. 4
Percentage Distribution of the Respondents by locality and their Occupation

Occupation		Locality		Total
		Rural	Urban	
Agricultural Labour	N	133	0	133
	%	52.4	0.0	34.5
Non Agricultural labour	N	32	47	79
	%	12.6	35.9	20.5
Home Based Worker	N	48	23	71
	%	18.9	17.6	18.4
Daily wage labour	N	12	7	19
	%	4.7	5.3	4.9
Petty Business	N	23	31	54
	%	9.1	23.7	14.0
Any Other	N	6	23	29
	%	2.4	17.6	7.5
Total	N	254	131	385
	%	100.0	100.0	100.0

The table no. 4 presents the distribution of respondents by occupation across rural and urban localities, reflecting significant differences in employment patterns. A majority (34.5 percent) of the total respondents work as agricultural laborers, with all rural respondents (52.4 percent) engaged in this occupation, while there are no urban respondents involved in agricultural labor. Non-agricultural labor is more common in urban areas (35.9 percent), accounting for 20.5 percent of the total sample, indicating the higher availability of non-agricultural jobs in urban settings. Home-based work constitutes 18.4 percent of the total sample, with a slightly higher prevalence in rural areas (18.9 percent) compared to urban areas (17.6 percent). Petty business owners are more common in urban areas (23.7 percent) than in rural areas (9.1 percent), reflecting the entrepreneurial opportunities in urban environments. Other occupations, such as daily wage labor and various unspecified jobs, make up a smaller portion of the sample, with urban areas (17.6 percent) exhibiting a higher percentage of respondents engaged in "any other" occupation compared to rural areas (2.4 percent). This data underscores the contrast in rural and urban economies, where rural areas are dominated by agricultural work, and urban areas show a greater diversity of employment opportunities, particularly in non-agricultural sectors and petty businesses.

Table No.5

Percentage Distribution of the respondents on their locality and knowledge on Domestic Violence ct-2005

Locality	Knowledge on Domestic Violence Act-2005		Total	Chi square values
	Yes	No		
Rural	108	146	254	$\chi^2=22.463$ DF= 1 P=.000***
	81.8%	57.7%	66.0%	
Urban	24	107	131	
	18.2%	42.3%	34.0%	
Total	132	253	385	
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

The above table shows the awareness of the Domestic Violence Act-2005 among individuals in rural and urban areas. The data reveals a significant association between locality and knowledge of the Domestic Violence Act, 2005 ($\chi^2 = 22.463$, $p = 0.000$). A significantly higher proportion of rural respondents (81.8%) were aware of the Domestic Violence Act compared to urban respondents (18.2%). In contrast, a larger proportion of urban respondents (42.3%) are unaware of the Act, while only 57.7% of rural respondents fall into the same category.

Table no. 6
Mean differences between domestic violence and locality among participants

Variables	Locality	N	Mean	SD	t value	Sig
Physical Violence	Rural	254	21.84	3.37	-2.696	.007**
	Urban	131	22.78	2.96		
Psychological Violence	Rural	254	13.24	2.49	-4.304	.000***
	Urban	131	14.41	2.63		
Verbal Violence	Rural	254	14.76	2.56	-2.064	.040@
	Urban	131	15.34	2.81		
Technological Violence	Rural	254	12.10	1.87	-1.776	.077@
	Urban	131	12.48	2.23		
Financial Violence	Rural	254	13.38	2.84	-4.520	.000***
	Urban	131	14.85	3.36		

Significance Level: $p < 0.00$ *, $p < 0.01$ ** , $p < 0.05$ *, @=No significance**

The data in the table no.6 reveals the significant differences in various forms of domestic violence between rural and urban participants. Urban participants reported higher level of physical violence, with a mean score of 22.78 compared to 21.84 in rural areas ($p < 0.01$). Similar trends were observed in psychological violence, where urban participants reported a mean score of 14.41, significantly higher than the rural mean of 13.24 ($p < 0.001$). For verbal violence, urban participants also reported higher level (mean = 15.34) than rural participants (mean = 14.76), with the difference being statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Financial violence is significantly higher in urban areas (mean = 14.85) compared to rural areas (mean = 13.38), with a strong significance ($p < 0.001$). However, no significant differences were observed in technological violence, where both rural and urban participants reported similar scores ($p > 0.05$). Overall, the findings suggest that urban participants experienced higher level of physical, psychological, verbal, and financial violence than rural participants. Technological violence, however, does not show a notable difference between the two groups. The results indicate that locality plays a significant role in the experiences of domestic violence, with urban areas experiencing higher levels of certain types of abuse.

Table No. 7
Spearman correlation on age and domestic violence factors among the respondents

Variables	Age	Physical Violence	Psychological Violence	Verbal Violence	Technological Violence	Financial Violence	Family Level	Cultural Level	Social Level
Age	1.000	-.011	.022	-.066	.110*	-.037	-.119*	.093	-.306**
Physical Violence		1.000	.044	.271**	.161**	.120*	.181**	-.123*	.229**
Psychological Violence			1.000	.324**	-.292**	.243**	.133**	.245**	-.018
Verbal Violence				1.000	.140**	.133**	.143**	.045	.174**
Technological Violence					1.000	-.037	.129*	-.141**	.146**
Financial Violence						1.000	.460**	-.038	.072
Family Level							1.000	.118*	.427**
Cultural Level								1.000	.041
Social Level									1.000

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The Spearman correlation analysis reveals significant relationships between various forms of domestic violence, age, and socio-cultural factors, shedding light on how these elements interact and influence each other. The findings suggest that domestic violence is a multifaceted issue, influenced not only by individual characteristics such as age but also by broader socio-cultural dynamics.

Age and Domestic Violence

Age exhibits a weak positive correlation with technological violence (0.110*), suggesting that as individuals age, they may be more likely to experience technological abuse, albeit to a limited extent. This could be explained by the increasing prevalence of technology use among older generations, which may expose them to new forms of violence, such as cyberbullying or online harassment (Zweig et al., 2019). However, age negatively correlates with family-level issues (-0.119*) and social-level challenges (-0.306**), indicating that older individuals may perceive fewer challenges in these areas. This could be due to a greater sense of stability or lower expectations about family and social dynamics as people age, as found in similar studies (Brown & Moran, 2020). Older individuals may also have accumulated coping mechanisms over time, leading them to view family and social challenges less acutely.

Correlation between Different Forms of Violence

The significant positive correlation between physical violence and verbal violence (0.271**) suggests that these forms of abuse often co-occur, as evidenced by previous research highlighting the cyclical nature of abusive relationships (Whitaker et al., 2007). Similarly, the correlation between physical violence and technological violence (0.161**) implies that individuals experiencing physical abuse are also more likely to be exposed to technological forms of violence. This reflects a growing body of

research that suggests domestic abuse increasingly intersects with online harassment and cyber violence (Duggan et al., 2015). Psychological violence shows a strong correlation with verbal violence (0.324**) and is linked to family-level challenges (0.243**), highlighting the emotional and verbal abuse often embedded in family dynamics. Psychological violence is also inversely related to cultural factors (-0.133**), suggesting that cultural norms may offer some protective barriers against certain types of emotional abuse. This finding aligns with studies indicating that cultural attitudes toward relationships and violence can shape individuals' experiences of abuse (O'Leary & Slep, 2006). Verbal violence is positively associated with cultural (0.143**) and social levels (0.174**), implying that cultural and social norms may play a role in its prevalence. In societies where patriarchal values are entrenched, verbal violence is often normalized, with verbal abuse being an integral part of relationship dynamics (Moffitt et al., 2017). This finding is consistent with research showing that cultural acceptance of violence and gender roles influences the occurrence of domestic violence, including verbal abuse (Bograd, 2015). In contrast, technological violence negatively correlates with cultural factors (-0.141**), suggesting that certain cultural norms might act as a deterrent to the prevalence of online or technology-mediated abuse. This could indicate that in cultures where traditional values are strongly upheld, there may be a reluctance to embrace new technology, thus reducing the opportunity for technological violence to manifest. Similarly, technological violence correlates with social issues (0.146**), which might reflect the role of social media and the internet in exacerbating social isolation, particularly in communities facing high levels of social stress (Vogt et al., 2022). The negative association between financial violence and family-level challenges (-0.460**) suggests that financial violence may occur in contexts where family stability is perceived to be lower. This finding is consistent with research that shows financial control often becomes more pronounced in families where there are already significant relational or socio-economic difficulties (Adams et al., 2013). Financial violence, by restricting access to financial resources, further exacerbates the vulnerability of individuals, particularly women, in abusive relationships (Kunst et al., 2020). Family-level challenges are strongly correlated with social-level issues (0.427**), which emphasizes the interconnectedness of personal, family, and societal struggles. Social isolation, poverty, and a lack of community support can amplify the difficulties faced within families, potentially increasing the likelihood of domestic violence. This finding supports the view that addressing family-level issues requires broader societal interventions, such as enhancing social support systems and improving community-level resources (Fagan et al., 2015).

Conclusion and suggestions

The study underscores the critical impact of locality on demographic, social, and economic dimensions, highlighting significant differences in family systems, educational attainment, occupational trends, and experiences of domestic violence. Urban areas, while offering diverse economic opportunities, exhibit higher levels of certain forms of violence, suggesting the need for targeted interventions, investments in rural education infrastructure and awareness campaigns are essential to bridging the urban-rural gap in higher education attainment. Awareness programs should target gender norms that contribute to violence, particularly in urban areas where social isolation intensifies vulnerabilities. Policies aimed at

promoting rural entrepreneurship and creating non-agricultural employment opportunities can help reduce economic disparities and lessen dependence on agriculture. Social initiatives should focus on strengthening both joint and nuclear family systems to alleviate the socio-economic pressures that contribute to domestic violence. The use of digital platforms to enhance awareness of laws and support systems offers a uniform approach to addressing technological violence across localities. Collaborative efforts involving government, non-governmental organizations, and community organizations are critical for tackling the interdependencies between socio-cultural factors and violence effectively.

References

1. Adams, A. E., et al. (2013). *Financial Abuse in Intimate Partner Violence: A Study of Women's Experiences*. *Violence Against Women*, 19(6), 773-786.
2. Bograd, M. (2015). *The Role of Gender in Domestic Violence*. *Family Violence Review*, 32(2), 15-28.
3. Brown, L., & Moran, E. (2020). *Age and Social Perception of Domestic Violence*. *Journal of Aging and Social Policy*, 32(4), 277-294.
4. Deb, S., Modak, S., Sinha, V. K., & Chattopadhyay, S. (2018). Prevalence of domestic violence and its impact on women's mental health in West Bengal, India. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 60(2), 176-183. DOI: https://10.4103/psychiatry.indianjpsychiatry_349_16
5. Duggan, M., et al. (2015). *Online Harassment*. Pew Research Center.
6. Fagan, J., et al. (2015). *Domestic Violence and Social Services: The Need for a Coordinated Response*. *Journal of Social Work*, 40(4), 457-473.
7. Government of India (2005). *Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA)*. Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India.
8. International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) and ICF. (2017) *National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4), 2015-16: India*. Mumbai, IIPS.
9. Jewkes, R. (2002). *Intimate partner violence: causes and prevention*. *The Lancet*, 359(9315), 1423-1429. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(02\)08357-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(02)08357-5)
10. Jeyaseelan, L., Kumar, S., & Neelakantan, N. (2007). *Physical spousal violence against women in India: Some risk factors*. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 39(5), 657-670. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021932006001803>
11. Johnson, M. P. (1995). *Patriarchal terrorism and common couple violence: two forms of violence against women*. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 57(2), 283-294. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/353683>
12. Joshi, S., Dhawan, V., & Singh, S. (2017). *Physical and mental health consequences of domestic violence against women in Delhi, India*. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 32(24), 3727- 3746. DOI: <https://10.1177/0886260516683573>
13. Kunst, M. E., et al. (2020). *Economic Abuse: A Framework for Understanding Financial Control in Domestic Violence*. *Journal of Family Violence*, 35(2), 157-169.

14. Moffitt, T. E., et al. (2017). *Gender and Domestic Violence: A Lifecourse Perspective*. *Violence and Victims*, 32(5), 789-804.
15. O'Leary, K. D., & Slep, A. M. (2006). *Prevention of Partner Violence: What Works?*. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(5), 969-978.
16. Sinha, M. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. *Juristat: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics*, 1.
17. Stark, E. (2007). *Coercive control: How men entrap women in personal life*. Oxford University Press.
18. Vogt, W. P., et al. (2022). *Social Isolation and Technology's Role in Domestic Violence*. *Journal of Social Issues*, 78(1), 92-113.
19. Whitaker, D. J., et al. (2007). *Impact of Domestic Violence on Children and Adolescents: A Review of the Literature*. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 10(4), 313-338.
20. WHO. (2013). Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence. World Health Organization.
21. Zweig, J. M., et al. (2019). *Technology and Domestic Violence: Challenges in the Digital Age*. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 34(6), 1060-1083.

