

Trauma in pakistani women research paper examples

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



The primary purpose of this paper is to explore how trauma patients can receive counseling in an effective way. It will describe the methods that counselors in Pakistan are recommended to take. Counselors have to be sensitive to the physical, social, psychological and spiritual dimensions of the trauma experienced. The paper will take into consideration the context of the clients and challenge to find ways of reaching out to these women and provide such effective support, as may be found in other countries in the region such as India and Bangladesh. In this way, the aim is to examine how women experiencing trauma can be less afraid to talk about their traumatic experiences and to seek and accept help.

Trauma in such cases, are usually caused by defacing women as a result of scouring them with acid, rape and domestic violence. The victims come across difficulties when seeking help due to several factors including a high level of illiteracy in the study group and lack of awareness of human rights and at times lack of family or community support for victims of such trauma. There are also cultural factors that contribute to the trauma. These include the fact that Pakistan is a male dominated society and there is reluctance in the enforcement of laws against such acts. Several cases are never reported, as they are considered shameful for the family and community. The victims are denied access to help and counseling and some may never recover from the trauma and are thus unable to lead a physically and mentally healthy life.

Causes of Trauma in Pakistani Women

Reports on Violence against Women reveal that 8539 women were victims of violence in 2011. This was a 6.74% increase in VAW compared to the 2010

statistics. In 2010, the number of abused women was 8000, 2009 saw a victim count of 8548 women. In 2008, the figure was lowest at 7571 women. This shows that the violence against women in Pakistan was in the same range and the society has not shown any shift from the trend. Sexual assault increased by 48.6%, throwing acid to women increased by 37.6%, honor killings increased by 26.57% while domestic violence increased by 25.51%. South Asia sub-continent is the most gender insensitive region in the world. Additionally, it is the only region in the globe where men outnumber women. The sex ratio is 100 women for every 105.7 men. In Pakistan, women are subject to financial and cultural discrimination. Discriminatory acts against women in the region have led to severe cases of trauma in women. Women are victims of inhumane laws and customs of the region such as Karo Kari, Qasas, Marriage to the Quran, Hadood Ordinance, and half witnesses according to the state regulations. Half witness is the legal provision that a female witness is worth half a male witness.

Women in rural Pakistan are like slaves and subjects to drudgery. All women exist to obey their fathers, brothers and husbands. They have no powers or rights to decide anything on their own. According to popular social and cultural norms, women are foolish and devoid of sense. In the same vein, most Pakistani communities view marriage as a sort of commercial trade between two families. It is a belief held in both rural and urban Pakistan. Women are, therefore, highly vulnerable to all forms of oppression because their rights are undermined. Such coercion on human beings with the same reasoning capacity as their oppressors without means of detaching themselves leads to trauma and psychological misfits.

Right to liberty of Pakistani women suffers restrictions in the name of modesty, prevention of immoral activities and protection. In rural Pakistan, 90% women of all ages work in agricultural fields with the male members of their families. After laboring for the whole day in the fields together, the female members still face the wrath of the male relatives. Brothers turn against sisters and their decisions are final. They have the right to punish and physically assault them. Male family members keep strict watch of the females in the name of honor. The honor that the males labor to preserve does not have the meaning of its true sense. Restrictions of the women's liberty prevail in the name of a social and cultural norm called ghairat. Women meet their death upon losing the honor that the society expects them to uphold. Women in Pakistan never feel secure. Past experiences of killings of their beloved ones and enslavement their brothers and fathers put them through frustrates and traumatizes them.

Koro Kari is the honor killing for those alleged to break social and cultural norms of Pakistani people. Male family members conduct the honor killing of female members perceived not to follow the strict guidelines of culture. In 2004, 286 women faced Koro Kari by male members of their families. This figure reflected the reported cases alone. The statistics could be much higher than these given that a majority of the cases go unreported. On June 11, 2000, other family members killed four women and a man for breaking the societal honor. This took place in Dera Jamii village, Sindh. A 13-year-old girl faced the fate of Koro Kari in Ghoth Khosa. The girl, Sara, faced her death alongside two other boys. The boys had nothing to do with dishonor to the society. Sara's brother mentioned them at the Koro Kari session, and the

male mob killed them too. In the villege of Moratha, another case of honor killing took place.

Traumatizing experiences of women in Pakistan far much outdo the same ugly experiences experienced by women in the neighboring India and Bangladesh. Of all the women living with trauma in the far and Middle East, Pakistan contributes around 27%. This figure is high considering the high population of India against relatively less populous Pakistan. Even though violence against women is prevalent in Bangladesh and India, the countries have placed legal systems to help curb gender injustices. Further, India has elaborate healthcare system that takes into account counseling of abused women. As such, women in India are more productive and suffer fewer traumas than women in Bangladesh and Pakistan suffer. Only one out of 13 women in India shows signs of complex trauma because of gender-based biases. In Bangladesh, the figure rises to 3 out of 14 women. Pakistan holds a record of 4 out of every 9 women traumatized. This is close to half the female population of the country. The statistics soar to as high as 90% traumatized women and girls in the rural areas of Pakistan.

Cases experienced by women in Pakistani system and society lead to complex trauma. Complex trauma refers to dual quandary of children's exposure to many traumatic experiences and events. These exposures have long-term impacts on children. Complex trauma results when a child suffers neglect and abuse. In addition, witnessing and being part of domestic violence causes complex trauma. Witnessing ethnic cleansing and wars also contribute to this condition.

Honor killing is not a phenomenon that is specific to Pakistan. Countries like

Turkey, Bangladesh, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt, India and other Mediterranean and Gulf countries conduct the customary practice. In Bangladesh, customary laws look upon the male as the sole protector of the female. There are no elaborate state laws to protect the women and they practically have no rights. Cases of rape and physical assault are ever on the rise. In 2012, reports on violence against women in Bangladesh revealed an increase of 9% of domestic violence, 8.9% increase of rape cases and 1.6% increase in acid throwing.

Although oppression of women is a little less in the neighboring India, statistics still cause a need to worry. Reports show that India has placed stringent laws to protect the rights of women, but cultural practices still get in the way of its full implementation. The girl-child in India still faces several challenges akin to the quandaries of the female society in East and Far East Asia. Customarily, women have no right to choose in India. Such notions have become obsolete and withered with time due to increased enlightenment and exposure to modern cultures. Cases of women assault, rape, and violence and honor killings are on the decline. For example, 2012 recorded a decline in domestic violence against women in India by 9.65% compared to 2011 statistics.

Women from poor families are the worst traumatized for the cases of honor killing. Female members of rich families are never targets of Koro Kari. Many cases of the vice have their root causes in love triangles. A majority of women in the Pakistani society do not enjoy the right to marry people of their choices. If one refuses to accept a proposal by a suitor, the grudge may hold for a long time until the right opportunity for revenge. Such sprees of

vengeance are daring and lead to deaths of many. In 2004, a family of 6 perished in the hands of honor killers in what turned out to be a love vengeance. A woman with a 5-year-old child, her husband and four other members of her in-law family faced Koro Kari orchestrated by a suitor she had earlier turned down. The society has no way of finding out the truth and investigating the reliability of the witnesses' claims. It traumatizes all women to think of ever falling in such situations. They, therefore, have no other choice but to live with the people they may hate as spouses for their lives' sake. Research shows that 82% of brothers and fathers subject their sisters and daughters to domestic violence. Wife battering is so common in Pakistani society does not consider it a pernicious vice against women. Women get serious injuries and report domestic violence to police. A majority of the battered women fall between the ages 14 to 30. The system does not recognize such cases as a serious offense against human beings. Police advise such women to seek reconciliation from their husbands and halt further lawsuits. The police system holds such as domestic disputes that bring dishonor to families.

Domestic violence against women begins at an early age. Cultural practices of Pakistani societies do not allow young girls to play like their male counterparts. Lack of play, socialization, and physical exercise interferes with the physical and mental growth of Pakistani women. Another Pakistani practice that furthers trauma in women is cutting off the noses of those suspected of engaging in extra-marital affairs. This acts as a symbol of infidelity for all to see and deter unfaithfulness and promiscuity. In addition, Pakistani women suffer sexual assault on a daily basis. Rape remains one of

the most common misdemeanors in the Pakistani society. Human Rights Commission of Pakistan estimates that a woman is raped every three hours. The age group targeted by rapists is 14-30 although a few bizarre cases of rape of infants occur. The rape per three minutes figure bases on reported cases alone, although there could be more rape cases that could go unreported than reported. Rape is a phenomenon that has severe trauma on victims.

Religious contribution to Pakistani Women Oppression and Trauma

Pakistani women undergo many traumatic experiences. The society treats women as underdogs, second-class humans. These mistreatments have long-term effects on psychological and mental development of women. Islamic fundamentalists and religious rights prevalent in Pakistan and surrounding regions have everything to do with the stark, horrible conditions under which women live. In several regions of the East, including Pakistan, religious fundamentalists help the ruling class oppress women. The crusaders use propaganda that Western interference with the rights of women and women empowerment struggles are conspiracies to erode the East's family values and great traditions. Islamic crusaders never utter a word against women oppression in the region.

In Pakistan, there are frequent cases of gang rapes. Islamic liberators have never protested against the brutal and inhumane acts of Taliban and Al-Qaida in Afghanistan. The ruling elite of the country constitutes mainly wealthy males. These rich, influential people perpetuate oppression, abuse and the plight of poor females. Religious leaders of the state give a blind eye

to the fact that several regions of the country do not allow women to access formal education. Areas of North West Frontier Province, Bluchistan, Sindh, Southern Punjab, it is practically impossible to see women in the streets. Pakistani women are living in the dark ages in the 21st century. They have no political, economic or social life.

Hadood Ordinance, the Islamic Penal Law repealed the provisions of Pakistan Penal Code connected to rape cases. The repealing occurred in 1997 to include Islamic Law of Evidence. The law requires that at least four male Muslim witnesses be present in a court case relating to rape. It is until the petition meets a requirement that a case of rape proceeds to hearing. Bearing in mind that a woman contributes half a witness, it becomes impractical for any woman to win a case against a rapist. According to Hadood Ordinance, victim's testimony requires firm corroboration for fervor by the courts.

Development of Complex Trauma in Pakistani Women

Pakistani scenario describes complex traumatizing agent at its best. The experiences female children go through make them so vulnerable to emotional breakdown that they are forever traumatized even in their adult lives. Female children in Pakistan suffer domestic violence from a tender age in the hands of their brothers. As they grow older, their fathers join the crusade to frustrate them. Their lives are full of Foul experiences. There are honor killings that take place in their full knowledge. Such killings are usually so brutal that they live remembering the incidences forever. Complex trauma causes the Pakistani female children to dethatch from their

caregivers. Formation of a secure bond between the child and her caregivers fails. They live to distrust their brothers, fathers and all males in general. Usually, the attachment between a child and the caregiver is the sole source of stability and security in her life. Children with complex trauma develop other risks and difficulties in life. These include psychiatric and addictive disorders, family problems, medical disorders and chronic illnesses. The problems extend from childhood to adolescence and finally to adulthood. Pakistani women have complex trauma. They live miserable lives. To a majority, their lives are meaningless and they merely exist for the benefit of men.

In a bid to give help to those traumatized in the Pakistani society, experts confirm that a majority of women aged between 14 and 30 years suffer posttraumatic stress disorders (PTSD). PTSD does not cover the full range of difficulties in developing that the girl child experience due to trauma.

Diagnose find out that those traumatized suffer a history of family violence, maltreatment, loss of caregivers, attention deficiency/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), conduct disorder, communication disorders, oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) and sleeping disorders. These meet the criteria for normal depression and do not cover the full effects of trauma on Pakistani girl child.

Complex trauma develops if a child or an infant gets exposed to dangers that are unpredictable and uncontrollable. Pakistani girl child gets exposed to dangers and disturbing situations at an early age. Several children grow without their caregivers who befall victims of Koro Kari. While a normal child's body devotes resources to growth and development, the system of a child exposed to such traumatizing experiences devotes resources to the

child's survival rather than growth and development. The greatest source of unpredictability and danger is lack of a caregiver who responsively and reliably nurtures and protects the child. An early stage of care giving relations provides the fundamental context in which a child learns about himself, his emotions and relationship with others. An early secure attachment to a caregiver gives the child ability to regulate his emotional and physical states, sense of safety, early knowledge on how to impact his influence on the world and capacity for communication.

Trauma as Inhibitor of Growth and Development

These fundamental abilities are evidently lacking in Pakistani women. Due to growing in fear of the unknown and constant assault by the male members of the family, the females in Pakistan lack the sense of security in early life. They do not know how to regulate their emotional and physical states. The society has made the Pakistani women to believe that they are worthless and utterly unproductive without their men. Women lack the incentives to change the world. A majority does not have an idea that they have the capacity to change the society. They lack a sense of security. This bars them from exploring the world. A majority of women in Pakistan lack confidence in themselves. They shun emotional relationships and do not have a full understanding of themselves.

In the event that a child's mother becomes a victim of honor killing, such a child remains under the care of father and siblings. Studies show that 12% of female children in the rural Pakistan grow under the care of their fathers due to cultural cleansing, high death rates of women among others. Growing

under the care of a male in a male dominated community becomes a living hell for such children. In normal circumstances, mothers are usually the only source of hope for female children in Pakistan. A father's care makes care giving the source of trauma. Children in this category undergo rejecting, erratic, abusive and hostile parenting. Such children normally try to exert control by disconnecting from social relationships and acting coercively towards other people. Later in life, the individuals are never able to formulate an organized and coherent response when faced with challenges. As a result, Pakistani women have great difficulties regulating emotions, developing concern for others, managing stress and using language to solve problems.

Women aged between 14 and 30 years in Pakistan have a massive dissociation problem. Women lack the ability to take and integrate information experiences and information. Their thoughts and emotions do not match. Their physical sensations are outside their conscious awareness. They possess repetitive behaviors that take place without their conscious choice, self-awareness or planning. Dissociation begins as a defensive mechanism against traumatizing experience. The girls wish they were never in the situations they find themselves. Since the society is so cruel that they have no method of airing their opinions on their maltreatment, they opt to disconnect their emotions from the world around them. This defense mechanism develops into a complex disorder with time. The chronic trauma women in Pakistan go through leads to overreliance on dissociation. In turn, women develop exacerbate difficulties with self-concept, behavior management and affect regulation.

Conclusion

In a bid to reduce the effects of trauma in Pakistani women and women in other parts of Asia, existential approach to trauma therapy has proved to be ultimately creative and evolutionary. The approach explores existential influence with a view to explore human reality from the client's viewpoint. The approach takes into account the experiences of Pakistani women's existence to give meaning to their identity and resolve intrapersonal difficulties. It does not provide cure or explanation to the traumatic state of the women. Instead, the approach seeks to explore, clarify, and describe in order to comprehend the women's predicaments. Therapists' labor to provide solution to the problems succumbing the Pakistani and other Middle and Far East women based on four dimensional force fields; psychological, spiritual, social and physical. The approach appreciates that the state of the women's wellbeing is subject to their biological forces that regulate them within the physical environment. In addition, the social and cultural networks through which they relate to each other define the status of their minds. Specialists in trauma management try different approaches to solving the trauma problem in Pakistan. The challenges are vast, but psychotherapists try their best to solve situations they can lay their hands on. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is the framework mostly applied in trying to recreate the destroyed women. The psychotherapeutic approach addresses ways of resolving dysfunctional emotions, cognitive processes and maladaptive behaviors. This is done through explicit and goal-oriented systematic procedures. It involves cognitive therapy, behavior therapy and therapy based on a combination of basic cognitive and behavioral principles

of the traumatized women and research. CTB acknowledges that there are practices that may not be controlled through cogent thought. It is action oriented and problem focused. The therapist assists the traumatized Pakistani women in selecting particular strategies to help address their problems. In addition, the therapist undertakes the process for a specific problem concerning specific woman.

The process of CBT involves six distinct phases. These include assessment, re-conceptualization, skills consolidation and application training, post treatment assessment follow-up, generalization and maintenance and skills acquisition. Therapists follow different approaches in delivering cognitive behavioral therapy to the affected women. It refers to different interventions including development of adaptive coping strategies, relaxation, and biofeedback, self-instructions, goal setting and changing maladaptive beliefs about pain. Using the process, therapists encourage and aid the women and girls to minimize negative and self-defeating notions about themselves, be imaginative, avoid distractions, and be motivational self-talkers.

So far, the measures taken by medical practitioners and human rights activists to correct the situation in Pakistani and its neighbors have yielded impressive results. Human rights activists and women's bodies have trouble accessing some parts of the countries with strong cultural dominance. They are, however, making every effort including colluding with administrative personnel of various jurisdictions to help restore the peace of mind of the Asian women. Women who have undergone therapeutic for a have shown increased self-worth and confidence. Increased economic productivity and happiness among the women is dominant feature for all benefactors. Despite

resistance from the male dominated communities, there is hope that the quandary of traumatized women in Pakistan and its neighbors will soon be an issue of the past.

References

Ayub, N. (2008). *The self-employed women in Pakistan: A case study of the self-employed women of urban informal sector in Karachi*. Karachi: Pakistan Association for Women's Studies.

Burney, S. (2009). *Crime or custom?: Violence against women in Pakistan*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Ken, B. B. (2012). *Treatment of trauma*. Washington DC: Apprentice Hall.

Khan, N. S. (2012). *Women in Pakistan: A new era?* London: Change International Reports.

Klein, H., & Nestvogel, R. (2011). *Women in Pakistan: General conditions, approaches in project proposals for the development and vocational qualification of women in the province of Punjab*. Lahore: Pakistan: Vanguard.

Lisa, C., & Martin, M. (2012). *Existential Therapy: A useful approach to trauma*. University of Surrey Journal, 19.

Mumtaz, K., & Shaheed, F. (2007). *Women of Pakistan: Two steps forward, one step back?* London: Zed Books.

Pakistan. (2007). *Women of Pakistan (revised ed.)*. Karachi, Pakistan: Pakistan Publications.

Pakistani Press. (2011). *Incidences of violence against women in Pakistan reported in 2011*. Pakistani Press Journal, 21.

Tazeen, F. (2010). The changing role of women in Pakistan. . Karachi: Dept. of Advertising Films and Publications, Govt. of Pakista.

Thomas, D. Q. (2011). Double jeopardy: Police abuse of women in Pakistan : a report by Asia Watch and the Women's Rights Project. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Violence Against Women Watch Group. (2012). Annual Report 2012: Violence against women in Pakistan, a qualitative analysis of the reports. Beyond Denial, 32.

World Bank. (2012). Women in Pakistan: An economic and social strategy. Washington, D. C: U. S. A: World Bank.