



ISSN 2278 – 0211 (Online)

## Violence against Nurses at Public Sector Hospital of Peshawar, Pakistan

**Awal Khan**

RN, BSN, MSN Institute of Nursing Sciences Khyber Medical University Peshawar, Pakistan

**Afsha Badshah Said**

RN, BSN Hayatabad Medical Complex, Peshawar, Pakistan

**Bakhtiyar Ali Shah**

Lecturer, BSN, MPH, Institute of Nursing Sciences, Khyber Medical University, Peshawar, Pakistan

**Aurangzeb**

RN, MS Bioethics, MSN Nursing Instructor School of nursing RMI, Peshawar, Pakistan

**Fakhrul Islam**

Lecturer, RN, BSN, MSN, Farkhanda Institute of Nursing Institute of Nursing Sciences, Peshawar, Pakistan

### **Abstract:**

*Violence against nurses prevail across the globe, violence toward nurses working in public sector hospitals in Peshawar is not studied. Objectives: study objectives were to (1) determines physical and verbal violence towards nurses working in public sector hospitals in Peshawar. (2) Identify weather nurses fell safe or not at their workplace in public sector hospital in Peshawar?*

*Methods: A questionnaire survey. Setting: Hayatabad medical complex Peshawar.*

*Results: shows that 29% nurses experienced physical violence in the last six months while (67%) nurses experienced verbal abuse in the last six months, more than half (57%) nurse's not feeling safe in their workplace and majority of study subjects 50 (71%) were witnesses to at least one physical or verbal assaults at their workplace in the last six months.*

*Conclusion: Measures should be taken at every stage ranging from in service training on identification and skill to deal with at high risk behaviors of patients and their relatives, improvement of working climate to minimize violence and ensure nurses safety at workplace.*

**Keywords:** Nurses, violence, work place

### **1. Introduction**

Violence at workplace is a prevalent problem in the current social order which results in serious consequences regarding safety, health and also legality (Talas, Kocaöz and Akgüç, 2011). World Health Organization defined violence as:

“Incidence where staff is abused threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, including commuting to and from work, involving explicit and implicit challenges to their safety, wellbeing or health<sup>3</sup>”.

Healthcare workers are at high risk of violence at workplace (Shields and Wilkins, 2009). In recent times concerns are increasing about violence toward health care personnel in their workplace (Balamurugan, Jose and Nandakumar, 2012). Violence toward nurses acts like a silent epidemic and cause serious consequences. Being key care provider, nurses are probably facing more violence as they spent much time in providing direct care to the patient (Mohammad, 2002). Incidents of violence at place of work are usually failed to report, especially, in health care field because of deficit policies for reporting, perceiving violence as part of employment and perceptions of worker that reporting will not have positive outcomes (Gacki-Smith et al, 2009).

Unsatisfied treatment plan, low staffing level, prevalence of weapons among patients or family, unrestricted movements of public to hospital, lack of staff training in connection to hostile behavior are the risk or contributing factors to work place violence (NANCEP, 2005). Exposure to work place violence resulted in disturbing and painful recurrent images, persistent fear, anger and guilt. Serious consequences range from personal crisis to post traumatic stress disorders (Attridge & Vandepol, 2011), it also adversely affect patients care and organization standard as it affects the quality of treatment, cause increase in absence of workers and disrupt the working environment (Franz et al., 2010). More than 85% nurses of Ankara turkey experienced at least one kind of violence (Talas, Kocaöz and Akgüç, 2011). Twenty five percent nurses experienced physical violence more than 20 times in a duration of three years while working in US emergency department (Gacki-Smith et al, 2009). Eleven percent Iranian nurses declared physical violence usual issue at their work place (Mohammad. G, 2009) and exposure of Indian nurses to violence is more than 87%. The prevalence

rate of violence was found high in Nurses who were working in either psychiatry or emergency wards. (Ashry. M, 2002). In Pakistan because of feeling disgraced and guiltiness violence incidents at work place are usually not reported. (Somani & Khowaja , 2012).

In Peshawar no such kind of study has been conducted to measure the magnitude of violence against nurses at their workplace therefore this study was carried out to know about the exposure of nurses to workplace violence. The findings of study may helpful in the management and prevention of workplace violence.

## 2. Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine magnitude of workplace violence against nurses at a public sector hospital in Peshawar.

A cross sectional descriptive study involving paper based questionnaire. A convenient sample of n=100 nurses was selected from Hayat Abad medical complex Peshawar n=70 nurses returned completed questionnaires.

Questionnaire was taken from the international council of nurses which was developed in collaboration with international labor organizations. This questionnaire was modified and concise in accordance with the purpose of the study.

Subjects were approached after obtaining permission from course co-coordinator, preceptor, and concerned officers of the hospital. Written consent composed of surety of safety, confidentiality and other ethical consideration was obtained from a study population prior to data collection.

Data was entered in SPSS version 19 for analysis and tabulation. Frequencies and percentage were used to describe data.

## 3. Results

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender :</b>		
Female	67	95.7%
Male	03	4.3%
<b>Age :</b>		
Below 30	48	68.8%
31-40	18	25.7%
41-50	4	5.7%
<b>Current position :</b>		
Staff nurse	51	72.9%
Student nurse	14	20%
Head nurse	05	7.1%
<b>Years of experience:</b>		
1-5 years	48	68.6%
6-10 years	13	18.6%
11-15 years	03	4.3%
16-20 years	03	4.3%
Above 20 years	03	4.3%

Table 1: Socio-demographics of participants

As shown in table 1. Total 70 nurses participated in the study. In which maximum number n=67(95.7%) were female and n=3(4.3%) were male. n= 48 (68.6%) participants were below the age of 30 years while n= 18 (25.7%) were in the age from 31- 40 years and n=4(5.7%) were in the age from 41-50. Majority of participants n=51(72.9%) were staff nurses followed by n=14(20%) were student nurses and n=5(7.1%) were head nurses. n=48(68.6%) of participants were having clinical experience of 1-5 years, n= 13(18.6%) had 6-10 years clinical experience, n=3(4.3%) had clinical experience of 10-15 years, n=3(4.3%) had experience of 16-20 years and n=3(4.3%) had above 20 years of clinical experience.

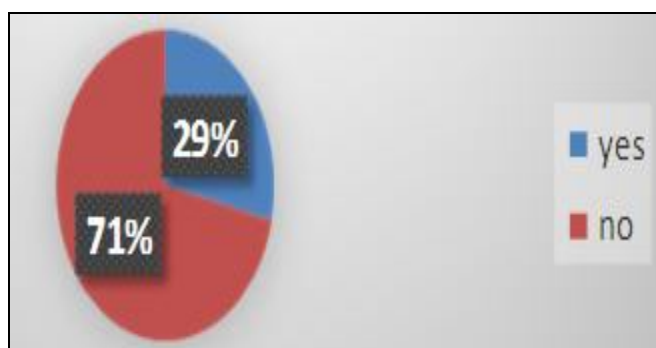


Figure 1: In the Last Six Months Have you been physically Attacked at Your...

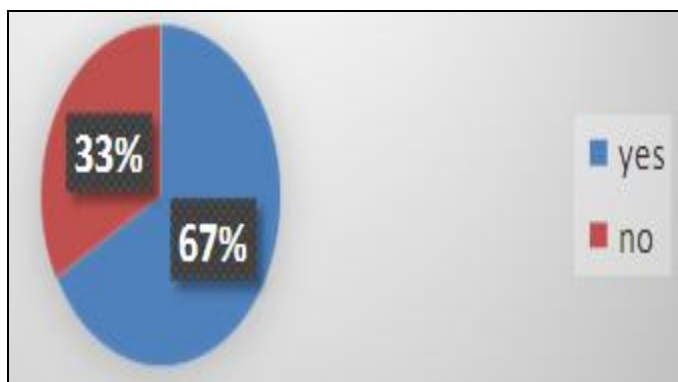


Figure 2: In the Last Six Months have you been verbally abused...

n=40 (57.1%) of participants felt safe in their workplace in which majority (n=29) were below age 30 and n=30(42.9%) did not feel safe in their workplace. Majority of participants n=50 (71.4%) witnessed physical and verbal violence in their workplace while n=20(29%) participants became victims of physical violence by themselves in the last six months as shown in figure (1) in which 35% were attacked by patients while 30% were attacked by patient relative and 20% were attacked by staff members. Majority of these incidents occurred inside the hospital. Only 50% of these incidents were reported and 70% participant responded that no action was taken against the violator. n=47 (67.1%) participants became victims of verbal violence in which 74% participants were verbally abused by relatives of patients. 91% of these violent incidents happened inside the hospital. Only 31% of these incidents were reported, but 81% participants responded that no action was taken against the violence.

#### 4. Discussion

In this study findings revealed verbal and physical violence against nurses (67.1%) and 28.6% respectively, while majority of participants (71.4%) witness workplace violence against nurses more than two times in the last six months. An Indian study carried out by Balamurugan, Jose and Nandakumar (87.2%) experience workplace violence among which 57% of nurses experienced mild violence while 30.2% experienced moderate violence. In the research of Mohamed conducted in Riyadh Saudi Arabia in 2002 (54.3%) of nurses experienced workplace violence. A cross sectional survey carried out by Franz et al. in 2010 on health care workers at Germany concluded that 89.4 % of participants experienced verbal violence while 70.7 % participants experienced physical violence. In the study of Esmaeilpour, Salsali. & Ahmadi conducted at emergency departments of eleven hospital in Iran (2011) revealed that 91.6% nurses experienced verbal violence and 19.7% nurses became victims of physical violence. In our study violence incidents were under reported to the level that only 50% of physical and 31% of verbal violent incidents were reported these findings similar with the findings of Imran, Pervez, Farooq and Asghar (2013) in which only 59.5% of violent incidents were reported and Talas, Kocaöz and Akgüç (2011) among which 43.3% of physical and 65.3% of verbal violent incidents were not reported to managers. In this study patient relatives were cause of violence in about 74% of verbal violence which are consistent with the findings of Esmaeilpour, Salsali. & Ahmadi (2011); Imran, Pervez, Farooq and Asghar (2013) and Ghasemi et al, 2009.

#### 5. Limitations

Our study has limitations like small sample, lack of resources, self-report questionnaire and unequal number of participants in gender, age, experience and designation groups. Traditional environment of Pakistan and especially Peshawar may have influence on responding about violence against nurses.

#### 6. Conclusion

Study proves that both physical and verbal violence prevail against nurses working in the public sector hospitals in Peshawar, Pakistan. Majority of incidents were not reported and very rarely, action was taken against the reported cases. Nurses should be encouraged to report violent incidents by proper investigation and taking movements against the violators. Measures should be taken at every stage ranging from in service training on identification and skill to deal with at high risk behaviors of patients and their relatives, improvement of working climate to minimize violence and ensure nurses safety at workplace.

#### 7. References

- i. Attridge M & Vandepol B(2011). Critical Incident Response for Workplace Violence The Workplace Violence Prevention e-Report 1-5 Available from: <http://www.workplaceviolence911.com/docs/ceandWorkplaceCritica.pdf>
- ii. Ashry, G.M., 2002. Work related assaults on nursing staff in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. J.Family and community Medicine 9(3), 51-56.
- iii. Balamurugan, G., Tessa, T.J., Nandakumar, P., 2012. Patients violence towards nurses: A questionnaire survey. International Journal of Nursing 1(1), available from : <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

- iv. Chapman, R., & Styles, I. (n.d.). An epidemic of abuse and violence: Nurse on the front line. *Accident and Emergency Nursing*, 245-249
- v. Gacki-Smith, J., Juarez, A., Boyett, L., Homeyer, C., Robinson, L., & MacLean, S. (2009). Violence Against Nurses Working In US Emergency Departments. *JONA: The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 340-349.
- vi. Esmaeilpour, M., Salsali, M., & Ahmadi, F. (2011). Workplace violence against Iranian nurses working in emergency departments. *International Nursing Review*, 130-137.
- vii. Franz, S., Zeh, A., Schablon, A., Kuhnert, S., & Nienhaus, A. (2010). Aggression and violence against health care workers in Germany - a cross sectional retrospective survey. *BMC Health Services Research*, 51-51.
- viii. Imran N, Pervez MH, Farooq R, Asghar AR. Aggression and violence towards medical doctors and nurses in a public health care facility in Lahore, Pakistan: A preliminary investigation. *Khyber Med Univ J* 2013; 5(4): 179-184.
- ix. International labour office ILO, International council of nurses ICN, World Health Organization WHO, & Public Services International PSI. Framework Guidelines for addressing workplace violence at health sectors. 2002. Available from: [http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/activities/workplace/documents/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/activities/workplace/documents/en/index.html)
- x. Mohammad, G., Maryam, R., Nematollah, J.J., Ali, F.A, Morteza, I., Reza, R., 2009. Physical violence against nurses in Hospital. *IJOH* 9(6) <http://journals.tums.ac.ir/>
- xi. National advisory council on Nurse Education and Practice. Violence against Nurses, Fifth Annual Report, 2007.
- xii. Shields, M., & Wilkins, K. (2009). Factors related to on-the-job abuse of nurses by patients. *Statistics Canada Health Reports*, 20(2), 7-17.
- xiii. Somani, R. K., & Khowaja, K. (2012). Workplace violence towards nurses: A reality from the Pakistani context. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice*, 2(3), 148-153.
- xiv. Talas, M., Kocaöz, S., & Akgüç, S. (2011). A Survey of Violence against Staff Working in the Emergency Department in Ankara, Turkey. *Asian Nursing Research*, 197-203.