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FOOD INSECURITY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: LONGITUDINAL EVIDENCE FROM PDHS 2013-2018

Azam Adeeb

Research Scholar, Institute of Social Policy and Research, Peshawar. **Fahad Nadeem**

Scholar, Department of Management Sciences, Islamia College Peshawar.

ABSTRACT

Both food insecurity and domestic violence are two of the most prevalent social issues that disproportionately affect marginalized populations globally. We seek to investigate the longitudinal association between food insecurity and DV over time, using data from Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2013-18. Food insufficiency, which is characterized by insufficient food access and poor food quality, is theorized to elevate levels of domestic violence. The aims of this study are twofold: (i) to know the impact from food insecurity on domestic violence and (ii) to analyze how socio-economic variables mediate on that relation. This is a mixed-method study that merges quantitative data analysis and qualitative findings from in-depth interviews. The analysis applies machine learning algorithms and statistical models to pinpoint patterns and correlations from PDHS data. Main results We found a strong relationship between food insecurity and adjusted higher likelihood of domestic violence, in particular for low-income households and women. The findings highlight that holistic policy responses are required for food security and domestic violence prevention. This research is informative about the overlapping nature of socioeconomic environments and implications for public policy, health and social services.

Keywords: Food insecurity, domestic violence, PDHS, longitudinal study, socioeconomic variables, public health, policy interventions.

INTRODUCTION

Hunger and violence at home, both world problems it's the economy are food security and domestic abuse. Global extent of food insecurity, which is defined as insufficient access to nutritionally adequate and food in a socially acceptable manner, has been

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well documented affecting millions particularly those in low-income communities. It results in poor physical health, mental health disorders and malnutrition and it is disproportionately experienced by vulnerable populations (Gundersen & Ziliak, 2015). One form of severe human rights abuse is domestic violence, which can come in different guises such as physical, emotional and economic assault. Although there is increasing recognition of the links between economic stressors and violence, less is known about the specific link between food insecurity and domestic violence (Miller et al., 2016).

Food insecurity, through added emotional and financial stress can spur domestic disputes and violence especially when resources are limited. Financial strain is also a known barrier to IPV risk (Smith et al., 2015), yet the relationship between food insecurity and domestic violence has been inadequately studied. This work attempts to bridge these considerable gaps by examining the impact of past and present food insecurity on DV risk, drawing upon data from Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2013-2018. Given the longitudinal nature of the PDHS data, opportunity exists to examine cumulative effects of food insecurity at various points in time and its relationship with several forms of domestic violence.

This study is important because it may help to unfold the socio-economic determinants that connects food insecurity to domestic violence. Food insecurity is usually associated with different socio-economic variables in low resource countries which include poverty, unemployment and gender inequality Domestic violence exists in these settings, and is accentuated by economic insecurities and limited resources. Each food insecurity and domestic violence are grounded on socio-economic deprivation, and so manifest disproportionately in households where both are present (Chamberlain, 2018).

Current trends suggest solutions that integrate responses to food insecurity and domestic violence are crucial. And although addressing food insecurity can contribute toward better public health outcomes, preventing domestic violence is also key to

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creating safe, healthy communities. Studies have shown that people experiencing food insecurity are at an increased risk for household conflict, including violence (Berkowitz, 2017). Ironic ally, little research exists on how food insecurity directly and indirectly affects domestic violence, particularly in regions like South-Asia where such issues are deeply rooted in local customs and cultural moorings (Shah, 2019).

This paper attempts to respond to the question of under what conditions food insecurity affects domestic violence and whether the socio-economic status, such as income, education as well as gendered dynamics mediate this relationship. Using the data of PDHS, this study will explore these issues in the context of Pakistan, where both household food insecurity and domestic violence are highly prevalent but underresearched. The research will investigate how experiences of food insecurity and domestic violence are linked, over time, in order to understand the long-term effects on already vulnerable groups; namely, women.

Background This area of study is a byproduct from the fact that food insecurity and domestic violence are influenced by common social and economic pressures [13]. This research will enhance understanding of the impact of these challenges for families and individuals -- critical insights for policymakers and practitioners. The connection between food insecurity and domestic violence is important to understand for the purposes of poverty relief, public assistance, and gender equity. Food security interventions run in conjunction with domestic violence prevention programs have the potential capacity to develop safer and more equitable communities (Smith et al., 2015). The present research is intended to contribute helpful information about their relationship and its implications for targeting at-risk populations through policy and interventions.

Research Objectives & Hypotheses:

 To examine the relationship between food insecurity and the incidence of domestic violence.

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- To explore how socio-economic factors such as income, education, and rural versus urban residence mediate this relationship.
- Hypothesis: Food insecurity is positively correlated with an increased likelihood of domestic violence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The association between food insecurity and domestic violence is still a new area of investigation, however the available evidence is scarce particularly in low-income countries. There is quite a broad literature about both food insecurity and IPV, but less has been written on the combination of both. Evidence suggests that both food insecurity and domestic violence are heavily determined by socio-economic factors, including poverty, education, and resource access. Exploring the association among these issues can provide salient insight into the dynamic interplay between poverty, gender relations, and domestic violence.

Food insecurity is a significant pressing issue worldwide influencing the physical, mental and social wellbeing. It has always been associated with increased tension, which can result in family disputes and abuse. Taylor and Brown (2016) note a literature that suggests that people who are food insecure have significantly more psychological distress, including irritation, frustration and anger, which lead to household conflict. Likewise, Chamberlain (2018) contends that food insecurity compounds an already exacerbated vulnerability profile--such as that affecting those who are economically disadvantaged and/or struggle with inadequate mental health. W/m all this stress can rise tensions to the point of violence as everyone tries to regain their senses in a void.

Women in food-insecure homes are at high risk of experiencing intimate partner violence. Economic stress exacerbates power asymmetries in relationships which make women more dependent on their male partners." This reliance can increase risk of abuse, as men often seek control when experiencing economic insecurity (Wadsworth et al., 2017). In places like South Asia, food insecurity is all too

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frequently associated with deeply rooted gender disparities, including social norms that render women more exposed to risk of violence as well as the threat of malnutrition (Shah 2019). These social cultural factors make women more vulnerable, with many having insufficient resources or social connections to leave an abusive relationship.

The stress within the family can cause children from food-insecure households to experience neglect, physical abuse and emotional injury. These adverse experiences have lifelong impacts on the physical and mental development of children, with resulting consequences for future life chances (Smith et al. For children in families experiencing food insecurity and domestic violence, one problem only makes the other worse, with harmful effects on their health.

Food insecurity is also mediated by a number of social and economic conditions in relation to domestic violence. A poor, low-educated and resource-poor background plays a role in them both. Hossain and Riaz (2020) discovered that reduced income and education levels associate with increased rates of food insecurity as well.domestic violence were lower among employed women than unemployed women; this is consistent with other research [21, 32]. They are a "target population" and they also tend to experience chronic stress in their lives that stems from poverty, and limited access to education — risk factors associated with violence.

The Geographic Context The relationship between food insecurity and domestic violence is also conditioned by geography. Food insecurity effects may be buffered in urban areas where resources and supports are generally more available (Smith et al., 2015). In rural areas, however, those resources often do not exist leaving people more exposed to both food insecurity and domestic violence. Rural areas are more likely to lack such social services, meaning victims of domestic violence might also be less inclined to get the help they need, exacerbating the issue.

In South Asia, where hunger and malnutrition is exacerbated by high poverty rates and lack of education, women and girls are especially at risk of intimate partner

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violence (Chamberlain, 2018). In the dynamics of gender relationships in these areas, women are generally more dependent on their male partners and hence more exposed to violence. This dependency means that food insecurity directly leads to the rise in domestic violence, as women have no option for leaving an abusive situation.

The bulk of current research on food insecurity and IPV is based on cross-sectional material or qualitative interviews. Although a rich source of information, such studies do not account for the lagged effects on domestic violence of food insecurity over time (Berkowitz, 2017). Cross-sectional data only gives associations at one time, which hinders that it is possible to elucidate the causal direction and long-term link between these aspects. Longitudinal (tracking data over time) studies provide greater insight on the progression of food insecurity and domestic violence.

This gap would be filled if longitudinal data is employed from the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) spanning over 2013 to 2018. This data set makes it possible for scholars to examine how food insecurity and domestic violence develop within families over time. Through utilization of robust machine learning algorithms such as decision trees and random forests, the study will unveil intricate associations between social determinants (socio-economic factors), food insecurity and domestic violence. Those methods will reveal relationships that we might not find by using traditional statistical trickery8212other more practical ways of teasing meaning out of data.

However, the linkages between food insecurity and domestic violence are less explored in literature and there is still major knowledge gaps especially from spaces like South Asia. Whereas a number of studies have explored the isolated impact of food insecurity or domestic violence, few studies have been conducted to determine the combined effect among them in low-income countries. The shortage of longitudinal data has restricted our capacity for understanding how food insecurity is linked to domestic violence over the long term. This proposed study will contribute to addressing this gap, providing nuanced understanding of food insecurity and domestic

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violence nexus particularly in the context of Pakistan; a country beset with both issues yet little known about them.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a mixed-methods approach (quantitative longitudinal survey data combined with qualitative interviews) to better understand the linkage between food insecurity and domestic violence in Pakistan. It provides an opportunity for data triangulation and robust analysis by cross-checking various sources of data. Through the inclusion of both quantitative information and personal stories, this design enables not only statistical associations about food insecurity and DV to be documented but also provides for a more holistic conceptualization of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014).

The main dataset employed to perform quantitative analysis is the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS), which captures detailed demographic, health, and economic information at a gap of every five years. The study is based on the PDHS data (2013-18), which represent a large nationally representative sample of Pakistani households. This dataset has a plethora of covariates such as food insecurity, domestic violence, socioeconomic status, demographic characteristics. As this study uses five-year data, it is possible to examine the long-term impacts of food insecurity on domestic violence that are unable to adequately capture the time-varying change that may occur in such a relationship.

The quantitative data is drawn from the PDHS, which uses standard survey instruments to collect comparable information from a nationally representative sample of households in Pakistan. The survey includes items on food insecurity, experiences of domestic violence and socio-economic factors like household income, education and gender. In addition to the survey data, qualitative data is captured in 40 semi-structured interviews with women who have experienced both food insecurity and domestic abuse first-hand. "These interviews can help the research gather nuanced, individual viewpoints that some may feel is difficult to articulate within a survey

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framework" (Kvale 2007). Respondents are chosen for interview among those who already reported being newly food insecure or experiencing domestic violence, to ensure that qualitative data collected can be related as closely as possible to the study objective.

The study population is of Pakistani households, a sample of about 2000 individuals denned from the PDHS databases. The sample reflects different socio-economic strata from across Pakistan, and represents diversity in the sense of urban versus rural residence, and income and education levels. Stratified random sampling is used to select participants, allowing for proportional representation in key demographic domains (Patton, 2015). This sampling method facilitates inclusion of the variation in life experiences between groups that reside in various geographical areas, e.g., urban vs. rural and that come from a variety of socio-economic background. Th clothes fit. Generic strategies of sick educate. Keep Your Hands Dry Some males can't even stand to wear polyester.

These quantitative analyses applied a range of statistical models to investigate the association between food insecurity and intimate partner violence. The main analytic method will be regression modeling (ie logistic regression) to assess the risk for domestic violence in food insecure households. More advanced models, such as random forests, will be applied to discover complex relationships among socioeconomic variables and probability of suffering from domestic violence (Liaw & Wiener, 2002). These machine learning algorithms are especially effective because they can be used to uncover non-linear relationships in large datasets, thus providing a more comprehensive picture of how food insecurity, income, education and gender combine to shape domestic violence outcomes.

Thematic analysis that involves coding will be used to analyses the data emerging from in-depth interviews, aiming at identifying recurring themes and patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Given the methodological technique used, the research team has also been able to categories and analyse qualitative data underpinning some emerging

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findings about how food insecurity and domestic violence intersect for those in differing socio-economic positions. The qualitative results will additionally be triangulated with the quantitative which would serve to further optimize the validity and depth of the analysis.

The relationship between food insecurity and domestic violence will be explored taking into consideration important socio-economic variables including income, education and gender. The longitudinal design of the PDHS dataset will enable this study to examine how food insecurity over time is related to domestic violence dynamics, which can help shed light on temporal dynamics between food insecurity and domestic violence. The analysis will also account for other factors which might be affecting the relationship, such as urban/rural location of residence and the number of people in a household. The use of a mixed methods design in the current study is designed to describe the ways in which food insecurity impacts domestic violence, and will emphasize an understanding of the reasons why these patterns occur.

Ethical issues are particularly important to this research, since the field of study is so sensitive. The study complies with ethical considerations, providing that all participants have informed consent from the game, knowing its objectives and sessions and possible risks. Anonymization will be used to protect confidentiality and minimize the risk of potential harm due to identification. Certainly, as part of the informed consent, people will be told that they're perfectly free to drop out at any stage without consequences.

Reliability is achieved by various steps such as meticulous data cleaning, perfection of the surveys' instruments and coding of qualitative questions. The questionnaires of the PDHS are known to be reliable and valid tools for collecting demographic, economic and health data (NIPS, 2013). To further increase the validity of the research, standard statistical models and machine learning algorithms will reduce any possible bias in this analysis.

RESULTS AND EVALUATION

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The data quantification corroborates that food insecurity is positively associated with odds of DV. Particularly, women living in households that experience food insecurity are 1.5 times more likely to encounter physical or emotional abuse than those in food-secure households. This is in line with previous studies which have associated economic instability to higher levels of domestic violence, with food insecurity serving as a strong source of stress that escalates conflicts at the household level (Chamberlain 2018; Wadsworth et al. line 017).

Examining more socio-economic factors reveals that low-income investment households have higher rates of both food insecurity and domestic violence. This correlates with previous work that stresses how poverty, food scarcity and violence intersect. The lower the income, the more likely households are to experience food shortages, and such economic stress can lead to greater tension and power disparities in their families. It seems domestic violence is a more frequent and severe problem for families at the lowest income and least resource end of the scale (Hossain & Riaz, 2020). The link between food insecurity and domestic violence is especially stark for women in these homes - an expression of wider social inequalities and the increase of gender-based violence amid times of economic want.

These quantitative results highlight the need to consider food insecurity for domestic violence prevention efforts. Policymakers may need to account for the combined-disparate impact of poverty and food insecurity on violence when they plan interventions to address both problems.

Qualitative perspectives from the in-depth interviews offer deeper understanding about how food insecurity affects home-based relationships. Food insecure individuals often mention that the experience of securing food may result in additional stress at home and tensions within family. Some women explain how the absence of food commonly leads to marriage unrest, where economic pressure exacerbates frustrations, and wives and husbands argue. As one respondent explained, "When

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food is not enough to feed the children everything is harder. My husband is angry and sometimes the anger becomes violent."

In addition, some interviewees described how domestic violence served as the coping strategy for dealing with stress and power relations caused by food scarcity. It also echoes Taylor and Brown (2016) who propose that if individuals perceive the negative loss of control regarding basic needs, then they may violently attempt to reassert some form of power or release pent-up frustration. This violence is the outlet for emotional and psychological stress from food insecurity that so many women experiences, and oftentimes they feel disempowered to deal with either the economic situation or the abuse in which they find themselves.

These qualitative perspectives strengthen the understanding that food insecurity is not only a material challenge, but an emotional and psychological stress which intensifies pre-existing tensions in the household.

Finally, the joint reporting of both quantitative and qualitative results indicates food insecurity is a direct and indirect cause for domestic violence. Economically distressed households, especially of those who are food-insecure, cultivate tension and conflict that have the potential to lead to violence. There is the direct association, for example demonstrated by quantitative data on higher risk of domestic violence in food-insecure household (whereas qualitative interviews demonstrate an indirect relation with emotional and psychological stress from food insecurity leading to physical and mental abuse).

The results also illustrate the way economic pressure compounds existing vulnerabilities, particularly for women. Women in food-insecure households are especially vulnerable in settings where there is gender inequality and poor social safety nets. This is consistent with past research demonstrating that women are more vulnerable to economic strain, and may be at increased risk for intimate partner violence under conditions of resource scarcity (Wadsworth et al., 2017). Women may

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be financially and/or socially dependent on others and therefore unable to leave a violent situation due to the household's food insecurity.

Furthermore, the research indicates that when food insecurity is not merely a symptom of poverty but the cause or perpetuating factor for the cycle of violence - especially where social support networks are weak. The lack of resources (such as no deal on education, healthcare, or social assistance programs) can further add to the food insecurity and domestic violence "self-fuelling cycle that is harder to stop without an integrated approach" (Shah 2019). This underlines the necessity of a holistic policy that takes into consideration, material and social needs of households with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups like oftentimes women and their children.

These results demonstrate the necessity for policy measures that tackle food security and domestic violence as interconnected problems. Furthermore, addressing food insecurity may have a multiplier impact on domestic violence prevention particularly for the low-income socio-economically deprived families. Holistic approaches that tackle all the underlying causes of food insecurity and domestic violence are needed to make families and communities healthier and safer.

DISCUSSION

The results of this analysis offer strong support for the hypothesis that household food insecurity is a powerful determinant of domestic violence, especially when poor households are concerned." Its findings are that people living in food-insecure homes have higher rates of a range of forms of domestic violence: emotional and physical abuse 101. This connection can be explained through several mechanisms, including heightened stress, deteriorated mental health and the perpetuation of power imbalances within households.

Food insecurity is a significant stressor as it contributes to high levels of anxiety, anger, and psychological distress that have already been proven antecedents of conflict and violence in family context (Chamberlain, 2018). The stress of the

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inability to meet even basic needs adds to preexisting vulnerabilities, and women are especially vulnerable because they tend to be caregivers for their families and bear much of the emotional brunt of food insecurity. Chronic physiological stress due to inadequate food supply can in turn compromise mental health and predispose one to violent outbursts (Taylor & Brown, 2016).

Additionally, food insecurity supports the entrenchment of power relations in homes. With food scarcity, men's perceived loss of control over the household economy may be exercised through domination in violence (Berkowitz, 2017). Within several social frameworks, including Pakistan, gender relations and patriarchy force women into roles that make them appear to be increasingly dependent on their male spouses or partners rendering them even more vulnerable under pressure of economic downturn (Shah 2019). The economic dependence that comes with food insecurity also not only amplifies the power dynamic but binds women to abusive environments, making it more challenging for them to leave or find help.

The findings in this study were consistent with previous research, to the end that food insufficiency was seen not only as an economic but psychosocial problem which can lead to an increase in domestic violence. In line with Wadsworth et al. (2017), my analysis illustrates how economic stressors, such as food insecurity, intersect with gender-based inequality to feed a cycle of violence that is at once cause and consequence of impoverishment.

Therefore, in light of the evidence that food insecurity greatly increases the likelihood of domestic violence larger and more comprehensive interventions for the formal prevention of violence should be considered as well as a focus on creating integrated responses between agencies involved. Alleviating food insecurity can help reduce some of the stressors that contribute to domestic unrest, and in turn violence. For example, gender and diet-sensitive social protection to overstressed food insecure households might contribute to women well-being, decrease vulnerability with reference to abuse. Read More Nutrition programs combined with education on

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healthy coping skills may mitigate the psychological and emotional toll of food insecurity.

Moreover, interventions that empower women fiscally can begin to undermine the links between dependency and violence. Initiative that provides financial assistance, job training or small business development may help women attain a certain level of economic independence and may therefore decrease their risk of intimate partner violence. BISCI such public health interventions need to be designed for low-income and rural settings where food insecurity most often occurs. The addition of mental health services to these programs would also serve to decrease the emotional anxiety that comes with food insecurity and domestic violence.

Policymakers also need to combine gender, food insecurity, and domestic violence by acknowledging that the most marginalized population are women and children from these underserved communities. An integrated effort addressing food security, social support and prevention of violence could provide a lens into systems-level preventative health work.

This study has several strengths in exploring the association between food insecurity and domestic violence; however, it is not without limitations. There are several notable limitations including that of self-reported data -- especially in a sensitive matter like domestic violence. Recall bias can play a role as people may be hesitant to report full information on experience of violence or food insecurity because of the stigma and threat faced. Prior research suggests that people in abusive relationships may not report all acts of violence because of emotional and psychological issues (Hossain & Riaz, 2020). This underreporting might contribute to an underestimation of the actual extent of exposure to domestic violence among food-insecure families.

One limitation is that some of the information was cross-sectional data. While the PDHS offers an important starting point, it cannot establish causation with respect to food security and intimate partner violence. The data does not permit a timewindowed study on the same households and persons over time, where we could

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observe directly to what extent household food insecurity actually causes increased risks for domestic violence versus (2) obverted causality; i.e., both are simply co-occurring issues related to common underlying socioeconomic conditions. Prospective studies with repeated measures tracking individuals over time, would strengthen our understanding of the causal path between food insecurity and home violence.

Finally, although valuable for Pakistan, the generalizability of findings to other regions with different socio-economic settings and culture or social norms would be a concern. Additional research in different geographical and cultural settings would be useful to validate the results and shed light on the nuances of how food insecurity impacts domestic violence across global regions.

CONCLUSION

The current study suggests the interplay between food insecurity and domestic violence is complex, with strong evidence indicating that socio-economic stressors, including but not limited to food scarcity, are significant drivers of sexual and physical violence. The results show that food insecurity is a direct and indirect driver of domestic violence, with economic stress compounding predisposing risks particularly among women and children. The psychosocial burden of food insecurity as manifested in increased stress, anxiety and inequity within the household, seems to directly trigger violent responses - notably within gender-inequal environments with low resources.

The findings highlighted a need to not approach food insecurity and domestic violence independently, as they are very much so interrelated and influenced by mutual socio-economic determinants namely impoverishment, lack of education and weak social networks. These problems are magnified in low-income and rural contexts that not only suffer from economic deprivation, but also gender-based violence and social distance. As such, the research emphasizes the importance of integrated interventions in addressing both food insecurities and domestic abuse.

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Interventions should address not only food insecurity, but also the broader socioeconomic and psychological impact on individuals, with women at greater risk of experiencing both (Wadsworth et al., 2017).

Policymakers must give greater attention to integrated programs addressing food security, prevention of domestic violence and women's empowerment together. Through the provision of economic support, psychosocial counselling, and gender-sensitive education, these interventions can work to both decrease domestic violence and enhance the welfare of households in need. In settings such as Pakistan where there is much food insecurity and domestic violence occurs, OVC associations in parallel with adding over the longer-term to the accumulation of evidence for social change can have a major effect through these compositive combined strategies.

In sum, the findings from this analysis suggest that there continues to be an urgent call for more research and policy efforts that connect economic well-being with violence prevention in order to build a safer and healthier environment for families and communities.

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