

**Prevalence and factors associated with intimate partner violence against women in the Western Province.**

**MD (Community Medicine) - 2007**

**D 1768**

A cross sectional survey was conducted among a community based sample of 750 ever-married women in the 18-49 years age group using standard methodologies and instruments recommend by the World Health Organization (WHO). The translated and pre-tested Women's Health and Life Events questionnaire was administered by trained interviewers. The validity and reliability of this instrument has been established by community surveys in 15 sites in 10 countries. The households included in the survey were chosen by multi-stage cluster sampling and one eligible woman was randomly chosen from each household. The response rate was 97 percent and the sample was representative of the population 'of ever-married females in the Western province. The lifetime prevalence of physical violence among ever-married women in the 18-49 years age group of the Western province was 34.4 percent (CI, 30.9 - 37.9) and prevalence of current physical violence (within last 12 months) was 8.8 percent (CI, 6.7 10.8). The lifetime prevalence of severe physical violence (acts of aggression with the potential to cause injury) was higher, physical violence 14.7 percent , CI , 12.1 - 17.3 percent ). The lifetime prevalence of sexual violence 5. 0 percent (-CI, 3.4 - 6.6) and of current sexual violence was 4.2 percent (CI, 2.7 -5.7) .Only 15 percent of the abused report being physically injured and 74 present of the injured had visited healthcare institutions. A large percentage of the severely abused women (41 percent reported poor general health and showed more symptoms of emotional distress. The abused were also more likely to have suicidal thoughts and attempts at suicides compared to non-abused. More than 70 percent of the abused and non-abused women believed that a 'good wife obeys husband even if she disagrees' affirming the subordinate position of women in the family. More than 68 percent of the abused and non-abused also believed that family problems should only be discussed with the family.