



Psychological Disorders as an Outcome of Domestic Violence: Meknes

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Abstract. Violence in general is a very complex issue that has many definitions in one single society. Each society has its own definition or rather definitions of violence for the reason that the latter lives under different conditions and have access to a variety of perceptions of violence as a concept. Violence changes our lives, affects our understandings of life, raises our awareness, harms our bodies and minds, and finally treats us as in an inhumane way. It neglects our rights and regards us as objects and victims who are unable to defend themselves and utter a word to express their pain and suffering. Violence is handled to be a crime where the violated persons occupy a lower position, which is different from the abuser's position that is very high to that of the abused. In addition, I have learned that in most society's women and children are always subject to violence inside and outside the borders of the family. Here, the notion of a family is differed and becoming to acquire new definitions and new vocabularies; it is a place of various types of violence being it rape, insults, sexual abuse, and physical force. Therefore, a family becomes a symbol of terror and victimization.

Index Terms- Traumatic, Violence, Sexual Abuse, Terror, Victimization.

I. Introduction

Throughout this pilot study, I am going to shed light on many aspects that have relation to violence against women that cause them psychological paralysis. In chapter one, I have reviewed the literature through consulting many articles, websites, and women have gone through the traumatic experience to support the researched topic.

Section 2 gives a clear idea about the instrument employed in conducting this project. In section 3, I have provided a full description of the collected data. Then, in section 4, I have taken the data into pieces and came out with results of this project after interpreting and analyzing.



II. The Literature Review

It is argued that Violence against women is the most pervasive human rights violation in the world today. Violence with all its types results in psychological and moral disorders that affect the lives of women being it private or public. This research will try to provide some solutions to get rid of this form of degradation of women. As ANAROUZ network stated, the psychological disorder cannot be seen in isolation from the physical, sexual and the economic violence but rather it is a reflection of all these forms of violence, it mirrors the victims' physical, sexual, economic, and legal suffering. This research places a specific focus on the psychological disorders caused by violence. For the reason, it cannot be expressed like other types of violence; it is a very silent pain that destroys the psychology of women and leaves them powerless. It is stressed by ANAROUZ network that when a complainant reaches some of the listening centers to complain about a concrete legal violence or physical violence, this does not mean the absence of the psychological disorder but rather it is within all other forms of violence, and extends through it horizontally and vertically. This will lead us to shed light on the types of physical violence since it is the most common form of violence that starts in the domestic sphere and goes beyond until it reaches the public sphere. I am also going to explore types of sexual, economic and legal violence that are the main reasons behind the psychological harm. Most women do not complain about the psychological illness that results from violence, and this does not mean that this disorder in the psych of women does not exist at all but rather it is the most dangerous outcome any form of violence can generate. It leaves deep psychological wounds that are too difficult to erase.

This research paper will try and concentrate on the psychological disorders women suffer from because of the domestic violence which is the most powerful reason behind physical and psychological harm in all parts of the world. But this research will focus on an urban area in Morocco called Meknes. I am going to see how violence against women is carried out in most of the time by men so as to subjugate women to their will, humiliate and force them to do what they do not want to. I will also investigate the expected outcomes of a traumatic experience of either beaten, raped or sexually harassed women. Our objective is to disseminate a vast social awareness of the aftermaths of psychological traumatic experience and the outcomes of these experiences. Our aim is to study this invisible psychological harm women always suffer from but do not talk about. The context of the research will be our contemporary Moroccan society. This paper will also deal with reactions that can be expected after a traumatic experience; for instance, sexual problems, bodily pains, sadness, anger and aggression, feeling helpless, feeling guilty, not trusting others, isolating oneself. Etc,

Violence against women and its psychological effects which is the main concern of this research is a very complicated topic for the reason that it calls for all types of violence to be under investigation. This paper dealt with the psychological disorders that result from violence in the domestic sphere because it takes into consideration that the latter is characterized by permanence and therefore are not



measured by hours but by days and months if not years. I am going to see why violence takes the closed spheres such as homes as the perfect place to exercise it on women and cause them psychological harm. Here the domestic sphere is viewed as a place of mental, physical, and sexual torture as well as a place of deprivation and humiliation. The place of love, warmth and intimacy is turned to battlefield where women are fought aggressively without mercy. In this case, it is law that makes the domestic sphere a hell for women since proofs of violence are almost impossible. What is more, is when the latter is looked at as a private issue especially when this enters the framework of obedience, politeness and authority a husband has over his wife. Besides, violence against women is a product of a sense of force that men enjoy and a look of inferiority, weakness and contempt women have in society. So, the proposed idea here is, to return safety and comfort to the domestic sphere there should be a reconsideration of the Moroccan criminal law and some reforms to family law so as to disrupt the culture of violence that is internalized in the Moroccan mentalities. There will be a detailed analysis of how domestic violence most of the time if not always results in mental problems for women that cause them in turn serious problems in the private and public sphere. This research will also give some suggestions for women so as to avoid being victims of violence. This research will be supported by readings from literature and other data collected by organizations that can enable us to have a general view (s) about why only women are legitimate targets to violence and force and how these forms of violence, which have an impact on the psychology of women, are justified by the abuser and society in general. In addition, an interview should be developed so as to gather data about women have gone through traumatic experiences and what is/ are the effect(s) these experiences have to their psych.

In this pilot study, I am going to examine how violence committed against Meknasi married women being it physical, sexual, or economic in public and private spheres, leads to psychological and mental disorders. Our purpose is to shed light on the outcomes of a traumatic experience of raped, divorced, sexually harassed and beaten women. In addition, I will state that if physical violence damages women's body by beatings and torture which sometimes results in death, and if sexual violence against women touches their femininity and left fingerprints on their lives, psychological disorder is an outcome of these two types of violence that harms the human self and feelings. I am going to study violence against women as a cultural phenomenon that has deep roots in the human history because it is practiced in every society regardless of its development or underdevelopment and what are the limitless causes and the consequences that can drive women to death or physical disability.

I will conduct this research in an urban area called Meknes so as to get an idea about how much women in this particular area suffer from physical, sexual and economic violence that affect their psychological state. I am also going to focus on illiterate women with no jobs and no incomes; those who rely 100 per cent on their partners economically speaking. This research will try and seek information from statistics of women that have gone through traumatic experience (s) as a result of violence in the Moroccan context. The research will focus on its essence on violence



that stands against human rights and causes women's subordination, harm and deprivation. Violence that touches the psychology of the human being is considered the most dangerous kind of violence ever. The research will be based on a fieldwork and a specific number of women who suffer from psychological harm will be interviewed so as to understand their situation (s) and get a clear image of what happened to them.

III. Methodology

Designing the methodology of any research is very crucial. This part provides a description of the techniques and the materials used in the study. It also defines the measures used to get answers to the research questions. In the paragraphs to come, I will state the main research questions of the study followed by the main hypotheses that are to be confirmed or opposed by the research findings. Making clear the measures that are used in the study is what will come next before talking about the population that is targeted and the sampling technique that is used.

The research questions:

Before I have started investigating the in hands research, I have generated some questions that should be answered during this pilot study:

- Does the Moroccan social context help in the spreading of violence?
- Do economic conditions help in producing violent persons?
- Do consequences of violence affect the family as a whole?
- Which type of violence is more dangerous, is it the physical or the psychological?
- Can physical violence result in psychological disorders for women?
- To what extent can illiterate women recognize violence that may lead to psychological disorders?
- To what extent are women aware of the necessity of voicing out their feelings of violence?
- Can silence be considered as a form of tolerating violence?
- How does society perceive women who reject violence and voiced out their voices?
- Is patience in the Moroccan context another form of tolerating violence?
- What are the roles played by nongovernmental associations to protect violated women?
- Is listening to these women enough or should something be done for the retrieval of Moroccan woman's identity and position in society?
- To what extent as social actors, can I protect children from psychological disorder caused by violence?

Hypotheses

- Given the huge number of violated women, violence is pervasive and can be seen everywhere in public as well as private spheres.
- Because of the society's tolerance of violence, rates of violated women is getting higher.



- Due to silence of violated women and their fear of the society's perception of them, numbers of violated women become scaring.
- Recommendations, of family and relatives to violated women to be patient, are the main causes of repeating violence within the same household.
- Nongovernmental association as main social actors in society participated in raising women's awareness of the necessity of voicing out their sufferance.

Measures

Demographic Variables

It concerns the age, gender, education and whether our respondents have an economic source or not. All these variables are of course to reflect specific attitudes and perceptions concerning the researched topic.

Measuring Spousal Violence

Research on violence suggests that the most common form of domestic violence of adults is spousal violence. Thus, spousal violence was measured using Shortened Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) (Strauss, 1990). CTS have been formed to be effective in measuring domestic violence. In this pilot study, CTS is used because it fits all cultural situations.

The Conflict Tactics Scale implies the following questions:

Does/ did your husband ever...

- Push you, shake you, or throw something at you?
- Slap you or twist your arm?
- Punch you with his fist or with something that could hurt you?
- Kick you or drug you?
- Try to strangle you or burn you?
- Threaten you with a knife, a metal or other type of weapon?
- Attack you with a knife, a metal or other type of weapon?
- Physically force you to have a sexual intercourse even when you did not want to?
- Force you to perform types of other sexual acts you did not want to?

Interviewed women have to answer only with Yes/No to the CTS model so that we can know that there is a domestic spousal violence.

Measuring the Prevalence of Emotional Violence

So as to identify the prevalence of emotional violence a similar approach is applied. This approach aims at deducing the emotional status of interviewed women resulting from violent abuses by asking them the following:

Does/did your husband ever...

- Say or do something to humiliate you in front of others?
- Threaten you or someone close to you with harm?

From the CTS model, any researcher can deduce the prevalence of both spousal violence and emotional violence. This type of interviewing is called structured interviews where the interviewer prepares a list of questions and the



interviewee answers without the intervention of the interviewer. Thus, we have chosen this type to recognize our sample out of a population. But still, we have generated other semi-structured questions that allow us to interfere from time to time when the conversation diverge or when it is dominated by the interviewee.

Population and Sampling

Our investigation targets women who suffer from violence that cause psychological disorders aging between 30 and 49 years old, with a divorced marital status, living in the center of Meknes, with no education and no employment. The aim behind choosing this category of women is that they are the most targeted with violent assaults because of their social, educational and economic status. Besides, this category of women supposedly is the portion that represents the silent, patient and the illiterate Moroccan woman who has been always a target of violence. That is to say, the sample under investigation should have experienced violence that leads to psychological disorders.

Clearly, the sample under investigation is non-probable and non-random. Specifically, it is a purposive sampling which is a technique that is also called judgment sampling. It refers to a deliberate choice of the participant according to the qualities that respondents have (Bernard, Lewis & Sheppard, as cited in Tongo, 2007) and according to which they are going to react upon the issue of the research. This exactly reflects our choice, that is, a respondent who is social being suffering from psychological disorders because of violence.

The following is a brief introduction of our interviewees

- The first interviewee is a wife a teacher. She was divorced after three years of marriage but she lived only three months with him as a wife. She has a son and she asks for the alimony of the husband to back up her son's daily needs.
- The second interviewee is a wife of an engineer assistant. She lived only four months with her husband before she was divorced. She has a son with him. She has no problem with her husband but rather her mother in law. She asks for the alimony of the husband to support her son's basic needs.
- The third interviewee is a wife of a butcher (her cusine). She lived with him in an urban area. She was divorced after five years of marriage. She has two kids with him a boy and a girl.
- The fourth interviewee is a wife of a soldier. She was divorced after five years of marriage but she lived with him as a wife only three months. She has a son living altogether with her family.

Qualitative Research Method (Interview)

Relying on qualitative method guarantees the study a sense of completion in terms of having a clear and a thoughtful data. The aim behind using qualitative method is to enrich the investigation with information that cannot be gathered quantitatively. That is, respondents will have the chance to express the human experience freely. Especially, qualitative study provides the researcher with an insight into people's attitudes, behaviors, aspirations and concerns.



Out of qualitative method, we have decided to employ the instrument of interviewing as a naturalistic interpretive approach to our subjects and their contextual setting. Within this instrument, there are three types of interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. We have made use of structured interviews to specify the sample of the population that we had worked on, and semi-structured interviews to enrich our data with information because of the literacy of the interviewed women. In this vein, Coolican (1994) pointed out that there are various skills that interviews need in order to obtain valuable data; these skills involve establishing a good understanding with the person being interviewed, adopting a non-judgmental approach, and developing effective listening skills. We have almost witnessed these skills with our interviewees with whom we have established a ground of security of the content of interviews. This security leads to an understanding between us.

IV. Data Description

I administered an interview with illiterate women who never went to school, I added this to confirm that illiteracy has to do with school but in today's society it acquires another meaning which is related to computer skills. I have chosen married women who are from the rural area of Meknes to be informed about the types of violence they encounter in their marriage. So, the sample consisted of five women that were in a very difficult condition. They are very young women aged between twenty-six and thirty-two years old. This data collection method informs the subsequent data analysis' decisions. The latter will enable us to investigate in-depth the answers of the sample and to generate the findings on the regional area of Meknes and why not at the national scale which is Morocco.

Definition of Psychological Abuse Caused by Violence

When these five women are asked to provide a definition to the so called psychological pain that result from violence, they relate it to the whole experiences they see through their marriage. They relate their psychological disorder to the painful lived incident. Besides, these women claim that they have experienced all types of violence that leaves an effect on their psychology till the time being. They all claim that the violence that touches the psychology of the human is the hard and the unbearable type of violence. It leaves them powerless and unable to use their mind properly because no type of violence is detached from the psychological abuse; they go together so that you cannot detach one type from its effect and the fingerprint it traces on the psychology.

Women provide us with different definitions concerning psychological harm in the private sphere caused either by the husband, the mother-in-law, or other members if it is the case of an extended family. They relate it to the damages caused by verbal language, physical harm, sexual assaults, threat, and to restrict one's freedom in the private and the public life. They also refuse to detach the violence directed to children from the violence that is in no way directed to women or mothers in a more precise way.



They add that all types of violence are unethical; they play on the psyche of the abused and they render her (the woman) as an object that has no feelings and emotions. They require from her to be obedient and weak with no reaction and absolutely no choice. So, illiterate women came with many definitions of violence that plays on the psychology of women. There is no doubt that all of them without any single exception relate it to all types of violence; words of mouth, physical violence or beating and finally sexual abuse.

Types of Violence

Women when they were asked about violence in general, they avow that this term is a big thing that entails many other concepts and definitions. They say that violence takes many forms and can be viewed in behaviors, words, non-verbal language, and other things. Despite the fact that the interviewed women are illiterate, they came with very aware definitions of the types of violence stressing on the psychological effects these cause.

Physical Violence

Physical violence as these women define it has to do with beating and physical harm caused either by the husband or the mother in law or other members. The first case claimed that she have experienced this type of violence from the mother in law who was the leader in the house. She was the source of physical harm rather than the husband who has the right to do so as she claimed. The second case was beaten by her husband, his sister and her mother regardless of the wife's pregnancy. The third case reveals the capability of the husband and his mother in law to exercise a bouble physical force on the woman even if she is still young and needs more care and tenderness at that stage. Here the abuser was someone from the family members before he is a husband, but this makes no sense as she says. The fourth case declares that she was beaten by her husband and no other member, and this was not a problem for her.

Verbal Violence

All the interviewed women ensure that they were victims of verbal violence every day and every single moment in the domestic sphere as well as outside it. This type of violence not only the husband who produces it but also the mother in law who is a strong figure in the family community. Besides, other members of the family are very keen on this violence. This is the easiest kind of violence to be exercised on women and wives more specifically.

Non-verbal Violence

This type is emphasized by three women on the area of Meknes; they avow that non-verbal violence is the harshest kind of violence ever for the sense that it leaves a deep trace on the psyche of women. Most of the times it leaves many questions unanswered. For instant, when the wives encounter this type of violence they are likely as they said to keep silent and pay attention to everything they do or they say because they feel that they are watched either by their husband or other members of the family.



Psychological Violence

When illiterate women were asked about the psychological violence they are likely to jot down all what they have lived with their husbands and with the extended family. They also transgress it to talk about the psychological trauma they experience when they return home after divorce. They avow they were psychologically sick because of the words, actions, behaviors, etc. The interviewed women relate this type of violence to intimidation; when their husbands use force so as to oblige them to have sexual relations with them. They leave no choice for them to decide on this. In addition, they prevent them from the right to choose and tell what they like and what they don't in the social life. Besides, Most women ensure us about the source of violence is not only the husband in the first place but also the mother-in-law who dictates everything and draw a line between she/her. The 'she' as the mother of the husband and the 'her' who is just his wife.

Causes of Psychological Violence

- Parental choice
- Absence of dialogue
- Absence of education
- The inherited past

Parental Choice

All interviewed women claim that the mother in law who have chosen them as wives for their husbands. They add, the husband has no choice in revealing what he wants and what he does not. Besides, husbands claim as women say that they should be faithful to their mothers whatever happens. It is this because of this faithfulness that they face luck in their carriers. Women in addition claim that the husbands follow whatever their mothers say without ever questioning it or asking a single question about this. What is more is that these women claim that they didn't find any problem with their husbands in what concerns treatment or other things till the mother interferes, only at that time things were getting worse. They proclaim that mothers tend not to leave them alone even in bedroom time.

Absence of Dialogue

Concerning dialogue, three of the interviewed women said that dialogue was absent in the domestic sphere especially with the husband whom they feel that he is very intimate and close to them in many ways. The reasons they give for this is the lack of education and the long hours of work that keep the husband away from his wife who is waiting for her husband to come the so as to share with him what she suffered from the part of the mother in law in his absence. But when he is back to home, he tends just to eat and sleep. One case avows that dialogue was present in the domestic sphere in spite of the lack of education.

Lack of Education

The lack of education is at the core of the majority of problems these women face as they claim. It is the reason behind their psychological disorders that were caused by physical, verbal, and non-verbal violence. One case claims that this issue



has a great impact on her psychology given the fact that her husband is an engender assistant and she was unable to read what he writes every day on an agenda. They feel that education stands as a hurdle between the husband and his wife. So, a gap is always seen between the two. The three cases that are left claim that education was every important for their relations with their partners to be successful. It also informs them about their rights and their needs as they say.

The Inherited Past

All interviewed women when they are asked if their husbands or their mothers in law have experienced violence in their early youthhood during their life with their parents or in their domestic sphere, they answered with yes. They add all of them that their husbands have lived in a psychological trauma because of their parents or other members of the family. Also, their mothers in law have experienced a very harsh past with the mothers of their husbands. They have been denied the right to speak in front of family of the husband, the right to express what they feel, and the right to be free because these mothers were just like servant and animals. They have one and single right which is obedience and patience. They proclaim that they have denied the right to wear, eat, and watch what they want. These women as they say are very oppressed and their right are digested first by their parents, second with their husbands and third by their mothers in law and other members of the family, and finally by society which puts pressures on them and portray as objects that are there just for sexual entertainment, physical exploitation and moral degradation.

V. Data Analysis

What we can deduce from the interviews we conducted is that Meknasi married women are at the first place victims of violence by all its types; Victims of sexual assaults, of physical exploitation, and of force. Many factors as we have learned with women operate and contribute to the lower status of the woman in the Moroccan society. In exploring these factors we can mention the social and the economic reasons as a very strong evidence that help in exercising many pressures on women especially illiterate ones.

Basing our results on our previous knowledge in gender studies and other studies that touches on the psychological traumas caused by violence, these women as we have seen were isolated and marginalized either by their husband or the husband's family. This marginalization was exercised on women by purpose so as to push them out of the domestic sphere. It is a kind of torture towards the wife to feel defeated and hopeless that she can find a solution at last with her husband so that she will ask for divorce.

We also came to the conclusion that violence produces violence; peoples who are victims of childhood abuse are more likely to produce and make offensive and violent behaviors so as to threaten the abused. In addition, for wives to live with extended family where the cycle of psychological harm occurs and produces an effect on the psyche of both women and children, much time and cure is needed for victims



to recover. We have also found that emotional abuse that is stressed upon by women to be a strong indicator of increased risk for psychiatric and physical illnesses among these wives.

Illiterate women receive less care and attention by their husbands in the domestic sphere and this leaves them psychologically powerless. Illiterate women consider the domestic sphere as a world of all types of violence. Their lives are very dependent on their partners and this increases their husbands' superiority and the wives' inferiority. Moroccan society is an environment where violence has its freedom and its relaxation. This enjoyment of violence especially in between couples is played on women's expense.

Another feature that husbands, mothers in law, families, and society require from women is patience. Patience is held to be the only acceptable answer wives have in this patriarchal society. Here, patience becomes not a value but rather a duty. The latter summarizes all the sufferings and pains women encounter within the domestic borders. So, marriage becomes a war where everyone tries to succeed at the expense of the other, everybody tries to live on his/her own regardless of the way the other thinks is right or wrong.

The second feature that is needed in the wife is silence. Silence is considered a necessity in the Moroccan marriage where the wife should keep quite regardless of the psychological pain, physical violence, verbal and nonverbal language that she is exposed to everyday or rather every single moment. Education also helps in this silence that women chose so as not to lose their abusers because they have an intimate relationship with them. In addition, society accused these illiterate women who get divorced at last of not being more obedient, more silent, more patient, more passive, and more loving. There is also the idea that is engraved in Moroccan mentalities which that of the mother in law cannot be replaced whereas the wife can, which is very racist on the part of women in this society.

We hoped that this small project will help those helpless, voiceless, and nameless women to have a voice in their society because it's time to break the silence and examine the increasing violence that affects the psychological state of women in the domestic sphere. I hope this research will try and bring awareness to people to start the long process of questioning the existing terms, vocabulary, and cultural aspects that deny women the right Islam provides them with.

VI. Conclusion

This pilot study was pursued for the sake of discovering the main causes and consequences of violence against women as the most targeted within the household, answering the previous global question. Thirteen research questions were meant to be investigated and thoroughly answered through designing and administering two lists of questions; one is meant to identify the sample of the targeted population. It is called a structured list of questions which requires no our intervention. As well as,



another list of questions that are semi-structured aiming at interviewing women with the possibility of generating other questions without being restricted to the list. About four women were interviewed for the sake of answering these research questions.

After a full description of our data and provide an analysis to it, one can conclude by stating three major components that are directly linked to domestic violence silence, patience, and substitution of woman. Silence from the part of women is socially dug in the Moroccan society if one may generalize. It is the act wherein woman becomes voiceless and incapable of reporting what she feels towards the aggressive sphere. This silence is due to being afraid of the rejection of society. Concerning patience, violated women, whatsoever the type of violence was, are recommended by relatives to be patient and not to report or complain. Consequently, patience gives the abuser the right to abuse again and again, and results in psychological disorders for the abused because of the accumulation of violent acts. As for the substitution of the woman, many women would not dare to utter a word against the husband being afraid of being substituted even at the expense of her life.

All in all, this pilot study lacks the mobilization of other instruments in methodology to have a more extended view of the topic in question; however, we have employed the most efficient instrument to be close and in the hot spot of these traumatic experiences. Not being able to give a more extended view of the topic a devaluation of our humble work but rather a call for future researcher to extend the investigation to a full study.

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