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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN HARYANA: LEVELS AND CORRELATES

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Abstract

Violence against women is a worldwide phenomenon, which exists everywhere in all societies. Women are victims of violence at every stage of their life cycle and it is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights that undermine the health, dignity, security or autonomy of the women victims. In this context, the present paper studies the levels and correlates of violence against women in rural and urban Haryana. The paper is based on primary data, collected from a sample of 501 households spread over four villages and two towns from two districts of the state. The selected districts are representative of least and most reported crime against women. The level of violence and its form is studied vis-à-vis marital status of women in rural as well as in urban areas. In addition to this, violent behaviour is studied in relation to socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. The findings of the study reveal that in the case of ever-married women (ever-married women are those who are not divorced or widowed) there are little rural-urban differential in two different geographical settings. However, a wide gap between the two geographical locations has been observed in case of girls. On the other hand, girl victims of violence are reportedly high in urban sample areas as compared to their rural counterparts. As far as socio-economic characteristics are concerned, violence is prevalent across caste, age and educational qualification in both the geographical settings.

Introduction

Violence against women is a global epidemic reported across countries and cultures. It is a shameful human right violation and denies equal opportunity, security, self-esteem and dignity to women in family and also in the society as a whole. The studies reveal that it is the resultant of long standing power imbalance between men and women which assumes men to be superior to women. Studies suggest that violent behaviour is related to social and cultural factors and different forms of socialization of men and women. In this

process, men adopt the gender roles of dominance and control, whereas women undertake the subjugation and dependence (Coker, 2000; Visaria, 2000; Saravanan, 2002; Dash and Hegde, 2007; Vranda, 2013; Islam et al., 2015). Violence against women is an extremely complex phenomenon, deeply rooted in gender based power relations, sexuality, self-identity and social institutions.

Violence constitutes all types of aggression and misbehavior. World Health Organization (WHO) defines violence as intentional use of physical force or power,

threatening or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation (WHO, 1996). Violence against women is defined as “any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life” (UN, 1993). The violence against women as described by United Nations (UN) is reported across nations and in each society. The estimates of WHO reveal that at global level, 35 per cent of women have experienced violence. It is very high in low and middle income regions of Africa (46 per cent) and Southeast Asia (40 per cent). In case of America, it is 36 per cent, while it is 27.2 per cent in Europe (WHO, 2013).

In India, gender based violence is systematic and occurs in all spheres of life and throughout the life cycle. In pre birth stage, girls are victims of sex selective abortion; in infancy, discrimination in access to food and medical care; in childhood stage girls may be victim of child marriage, genital mutilation and sexual abuse by family members and strangers. In adolescence, coerced sex, sexual abuse, harassment, trafficking etc. are faced by women, which remains in reproductive age also while other violent acts such as marital rape, dowry abuse, intimate partner violence etc. remain in her life, she is also liable to violence as elderly and many a time faces violence in the form of widow abuse.

The widespread socio-economic dependency of women makes them subordinate to their husbands and other family members. The fear of social exclusion and marginalization and lack of effective responses to violence keeps them in the web of continuous

violence and intimidation. The recent report of 4th round of National Family Health Survey (2015-16) reveals that one in three ever-married women (ever-married women are those who are not divorced or widowed) report any form of physical, emotional and sexual violence. It may be noted that 27 per cent were victims of any form of physical violence, while 13 per cent reported emotional violence and six per cent reported that their husbands physically forced them to have sex (IIPS, 2017). The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report also shows that violence against women is the fastest growing crime in India, reported every 3 minutes and shockingly the incidence of cruelty by husband is being reported at every 5 minutes. The statistics also reveal that women are raped in every 21 minutes and a young married woman is burnt or driven to suicide due to dowry in every 64 minutes (Government of India, 2016). In this scenario, present study aims to explore the pattern of violence against women in Haryana.

Objectives

Major objectives of the present study are:

- to assess the levels of violence against women in rural and urban setting of Haryana.
- to analyze the types of violence against women and their correlates.

Study Area

Haryana is located in north-western part of India covering an area of about 44212 km². Geographically, it is located between the latitudes of 27° 39' N to 30° 55' N and longitudes of 74° 27' E to 77° 36' E. Administratively, the state is divided into 6 administrative divisions and 22 districts. The total population of Haryana is 25.3 million, which accounts for 2.01 per cent of country's population. Economically, it is one of the

developed states of India. The per capita income of the state is Rs. 1.78 lakh at current prices, while the national average is Rs. 1.03 lakh (Government of Haryana, 2018). However, the state is not keeping well in terms of various social developmental parameters. It may be noted that in terms of sex ratio, there are 879 females per 1000 males, keeping Haryana at 30th rank in India. In case of female literacy, the state stands at 23rd position in India. Further, in crime against women, the crime rate is 76 per lakh women, which is much higher than its neighboring states of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh where it is 40 and 37 respectively (Government of India, 2016).

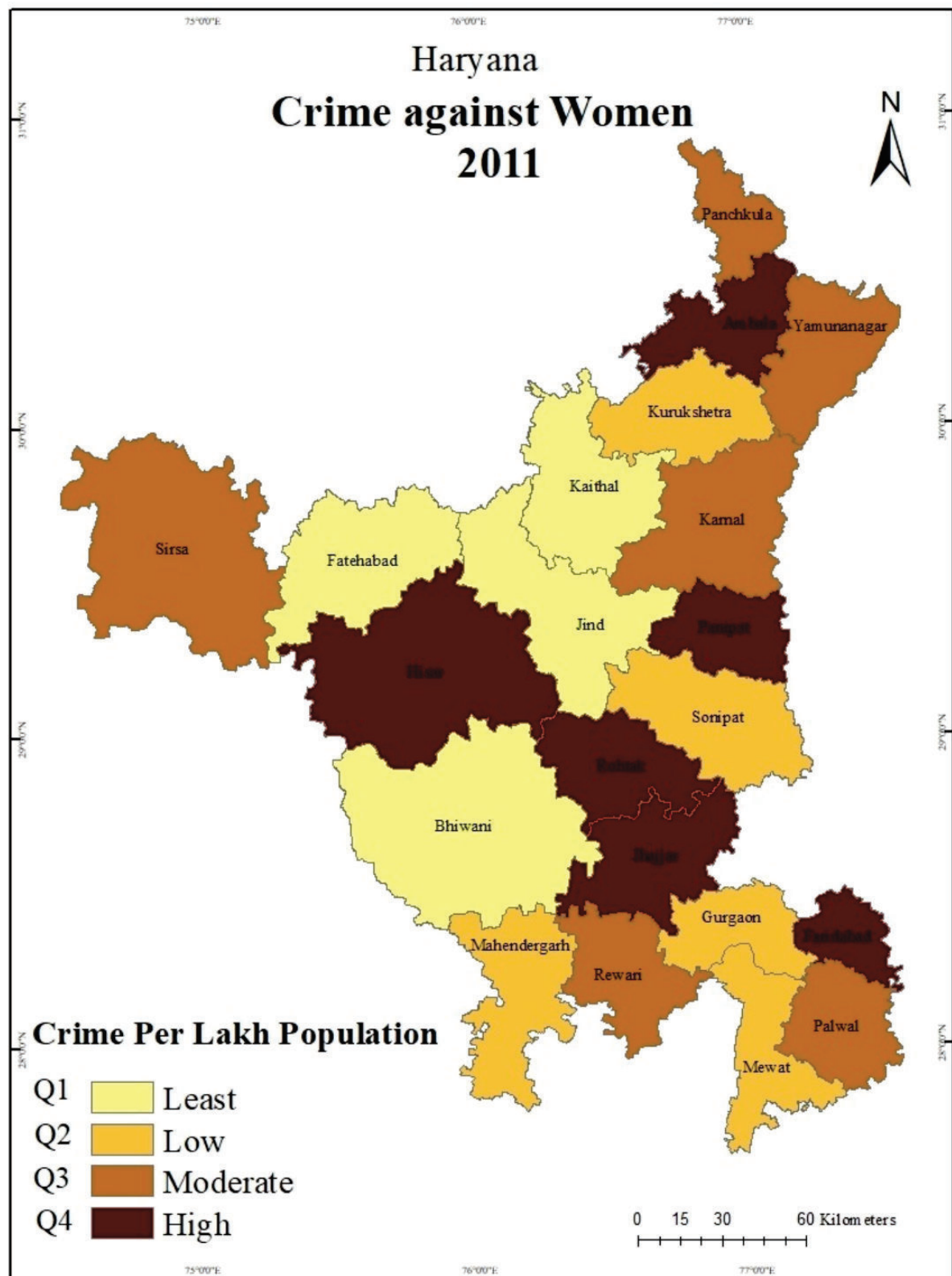
Database and Methodology

The present study is based on primary data, obtained from 501 households surveyed during the year 2016. Households have been selected by multi stage method of sampling. At the first stage, the districts of Haryana were grouped into four categories in terms of crime against women per lakh of population (Fig. 1). The first quartile on map represents the districts with least crime rate. Quartile second, third and fourth respectively represent the districts with successive higher rate of crime against women. At the second stage, two districts namely Fatehabad and Rohtak have been selected from the first and fourth quartile representing least and highest crime rate respectively. At third stage, two villages and one town are selected from each of these districts. Hence, the present sample pertains to four villages i.e. Ayalki and Dhingsara from Fatehabad district and Khrawar and Singpura from Rohtak district. The two towns are Ratia from Fatehabad district and Mahem from Rohtak district. The selection of villages is based on the distance from the existing urban area. One village selected is at a distance of at least 5 km from existing urban area while other is at a distance

of 10 km or more from existing urban area. The location of sample villages and towns is shown in Fig. 2.

The selection of sample households is based on stratified random sampling technique which is representative of all the caste groups in the village. A total of 501 households in both rural and urban areas were surveyed. Further, such households were selected which has at least one married or unmarried women. In total, 531 respondents (451 ever-married women of 15 to 59 years and 80 unmarried girls of 15-29 years) were surveyed by visiting 501 households. Violence against women is considered here as any form of physical violence (slapping, kicking and pushing), emotional violence (controlling, insulting or shouting, verbal abuse, throw out from home, neglect for money and threatened to burn) committed by husband or in-laws, intimate partner sexual violence (forcefully being intimate) and sexual violence by strangers and relatives. In case of unmarried girls, non-contact sexual violence e.g. staring, making dirty comments or gestures and contact sexual violence i.e. unwanted touching and forcefully trying to intimate without consent are also taken into account. Hence, all types of violence (whether it is physical, emotional, and sexual) have been taken into account for the present study.

The levels of crime have been computed as per cent of women ever experienced any type of violence at any point of time in their life. In order to study the correlates of violence against women, the socio-economic condition of the respondents has also been taken into account. The social characteristics such as caste affiliation and educational status of the respondents were taken into account. All castes in the sample study area are grouped into three broad social groups, which reflect local social status enjoyed by them in the society (Sinha and Rajeshwari, 1993). These social groups are (i)

**Fig. 1**

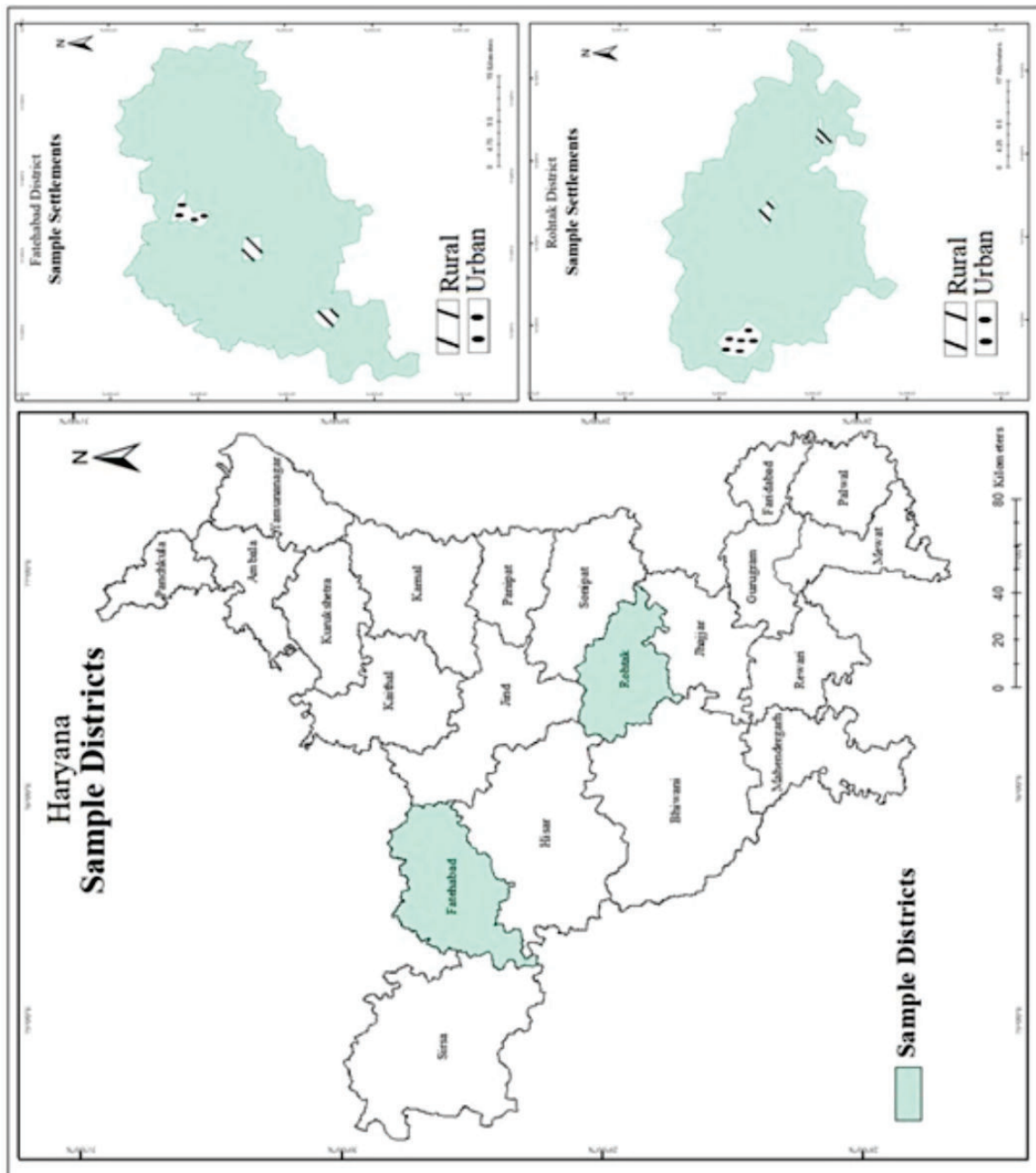


Fig. 2

upper and dominant castes; (ii) middle castes invariably are artisan castes; and (iii) lower castes group. The upper castes include *Brahmins, Baniya, Jat, Jat Sikh, Rajput, Bishnoi* and other landholding communities, which enjoy high social status either due to their traditional brahminical social order or due to being resourceful in terms of land ownership and other resources. The 'artisan caste group' comprises the households, which remained in the middle of social hierarchy. It includes the caste groups of *Kumhar, Luhar, Suthar, Jangra, Rohilla, Nai, Maniyar, Dhobi, Kamboj, Naik, Sunar, Rai Sikh* etc. The third caste group is named as 'lower caste' which includes the castes of *Odd, Chamar, Dhanak, Valmiki, Khatike, Jogi, Majhabi Sikh, Bajigar* etc.

The educational status of women has been classified into five categories: illiterate (who cannot read or write), primary (1st to 5th class), sixth class to matric (6th to 10th), higher secondary (11th and 12th), and graduate and above. The economic characteristics of households are studied by taking into account occupation of the head of the household or of the person on whom the respondent is economically dependent. These invariably are husbands of the ever-married women and in case of

unmarried girls; it is the father's occupation. This is categorized into following groups: (i) landless labourers (without having land); (ii) cultivators (with landholding); (iii) self-employed and (iv) service. The association has been quantitatively studied by using chi-square method.

Results and Discussion

Levels and Patterns of Violence

The detail of rural and urban samples is presented in Table 1 which shows that 27 per cent ever-married women and 39 per cent unmarried girls experienced violence. The analysis shows little rural urban differential in prevalence of violence in case of ever-married women in two different geographical settings. However, within the urban areas, there is a wide gap in the levels of these two geographical locations i.e. Rohtak and Fatehabad Districts (Table 1). It was observed during primary survey that the gap may be largely due to the difference in reporting and gender roles performance in these districts. The women in Fatehabad district were more comfortable in answering the questions regarding violence than women in Rohtak district. It was observed that women subjugation was more in Rohtak district as compared to Fatehabad district;

Table 1
Haryana: Levels of Violence against Ever-married Women and Girls in Rural and Urban Areas, 2016

District Rural/Urban	Women (N)	Women Reported Violence (per cent)	Girls (N)	Girls Reported Violence (per cent)
Fatehabad Rural	149	39.0	9	11.1
Rohtak Rural	143	19.6	10	20.0
Total (Rural)	292	28.7	19	15.7
Fatehabad Urban	75	37.3	31	51.6
Rohtak Urban	84	19.0	30	40.0
Total (Urban)	159	22.6	61	45.9
Total	451	26.6	80	38.7

Source: Based on Primary Survey, 2016

however, the reporting was more in Fatehabad. In case of Rohtak district, the subjugation was to the extent that women in general justified violence such as shouting, verbal abuse and controlling behaviour of their husbands and other members of the household. The women even did not recognize it as a violent behaviour and this type of subjugation of women was an acceptable norm there. It was highly distressing to note that many of them rather reported that it was man's duty to control them and keep them in discipline as per family norm.

In case of unmarried girls, however, the pattern is somewhat different. Though the level of violence against girls is high i.e. 38.7 per cent, the rural-urban pattern is different. In both sample districts, the level of violence is high in urban areas as compared to rural areas, meaning thereby that unmarried girls are more vulnerable in urban areas as compared to rural areas and this is about three times more in urban locations than rural areas. It may be, because the girls in urban areas are more mobile and that's why more prone to unruly behaviour. In rural areas, unmarried girls are less mobile; hence the level of violence against girls in rural areas is much lower.

Patterns and Type of Violence Experienced by Women

Women experience violence in a variety of forms. It may be in the form of slapping, pushing, kicking-a form of physical aggression; emotional i.e. shouting, insulting, verbal abuse, controlling behaviour, throwing out of home, threatened to burn etc. Besides, there are other forms of violence i.e. sexual violence committed by husband/intimate partner, relatives and strangers; unwanted touch and trying to be intimate without consent and non-contact sexual violence which includes staring, wrongful gestures, making dirty comments etc. The information about different types of

violence against ever-married women and unmarried girls in urban/rural parts of the selected study districts is presented in Table 2. The form of violence for unmarried girls is presented in Table 3. In case of ever-married women, the overall level of violence is 27 per cent i.e. every fourth married woman had experienced any of these violence at any stage of her life.

The emotional violence i.e. verbal abuse, shouting, threatening, controlling behaviour etc. has been experienced by about 23 per cent women. The physical violence in the form of slapping, kicking is experienced by 13 per cent women in study area. It may however be noted that 11 per cent ever-married women reported sexual violence while non-contact sexual violence was experienced by 4 per cent women (Table 2). Though the most dominant form of violence in both rural and urban areas is emotional violence, yet its level varies. In case of rural areas, the level of emotional violence is much higher (26 per cent) as compared to urban areas (18 per cent). In rural areas, about 16 per cent women also have experienced physical aggression against them. Further, distressing is the fact that another 14 per cent have experienced sexual violence from intimate partner/husband. Another 3 per cent women suffered violence afflicted by strangers and relatives. The pattern of violence experienced by urban women is different in the sense that 7 per cent women were abused physically which is much lower than their rural counterparts. Similarly, only 5 per cent women reported to have suffered violence afflicted on them by their husbands. The non-contact or contact sexual violence by strangers or relatives however was experienced by more women in urban areas than rural areas.

The type of violence experienced by unmarried girls however shows an entirely different pattern in the state. Almost half of

Table 2
Haryana: Forms of Violence Experienced by Ever-married Women, 2016

Forms of Violence	Total (per cent)	Fatehabad (per cent)	Rohtak (per cent)
Rural Area			
Physical violence	16.0	22.1	9.8
Emotional violence	26.0	36.9	14.7
Intimate partner sexual violence	14.0	21.5	6.3
Non-contact or contact sexual violence	2.7	2.0	4.2
Total	29.4	38.9	18.2
Urban Area			
Physical violence	6.9	9.3	4.8
Emotional violence	17.6	22.7	13.1
Intimate partner sexual violence	5.0	6.7	3.6
Non-contact or contact sexual violence	5.6	4.0	7.1
Total	22.6	26.7	19.0
Urban and Rural Area			
Physical violence	12.8	17.9	7.9
Emotional violence	23.0	32.1	14.1
Intimate partner sexual violence	10.8	16.5	5.3
Non-contact or contact sexual violence	3.7	2.7	5.3
Total	26.6	34.8	18.5

Source: Based on Primary Survey, 2016

Table 3
Haryana: Forms of Violence Experienced by Unmarried Girls, 2016

Forms of Violence	Total (per cent)	Fatehabad (per cent)	Rohtak (per cent)
Rural Area			
Non-contact sexual violence	15.7	11.1	20.0
Contact sexual violence	5.2	11.1	0.0
Urban Area			
Non-contact sexual violence	45.9	51.6	40.0
Contact sexual violence	8.1	3.2	13.3
Total Rural and Urban Area			
Non-contact sexual violence	38.7	42.5	35.0
Contact sexual violence	7.5	5.0	10.0

Source: Based on Primary Survey, 2016

unmarried girls in urban areas experienced non-contact sexual violence, while its proportion was 16 per cent in rural areas. In other words, every second girl in urban Haryana and every sixth girl in rural area had experienced violence in the form of staring, stalking, comments etc. Besides this, unwanted touching and forceful contact behaviour was reported by 8 per cent girls in urban areas against 5 per cent reported by rural girls (Table 3). It is due to the fact that in urban areas girls are more mobile than rural areas.

Violence and Socio-economic Characteristics of the Households

The development and propagation of violent behaviour is associated with many factors. In this context, an attempt has been made to study who are the sufferers and to which socio-economic background they belong to. The level of violence against ever-married women vis-à-vis socio-economic characteristics has been presented in Table 4. The study reveals that women from lower caste group are most vulnerable to any kind of violence and the pattern is same in rural and urban areas. However, it may be noted that in rural areas the proportion of vulnerability of women facing violence is much more as compared to their urban counterparts. Among upper caste households also, 15 and 21 per cent women had experienced violent behaviour in urban and rural areas, respectively (Table 4). Violence vis-à-vis age of women shows that women of all age-groups experience violent behaviour. However, its magnitude shows a decline with age more sharply in case of urban areas. In rural areas of the state, women remain sufferers irrespective of age.

The level of violence vis-à-vis education status of the respondent reveals that women with all educational backgrounds, in rural as well as in urban areas, experience

violence. It is more shocking to find that more women with better educational status have suffered violent behaviour both in urban and rural areas as compared to the ones with low educational status. As far as economic status is concerned, the data reveal that in rural areas, more violence is afflicted among those who are landless labourers. In case of urban areas, women from self-employed and landless wage earners households have experienced higher level of violence as compared to households where husbands were employed in services. It may however be noted that, among wage earners, one-third urban women experienced violent behaviour.

As far as violence against unmarried girls is concerned, it is observed that a whopping 39 per cent girls also experienced violence, in which non-contact sexual violence was more prevalent. The correlates of violence in case of unmarried girls have been presented in Table 5. The incidences of violence vis-à-vis caste affiliation of girls reveal that more than one third girls in sample area, and about half of girls in urban areas have experienced violent behaviour irrespective of their caste. Though it is reportedly high among the girls belonging to artisan caste group, yet it is statistically not significant, meaning thereby, that girls from any social background are subjected to violence both in rural as well as in urban Haryana.

Again with reference to age group of the girls, one may assume that younger girls are more vulnerable. The study however reveals that girls of younger age group from rural areas reported less violent behaviour as compared to the ones above 20 years of age. In rural areas, this might be due to less mobility of girls in 15 to 19 years of age. In case of urban areas, however, there is hardly any clear cut pattern. Unmarried girls of all age groups have experienced violence and more is reported by girls of 20 to 24 years of age when they are

Table 4
Haryana: Socio-economic Characteristic- wise Violence against Ever-married Women, 2016

Socio-economic Characteristic	Women (N)			Women Experienced Violence (per cent)			Level of Significance
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	
Caste group							
Upper Caste	187	114	73	18.7	21.0	15.0	T- χ^2 = 17.6, df-2 (Significant at 0.000) R- χ^2 = 13.0, df-2 (Significant at 0.001) U- χ^2 = 5.1, df-2 (Not Significant)
Artisan Caste	114	81	33	23.7	23.5	24.2	
Lower Caste	150	97	53	38.7	42.3	32.1	
Age Group							
15-29	175	118	57	30.3	29.7	31.6	T- χ^2 =2.3, df-2 (Not Significant) R- χ^2 =20.1, df-2 (Not significant) U- χ^2 =4.4, df-2 (Not significant)
30-44	219	140	79	25.1	28.6	19.0	
45-59	57	34	23	21.1	26.5	13.0	
Educational Level							
Illiterate	111	77	34	33.3	39.0	20.6	T- χ^2 =11.9, df-4 (Significant at 0.017) R- χ^2 =13.3, df-4 (Significant at 0.010) U- χ^2 =4.5, df-4 (Not significant)
Up to Primary	64	46	18	23.4	23.9	22.2	
6 th to Matric	178	112	66	20.7	23.2	16.6	
Higher Secondary	59	38	21	23.7	18.4	33.3	
Graduate and above	39	19	20	43.6	52.6	35.0	
Occupational Status							
Landless labourers	121	83	38	34.7	37.3	28.9	T- χ^2 =6.1, df-4 (Not Significant) R- χ^2 =7.4, df-4, (Not Significant) U- χ^2 =5.6, df-4 (Not significant)
Cultivators	80	62	18	21.2	24.1	11.1	
Self-employed	91	48	43	25.2	20.8	30.2	
Service and other	159	99	60	23.8	28.2	16.6	
Total	451	292	159	26.6	28.7	22.6	

Source: Based on Primary Survey, 2016

more mobile in terms of going for education, market or nearby places. The data reveal that among surveyed unmarried girls, none was uneducated. Given their age, they were either matriculate or having higher educational qualification. The statistics reveals that the girls with higher educational qualifications have

experienced and reported violent behaviour.

Conclusions

The study highlights the level of violence against women in rural and urban settings in the state of Haryana. Violence against women is studied in respect of (i) ever-

Table 5
Haryana: Socio-economic Characteristic-wise Violence against Girls, 2016

Socio- economic Characteristic	Girls (N)			Girls Reported any Kind of Violence (per cent)			Level of Significance
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	
Caste Group							
Upper Caste	30	5	25	40.0	20.0	44.1	T- χ^2 =0.9, df-2 (Not Significant) R- χ^2 =1.1, df-2 (Not Significant) U- χ^2 =0.0, df-2 (Not Significant)
Artisan Caste	22	3	19	45.5	33.3	47.4	
Lower Caste	28	11	17	32.1	9.1	47.1	
Age Group							
15-19	44	14	30	29.5	0.0	43.3	T- χ^2 =3.7, df-2 (Not Significant) R- χ^2 =11.4, df-2 (Significant at 0.003) U- χ^2 =1.1, df-2 (Not Significant)
20-24	31	4	27	51.6	50.0	51.9	
25-29	5	1	4	40.0	100.0	25.0	
Educational Level							
Up to Matric	4	4	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	T- χ^2 =11.6, df-2 (Significant at 0.003) R- χ^2 =12.9, df-2 (Significant at 0.005) U- χ^2 =4.9, df-2 (Not Significant)
Higher Secondary	11	8	3	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Graduate and above	65	7	58	47.6	42.8	48.2	
Occupational Status							
Landless labourers	19	6	13	5.3	0.0	7.7	T- χ^2 =11.9, df-3 (Significant at 0.007) R- χ^2 =3.9, df-3 (Not Significant) U- χ^2 =11.6, df-3 (Significant at 0.009)
Cultivators	8	3	5	50.0	0.0	80.0	
Self-employed	24	1	23	45.8	0.0	47.8	
Service and other	29	9	20	51.7	33.3	60.0	
Total	80	19	61	38.7	15.7	45.9	

Source: Based on Primary Survey, 2016

married women (15-59 years) and (ii) unmarried girls in 15 to 29 years of age to unravel the patriarchy in the state. The analysis reveals that in case of ever-married women, there are little rural-urban differentials in two different geographical settings. However, one finds quantitatively a wide gap between the two geographical locations, whereby the sample study area in Rohtak district shows low level of violence against women, while Fatehabad district exhibited the highest. It was observed that the difference was largely due to the fact

that in Fatehabad district women were more responsive in terms of reporting of violence as compared to the women of Rohtak district. The women of Rohtak district were subjugated to the extent that they accepted and justified the violent behaviour against them as part of men's duty to discipline them.

In case of unmarried girls, the analysis suggests that violence was reportedly high in urban areas of both sample districts as compared to their rural counterparts. This may be due to the fact that girls in urban areas were

more mobile than rural areas. As far as type of violence is concerned, emotional violence was the most prominent form of violence in rural as well as in urban areas. It was followed by physical violence. The level of physical violence however was high in rural areas. Further, intimate partner sexual violence was also reportedly high in rural areas. However, in case of girls, non-contact sexual violence was a prominent form of violence.

The analysis further reveals that violence was prevalent among all caste groups; however, women from lower caste were subjected to more violent behaviour in both rural and urban areas, which was statistically significant. Its prevalence vis-à-vis age of ever-married women, however, did not show any significant variation. The same was true in case of unmarried girls too. As far as girls are concerned, all socio-economic factors are indifferent in the sense that no girl irrespective of her age, caste, educational background is immune to violence i.e. they may be subjected to violence irrespective of socio-economic background. It is highly distressing that levels of abuse for girls and women are so high that about 39 per cent girls and 27 per cent women have experienced violence in study area. Such a high proportion of women sufferers also reveal social sanction to violent behaviour of men in Haryana.

Since the problem is systemic, the solutions also need to be systemic. In other words, mere slogans cannot bring the change in women's life; there is a need to hit the patriarchal set up, to change the mindset of the people at large. There is a need to go beyond superficial programmes like opening of *mahila thanas*. How to combat this problem of violence against women needs further investigation?

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