Domestic Violence: A Risk Factor to Child Abuse in Pakistan

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The relationship between child abuse and domestic violence in the lower socio-economic families in Pakistan was focused with the assumption of high prevalence of child abuse in families with high domestic violence. Sample comprised 73 children (43 girls & 30 boys) of 7-12 years and 73 mothers. The data were collected from suburbs of Lahore. Measures used were Child Abuse Scale (Malik & Shah, 2007) and Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus & Gelles, 1986). The results suggested high child abuse in the families with high domestic violence. Domestic violence, family size, and mothers' education were significant determinants of child abuse, whereas fathers' education did not contribute in domestic violence. The results are discussed in peculiar social context of Pakistan.

Keywords: Child abuse, domestic violence, SES, family size

Violence and aggression between members of the family have been considered to be a part of the rich pattern of family life since centuries. Historically violence has been regarded as an acceptable way for adults especially men to exert power and control over the behavior of their relatives and dependents. Clinical observations, empirical research, daily newspapers, and news bulletins have increased public awareness and forced us to recognize that violence within the family is a common phenomenon of society today that occurs across most cultures (Levinson, 1989).

The exercise of physical force by adults in the family results in child abuse, spouse abuse, elder abuse, and etc. These forms of violence represent the exertion of power and control by one family member over another (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Global scenario regarding domestic violence presents quite a grimmer picture where world wide at least, one woman in every three has been reported to be beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime and most often the abuser was a member of her own family (Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottemoeller, 1999). Physical violence was estimated to occur in 4 to 6 million intimate relationships each year in the United States (Rodriguez, Bauer, McLoughlin, & Grumbach, 1999). Approximately four million American women experienced a serious assault by an intimate partner during a 12-month period (American Psychological Assiciation; APA, 2000). It has been estimated that a domestic partner assaulted 2 million to 4 million US women every year (Massey, 1999).

Pakistani women have to face the threat of multiple forms of violence, including sexual violence by family members, strangers, and state agents; domestic abuse including spousal murder and being burned, disfigured with acid, beaten, and threatened; ritual honor killings; and custodial abuse and torture. Estimates of percentage of women who experience domestic violence in Pakistan range from 70 to upwards of 90% (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan; HRCP, 1996). The most endemic form of violence faced by women is violence in the home. The supremacy of the male and subordination of the female assumed to be part of the Pakistani culture and even to have sanction of the religion made violence by one against the other in a variety of its forms an accepted and pervasive feature of domestic life (HRCP, 1997). The same report argues the worst victims of domestic violence were women of the poor and middle classes. During 1998, the press reported an average of more than 4 women being burnt weekly, 3 out of 4 fatally burnt (HRCP, 2000). Fear, ignorance, social, and cultural beliefs prevent women in our culture from exposing themselves as victims of home violence. In our culture women are taught and forced to bear all kinds of violence and psychological degradation in order to maintain the facade of family peace. Consequently, the under reporting of family violence fails to give us the true picture of the grave situation at home globally (Cascardi, O'Leary, Lawrence, & Schlee, 1995). Farooqi's (1992) clinical data suggested Pakistani society as highly oppressive, religious and male dominant characteristics where people tend to rely more on violence and force to solve family problems. Thus in societies like ours, where use of force and violence are viewed as appropriate techniques for controlling wives and children is like a stage set for domestic violence and child abuse (Malik, 2003).

Some studies carried out in Pakistani social set up have reported different findings. For example, Farooqi (1992) suggested a strong association between various forms of family violence and specific stressful situations. Fikree and Bhatti (2003) reported that the magnitude of physical and mental health consequences of domestic violence represent a serious reproductive health concern for Pakistan. Shaikh (2003) assessed the magnitude and type of domestic violence inflicted on women and found that only 3.2% of women did not report enduring any type of violence ever. However, the rest 96.8% women reported enduring multiple forms of violence.

Child abuse and neglect is taken as, any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm (National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, 2002). Physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse being different forms of child abuse is the phenomena equally prevalent in developed and underdeveloped societies just like domestic violence. According to United States Department of Health and Human Services (2003) approximately 903,000 children were found to be victims of child maltreatment. Maltreatment categories typically included neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and psychological maltreatment. More than half of child victims (57%) suffered neglect, 2% suffered medical neglect, 19% were physically abused, 10% were sexually abused; and 7% were psychologically maltreated.

According to Kamran (2004) Pakistan offers worse conditions for children as well than any other country in South Asia. Nearly 8 million children, or 40% of the total population of children under age of 5, suffer from malnutrition. About 63% of children between 6 months and 3 years have stunted growth and 42% are anemic and underweight. Poor conditions extend to the education sector as well. About 23 million children in Pakistan have never been to school. Edhi Foundation Source (as cited in Kamran, 2004) estimated that in 2003 there has been a 30% increase over the previous year in the number of children running away from home. Most of them left home because of child battering by the parents, domestic violence and family financial problems. According to the UNICEF (as cited in Kamran, 2004) about three million children under the age of 14 and 18 % of children between the ages of 10 and 15 are involved in labor. In Pakistan physical abuse or battering is the most common part of the disciplinary training methods employed by the parents (Malik, 2001). Sometimes it is so much torturous that children get severe injuries as a

result. Even other authority figures that may physically abuse children include teachers and relatives who may also have a misconceived idea of discipline. The governing officials have now begun to recognize the severity of the problem and Child Protection Bureau has started working at Lahore in 2005 but its performance and vision is a question. There is still a greater need of much more such departments to be established all over Pakistan. There still exists a non-availability of any statistics regarding the prevalence of child abuse and neglect in Pakistan and similar is the case with domestic violence.

It is important to realize that all forms of violence in the family are interrelated and have an impact on the family as a whole. Violence between intimate partners can also seriously affect those family members who are not a part of direct assault. It has been estimated that each year in the United States 3.3 to 10 million children are at risk of witnessing incidents of verbal and physical domestic violence. However witnessing violence alone can cause serious emotional damage to the child. Children may be sometimes victimized and threatened as a way of punishing and controlling the adult victim of domestic violence resulting in child abuse (Browne & Herbert, 1997).

Therefore, the phenomena of child abuse and domestic violence seem to be closely interrelated as Edleson (1999) has suggested in his review of 35 studies that in 30 to 60% of the families where either child maltreatment or domestic violence was identified, the other form of violence was also identified. McGuigan and Pratt (2001) revealed that domestic violence occurred in 38% of the cases of confirmed maltreatment. Recently Windham et al. (2004) reported that severe child physical assault was significantly associated with parent characteristics of maternal depression and partner violence.

Similarly, Kellogg, and Menard (2003) in their study interviewed sexually abused children and adolescence regarding in-home violence. About 52% of the participants reported the presence of spousal violence in their homes. It has been reported that exposure to intimate partner violence is significantly associated with child behavioral problems both in the presence and absence of co-occurring child maltreatment (Kernic et al., 2003). Margolin (as cited in Browne & Herbert, 1997) published a review of studies on child abuse indicated that between 45 to 70 % of children exposed to domestic violence are also victims of physical abuse, and as many as 40% of the victims of child physical abuse are also exposed to domestic violence.

Some researchers assume that parents' marital discord affects children primarily through disruptive impact on parent-child relationships (Fauber, Forhand, Thomas, & Wierson, 1990). A meta-

analysis of 39 studies by Krishnakumar and Beuhlar, (2000) confirmed that inter-parental conflict is linked with poor parent-child relationships in general with harsh and low parental acceptance in particular. Furthermore this analysis highlighted that marital relationship quality of parents was associated with parent-child relationship and negative marital relationship quality leads to negative parent-child relationship that ultimately may result in child abuse.

Malik (2001) argues that in Pakistani society the linkage between domestic violence and child abuse appears more important as a large ratio of parents' dispute over conflicting issues in the presence of their children exposing their children to witness violence. Another important aspect of this situation is that parents usually target their children to release their own frustrations and aggression due to any conflicting situation within family. Hence, abused children perceived their parents, both mother and father, as more rejecting and authoritarian as compared to less abused children. Furthermore, the severely abused children perceived their intra-familial environment as more problematic and disturbing as compared to the mildly abused children.

In recent years, there has been a growing concern in Pakistan about child maltreatment at the hands of parents and domestic violence between spouses. The widespread prevalence of child physical abuse and child sexual abuse as well as the numerous problems and consequences associated with it has been increasingly recognized by many NGO's but authentic research is still lacking that can show the actual picture prevailing in Pakistani society. Despite of this increasing global concern (e.g., Fauber et al., 1990), research on child abuse in Pakistan has been primarily focused on the psychological and behavioral consequences of abuse and parent child interaction (Hanif, 1994; Malik 2001) on the part of children. Similarly most of the studies regarding domestic violence have focused primarily on the psychosocial causes of domestic violence (e.g., Farooqi, 1992; Fikree & Bhatti, 2003; Shaikh, 2003). Moreover, there is no concrete information available regarding the prevalence of both child abuse and domestic violence in association with each other in our society. There have been no efforts made to understand the relationship between child abuse and domestic violence. In such situation, current study was an effort to focus the issue of the inter-relationship of child abuse with domestic violence from a very different but crucial dimension that seems to be pertinent with specific relevance to Pakistani society e.g., socioeconomic status of the families, nuclear and joint family systems, and etc.

The main objectives of the current study were:

1. To explore the relationship of child abuse with domestic violence.

2. To investigate the effects of parental education/literacy, both fathers and mothers on the level of child abuse and domestic violence.

3. To study the relationship of family size with domestic violence and child abuse.

4. To determine the relationship of family type with domestic violence and child abuse.

The hypotheses formulated for the study were:

1. High domestic violence in families will be positively related with high level of child abuse.

2. The illiterate parents would be involved in high levels of child abuse as well as domestic violence as compared to literate parents.

3. Domestic violence and child abuse would be greater in the families with joint family system as compared to nuclear family system.

4. Domestic violence and child abuse would be higher in the larger families (i.e., greater number of children) as compared to small families (i.e., less number of children).

Method

Sample

The purposive sample of the study comprised 73 abused children (43 girls and 30 boys) with an age range of 7 to 12 years ($M = 9.35$, $SD = 1.78$). Children were drawn from different schools situated in different suburb areas of Lahore including Aghosh in Duban Pura, Phoolon Ka Des in Jhogia Shahabdin, Chaman in Pekhawal Pind, Sitaray in Jhogia Nagra, and Reshmaa in Molan Wal being run by the NGO "Savera" working with abused children. All of the children belonged to lower socio-economic background with parental education level ranging from illiterate to 10th grade (matriculation).

Second segment of the current sample was mothers of the identified abused children (N = 73) who were approached at their places later with the help of Savera's team. The age range of mothers was 25 to 45 years (M = 36.04, SD = 5.08). They belonged to low socio-economic status group with education level ranging from illiterate to 10th grade (matriculation).

Instruments

Child Abuse Scale (CAS). Child Abuse Scale (Malik & Shah, 2007) containing 34 items was employed to determine the severity of abuse among children. It is a Likert-type scale comprising four empirically defined categories: Physical Abuse (4 items), Emotional Abuse (14 items), Physical Neglect (4 items), and Emotional Neglect (12 items). The responses were recorded on 4-point rating scale with response categories of "Never", "Sometimes", "Frequently" and "Always". The scores assigned ranged from 1 to 4. There were 14 reverse scored items in the scale. The scores of the subject on CAS was a sum of scores on each item and total score ranged from 34 to 136. The CAS scores have been divided into three categories of scoring i.e., scores of 54 and below as mild child abuse, 54 to 65 as moderate child abuse, and 66 and above as severe child abuse.

The authors have reported highly significant reliability for CAS (α = .92) and for its four subscales ranged from .51 to .90. For the present sample internal consistency was also determined; alpha coefficient for Child Abuse Scale was highly significant (α = .93, p < .001) and for its four subscales was, .60 for Physical Abuse, .91 for Emotional Abuse, .63 for Physical Neglect, and .78 for Emotional Neglect.

Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS). The Conflict Tactics Scale- Partner to Partner (Straus & Gelles, 1986) was used which contained 19 tactics based on the three constructs: Reasoning (3 items), Verbal Aggression (6 items), and Physical Assault (10 items). The Physical Assault scale included Minor and Severe assault subscales. The scale was translated into Urdu using the standardized procedure. The responses were recorded on a 5 response categories in which the respondents were asked how many times his/her spouse has used a specific tactic in a month time "Never", "Once", "Twice", "3-5 Times" and ">5 Times". The scores assigned to these categories ranged from 0 to 4. Higher the scores on the scale indicated more use

of violent tactics or domains of tactics. The score of the subjects on CTS was a sum of scores on each item and total score ranged from 0 to 76.

The authors have reported high internal consistency of CTS-Partner to Partner Form with alpha coefficients ranging from .42 to .61 for reasoning, .62 to .83 for Verbal Aggression, and .69 to .88 for Physical Aggression at $p< .05$ (Straus, 1990). Concurrent validity has been examined by comparing reports obtained separately from husbands and wives. Husband-wife correlations ranged from .19 to .80, with a mean of approximately .40 at $p< .05$ (Straus, 1979). Correlations are lowest for Reasoning and highest for Physical Aggression.

The CTS-Partner to Partner Form was translated into Urdu by using the standardized procedure. In the first step CTS was given to 3 bilingual experts who were requested to translate each item while keeping in mind the actual connotation of the items, grammar, and Pakistani social context so that the actual meaning should be conveyed to the respondents. These translations then were carefully evaluated and scrutinized by the researchers to select the best suitable translation for each item. In the next step 3 different English experts were requested to check the Urdu items whether they were conveying the same meaning and connotation as did the English items. The suggestions were again evaluated by the researchers and some of the items were modified in the light of the experts' opinion.

The final draft was then prepared after incorporating the suggested changes into the translated version of the scale along with the response categories. Then a tryout study was conducted with the sample 10 spouses, 5 husbands and 5 wives to confirm its difficulty and comprehension level. The respondents did not report any difficulty in responding to any of the items of CTS Urdu version, and then CTS Urdu version form was employed in the main study. The reliability of the data was computed through Cronbach's alpha which was .89 suggesting its internal consistency, then Urdu version CTS was used for the main study.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient for Conflict Tactics Scale and its subscales for the main study's sample was also highly significant i.e., .92 for CTS, .53 for Reasoning, .89 for Verbal Aggression and .90 for Physical Assault Scale.

Procedure

After seeking formal permission from the "Savera" an NGO and schools' administrations, data from abused children were collected at the respective schools with the help of the class teachers who referred children suspected for physical torture and abuse by their parents. Their mothers were already in contact with school and Savera's team of social workers and psychologists for counseling and other issues so they were invited to the schools where the researchers were introduced to them and informed consent was taken for themselves and their children to participate in the study.

After developing good rapport in the first step Child Abuse Scale (Malik & Shah, 2007) was administered to children to confirm the level, type, and intensity of abuse in the form of small groups. They were given a brief introduction of the objectives of the study and were assured of confidentiality of information so that they could provide information regarding the crucial issue of child abuse being focused in the study with out hesitation. It took almost a child about 15-20 minutes to fill in the complete scale.

As mothers of these children were already in contact with the psychologists and social workers of "Savera" for counseling purposes, they perceived the researcher to be a part of the team which helped in collection of information required for the study without much hesitation. Initially respondents were invited in the schools for counseling purpose and interviewed in small groups of 4 to 5 mothers for rapport development. They were assured of confidentiality of information provided by them so that they could provide information regarding crucial issue of domestic violence being focused in the study with out hesitation.

Later on Conflict Tactics Scale (spouse form) was administered individually either in the school or at their places, according to their convenience; it took mothers 10-15 minutes to complete the form. Finally some demographic information was also obtained from the respondents on the same forms.

Results

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Sample (N = 146)

Variables			Percentage
Abused Children			-
Age in years	7-12		-
Education/Grades	4-8		-
Gender			
Boys	30		41
Girls	43		59
Mothers' age in years	25-45		
Mothers' education			
Illiterate	60		82
Literate (educated (5-10 grade	13		18
Father's education			
Illiterate	55		75
Literate (educated (5-10 grade	18		25
Family size (no. of children)			
Small (3-4 children)	20		27
Medium (5-7 children)	40	-	55
Large (8 and more children)	13	-	18

Table 1 indicates the demographic characteristics of the sample. A sample of 73 abused children with the age range 7-12 years ($M = 10.38$; $SD = 1.2$) and their 73 mothers with the age range 25-45 years ($M = 36.04$; $SD = 5.08$) was taken. Among the over all sample of abused children, 41% were boys and 59% of them were girls. All the abused

children had at least 4th grade education while 82% of their mothers were illiterate and 18% were educated (5-8 grades).

Table 2

Inter-correlations of the Child Abuse Scale and its Four Subscales with Conflict Tactics Scale and its Three Subscales (N = 176)

	Physical Abuse	Emotional Abuse	Physical Neglect	Emotional Neglect	Child Abuse Scale
Reasoning	.13	.18	.18	.25*	.21*
Verbal Aggression	.47**	.57**	.45**	.48**	.61**
Physical Assault	.49**	.57**	.53**	.45**	.63**
Total CTS	.50**	.58**	.52**	.49**	.64**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .0001$.

Inter-correlations between the Child Abuse Scale scores of children and Conflict Tactics Scale scores of their mothers were computed which indicated a highly significant correlation ($r = .64, p < .001$) depicting a strong association between domestic violence faced by mothers and child abuse by children in the family.

Table 2 also showed that four sub-scales of CAS were significantly correlated with verbal aggression and physical assault categories of Conflict Tactics Scale and overall CTS score. Interestingly 3 subscales of CAS namely physical abuse, emotional abuse, and physical neglect scores were not significantly correlated with reasoning domain of Conflict Tactics Scale. It means the child abuse in children is more associated with verbal aggression and physical aggression tactics of parents.

Analysis of Mothers' Data

When mothers responses on the Conflict Tactics Scale (Partner form) was analyzed, the scoring range that emerged was 9 to 76 with mean score of 52.32 ($SD = 15.64$) depicting a significantly high score on CTS and overall violent tactics between spouses.
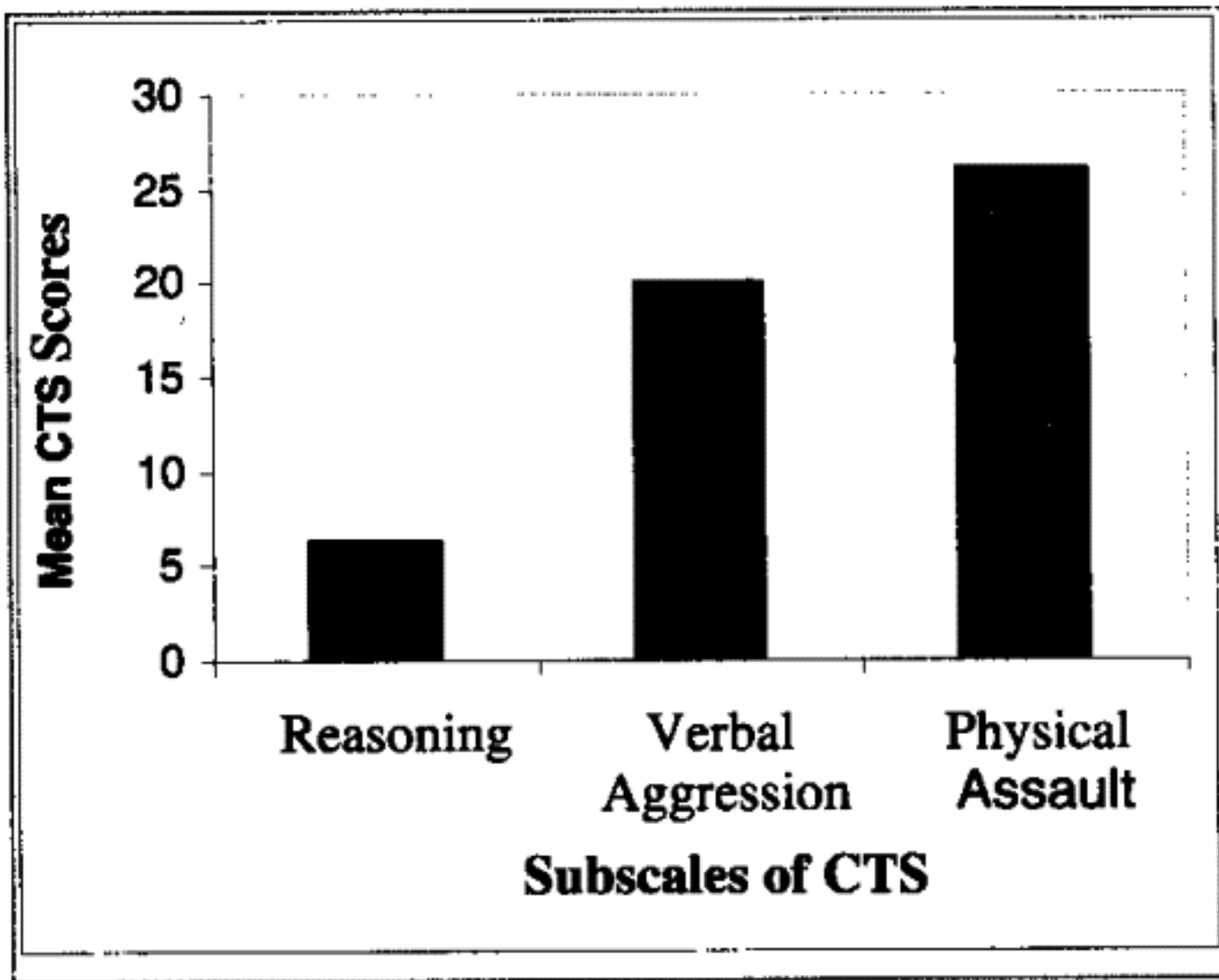
Figure 1. Means of Mothers' Scores on Three Tactics Domains of CTS

The results in figure 1 showed mean scores on three main tactics domains of CTS: Verbal aggression, physical assault, and reasoning were computed, the results depicted respondents scored highest on the physical assault ($M = 26.00$, $SD = 3.0$) followed by verbal aggression ($M = 20.02$, $SD = 5.1$) and reasoning ($M = 6.30$, $SD = 10.0$), which shows that the physical torture and verbal violent tactics are mostly used in any conflict or violent interaction between spouses and reasoning, is the least used tactic.
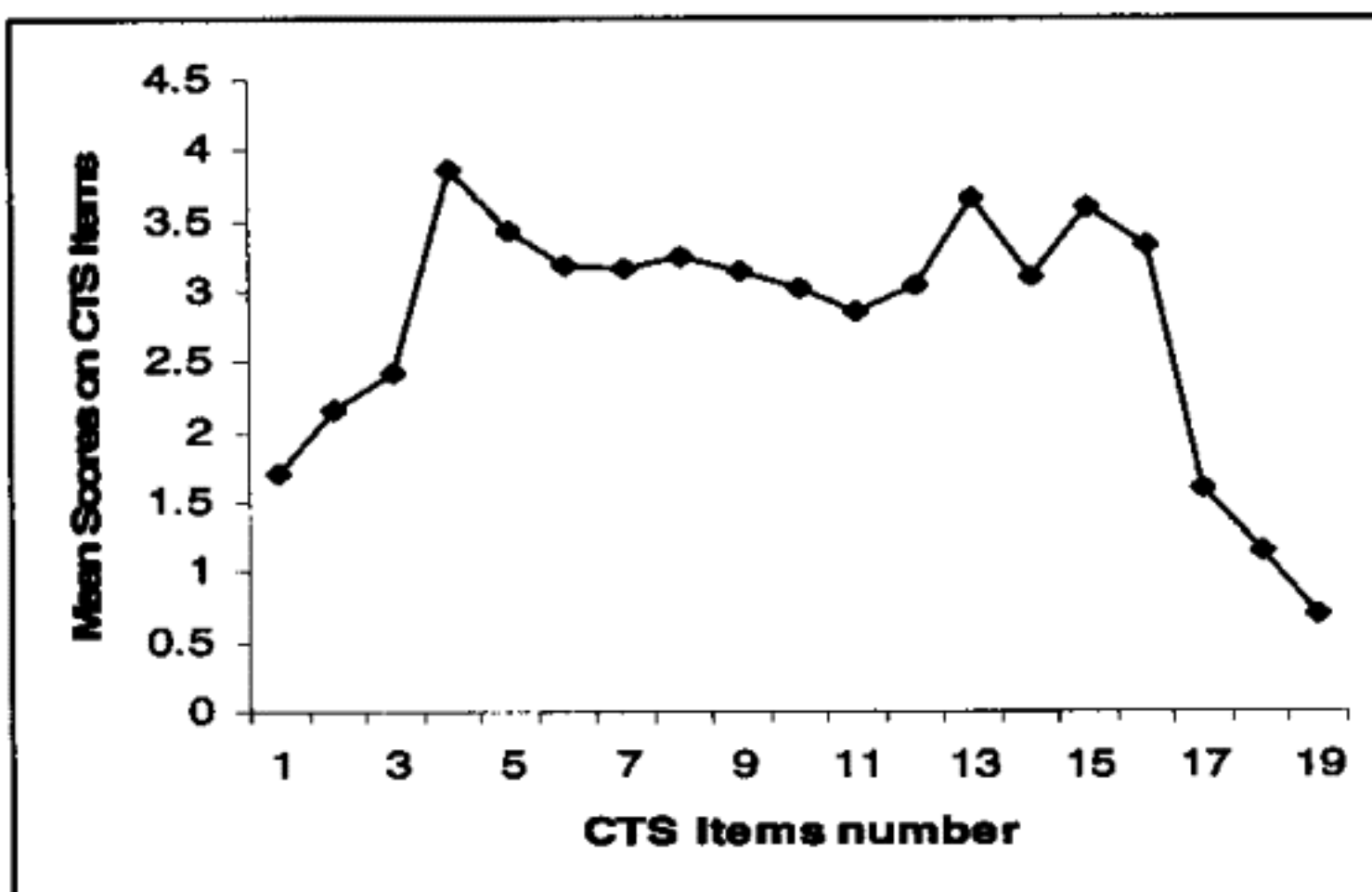

Figure 2. Means of Mothers' Scores on 19 Items of CTS

The Figure 2 shows the mean scores of mother's responses on each item of conflict tactics scale. From the figure it is clearly seen

that item no. 4 shows highest mean score while item no. 19 shows least mean score value. The variation in mean scores indicates different tactics used by partner to avoid conflict.

The results thus indicated that almost in most of the families, physical torture tactics were mainly used along with frequent use of verbal aggression strategies to settle conflicting family matters. Minor strategies of physical assault were found to be frequently employed to settle down family matters, as quite high mean scores were obtained on item 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16.

However, major attempts to harm partner with physical assault like using of knife and gun etc were indicated not very high. It implies that physical violence like hitting, kicking beating is used along with other verbal aggression strategies like abusing, threatening etc.

Child Abuse and Domestic Violence

The mothers' sample was divided into two groups, those facing low and high levels of domestic violence tactics on the basis of the median score on Conflict Tactics Scale of the sample that was 58. The scoring range of below 58 was taken as low domestic violence group and the score of 59 and above was taken as a group facing high level of domestic violence. *t*-test was computed for their children's score on Child Abuse Scale to find the difference across groups facing low and high level of domestic violence to determine the level of abuse in the families as depicted in Table 4.

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and t-value of Child Abuse Scale Scores of Children from Families with Low and High Levels of Domestic Violence (N = 73)

Scale	Low Domestic Violence n = 36		High Domestic Violence n = 37		
	M	SD	M	SD	t
Child Abuse Scale	100.3	9.69	118.77	9.14	8.51*

df = 71, *p* < .0001

The results in Table 3 indicated a significant mean difference in the Child Abuse Score of children for two levels of domestic violence groups of mothers depicting that children of mothers enduring high

level of domestic violence were more at risk of being abused than the children of mothers enduring low level of domestic violence.

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations and t-values of CTS Scores for Educational Levels of Wives and Husbands (N = 73)

Groups	n	M	SD	t
Wives				
Illiterate	60	53.57	15.23	
				1.77*
Literate (5th- 8th grade)	13	46.55	14.79	
Husbands				
Illiterate	55	52.57	15.96	
				.56
Literate (5th -10th grade)	18	52.55	14.79	

df = 71. * *p* < .05.

The results in Table 4 showed a non-significant difference in the CTS scores of women for different levels of their husbands' education but a slight difference was found on the women's scores on CTS for their own education.

Table 5

Relationship of Small (n= 20), Medium (n= 40) and Large (n= 13) Groups of Family Size with Child Abuse Scale Scores of Children and Conflict Tactics Scale Scores of Mothers (N = 146)

Scales	Family Size						
	Small 3-4 Children		Medium 5-7 children		Large 8 & more children		
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F
CAS	118	10.25	105.55	13.32	108.31	11.53	7.24*
CTS	58.35	14.11	47.87	15.16	56.77	15.74	3.96*

*p < .01, between groups *df* = 2; within groups *df* = 70; groups total *df* = 72

The data were further analyzed to find the relationship of family size with Conflict Tactics Scale scores of mothers. For this purpose the sample was divided into three groups determined on the basis of number

of children in the family with the existing range of the sample (3-12 children) i.e., small (3-4 children), medium (5-7) and large (8-more). The results of One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in Table 6 indicated that women with more number of children in the family (larger family) were at greater risk of facing violence at home, $F(2, 72) = 3.96, p < .01$. Results esults suggested that children belonging to larger families are at a greater risk of being abused than children belonging to medium and small families as depicted in Table 6, $F(2, 72) = 7.24, p < .001$.

Analysis of Children's Data

When data of abused children were analyzed separately to relate with the initial findings of mothers' data, the results indicated that all children in the sample of the study were falling within the range of severe level of abuse with the scoring range of 88-133 ($M = 109.52$ & $SD = 13.28$) according to CAS criteria.
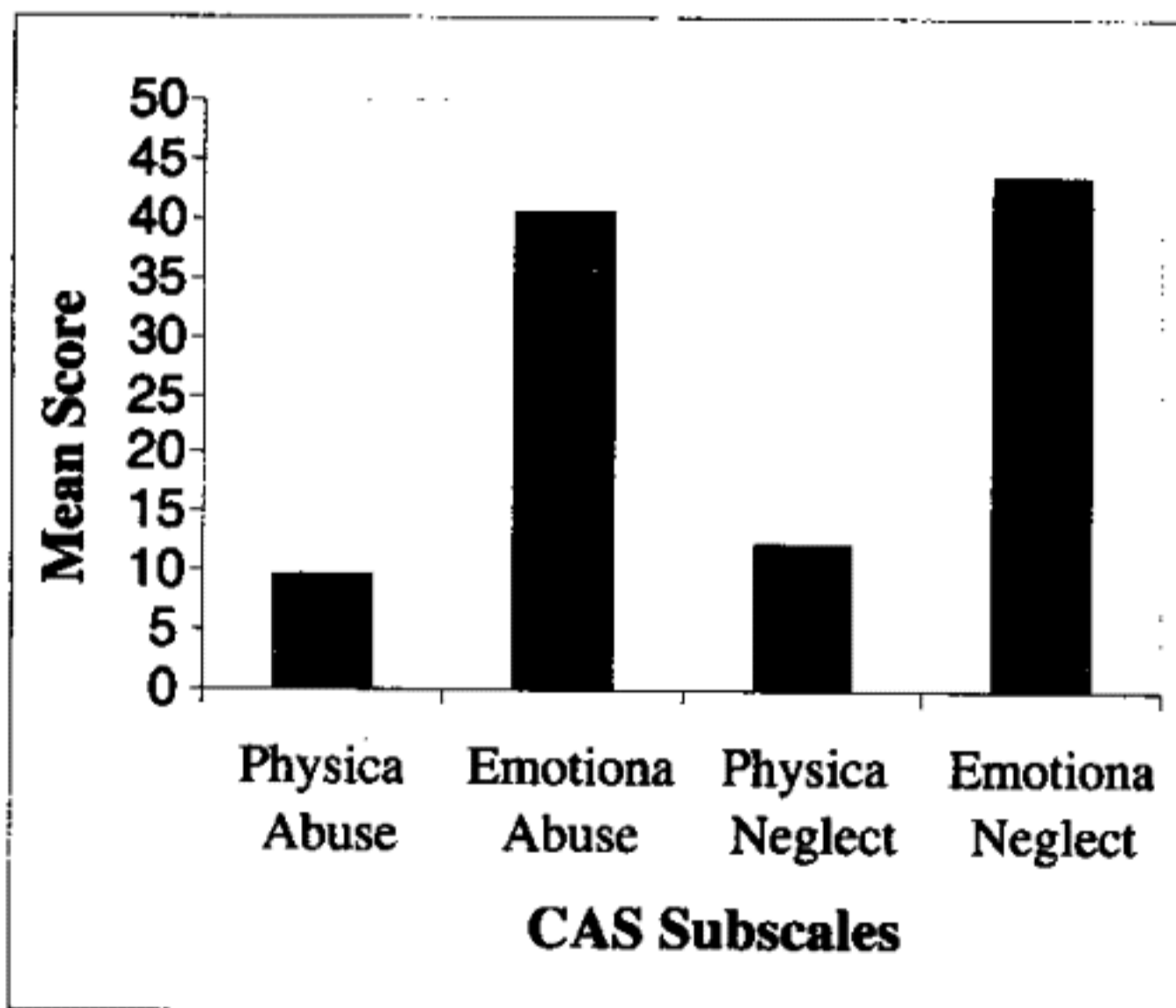

Figure 3. Types and Levels of Abuse in Children

The Figure 3 represents the data of four subscales of CAS: physical abuse, physical neglect, emotional abuse, and emotional neglect further showed highest score of abused children on the subscale of emotional neglect ($M = 43.66$, $SD = 3.83$), followed by emotional abuse ($M = 40.59$, $SD = 6.47$), physical neglect ($M = 12.33$, $SD = 2.54$), and physical abuse ($M = 9.85$, $SD = 2.28$).

Table 6

Means, Standard Deviations and t-values of Child Abuse Scores of Children for Mothers' and Fathers' Education (N = 73)

Groups	n	M	SD	t
Mothers				
Illiterate	60	111.65	12.65	
				3.17*
Literate (5th- 8th grade)	13	99.69	11.99	
Fathers				
Illiterate	55	110.08	11.89	
				.56
Literate (5th -10th grade)	18	108.00	17.22	

df = 71. * *p* < .05.

To explore the relationship of parental education with the level of child abuse *t*-analysis was computed. The results indicated a non-significant difference in the Child Abuse Scale scores of children for different levels of their fathers' education, $t(71) = .56$, p = ns. However, a highly significant difference was found between CAS scores of children of literate and illiterate mothers, $t(71) = 3.17$, $p<$ .001 depicting that children of illiterate mothers are at a greater risk of being abused than children of literate mothers.

Table 7

Means, Standard Deviations and t-value of Child Abuse Scale scores of Children and Conflict Tactics Scale scores for mothers for Family Type (N = 73)

Scales	Family Type				
	Nuclear Family n = 47		Joint Family n = 26		
	M	SD	M	SD	t
CAS	109.30	13.29	109.92	13.50	.191
CTS	53.72	15.50	49.81	15.67	1.03

df = 71. * *p* < .05.

When differences of family type (nuclear and joint) for the levels of abuse were determined through *t*-test a non-significant relationship was found between the two groups indicating that children of both nuclear and joint families are equally at risk of abuse.

Discussion

The current research focused the relationship of child abuse and domestic violence in particular relevance to Pakistani society, as these phenomena appear to be closely associated with each other in our socio-economic context. The study also determined the relationship of family type, family size and parental education with domestic violence and child abuse. The inter-correlations of the different subscales of Conflict Tactics Scale and Child Abuse Scale were positive and highly significant suggesting the association of the phenomenon of family violence with child abuse. The child abuse was more associated with verbal and physical assault tactics used between parents suggesting that when spouses use verbal aggression and physical assault they may also use same tactics with children. Reasoning is the least used tactic between spouses hence it is not related with child abuse strategy used by parents in our society.

Data of mothers' of abused children was analyzed to determine the level of violent tactics between the partners. Over the settlement of family issues, their overall CTS score was quite high (52.32) out of overall range of score (9-76) suggesting the prevalence of violent tactics in Pakistani families. Furthermore to strengthen the findings the total sample of mothers was divided into two groups on the basis of median score of the total sample on CTS taken as cut off point (58) and difference was determined for their children's scores on CAS. *t*-test results suggested that children of mothers enduring high level of domestic violence were also at high risk of abuse than the children of mothers enduring low level of domestic violence. This finding of our study is in line with the findings of the researches done in the western culture indicating that the presence of domestic violence increases the likelihood of child maltreatment in the family (Giles-Sims, 1985; Hughes, 1988). Similarly it has been observed that some form of child abuse is up to 15 times more likely in families where domestic violence is occurring (Stacey & Shupe as cited in McKay, 1994).

When children's data of the current study analyzed it indicated that almost all the children were falling in the category of severe chills abuse according to their score on CAS and they were high on all four types of child abuse but main types of abuse they faced was emotional abuse followed by emotional neglect, physical abuse and physical neglect. Some researches had indicated that the incidence of child physical abuse was higher in families with an identified domestic violence problem (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980) but our findings may be taken as an indicator that children in our society might be

emotionally distressed due to conflicting relationship of their parents as they are not only the eye witness of every clash between their parents rather they might be the target of their aggression. Straus and Gelles (1986) argued that of those husbands who were physically violent towards their wives, 23 per cent reported also physically abusing their children. Yet the greater incidence of child abuse is not always necessarily at the hands of a violent male rather Straus and Gelles (1990) have reported that battered women were more than twice as likely to physically abuse their children who use them as escape goat for their own frustration.

The strategy of domestic violence most employed in Pakistani families was also a point of concern for the researchers to understand the prominent and pertinent patterns of expression of aggression and establishing control in our social context. For this purpose, individual responses on three main dimensions/subscales of CTS as well as on all the items of CTS were analyzed. The results suggested that physical assault was the mostly used tactic in settling down any point of clash among spouses, beating, slapping, hitting, kicking and even threatening with knife were the most employed tactics of physical torture.

Verbal aggression was the second mostly used tactic including insulting (100% yes response), using abusive language, shouting, teasing, etc. Unfortunately reasoning was the least employed tactic to settle down any conflict among partners as males never wanted to discuss anything with wives as reported by wives, they refuse to listen to them rather they just pass orders which should be obeyed by all the family members. This finding is consistent with Malik (2001) who argued for the overall authoritarian attitude of fathers in Pakistani families. Interestingly in the beginning of the research the actual plan was to collect data from partners, mothers and fathers but after initial meetings with the research team in which they were briefed about the objectives of the study, fathers refused to participate in the study.

This might be taken as an indicator of their non-cooperative attitude towards family matters so we had to rely on mothers' and children's data. Moreover quite a high percentage of responses were obtained on minor physical assault subscale items as well, which indicates its frequent use in violent interactions of spouses. However, major physical assault tactics like use of knife and gun were less reported tactics.

These findings thus imply that physical assault and verbal aggression tactics are the most employed to settle problems in intimate relationship in the families belonging to low socioeconomic class in

our socio-cultural context where domestic violence remains a pervasive phenomenon, used extensively by males to establish their control and power at home. This supremacy of male and subordination of female is assumed to be an important part of Pakistani families where women and children have to face a variety of its forms as an accepted and pervasive feature of our domestic life. The structure of our society disregards and ignores the oppression of women and tolerates the male violence as one of the major instruments in the perpetuation of the power balance. All these legal and societal discriminations based on social and cultural norms and attitudes have made the Pakistani women structurally disadvantaged and second-class citizens. Seventy-five percent of the Pakistan's female population is beset with the crippling handicaps of illiteracy, constant motherhood and poor health (HRCP, 2000). Farooqi (2001) also reported a high exposure of all the subjects to verbal threats of violence, abusive language (verbal strategies) a slight slap, pushing, shoving, punching, throwing things around and injury with household objects (physical strategies).

But at the same time children in such families appear to be at high risk of abuse as indicated by their scores four subscales of CAS that were analyzed to understand the form of child abuse more prevalent in our cultural context. The overall high CAS score in the current sample of children (range of 88 to 133) is alarming as minimum score was also indicative of high level of abuse according to CAS scoring criteria. The emotional state and distress of children may be evident by their highest score on the scale of emotional abuse and neglect. This finding is in line with the MacGuigan and Pratt (2001) that child maltreatment occurred in 78% of the cases of domestic violence.

As far as the educational level of parents was concerned in reference to domestic violence and child abuse the results of our study suggested that children of illiterate mothers were at high risk of abuse as compared to children of literate mothers who themselves were at high risk of domestic violence in relation to their husband's educational level. These findings are in line with Windham et al.'s (2004) who reported that abuse was not associated with mother's age, education, race, parity, or household income level. Moreover the results further suggested that both literate and illiterate wives were at risk of facing violence in their intimate relationships. Literate and illiterate spouses were equally using violent tactics in conflicting family issues. Shaikh (2003) in Pakistani context reported no statistically significant association in terms of domestic violence and its various types with the educational level of women or their

husbands. On the contrary fathers' education level did not play role in the risk of child abuse as children of both literate and illiterate fathers were at an equal risk of being abused. These findings of the current study are consistent with the findings of a research done in Pakistani social setup that revealed educated, highly educated and less educated fathers were equally abusive towards their children (Malik, 2001).

The relationship of family size with of both child abuse and domestic violence also appeared pertinent in Pakistani cultural context, hence it was hypothesized that domestic violence and child abuse would be higher in larger families i.e., with greater number of children which is associated to greater economic burden. For this purpose family data were divided into three groups on the basis of the number of children in the family i.e., small, medium and large. Important point to highlight here is the minimum number of children reported by the sample of current study was 3 and maximum 12. The range of children was very peculiar to the concept of the low income families in our society to bear more children with the expectations of earning money from their childhood; another form of child abuse.

The results of ANOVA suggested that women with larger families were at higher risk of facing domestic violence as compared to women with medium and smaller families. When children's data was analyzed it again depicted the similar kind of picture that children belonging to larger families were at higher risk of being abused than smaller and medium families. This suggests that number of children in the family plays a vital role in increasing economic pressures within the family and when these economic needs are not met it leads to frustration and ultimate use of abusive tactics by the authority figures/male members of the family either towards spouse or children. On the other hand the mothers targeted by abusive tactics may also use their children to release their own frustration. These findings of our study are supported by the researches from western culture which indicate that abusive and neglectful parents are more likely to have a large number of closely spaced children (Belsky, 1992; Holden, Willis & Corcoran, 1992) and to have a larger family size (Belsky, 1992; Creighton, 1985). Goode (1974) suggested that larger families tend to use physical punishment more often than smaller families. Gelles and Straus (1988) suggested that the greater the number of children in a family the more likely the parents, particularly mothers were to feel frustrated and overwhelmed; the conditions that might lead to abuse.

To determine differences regarding domestic violence and child abuse for family type (joint or nuclear) was another point of concern of the study. It was hypothesized that domestic violence and child

abuse would be higher in the families with joint family system than nuclear family system. The assumption was based on the ground that in Pakistani culture still joint family system exists where parents and other family members of fathers live jointly and share the economic resources. Moreover sometimes more than economic burden and other family members e.g., mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law do play an active role in creating conflicts between husbands and wives. Contrary to our assumption, interestingly our findings suggested that women living in both joint and nuclear family systems were equally at risk of violence in their intimate relationship. It may be concluded then domestic violence is thus equally prevalent in both the systems. These findings are supported by a previously conducted research by Farooqi (2001). Shaikh (2003) also reported that women living in joint family set-up were as likely to suffer violence as the ones who lived in the nuclear family set-up.

Concluding the discussion it may be said that in Pakistani families there are is close association between the phenomenon of family violence and child abuse as total CTS scores and verbal aggression and physical assault scores were significantly correlated with CAS scores of children and its four dimensions. It means children belonging to the families at high risk of domestic violence are also at high risk of being abused by both of their parents irrespective of their educational level and family system. Lager family size might be considered a contributing factor to child abuse as well as domestic violence.

Limitations and suggestions

The most important limitation of our study was that limited sample due to limited resources, limited time period, and unwillingness of people to participate in the study. The sample was only drawn from suburbs of Lahore so it cannot be considered representative sample which limits the generalizibility of its findings. A larger sample could give more reliable and significant findings, thus in future a larger and representative sample drawn from different areas should be used to obtain more significant findings.

The second limitation of the study was the restriction of the samples to the mothers of abused children and both belonging only to low socioeconomic class. It was only due to the availability of the sample in which NGO "Savera" helped the researchers. The future research could focus to include sample from other socio-economic strata i.e., middle and upper class. The sample from all social strata

could highlight the differences regarding the prevalence of domestic violence and child abuse across culture while enhancing the generaliziblility of the current findings. Thus in future research sample from all the social classes can be drawn to produce more valid and reliable findings.

The sample of fathers could not be obtained because of their non-cooperative attitude. The sample of fathers however could lead to some significant results. Thus in future fathers sample may also be drawn to improve the significance of results of the study.

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