



Factors Affecting the Reduction of Domestic Violence against Married Women by Their Intimate Partners in Rural Bangladesh

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Abstract

This study has explored the factors affecting the reduction of domestic violence against married women by their intimate partners in rural Bangladesh. To conduct this research both quantitative and qualitative research methods has been applied. In order to collect data, one hundred and twenty-six (126) respondents whose age range is 40 to 70 were interviewed from rural areas in Thakurgaon city of Bangladesh. Simple random sampling was used to select samples. Besides four case studies were conducted. The research findings showed that although the respondents of the study area experienced physical and mental violence by their intimate partner about 12 - 15 years ago, at the current time, the physical violence (slapping, beating, hitting, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse, threats) has reduced on a larger scale. And some factors such as economic solvency, mass media and laws, micro-credit, changes in family structure, and self-realization play a significant role in the reduction of such violence.

Subject Areas

Sociology

Keywords

Factors, Domestic Violence, Physical Violence, Mental Violence, Rural Bangladesh

1. Introduction

Violence against women (VAW) is a global issue experienced by societies in developed and developing countries alike [1]. There are many problems prevailing

in Bangladesh, one of the serious problems is violence against women. Violence against women is any act of persecution against women that results in physical, mental, and sexual suffering to women. The UN declaration on the elimination of violence against women defines violence against women as “any act 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 deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”. In Bangladesh, VAW is a very common practice that denies women equal opportunity, security, self-esteem, and dignity in the family and in society as a whole [2]. In Bangladesh, women are subject to multiple forms of violence, one of which is domestic violence against women. It is a persistent threat to the dignity of women and often results in serious injury or death [3]. Domestic violence is the most common form of oppression against women in which an intimate partner or any other person in the family tries to gain and maintain power and control over women by their acts or behavior. Domestic violence is considered one of the most common forms of gender-related violence, and various studies estimate that between 10% and 36% of women experience domestic violence at some point in their lives [4]. In the patriarchal society of Bangladesh, women are always in a subordinate position and are subject to various forms of oppression by men. Bangladesh ranked 4th in violence against women by an intimate partner [5]. Almost two-thirds (72.6%) of ever-married women in Bangladesh have experienced some form of partner violence in their lifetime. Physical violence and mental violence are the two major forms of domestic violence in Bangladesh against married women. Physical violence refers to any undesirable physical contact made by a person with a woman/girl resulting harm, injury, and/or embarrassment such as slapping, kicking, restraining, beating, and choking [6]. Mental torture can include restriction on movement, limitation of communication with the wife’s parental home, stalking and threats [7]. Poverty, dowry, early marriage, joint family, misunderstanding, and patriarchal attitudes are the main reasons for domestic violence against married women whose age range is 40 to 70 in the study areas about 12 - 15 years ago. But at present, revolutionary changes in the socio-economic condition of Bangladesh has drastically reduced the level of domestic violence especially physical violence and mental violence against married women within the family in rural Bangladesh. In the study area, physical violence such as slapping, beating, hitting, throwing objects and mental violence such as verbal abuse and threats has decreased enormously. Although, the state scenario is different and the level of violence against women has not decreased at the state level but some factors has played a significant role in reducing the physical violence (slapping, beating, hitting, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse and threats) against married women by their intimate partner in rural areas of Bangladesh. At present, the urban areas, as well as the rural areas, are getting benefits from socio-economic development of Bangladesh. According to the World Bank [8], Bangladesh has an impressive track record of

growth and development. According to the latest World Bank report, over 15 million Bangladeshis have moved out of poverty since 1992 [9]. Economic solvency as well as engagement in income earning activities of rural women, changes in family structure, mass media and women protection and violence prevention related laws, and self-realization are the important factors that help to reduce those types of violence against married women by their intimate partner in the rural areas of Bangladesh. In the study area, both the respondents and their husbands have engaged in income-earning activities in different sectors and can contribute a lot to their family. Now they have been able to lift themselves out of poverty. Their family structure has also changed. So, they don't have to face the problems of being in a joint family. The government of Bangladesh has taken significant steps towards violence against women. The government has introduced different types of violence prevention and protection acts which play an important role in the reduction of domestic violence against women. Mass media is a big factor in that case. The mass media now have reached the villages even illiterate people to make them aware of domestic violence against women. Women are engaging in many income-earning activities by which they are now economically independent to some extent.

2. Objectives of the Study

2.1. General Objective

The general objective of the present study attempts to identify the factors that have played a significant role in the reduction of domestic violence against married women by their intimate partner in Rural Bangladesh at present.

2.2. Specific Objective

- To know the socio-economic conditions of the respondents.
- To explore the factors that played a vital role in being abused by their intimate partner about 12 to 15 years ago.
- To ascertain the influential elements contributing to the decrease in domestic violence against married women by their intimate partners in rural Bangladesh.

3. Review of Relevant Literature

Violence against women has become a mainstream issue for research and study [10]. A huge number of researches have been executed in Bangladesh and throughout the world on violence as well as domestic violence against women. In order to find out the research gap, the relevant literature on domestic violence against women has been consulted. The reviewed literature comprises a comprehensive range of studies addressing the intricate factors influencing the reduction of domestic violence against married women by their intimate partners in rural Bangladesh. Rahman, *et al.* [11] investigate the potential role of women's empowerment in diminishing intimate partner violence, drawing insights from a

national Bangladeshi sample. Schuler *et al.* [12] provide qualitative evidence suggesting a perceived decline in such violence and offer qualitative insights into the phenomenon. Rayhan and Akter [13] contribute a temporal dimension by exploring the prevalence and associated factors of intimate partner violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Sanawar, *et al.* [14] delve into the complex relationship between women's empowerment and intimate partner violence, while Schuler and Nazneen [15] examine the potential correlation between women's empowerment becoming normative and the decline in intimate partner violence from the perspectives of Bangladeshi women. Collectively, these studies enrich our understanding of the multifaceted dynamics involved in reducing domestic violence against married women by their intimate partners in rural Bangladesh. Hossain [16] has highlighted different types of domestic violence, the reasons for domestic violence against women in rural Bangladesh, and the impact of violence in Bangladesh society. Marium [17] has tried to look for the co-relation between women education level and domestic violence against women in rural Bangladesh. Hossain and Sumon [18] have shown different types of violence against women in their study. They try to examine the causes, magnitude and trend of violence against women in Bangladesh. Khatun and Rahman [2] have discussed in their study how patriarchal capitalism puts women in subordinate positions. They have focused on the socio-economic causes of domestic violence in Bangladesh and tried to discover the prevention mechanism of domestic violence through different laws. Islam *et al.* [19] have pursued the nature, causes and effects of domestic violence against women. They also have given some recommendations for reduction of domestic violence. Ara [20] has identified some causes of violence against women such as patriarchal social system, economic backwardness, traditional norms and values, and religious misinterpretation. This study has used secondary analysis to find out the current status of violence against women and has highlighted the different types of laws and strategies adopted by the Bangladesh government. It is observed from the review of the above-mentioned literature that a large number of studies have been conducted on domestic violence, its causes, consequences, prevention, and domestic violence-related laws adopted by the government of Bangladesh. Akter *et al.* [21] showed how the activities of children stigmatize their mother, which can contribute in intimate partner violence. These researches have highlighted different types of domestic violence, its effects and various laws to prevent these types of violence. There are a dearth of studies that examined the factors that play an important role in reducing physical violence such as slapping, beating, hitting, throwing objects and mental violence such as verbal abuse and threats against married women by their intimate partner in rural areas of Bangladesh. This study is one of the few ones that discover the factors affecting the reduction of these types of violence against married women by their intimate partner in rural Bangladesh. To perceive the interrelation between these factors and these types of violence I used a sample of married women from rural villages of Thakurgoan District in Bangladesh.

4. Significance of the Study

Violence against women is a widely discussed issue in the current period. In a patriarchal society, women get fewer opportunities than men in various socio-cultural, and financial fields. Because of this they are in a lower position than men and are oppressed by men in various ways. According to the preliminary census, the male-female ratio stands at 98:100.3 respectively, so the number of women is about 50%. The country's overall development is not possible by leaving this half of the population behind. According to Karl Marx, when changes occur in the basic structure of a country then the superstructure will be automatically changed [22]. As currently, Bangladesh has made incredible progress in the economic sectors as well as GDP growth is increasing day by day, its benefits are being noticed in other sectors or areas including rural areas. The rural economy has also prospered. People's financial well-being has increased as compared to earlier. Awareness has increased. Engagement in income makes women economically dependent. Economic solvency reduces women's financial dependency on men. Law and enforcement help women to get legal rights. Mass media make women aware of new laws and make them aware of equality. The married women in the village have gradually come out of isolation, which I have tried to highlight in my research. These factors play an important role in the reduction of physical violence (slapping, hitting, and beating, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse and threats) in the study area. As far as I know, although there is extensive research on women's emancipation, the number of studies on the reduction of violence at the family level of married women is not that much. From that point of view, there is enough justification to research it. If the government gives proper importance to the factors that have played a significant role in reducing physical and mental abuse it will have a positive impact on the other areas of the country. Women will be more involved in income earning activities as well as we can achieve SDG's Gender Equality goal. This research is also very important in this aspect.

5. Theoretical Framework

Domestic violence can be explained through three important theoretical streams such as Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), Gender and Development (GAD). WID theories mainly focus on women's productive roles and engagement in the income generation process, but often ignore the reproductive aspects and gender relations [23]. This approach emphasizes women's social status and aims at making women visible in the development process [24]. WAD approach says women have always been part of the development process, so there is no need to re-engage them in the development process. Although they play an important role in the economy, they do not get a fair share of the production process. In this case, they blamed the unequal global financial system. They think that if equality can be established in this unequal financial system, only then will the development of women be established. Be-

sides, GAD theories emphasize on gender rather than women. This study is more compatible with the GAD approach. This approach assumes that since women are subordinate to men if the real problem is to be investigated we have to focus on gender relations. The GAD (or Gender and Development) approach focuses on the socially constructed basis of differences between men and women and emphasizes the need to challenge existing gender roles and relations. Gender relations is the ways in which a culture or society define rights, responsibilities and the identities of men and women in relation to one another [25]. Socially constructed societal norms are one of the most important causes of domestic violence in rural areas. And some factors such as economic development, awareness rising by mass media, and women's engagement in income-earning activities, different laws adopted by the government to prevent such kinds of violence against women play a vital role in changing the societal norms that are socially and culturally constructed in which women are in a subordinate position. For this reason, this study is suitable with the GAD approach to improve gender relations. Because this study aims to discover the factors that help to reduce physical violence (slapping, hitting, beating, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse, threats) against married women by their intimate in rural areas who are subordinate to men due to the gender relations that are socially constructed.

6. Research Methodology

This research is explorative and descriptive in nature but to execute the research clearly both qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used. The social survey method and case study method are used as data collection methods. To know more explicit and profound ideas about physical and mental violence against women, case study method has been used. To collect primary data a questionnaire, checklist, mobile phone, tape recorder, and camera were used as data collection tools. An additional technique for collecting primary and supplementary data was in-depth interviews, survey interviews, and empirical observation. Both primary and secondary sources have been used to collect the relevant data for this research. To collect data and interview the selected respondents a structured questionnaire was prepared. To execute the research appropriately secondary data has been collected from different journals, books, the internet, reports, newspaper, and other studies which are relevant to this study.

This study was conducted on some villages (Keshurbari, Jalali, Jalali East, Kishmot Keshurbari North, Kishmot Keshurbari South, Khenpara South) which are situated in Baragaon union-2 of Thakurgaon district, Rangpur division. A simple random sampling has been used in this study. There were 1356 married women between the ages of 40 - 70 [26]. A total of 126 women were selected among them for the sample. These women were victims of physical or mental violence. The sample size was determined by the sample calculator of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) which is 10% of the total population (Confi-

confidence Level = 95%, Population Size = 1356, Proportion = 0.1, Confidence Interval = 0.05, Confidence Interval: Upper = 0.15000 and Lower = 0.05000, Standard Error = 0.02551, Relative Standard Error (RSE) = 25.51, Sample Size = 126). An individual has been considered as a unit of analysis in the present research. To analyze and presentation of data statistical methods such as tabulation, classification, frequency distribution, and percentage have been used in this research. To interpret and present the collected data Microsoft Excel has been used in this study.

7. Result

7.1. Socio-Economic Conditions of the Respondents

In order to perceive human interactions, their norms, values, attitudes, behaviors, emotional and mental states, and many other aspects of life's, socio-economic conditions are very essential. Socio-economic, cultural, and many other aspects of human life are interconnected to each other. For this reason, domestic violence against married women is also connected with various aspects of their life. To perceive the socio-economic conditions of the respondents, the following data of table has been collected and summarized below.

Tables 1-4 present information about the distribution of respondents based on their age, religion, education, family types, types of houses, and sanitation respectively. The data is represented in terms of frequency and percentage.

7.2. Factors Affecting the Reduction of Domestic Violence

This study has explored the factors that play an essential role in reducing domestic violence especially physical violence (slapping, beating, hitting, throwing

Table 1. Age, religion and education.

Indicators of Socio-Economic Status		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age	40 - 49	38	30.16
	50 - 59	46	36.51
	60 - 69	40	31.75
	70 - 79	2	1.59
	Total	126	100.00
Religion	Islam	117	92.86
	Hindu	9	7.14
	Total	126	100.00
Education	Illiterate	28	22.22
	Primary	87	69.05
	Secondary	8	6.35
	Higher Secondary	3	2.38
	Total	126	100.00

Table 2. Respondent's family types.

Types of Family	Before	After
Extended	111 88.10%	19 15.08%
Nuclear	15 11.90%	107 84.92%
Total	126 100.00%	126 100.00%

Table 3. Types of house.

Types	Before	After
Building	5 3.97%	18 14.29%
Semi Building	11 8.73%	89 70.63%
Raw/Shebang	110 87.30%	19 15.08%
Total	126 100.00%	126 100.00%

Table 4. Sanitary latrine.

Sanitary Latrine	Before	After
Yes	27 21.43%	126 100.00%
No	99 78.57%	0 0.00%
Total	126 100.00%	126 100.00%

objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse, threats) against women by their intimate partners in rural Bangladesh. In this regard, the researcher has explored some factors such as economic solvency, mass media and women's protection and prevention-related laws, self-realization, micro-credit, family structure which play an important role in the reduction of physical violence (slapping, beating, hitting, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse, threats) against rural women in Bangladesh by their intimate partner. To find these factors the researcher has collected data about respondents' occupations, their husband's occupations, their family's monthly incomes and expenditures, types of families, and types of sanitary latrines before and after about 12 - 15 years. Besides, the researcher also collected data on respondents' marriage age, information related

to previous violence, and previous forms of violence, causes of domestic violence, and reduction of domestic violence such as physical violence (slapping, hitting, beating, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse, threats) by their intimate partner in rural Bangladesh. These data and information are described below:

Table 5 shows that in the research area all the respondents (100.0%) in the research area have experienced some kind of domestic violence by their intimate partner.

Table 6 shows that 63.49% of respondents experienced excessive physical and mental violence by their intimate partner about 12 - 15 years ago. Their intimate partners had beaten them at an extreme level. And also used to throw some objects to harm them physically. Their intimate partner also abused them verbally using slang and also threaten them for various reasons and sometimes for unnecessary reasons. 23.02% of respondents were only physically abused and 13.49% of respondents only were mentally by their intimate partner. On the other hand, no respondents were interested to talk about sexual violence.

Respondents were victims of different types of domestic violence for various reasons. **Table 7** shows that because of dowry and poverty most of the respondents (30.16%) had been tortured. Patriarchal attitude (13.49%), child marriage (13.49%), and joint family (12.70%) were also the reasons for the oppression of the respondents.

Table 8 shows that most of the respondents (53.97%) got married at less than 15 years old. So, most of the respondents had child marriage. Because of that, they had to face many difficulties in adapting to the family and they could not understand many rules and regulations of their family. There was a lack of understanding between the respondents and their intimate partners. As a result, they become the victims of violence.

Table 5. Information related to previous violence by intimate partner.

	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Yes	126	100.00
No	0	0.00
Total	126	100.00

Table 6. Information related to previous forms of domestic violence by an intimate partner.

Forms of violence	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Physical	29	23.02
Mental	17	13.49
Sexual	No Answer	
Physical and Mental	80	63.49
Total	126	100.00

Table 7. Causes of domestic violence.

Causes of domestic violence	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Poverty	14	11.11
Dowry	12	9.52
Misunderstanding	12	9.52
Poverty and Dowry	38	30.16
Child Marriage	17	13.49
Joint Family	16	12.70
Patriarchal Attitude	17	13.49
Total	126	100.00

Table 8. Respondents' marriage age.

Age (Year)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
10 - 12	35	27.78
13 - 15	68	53.97
16 - 18	17	13.49
19 - 21	4	3.17
22 - 24	2	1.59
Total	126	100

Table 9 shows that about 12 - 15 years ago, 85.71% of the total respondents were housewives. Few of them were (3.97%, 7.14%, 3.17%) engaged in income-earning activities. But nowadays, they are engaged in different types of works. Due to the increase of the wages, they now work as a day laborer (41.27%) on agricultural lands and as a helping hand in different houses. They had received microcredit from different NGOs such as ASA, BRAC and now they rear cattle on a large scale (24.60%). Many respondents (13.49%) has bought sewing machines with micro-credit and earned money by sewing clothes. They now can contribute to their family income and this helps them come out of poverty. Due to economic independency now they are also conscious of their rights. They can also raise voices against the violence.

Table 10 reveals that, most of the respondents' husbands used to work in agricultural fields (39.68%) and as day laborers (31.75%) about 12 - 15 years ago. But their income was too low. During the off seasons of agriculture, they used to pass their leisure time without engaging in earning. Recently, the economic condition of Bangladesh has changed remarkably. According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics [27] the GDP growth rate of Bangladesh is 7.25% which increased noticeably over the last 10 years. Because of that, work opportunities have increased in other sectors of Bangladesh. Nowadays, they work both as agricultural labor and day laborer (30.95%), agricultural laborer and businessman (14.29%), agricultural laborer and rickshaw puller (7.14%), and businessman (11.11%).

Table 9. Respondents' occupation.

Occupation	Before	After
Housewife	108 85.71%	21 16.67%
Services	0 0.00%	3 2.38%
Day Laborer	5 3.97%	52 41.27%
Garments Worker	0 0.00%	2 1.59%
Rearing Cattles	9 7.14%	31 24.60%
Sewing cloths	4 3.17%	17 13.49%
Total	126 100.00%	126 100.00%

Table 10. Respondents' husbands' occupation.

Occupation	Before	After
Services	2 1.59%	4 3.17%
Business	7 5.56%	14 11.11%
Agriculture	50 39.68%	13 10.32%
Day Laborer	40 31.75%	12 9.52%
Agriculture and day laborer	12 9.52%	39 30.95%
Agriculture and services	0 0.00%	2 1.59%
Agriculture and business	10 7.94%	18 14.29%
Agriculture and Rickshaw puller	0 0.00%	9 7.14%
Auto Driver	0 0.00%	9 7.14%
Van driver	5 3.97%	0 0.00%
Others	0 0.00%	6 4.76%
Total	126 100.00%	126 100.00%

Also, the wages are much higher than before. Their economic solvency has brought a positive change in their mentality and attitude.

Table 11 shows that about 12 - 15 years ago, the family income of the respondents was too low 6000 - 10,000 (42.06%). Because most of them were engaged in agriculture-based activities. And the wages were too low, the production was low, and techniques of cultivation were primitive. And a minimum of 5 families earned 21,000 - 25,000, 2 families earn 16,000 - 30,000 and 2 families earned 31,000 - 350,000 taka per month respectively. But now a maximum 33.33% of respondents' families have earned 16,000 - 20,000 taka per month. Besides this, 24.60% of respondents' families have earned 21,000 - 25,000 per month, and 14.29% of respondents' families have earned 26,000 - 30,000 per month. Because they have more opportunities to engage in different sectors. And wages has also increased on a large scale. Economic solvency has played an important in the reduction of such violence against married by their intimate partner in the study are.

The expenditure of the respondent's family was very low about 12 - 15 years ago (**Table 12**). Because of the low wages and fewer opportunities for work, their income was very low. But nowadays, their ability to spend has increased.

Figure 1 shows that domestic violence has reduced in the study areas. But, there are a few women (2.38%) who are still victims of physical and mental violence. 46.83% of respondents said that both physical and mental violence against them has reduced.

Table 11. Family's monthly income.

Monthly Income Range	Before	After
1000 - 5000	20 15.87%	0 0.00%
6000 - 10,000	53 42.06%	7 5.56%
11,000 - 15,000	32 25.40%	22 17.46%
16,000 - 20,000	12 9.52%	42 33.33%
21,000 - 25,000	5 3.97%	31 24.60%
26,000 - 30,000	2 1.59%	18 14.29%
31,000 - 35,000	2 1.59%	6 4.76%
Total	126 100.00%	126 100.00%

Table 12. Family's monthly expenditure.

Monthly Expenditure	Before	After
1000 - 5000	17 13.49%	0 0.00%
6000 - 10,000	71 56.35%	21 16.67%
11,000 - 15,000	28 22.22%	45 35.71%
16,000 - 20,000	9 7.14%	36 28.57%
21,000 - 25,000	1 0.79%	19 15.08%
26,000 - 30,000	0 0.00%	4 3.17%
31,000 - 35,000	0 0.00%	1 0.79%
Total	126 100.00%	126 100.00%

THE INFORMATION RELATED TO THE REDUCTION OF
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER

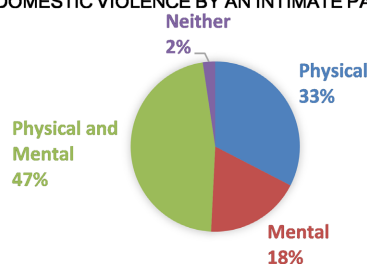


Figure 1. The information related to the reduction of domestic violence by an intimate partner.

Figure 2 shows that every factor has played a vital role in the reduction of physical and mental violence in the study area. In the study areas, economic solvency (24.60%), mass media and law (23.02%), self-realization (17.46%), economic solvency and micro-credit (11.90%), micro-credit (11.11%), changes in the family structure (11.90%) are the main factors which help to reduce the physical violence (slapping, hitting, beating, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse, threats) against the respondents.

8. Discussion

This study has explored the factors that affect the reduction of physical violence (slapping, beating, hitting, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse,

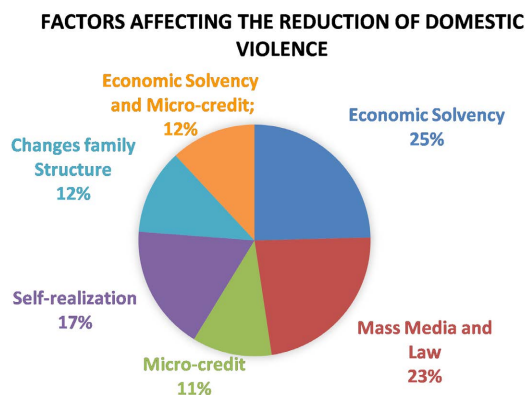


Figure 2. Factors affecting the reduction of domestic violence.

threats) against married women by their intimate partners in rural Bangladesh. To identify the factors data related to domestic violence against the respondents, the cause of domestic violence, their socio-economic conditions about 12 - 15 years ago, and data related to their present situation and their present socio-economic condition have been collected. All the respondents were physically and mentally abused (100%) by their intimate partners for various reasons such as poverty (11.11%), dowry (9.52%), misunderstanding (9.52%), child marriage (13.49%), joint family (12.70%), and patriarchal attitude (13.49%). They were the victims of domestic violence such as physical and mental violence. No one was interested to talk about their sexual violence. Their family's monthly income was too low, even though most of the family's income was less than 15000 taka per month (1000 - 5000: 15.87%, 6000 - 10,000: 42.06%, 11,000 - 15,000: 25.40%). Because a few of the respondents were engaged in income-earning activities and most of them were housewives (85.71%). And their husbands were engaged in agriculture-related work (39.68%) and the wages were too low. During the off-season of agriculture-related work, they had no work to do. As a result, their family lived in poverty. Few of them had semi-buildings and most of them used to live in shebang houses (87.30%). They did not even have a proper sanitary latrine (78.57%). The educational qualification of the respondents is very low. Most of them have studied up to the primary level (72.22%). Most of the respondents married at an early age even under 15 years old. At that time, due to poor socioeconomic conditions, their husbands always worried about these conditions. Their mental condition wasn't very stable. So, they used to get angry about little things. Being married at a young age their mutual understanding was poor. Again as they lived in a joint family (88.10%), there were many disturbances in which their husband used to torture them. But nowadays the scenario has remarkably changed. Their socio-economic condition is much better than before. They are now getting the benefits of the development of Bangladesh. Besides, agricultural work, their husbands are now getting the opportunity to work in other sectors to earn money. During the off-season of agricultural work, they has migrated from rural to urban areas and worked as rickshaw pullers, and in-

dustrial laborers. Their husbands are also now involved in small businesses to earn some extra money. Due to the development of modern technology in the agricultural sector, production has increased significantly. So, the wages of agricultural laborer and day laborer has increased at a higher rate than before. The respondents have also engaged in income-earning activities. They work as day laborer (41.27%). By taking micro-credit from different types of NGOs such as ASA, BRAC some of them has bought sewing machines (13.49%), and some of them are rearing cattle commercially (24.60%). As a result, their family income has increased significantly. Now, most of the respondents' family monthly income is more than 15,000 taka (16,000 - 20,000: 33.33%, 21,000 - 25,000: 24.60%, 26,000 - 30,000: 14.29%). For that reason, their ability to spend money has also been enhanced than before. Most of them are now living in semi-building houses (70.63%). And all of the families of the respondents (100%) have proper sanitary latrines in their houses. Nowadays, domestic violence especially physical violence (slapping, beating, hitting, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse, threats) against the respondents of the study area has reduced. Most of the respondents (46.83%) have come out from both physical and mental violence. 32.54% of respondents come out from only physical violence and 18.25% of respondents have come out from only mental violence. Many factors have played a significant role in the reduction of such types of violence against married women by their intimate partner in the study area. Economic solvency (24.60%) is one of the main factors in the reduction of violence. Besides, mass media and law (23.02%), changes in the family structure (11.90%), economic solvency and micro-credit (11.90%), micro-credit (11.11%), self-realization (17.46%) are the important factors that help to reduce the physical violence (slapping, beating, hitting, throwing objects) and mental (verbal abuse, threats) violence in the study area. With the development of our country, the ability to engage in different sectors and earn money for the rural people of Bangladesh has also increased. Alongside agricultural work, people now get the opportunity to work in different sectors. In the study area, both the respondents and their husbands are now engaged in different types of income-earning activities and can contribute to their family at a large scale than before. They also have come out from poverty. With the advancement of modern technology, production in agriculture has enhanced and the wages of day laborers has also increased. About 12 - 15 years ago, the respondent's family could not meet up the family necessities due to low production in agriculture and low wages. Today mass media are creating awareness by broadcasting different types of programs. Now, television and satellite are available even in rural areas of Bangladesh. Rural people are now learning about different types of domestic violence prevention laws adopted by the government through satellite channels, newspapers, signboards, posters, and the internet. Notable actions have been taken by the government to protect women's legal rights and improve their social status. These include enacting of The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1980 which forbids anyone

from giving or receiving dowry and The Nari-O-Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain, 2000 (Law on the Suppression of Violence against Women and Children, 2000) for the first time expanded the definition of rape considerably and the sexual assault and sexual harassment have been made punishable offences; Acid Crime Prevention Act, 2000 and Acid control Act, 2000 to prevent from the acid violence. For preventing women from violence, government has enacted Family Violence Prevention and Protection Act, 2010 and National Women policy, 2011 was adopted for the empowerment of women [28]. Respondent's intimate partner has come to know about these laws through mass media and these are helping to prevent them from abusing their wives. Self-realization is also an important factor in the reduction of violence. With the change of time, people's states and mentality are also changed. With increasing age, the husbands of the respondents have learned to understand many things. The sense of responsibility has increased and self-realization has occurred. As the children are grown up and many have married children, they have settled the dispute with their wives. Thinking about their children and fearing public shame they refrain from torturing their wives. They realize that if they torture their wives, it will bring a lot of emotional trauma to their children. Presently, most of the respondents live in a nuclear family. So, they do not need to go through the problems they had in a joint family. Such as instigation of other members of the family, and disputes with other members. Being in a nuclear family the mutual understanding of respondents with their intimate partners has improved. The respondents think those factors such as economic solvency, mass media and laws, micro-credit, changes in the family structure, and self-realization have helped to reduce the physical violence (slapping, beating, hitting, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse, threats) against them.

9. Conclusion

Violence against women is an alarming issue all over the world. Multiple violence against women such as physical violence, mental violence, sexual violence, and domestic violence takes place in Bangladesh, especially in rural areas. In the study area, married women whose age range is from 40 to 70 were severely tortured by their intimate partners for various reasons about 12 - 15 years ago. But recently, the scenario has changed immensely. The level of physical violence (slapping, hitting, beating, throwing objects) and mental violence (verbal abuse and threats) against the respondents has reduced to a great extent. In this regard, economic solvency, mass media and laws, micro-credit, changes in the family structure, and self-realization are the leading factors that have played a strong and noteworthy role in the study area. The socio-economic development of Bangladesh has a positive impact on the rural areas. People in rural areas have now got the opportunity to engage in various sectors outside agriculture, and women are also engaging in income-earning activities. Besides, various NGOs have introduced micro-credit to rural people which helps them to become

self-reliant. Their financial affluence has improved their accessibility to mass media which helps them to become aware of the women's protection and violence prevention related laws. Due to the alleviation of their poverty, their family structure has changed and a sense of self-realization has developed. Their intimate partner now can realize that disturbance in their relationship will negatively affect their children's life and future. So, the government of Bangladesh should create more working opportunities for rural people, especially women. Technology should be advanced and different types of violence against women alleviation programs should be enriched. Government should keep an eye on the implication of various laws. Government should analyze and emphasize on the factors that has played a vital role in the reduction of physical and mental violence against married women in the study area, so that violence against women will reduce in the other areas of Bangladesh.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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