2005-06 National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3)

Documenting Domestic Violence In India
Why measure domestic violence?

- A violation of the human rights of women
- India a signatory to CEDAW, ICPD, and Beijing agreements
- Has significant economic costs, including loss of women’s labor hours and increased health-care costs
- Has significant public health consequences, including effects on
  - Unwanted fertility and contraceptive use
  - Rates of HIV and other STIs
  - Infant and child mortality
  - Immunization and other health care for children
**Approach to Violence Measurement in NFHS-3**

- **Different forms of violence measured:**
  - Physical and sexual violence for all women by anyone
  - Spousal physical, sexual, and emotional violence for ever-married women
  - Violence initiated by women against their husband

- Followed Indian and international guidelines for the ethical collection of data on violence

- Methodology used in NFHS-3 known to increase validity of results
  - Provides multiple opportunities for disclosure
  - Asks about specific acts of violence
Forms of Spousal Violence: Definitions

- **Physical violence** Any of the following acts of violence perpetrated by her husband:
  - Pushed her, shook her, or threw something at her
  - Slapped her
  - Twisted her arm or pulled her hair
  - Punched her
  - Kicked her, dragged her, or beat her up
  - Tried to choke her or burn her on purpose
  - Threatened her or attacked her with a weapon
Forms of Spousal Violence: Definitions

- **Sexual violence:** Any of the following:
  - Forced her to have sexual intercourse when she did not want to
  - Forced her to perform sexual acts she did not want to

- **Emotional violence:** Any of the following:
  - Said or did something to humiliate her in front of others
  - Threatened to hurt or harm her or someone close to her
  - Insulted her to make her feel bad about herself
Spousal Violence: The most common form of violence against married women

Percent of ever-married women age 15-49

Only 1% of married women have ever *initiated* violence against their husbands.
At what marital duration does spousal violence first occur?

87% of spousal violence initiated within 5 years of marriage.
How does prevalence of spousal violence vary by individual characteristics?

- What characteristics of women and their husbands are relevant?
- What is the relationship of spousal violence with education?
  - Does violence decline with education?
  - Whose education has a stronger effect: The woman’s or her husband’s?
- Other than education, what factors affect the prevalence of violence?
Selected Differentials in the Prevalence of Spousal Violence

Spousal violence

- **Increases** with:
  - Age
  - Number of children

- **Decreases** with:
  - Wealth

- **Higher** for employed women
Education and Spousal Violence

Percent of ever-married women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Status</th>
<th>Women's Education</th>
<th>Husband's Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No education</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12+ years of education</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spousal Education Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neither educated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband better educated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife better educated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both equally educated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What other factors are strongly associated with the likelihood of spousal violence?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUSBAND'S ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION</th>
<th>Percent of ever-married women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never drinks</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinks, does not get drunk</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets drunk sometimes</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets drunk very often</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONDENT'S FATHER BEAT HER MOTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent's father beat her mother</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband's alcohol consumption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Injuries Due to Spousal Violence

Percent of women who have experienced spousal violence who had:

- Cuts, bruises, or aches: 36%
- Eye injuries, sprains, dislocations, or burns: 9%
- Wounds, broken bones/teeth, other serious injury: 7%
- Severe burns: 2%
- Any of these injuries: 38%
From whom do women who are abused seek help?

- Only one in four abused women have ever sought help
  - Women are much less likely to seek help for sexual violence, than for physical violence

- When women seek help, they do so mainly from family members, not from institutions:
  - Police: 2%
  - Social service organizations: 1%
  - Religious leaders: 1%

- Help seeking varies very little by background characteristics, including education and wealth
Summary

- Almost two out of five ever-married women in India are subject to spousal violence.
- Women rarely initiate violence against their husband.
- Most spousal violence begins within five years of the start of the marriage.
- Most women suffer violence in silence.
If we knew that more than a third of women had a debilitating disease that is wearing them down mentally and physically, would we continue to ignore it?