The pathways between female garment workers’ experience of violence and development of depressive symptoms

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23 October, 2019
Introduction

Rate of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is very high

1 in 2 women reported experience of physical/sexual IPV during lifetime

Working women reported higher rate of IPV
Violence against female garment workers

Reports higher level of IPV at home

Exposed to violence at workplace too -
- Verbal abuse
- Economic abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual harassment
Violence and mental health: Depression

Single largest cause to non-fatal health loss (WHO, 2017)

Estimated rate of depression among adults in Bangladesh is 4% (WHO, 2017)

Women are 2/3 times more prone to develop depression

- Life satisfaction
- Self-esteem
- Work and productivity
- Other mental and chronic health problems

Single largest cause to non-fatal health loss (WHO, 2017)

Estimated rate of depression among adults in Bangladesh is 4% (WHO, 2017)
Objective

This paper aims to explore -

The pathways through which experience of IPV and Workplace Violence (WPV) leads to the development of depressive symptomatology.
Methods

- **Study design:** Quasi-experimental
- **Study site:** In and around Dhaka city
- **Garment factories, no.:** 8
- **Sample size:** 800 female workers
- **Sampling method:** Random, based on factory list
- **Interview venue:** Outside the factory
Methods …

Measurement tools:

- WHO VAW instrument for measuring IPV
- CESD for measuring depression
- Modified peer victimization scale to assess workplace violence (WPV)

Data analyses:

- Descriptive
- SEM (Structural Equation Modeling)
Results
Prevalence of IPV, WPV and depression among female garment workers

Almost 3 in 4 female workers reported any IPV in the last 12 months.

73% of the workers experienced or witnessed WPV in the past 4 weeks.

40% of the workers have depressive symptomatology in last 7 days.
The Pathway
Ability to mobilize resources  

Self esteem  

Life satisfaction  

Depression  

Any IPV  

Any WPV  

Work related stress  

General health  

Controlling by husband
WPV → Depression

1. Any WPV
2. Work related stress
3. Controlling by husband
4. Life satisfaction
5. General health

Correlation coefficients:
- Any WPV -> Work related stress: 0.05
- Work related stress -> Depression: 0.85
- Life satisfaction -> Depression: 0.80
- Controlling by husband -> General health: 0.23
- General health -> Depression: 1.41
- Life satisfaction -> General health: -0.11
- Life satisfaction -> Control by husband: -0.04
- Control by husband -> Life satisfaction: 0.24
Other pathways

- Ability to mobilize resources
- Self esteem
  - Life satisfaction
  - Work related stress
  - General health
- Depression
- Controlling by husband
Discussion

➢ High levels of IPV, WPV and depression among female garment workers

➢ Experience of IPV + WPV → higher rate of depression

➢ IPV + WPV → ↑Work related stress, ↓life satisfaction and ↓general health → Depression

➢ Worker’s ability to mobilize resources → improve her mental health through ↑self-esteem and ↓ work stress
Conclusion

➢ This may indicate that combined intervention including women’s empowerment could be successful in dealing with IPV, WPV and mental health.

➢ Thus will benefit individuals, family, garment industry and contribute to development of the country.
Acknowledgements

➢ DFID

➢ South African Medical Research Council

➢ The brands

➢ The study participants

➢ The study team