Patriarchal Violence in Central U.P: Interrogating the Gender Equality and Human Security System

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ABSTRACT

Despite increasing trends of democratic attitudes toward gender equality, the prevalence of violence against women remains alarmingly high. It is supported and reinforced by gender norms and values that put women in subordinate positions to men. The specific cultural context plays an important role in defining the mechanisms through which gender inequality and other factors affect violence. Questions/issues raised by the scholars related to human security and patriarchal violence, not only have important policy implications but normative ones also. Therefore, the present study critically examines the patriarchal violence against women which has a reflection on the state's policy of gender equality and the existing human security system.

INTRODUCTION

Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms that are the essence of life. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military, and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood, and dignity (CHS, 2003:4). It is concerned with people "in their total context of living." It directs attention to basic priorities such as life, health, and dignity and it considers the degree to which ordinary people are able to fulfill these basic priorities (Murphy, 2006:241-42). It involves focusing on individuals and recognising the diverse factors that pose threats of want and fear, which include states, internal conflict, human rights abuses, environmental deterioration, poverty and oppression, and disease and malnutrition.

Although human security tries to take into consideration the impact that gender has on security issues, the current concept of human security has not directly confronted the ideologies and structures that oppress and deny justice and equity to women. In a presentation of the United Nations Commission on Human Security Report at the National Council for Research on Women Annual Conference in May 2003, Sadako Ogata said that the Commission decided not to isolate women as a special area of concern in the report. By not taking up women as subjects, the report fails to explore core matters that are critical to intimate security such as reproductive rights and violence against women in the family (Chenoy, 2009:45). The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recognizes that Violence Against Women (VAW) "inhibits women's ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on the basis of equality with men". VAW is connected to other forms of oppression and discrimination that manifest in the political, economic, social, cultural, and gender inequities spheres, associated with patriarchal relations that subordinate women (POWA, 2010).

It is broadly theorized that increased gender equality will lead to decreased violence against women (Pease, 2008). Attitudes about the legitimacy of violence against women are important indicators of widespread societal acceptance or otherwise of violence against women (WHO, 2010). These attitudes vary within different cultural contexts and suggest that socio-cultural factors may be more important than gender alone in influencing attitudes to violence against women (Nayak, *et.al.*, 2003). Ridgeway (2014) observed that despite changes in structural inequality in society, which have improved women's socio-economic and public sphere status or absolute status, their position as inferior in terms of social status has remained constant. It is

well-established thought that the existence of effective human security measures does assist to prevent patriarchal violence through direct or indirect ways.

Though the status of women in India, both historically and socially, has been one of the respect and reverence, but the hard truth is that even today, they are struggling for their own identity, shouting for the diffusion of their voices and fighting for their own esteem. Problems of Unemployment, Poverty, Economic Inequality, Gender discrimination, Lack of Proper Education etc. which are part and parcel of society, prevail mostly in women. In addition, society has been experiencing that money controls everything. Although gender discrimination has been banned by the constitution and women have been guaranteed political equality with men, yet there is a difference between constitutional rights and rights enjoyed in reality by women (Bhuyan & Panigrahy, 2006).

In Indian family the man is the master and women is the inferior and subordinate partner and societal pressure force women to maintain this status quo. The irony lies in fact that in our country where women are worshipped as *shakti*, the atrocities are committed against her in all sections of life. She is being looked down as commodity or as a slave, she is robbed of her dignity and pride not only outside her house but also faces ill-treatment and other atrocities within her house. The main root cause of all the evils practices faced by the women are illiteracy, economic dependence, social restrictions, religious prohibition, lack of leadership qualities and apathetic and callous attitude of males in the society. The patriarchal system in India made women to live at the mercy of men, who exercise unlimited power over them and after time-being which become a threat to their freedom and life, problem of gender discrimination and their development. In spite of constitutional and legal safeguards, the women in India continue to suffer. It is realized that the long run supremacy of male over female in all respect in the patriarchal society in India is highly responsible for arresting the empowerment of women (Nagindrappa & Radhika, 2013).

Despite increasing trends of democratic attitudes towards gender equality, the prevalence of violence against women remains alarmingly high (Koenig, *et.al.,* 2006:132). Violence against women is not only endemic, but also pervasive and occurs throughout the whole life span of women (Samantroy, 2010:27). It is supported and reinforced by gender norms and values that put women in subordinate position than men. The specific cultural context plays an important role in defining the mechanisms through which gender inequality and other factors affect violence. Many of the factors identified are closely related to norms and values around gender and social equity. While at the level of family, male dominance and male control of wealth appear important, at macro social level, it is notions of male entitlement/ownership of women, masculinity linked to aggression and dominance, rigid gender roles, and acceptance of interpersonal violence as a means of resolving conflict (Heise, *et.al.*, 1994).

Feminists argue that adherence to the patriarchal ideology of male dominance has been the single most significant risk marker of violence against women. Feminist theory maintains that stronger patriarchal attitudes in a society are linked with higher level of prevalence of male violence against women (Brownridge, 2002:88). A significant association is found between culture, religion and patriarchy or the combination of all the three and male violence against and control on women (Macey, 1999:51). Questions/issues raised by the scholars related to human security and patriarchal violence, not only have important policy implications but normative ones also. Therefore, the present study is based on the hypothetical assumption that there is a significant relationship between human security and the severity of patriarchal violence.

Human security is a broad concept that moves beyond traditional ideas of security, which focus primarily on the protection of states and borders. Instead, human security emphasizes the well-being and safety of individuals, especially in the face of threats such as poverty, disease, environmental degradation, and violence. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) formally defined human security in its 1994 Human Development Report as "freedom from fear, freedom from want, and the freedom to live with dignity." This framework highlights the importance of protecting people from both direct and structural forms of violence, providing a foundation for addressing the insecurities individuals face in their daily lives.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Human Security: Human security refers to the right of people to live in a safe environment, in terms of preventing economic deprivation, achieving a dignified life and ensuring fundamental human rights. It directs attention to basic priorities such as life, health, and dignity and it considers the degree to which ordinary people are able to fulfill these basic priorities (Murphy, 2006). UNDP (2000) mentioned 07 indicators/dimensions of human security, namely: Personal Security, Community Security, Economic Security, Food Security, Health Security, Political Security, and Environmental Security.

Patriarchal Violence: Patriarchal violence is a kind of violence that creates or maintains men's power and dominance, or avenges the loss of their power. Male dominance seems to be upheld primarily through violent means. These means are on a wide scale from verbal, psychological, economic, and physical violence to sexual violence or murder (HCWG, 2006).

OBJECTIVES

Its main objectives are:

- To examine the nature and intensity of patriarchal violence among respondents.
- To explore the status of different aspects of human security.
- To examine the interlinkages between various dimensions of human security and patriarchal violence.

HYPOTHESIS

The main hypothesis of the study is "There is a significant relationship between human security and severity of patriarchal violence".

Connection between Human Security and Patriarchal Violence

Patriarchal violence is a significant threat to human security for several reasons:

1. **Physical and Emotional Harm**: The direct impact of patriarchal violence—such as physical abuse, sexual violence, and emotional manipulation—poses a severe threat to individuals' safety, health, and dignity. In many parts of the world, women and gender minorities live in constant fear of violence, which limits their freedom to move, work, and engage in society.
2. **Structural Insecurity**: Patriarchy enforces gendered power dynamics that restrict women's access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes. This economic and social marginalization contributes to insecurity by limiting women's ability to escape violent environments, access justice, or secure their livelihoods.
3. **Psychological Impact**: Beyond physical harm, patriarchal violence creates long-lasting psychological scars, including trauma, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The emotional toll of living in fear or experiencing repeated abuse profoundly undermines an individual's sense of security and well-being.
4. **Systemic and Legal Failures**: In many patriarchal societies, legal and justice systems fail to protect survivors of violence, often due to institutional bias, victim-blaming, or outright denial of women's rights. This systemic failure reinforces insecurity and perpetuates cycles of abuse. The lack of effective legal remedies and support services compounds the vulnerability of those affected by patriarchal violence.
5. **Gender Inequality and Economic Insecurity**: Patriarchy often restricts women's economic independence, thereby trapping them in situations of violence. For instance, economic dependence on abusive partners or family members can limit women's ability to leave harmful relationships or access resources that could improve their security and well-being.

LOCALE OF STUDY AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Malihabad block of Lucknow district is purposively selected as study area. As the study area consists of 117 villages in which 2.73 lac people (1.41 lac Male and 1.32 lac Female) live in approximately 45 thousand households, a sample method is used to select respondents. Sample size is determined by using Cochran (1963) formula considering a confidence level 85% and acceptable error 5%. The calculated sample size was 197. 10% of the calculated sample is further added to eliminate shortening of sample due to any occurrence of non-availability of respondents. Thus, final theorised sample size was 217. To select the respondents 04 villages were randomly selected and 217 households are proportionately selected from these villages. One adult woman from each selected household is selected through convenient sampling method. An exclusion criterion was made to exclude the respondent in case any adult female member is not contacted, or household is female headed, or all adult women of selected house refuse to participate in survey.

A cross-sectional descriptive research design is adopted in present study. For this, extensive interviews are taken into account to maintain the objectivity of the study. The method adopted to carry out the present work is mainly quantitative in nature. Interview and observation methods were used to collect primary and Interview schedule is used as a tool of data collection.

On completion of the field survey and editing of collected data, it was found that only 203 respondents have participated in survey. Collected data were tabulated according to aims and hypothesis of study, further, they were analyzed both logically and statistically. Various statistical tools like Percentages, Average, Chi-square test, t-test, correlation coefficient are employed to analyse data. Suitable graphs are also used to get some interrelation etc.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Socio-economic background makes a significant thrust to influence an individual's social mobility, development and change, and human behavior in a significant way various sociological studies are particularly contrasted on this. If defined in words of Kimball Young, "Social background refers to the interaction of one person with another. It affects each other as a result of the individual's reaction". It is social background or in other words the social status and status of the individual tries to decide what kind of decision the individual will take under the circumstances and how the social forces will try to influence his decision-making process.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents as per Status of Patriarchal Violence

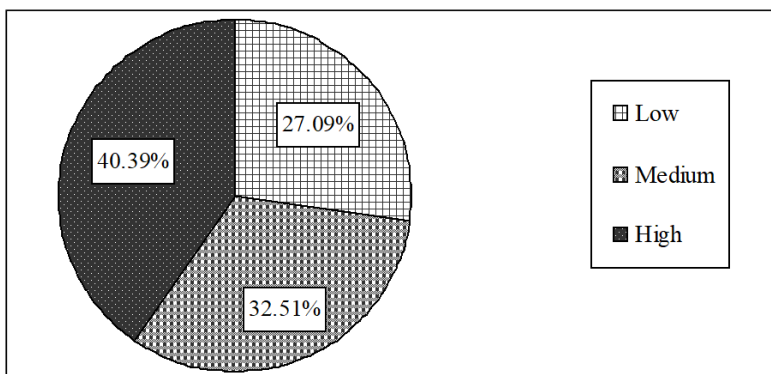| Status	No. of Respondents	Percent
Low	55	27.09
Medium	66	32.51
High	82	40.39
Total	**203**	**100.00**

Fig. 1: Distribution of Respondents as per Status of Patriarchal Violence

Table indicates that 40.43% of respondents feel high level of patriarchal violence in their family, whereas 32.51% of respondents have opined it as medium and 27.09% of respondents have viewed the prevalence of patriarchal violence in their family as low.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents as per Status of Human Security

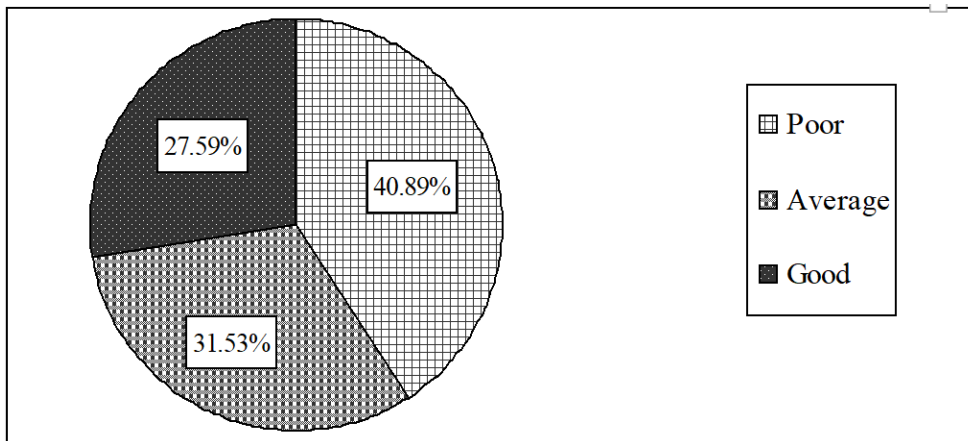| Status	No. of Respondents	Percent
Poor	83	40.89
Average	64	31.53
Good	56	27.59
Total	203	100.00

Fig. 2: Distribution of Respondents as per Status of Human Security

Table No. 3: Distribution of Respondents as per Status of Selected Dimension of Human Security

Dimension	Poor	Average	Good	Total
Personal Security				
No.	83	69	51	**203**
Percentage	40.89	33.99	25.12	**100.00**
Food Security				
No.	66	79	58	**203**
Percentage	32.51	38.92	28.57	**100.00**
Community Security				
No.	76	73	54	**203**
Percentage	37.44	35.96	26.60	**100.00**
Health Security				
No.	58	84	61	**203**
Percentage	28.57	41.38	30.05	**100.00**
Economic Security				
No.	87	68	48	**203**
Percentage	42.86	33.50	23.65	**100.00**
Political Security				
No.	76	72	55	**203**
Percentage	37.44	35.47	27.09	**100.00**
Environmental Security				
No.	79	72	52	**203**
Percentage	38.92	35.47	25.62	**100.00**

Table 2 shows that 40.89% of respondents viewed the status of existing human security as poor, whereas 31.53% of respondents have opined it as average and 27.59% of respondents have viewed the status of human security as good.

Table 3 represents the distribution of respondents as per their views on status of various dimensions of human security. It reveals that:

- Poor status of existing personal security is viewed by 40.89% of respondents, whereas it is viewed as average by 33.99% of respondents and viewed as good by 25.12% of respondents.

- 38.92% of respondents viewed the status of existing food security as average, whereas 32.51% of respondents have opined it as poor and 28.57% of respondents have viewed the status of food security as good.

- 37.44% of respondents viewed the status of prevailing community security as average, whereas 35.96% of respondents have opined it as poor and 26.60% of respondents have viewed the status of prevailing community security as good.

- 41.38% of respondents viewed the status of prevailing health security as average, whereas 30.05% of respondents have assessed it as good and 28.57% of respondents have viewed the status of prevailing health security as poor.

- 42.86% of respondents viewed the status of prevailing economic security as poor, whereas 33.50% of respondents have assessed it as average and 23.65% of respondents have viewed the status of prevailing economic security as good.

- 37.44% of respondents viewed the status of prevailing political security as poor, whereas 35.47% of respondents have assessed it as average and 27.09% of respondents have viewed the status of prevailing political security as good.

- 38.92% of respondents viewed the status of prevailing Environmental security as poor, whereas 35.47% of respondents have assessed it as average and 25.62% of respondents have viewed the status of prevailing Environmental security as good.

Association between Human Security and Patriarchal Violence

To find out association between selected dimensions of human security and patriarchal violence, chi-square test is used on distribution of respondents as per status of patriarchal violence with respect to various areas of human security. Details of calculated chi-square values for this distribution are given in table 4.

Table 4: Calculated Chi-square values for selected dimensions of human security

Chi-square values for selected dimensions of human security						
Personal Security	Food Security	Community Security	Health Security	Economic Security	Political Security	Environment Security
***19.937	*13.117	***19.136	*11.618	**15.732	*10.037	8.183

Note: * significant at p=0.05, ** significant at p=0.01, *** significant at p=0.001.

Table 4 reveals that calculated values of chi-square for distribution of respondents as per level of patriarchal violence, w.r.t. status of personal security (19.937) as well as w.r.t. status of Community Security (19.136) are more than critical Chi-square value at df = 4 and p= 0.001 (18.467). So, it can be said that there is *very highly significant association between distribution of respondents as per level of patriarchal violence w.r.t. status of personal security as well as with Community Security.* Calculated value of chi-square for distribution of respondents as per level of patriarchal violence, w.r.t. status of economic security (15.732) is more than critical Chi-square value at df = 4 and p= 0.01 (13.277). So, it can be said that there is *very highly significant association between distribution of respondents as per level of patriarchal violence w.r.t. status of economic security.*

This table also shows that calculated values of chi-square for distribution of respondents as per level of patriarchal violence, w.r.t. status of food security (13.117), health security (11.618) and political security (10.037) are more than critical Chi-square value at df = 4 and *p*=0.05 (9.488). So, it can be said that there is *a significant association between distribution of respondents as per level of patriarchal violence w.r.t. status of food security, health security and political security.*

Correlation between Patriarchal Violence and Different Dimensions of Human Security: Fig. 3 presents the Correlation coefficient between selected areas of human security and patriarchal violence.
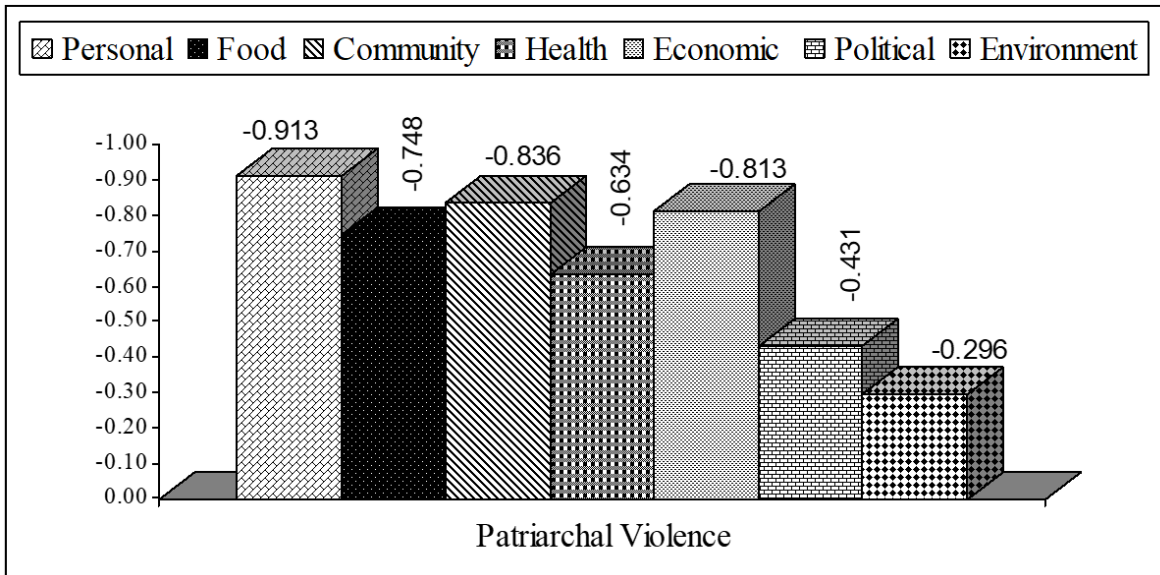

Fig. 3: Correlation co-efficient for Patriarchal Violence and Different Dimensions of Human Security

This figure shows that Personal Security (r=0.913), Community Security (r=0.836), Economic Security (r=0.813) and Food Security (r=0.748) are highly and negatively correlated to patriarchal violence, where as Health Security (r=0.634) is medium correlated and Political Security (r=0.431) is significantly correlated to patriarchal violence.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Present study found a high level of patriarchal violence along with very low status of human security and its selected dimensions. Level of patriarchal violence and status of human security and most of its selected dimensions are found significantly associated. It was found that Personal Security has highest and negative correlation with patriarchal violence, followed by Community Security, Economic Security, Food Security and Health Security, which indicate that if human security is increased, patriarchal violence will be decreased and personal security, community security, economic security, food security and health security are the main areas of human security, which must be enhanced to eliminate/reduce violence against women. Hence, measures must be taken to prevent crime, harassment and violence of all kinds. Apart from these measures more attention should also be given to enhance economic, food and health security to the women.

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