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## **Focus on Domestic Violence in Bangladesh: A Study from Criminological Perspectives**

By Khandaker Farzana Rahman<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract**

Bangladesh is a patriarchal society where powerlessness and vulnerability are associated with women's lives, as they are often found in positions where they are dominated and subjugated by men. Women are often controlled by their father, husband and son at different phases of their lives, and due to this reason a woman commonly has risk of experiencing domestic violence within her family. Though Bangladesh is experiencing a relatively high level of gender equality for South Asia, it is still not very surprising that a husband is more likely to assault and/or batter his educated/financially solvent wife if she fails to meet his demands or to perform household work. Domestic violence often takes place in form of physical aggression or threats, sexual and emotional abuse, stalking, passive/covert abuse, and economic deprivations. There have been many studies investigating the social and cultural reasoning of such heinous behaviour and crimes in Bangladesh. This paper focuses on criminological perspectives (e.g. individual personalities, socialisation, moral upbringings, and drug addiction of male partner) in addition to the feminist theory of domestic violence. These variables work together to conceptualise domestic violence. Theory integration has been used to amalgamate a number of relevant theories to gain a more eclectic and broad understanding of this phenomenon. Hence, in this study, all the relevant factors and aspects of criminological theories of domestic violence have been analysed and put in context to Bangladesh. The methodology includes a wide literature review on the issue of domestic violence and a survey with victims and perpetrators. The study reveals the continuing persistence of misogynistic gender roles in the society and the dominance of men over women in an abusive and subjugated manner that ultimately results in domestic violence. Additionally, results suggest that for households where abuse occurs and children are present, the children grow up having this violence ingrained and normalized due to the modelling of family members.

*Keywords:* Domestic Violence, Criminology, Theory Integration

### **Introduction**

Domestic violence against women has been an issue of concern and urgency for a long time now. These heinous acts of crime are mainly perpetrated against women in the form of physical, sexual, psychological or social abuse. These violent acts are so alarmingly prevalent; global estimates are that 1 out of 3 or approximately 35% of women have experienced some sort of physical or sexual abuse from intimate or non-partner violence at some point of their life (WHO, 2017). While this type of violence remains generally pervasive, the range is estimated to be from 23.2% in high income countries to 37.7% in the WHO South-East Asia regions (WHO, 2017). Within South-East Asian countries, Bangladesh has a high rate of domestic violence that continues

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to hinder the country's equality and development. However, according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), domestic violence in Bangladesh has seen a decrease. Survey data shows that the rate of domestic violence has fallen from 87% in 2011 to 77% in 2013 and then to 72.6% in 2016 (The Future Law Initiative, 2016). Arguably, there may be underreporting issues that have contributed to the noted statistical declines, but there is also reason to believe that promotion of equality may be a contributing factor. Nonetheless, each year, in spite of the above mentioned statistical decline, a record number of women in Bangladeshi society face persistent violence brought on by their own families. There is direct evidence that regulatory policies focused on women and legal protection programs, equal income and wage for similar work, equal opportunity in political and social life, have promoted the empowerment of women (Centre for Research and Information, 2018).

A significant number of laws and regulations have been implemented in Bangladesh to address domestic abuse and inequality, including the 2010 Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act and its corresponding rules (*The Daily Star*, 2013), the Prevention of Repression of Women and Children Act of 2000 and the Penal Code, 1860 (Khan, 2014). Despite these legal and regulatory protections violence against women is still continuing. There has been much work done on the causes and impacts of domestic violence from socio-legal perspectives; however, no significant work in Bangladesh has been done on the criminological or psychological reasoning of domestic violence from a perspective of the perpetrators. This paper attempts to understand the underlying psychological influences or causes that lead the offenders to adopt violence and the factors that shape their suppressive and hostile attitudes in the first place, especially in Bangladesh.

## Methodology

This paper relies on qualitative data to understand the rationale for domestic violence, the relevant criminological theories, and the current trends and pattern of domestic violence in Bangladesh. Through content analysis, secondary sources have been used to support the literature and develop a more objective understanding of the phenomenon of domestic violence in a country context as well. Secondary data analysis primarily included newspapers, journals, articles, books, internet publications, online journal and articles, online opinionated write-ups like blogs, and online archives of governmental and non-governmental organizations.

In addition to these resources, a survey using the quantitative survey method was conducted in some parts of Dhaka to understand the relationship between a perpetrator and his psychological background of deviance or criminality. The surveyed sample is representative of the population of people living in geographically recognized economically disadvantaged areas in three distinct slum<sup>2</sup> areas of Dhaka: Begunbari, Shahjahanpur and Karwanbazar Railway Slum.

The paper has concentrated on mixed methods of research as a mixed method is more likely to add value by increasing validity in the findings, informing the collection of the second data source, and assisting with knowledge creation (McKim, 2017:203). The author believes that studies using a mixed methods approach in assessing a sensitive issue like domestic violence gain a wider and broader understanding of the phenomenon than studies that do not utilize both a quantitative and qualitative approach. A limitation of the present study is found in the gendered

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<sup>2</sup> A slum is an urban residential area with a densely packed population in small, dilapidated housing units. The households are in miserable conditions with the residents mostly being poor and underprivileged. Almost all of the households possess a severe lack of sanitation, clean water supply, electricity, law enforcement and other rudimentary facilities.

perspective of abuse. Though domestic violence can be caused by a female relative too, the paper limits evaluation to the male dominants (i.e., predominantly husband) and investigates how the psychology behind this crime works against a woman in the family to identify male perpetrators' reasoning for committing violence.

### **Conceptualizing Domestic Violence against Women**

Delineating the concept of domestic violence has been an ongoing discussion. There have been definitions that are too wide while others have been too narrow, leading to problems in precisely conceptualising the range of what constitutes domestic violence. Domestic violence, also known as intimate partner violence, refers to the manifestation of any physical, psychological, sexual or social abuse stemming from unequal dynamics in an intimate relationship. Domestic violence is primarily assumed to be perpetrated against women, as a result, the term may reference female abuse in an intimate relationship.

The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women<sup>3</sup> defines violence against women in Article 1 as “any act of gender-based violence 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 deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.” In Article 2, it states that this includes the “physical, sexual and psychological abuse” that may take place in the household through forms like “dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation” or may also take place in the community or by the state through forms like “rape, sexual harassment, sexual abuse or intimidation” (United Nations, 1993). This understanding is widely accepted as a full-fledged definition of domestic violence and has been also adopted in the national law of Bangladesh. Article 3 of the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act defines domestic violence for the purpose of this Act, as physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse or economic abuse against a woman or a child of a family by any other person of that family with whom victim is, or has been, in family relationship.

Domestic violence has been further conceptualised through different scholars and feminists. Kaur and Garg (2008) argue that the concept of domestic violence can be defined as the “misuse of power” by the perceived superior of the relationship to denote a sense of “control and fear” through means of violence such as “physical assault, psychological abuse, social abuse, financial abuse or sexual assault.” Thus, domestic violence may be demonstrated in many forms; physical and sexual assaults, however, are the ones most often discussed and recognized. The systematic pattern of domestic violence resulting in the physical and sexual abuse has been explained through the “power and control wheel” model developed by the National Centre on Domestic and Sexual Violence. The model depicts the precise rotation of how “male privilege” or superiority is exploited to abuse a woman emotionally by means of fear and duress; again, the same means of power are used to financially deprive or sustain the woman’s perpetual financial dependence on the men (National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence, n.d.).

A much broader, varying pattern of domestic violence has been proposed by Michael P. Johnson (Steeh, 2005). Johnson identifies three major types of domestic violence—intimate terrorism, which is demonstrated through the traditional power control role and an “attitude of entitlement” towards the victim; situational couple violence, which is characterized by particular conflicts leading to violent arguments, and this is to say that even though this violence doesn’t reflect the power control pattern it continues to yield a violence of severe magnitude; and violent

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<sup>3</sup> A/RES/48/104 85th plenary meeting 20 December 1993 48/104.

resistance, which denotes the circumstance where a woman's resisting violence of the male perpetrator ultimately leads to her physical and sexual abuse and the two-fold likelihood of getting injured (Steegh, 2005).

Following this pattern presented by Johnson, it can be seen that the first kind of violence, namely intimate terrorism, is the most prevalent in Bangladesh. The traditional power control demonstration in this kind of violence is consistent with the sociological and traditional roles of men and women. The social norms and traditional submission of women may be the basis for lower statics for violent resistance or situational couple violence (WHO, 2009).

### **Recognizing Domestic Violence in Bangladesh**

Because Bangladesh, Pakistan and India all used to be one same country until the partition of 1947, the countries share a few common cultural attributes, including the patriarchal system. Unfortunately, the patriarchal system is also related to the common treatment of women across these countries; women are treated as inferior to men, and men's mistreatment, in turn, has been accepted as a norm of behaviour (Sultana, 2012). The traditions and customs in these countries have been such that women were not only dominated but also discouraged and prevented from raising their voices (Niaz, 2003).

Despite the mutual geneses across the countries, differences remain in the nature and pattern of domestic violence in the countries. While the practice of honour killings is a lot more common in Pakistan, the same is not seen in Bangladesh due to a women friendly legislature and women's rights protections. Reports show that both Pakistan and India were reported to have approximately 1000 honour killings every year, whereas crime is lower in the case of Bangladesh (Crilly, 2012).

The socio-economic status of a woman in Bangladesh traditionally always has been one of subjugation owing to the patriarchal social conditions of the country. The legacy of this domination has resulted in gender biased socialisation, which in turn has stereotyped and further contributed to the perceived inferior position of women in comparison with men. For example, despite a reported increase in female literacy rates by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (Dhaka Tribune, 2018) based on 2016 data, female literacy remains lower than that of male counterparts, 69.9 percent relative to 75.62 percent. This again depicts how inequality and gender discrimination have prevailed even in aspects of basic rights like education. This issue of deprivation years later results in an incapacity and eventual dependence on men (Karim et al., 2017).

If a similar approach would be taken to study the same factors specific to men in the country, there is evidence to support that the contrived socialisation of men gives them the inflated sense of superiority over women. Years later, the perception of dominance can be manifested in crimes like domestic violence, coerced suicide, and harassment in public (Hossain, 2016). This is also the reason why "male violence" is justified as forms of correcting women and "deserved responses" for women's misdemeanours against their husbands or other men in their household (Hossain, 2016). In support of this statement, recent data in Bangladesh provides evidence that 213 women have been murdered by their husbands and 67 women have been tortured by their husband and/or husband's family from January to December 2017 (Ain O Salish Kendra, 2018).

Besides all these factors, the social stigma against domestic violence against women in Bangladesh makes it particularly difficult for the victims to make their cases public. Victim blaming again is very common in cases of domestic violence where victims are very often denounced for not being able to satisfy their husbands and where violence against them is justified

as a result. In other cases, women are blamed for not being able to come out of an abusive relationship.

As per Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers Association (BNWLA), 2,481 cases of violent acts have been reported from January through June of 2016 (Malik & Hasan, 2016). Even though the numbers are significant, the real statistics are said to be much higher, different reports found. In 2018, a study by Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) shows that only 68% of the violent incidents are reported (Shilpi, 2015). Underreporting has been attributed to the familial relationship; the fact is the majority of assaults are perpetrated by family members of the victim, and the victim is not willing to disclose this violence since it might hamper the family's reputation or status (Malik & Hasan, 2016).

## **Literature Review**

The phenomena of domestic violence or intimate partner violence entails a series of conflicting interpersonal relationship dynamics, years of fallacious socialisation or social upbringing and innumerable negative traditional and cultural social norms. Because this criminal behaviour is a multifaceted phenomenon, it is imperative to adopt a comprehensive approach in order to gain an adequate understanding. Throughout the years, several theories have been devised in pursuit of this understanding. Some theories have focused on the psychological milieu of the criminal behaviour, some studies emphasise upon vulnerability attributes of the victims, while few others concentrated on the facilitative environmental factors.

This paper applies the concept of theory integration to investigate the reasons of criminal behaviour with respect to domestic violence against women. Theory integration is a process of combining the best elements of existing theories to better explain the causes of criminal behaviour (Lanier & Henry, 2009). This paper has merged concepts from feminist theory, social learning theory, personality disorder theory, and psychodynamic theories to explain domestic violence against women. Domestic violence by male perpetrators requires a network of variables in order to formulate a comprehensive view of its occurrence.

### *Feminist Theory*

The Feminist Movement emerged during the early 1970s as a second wave movement in the USA to address the rising and widespread issues of domestic violence and suppression of women (Bergeron, 2015). The feminist view is that any violence against women is as a result of the historical and socially construed concept of gender power. Feminists claim that male dominance has been maintained systematically throughout the years to ensure the domination of women; further, the use of male superiority has been traditionally legitimized in the use of correcting women's mistakes or misconduct through abuse. This so-called correction or control, to be more accurate, results in "physical, sexual, psychological harm, economic and social deprivation" and eventually causes women to live in a state of perpetual fear (Seeley & Plunkett, 2002). Contrary to popular belief, the perpetrators of domestic violence thus, do not commit the crime in order to fulfil sexual gratification or out of passionate love, but rather to exert power and control over the victim, which is explained by the use of "abduction, isolation, manipulation, coercion and sexual abuse" (Kalra & Bhugra, 2013). The feminist theory of domestic violence is particularly applicable in Bangladesh due to its relevance to the patriarchal social system along with mainstream reactions to domestic violence.

### *Social Learning Theory*

Psychologist Albert Bandura established the theory that human behaviour is something that is learned through conscious and subconscious observation of what is presented and subsequently repeated through a process of imitating the same observations (David, 2015). As a result, violent behaviours are not an inherent characteristic of an individual; instead these actions are learned through observation or imitation. Children who witness their mothers being oppressed by their fathers learn that this violent behaviour is not only viable but acceptable as well.

This theory again can be quite relevant to the context of Bangladesh since a majority of the children witness domestic violence; further, the society has an embedded favouritism towards male children. As a result, male children grow up learning and believing themselves to be superior to women and therefore having the power to control them.

The theory has many aspects and a focal aspect to it is the intergenerational transmission theory, which holds the belief that a girl who observes her mother being harmed by her father is likely to be a future victim of the same; in the same vein, a boy who witnesses his father battering his mother is likely to end up beating his wife in the future (Okun, 1986). Essentially, violent behaviour is learned through observation and is transmitted intergenerationally. The intergenerational transmission of violence is facilitated by male peer supports or peer groups that have a demeaning or misogynistic attitude towards women. Several studies and multiple research projects have justified this theory—six studies have showed that 23 to 40 percent of battered women were also victims of child abuse (Okun, 1986).

However, there have been debates related to male aggression. Some evidence suggests that aggressive male partners may not always come from households with domestic violence (Kane, Staiger, & Ricciardelli, 2000). Alternatively, there have been numerous instances where male children have witnessed their mothers being battered and the plight of mothers have resulted in an abhorrence of violence against women.

### *Personality Disorder*

Personality can be discerned as an individual's unique way of thinking, feeling and behaviour; it is shaped by several internal and external factors like experiences, environmental conditions and inherent characteristics (Bandura, 1999). A personality disorder results from discrepancies in a person's thinking, feeling and behaviour, meaning individuals might not perceive certain realities properly about themselves or their surroundings; additionally, they may also face difficulties in responding accurately to people or situations at hand and very often fail to control their behaviour. Ten disorders conforming to these categories have been identified and are classified as "odd or eccentric behaviour, dramatic, emotional or erratic behaviour and anxious or fearful behaviour" (American Psychiatric Association, 2016).

Even though there has not been any well-grounded corroboration on whether or not there are any specific correlations between personality disorder and violence, the elements of a disordered personality (e.g. impulsive behaviour, aggression, anger, frustration, etc.) are such that it is foreseeable that they might result in any ferocity of behaviour and hence an increased risk of violence. Two studies were conducted to identify the presence of personality disorders among convicted violent offenders. Outcomes noted that a large portion of the sampled offenders possessed at least one of the following personality disorders: anti-social personality disorder (APD) or narcissistic and paranoid personality disorder, with the proportion within the group ranging from 47 to 69 percent (Gilbert & Daffern, 2011).

In cases of domestic violence or intimate partner violence, a high prevalence of anti-social and borderline personality disorder is measured among the abusers. People with anti-social or borderline personality disorder (BPD) possess an inherent aggression or negative impulse that often results in poor responses or behaviour in comparison with expectations related to social and civic norms. The traits also often result in a lack of self-restraint or stability that eventually results in harming the interpersonal relationships within the domestic setting. Male abusers with APD showed high levels of proactive violence aimed to exert control or power over the female partner, as compared to male abusers with BPD, who were more reactively violent to certain circumstances (Ross & Babcock, 2009).

### *Psychodynamic Theory*

Psychodynamic theory is premised on classical theories like Sigmund Freud's Structural Model of Personality, Erik Erikson's Inferiority and Birth Order, and Alfred Adler's Theory of Psychosocial Development. As per Freud, the human personality is comprised of three levels—id, ego and superego. The id consists of pleasure-seeking and immediate gratification instincts whereas the ego and superego develop the moral aspect of the individual's personality. These transformations commence very early in childhood with id being the primary level of development; with greater socialisation and further moral upbringing of a child, gradually he/she begins to develop a complete personality. Gavin et al. (2018) assert that humans are born with an inherent propensity to inferiority and that the entire human subsistence is a pursuit of attempting to be superior. The psychosocial theory identifies the challenges that an individual has to meet in stages bit by bit. Beginning with the challenge of trusting others at the very early age of 0 to a year, the challenges lie in attaining independence, expression, sense of confidence or identity and lastly a productive and positive outlook to life (Sincero, 2012).

Psychodynamic theory thus essentially asserts that human personality does not develop or change overnight; rather it follows and goes through a prolonged and gradual process that begins at the earliest stages of childhood. The development is a continuous process and any sort of disruption or defectiveness during the process will lead to an individual developing a distorted or poor personality.

All of these theories seek to explain how bits of an individual's personality are developed through conscious and subconscious forces and motivations. As the theory places significant focus on the social upbringing and personality development of an individual, it may be inferred that the phenomena of domestic violence might be a result of an individuals' improper development of ego and superego (i.e. the moral or refined aspect of personality). How parents, peers and social surroundings mould an individual's perceptions and attitudes has a lot to do with that person's consequent violent behaviour. In relevance to the social context of Bangladesh, this can be quite relatable given the socialisation of male children is aligned to pre-established societally determined gender roles, which encourage males to be devoid of empathy, aggressive and indifferent to emotions (Khatun & Rahman, 2012). All of these factors shape men's personalities and promote violence or aggression as an inherent psychodynamic aspect of male traits.

### **Theory Integration: Data Collection and Analysis**

Domestic violence against women is an outcome of a combination of multiple social and psychological factors. The concepts integrated for the construction of this framework are done at individual level of theory integration. There exists a mutual relationship between selected variables



under these theories so that when they are combined one cannot function without the other. To explain the factors contributing to intimate partner violence, the variables below have been selected from the theories described above. Each set of variables correlates with each stage of domestic violence. For instance, male leadership and dominance in the family along with their wide power to marry, potential for personality problems, and social upbringing are distinct issues that all create an opportunity for domestic violence in familial life. The interconnectedness of variables from the above theories also develop a reasonable foundation for the commission of intimate partner violence (Kishor & Johnson, 2004).

Data for this paper was primarily collected from the Shahjahanpur Railway Slum, Karwanbazar Railway Slum and Begunbari Slum areas. As stated earlier, to conduct the study, primary and secondary data both were used. Primary data were collected through a survey questionnaire. To discover women’s experiences and perpetrators’ behaviours, attitudes and perceptions, 180 respondents from 180 families were selected through purposive sampling using a snowball technique. The respondents were provided the questionnaire according to their sex. Most importantly, 100 of respondents included in the sample population were husbands and were evaluated to understand the perpetrator’s perception of domestic violence against women and their wives. The rest of the respondents were wives within families who contributed to the survey, and they shared their experience as victims, survivors and witnesses of domestic violence (Appendix 1 and 2).

### **Variable 1: Head of Family and Violence**

Most of the families of Bangladesh do follow a patriarchal order. Male members are the head of the family. They are the decision makers of social, political, religious, cultural and other matters. On the other hand, females are the non-dominant member of the family. The male makes decisions and the female does have to follow and conform to those decisions without any questions. If the female refuses to follow the decisions, she becomes a victim of violence. So, family authority is a predominant factor of domestic violence.

Table 1 shows that among the 180 respondents, 161 families are male dominated whereas only 19 families are female headed. However, in most of cases of female headed families, the female is a single mother, divorced or a widow. In a family with a male head and patriarchal structure, control over and exploitation of areas of women’s lives is prevalent (Sultana, 2012).

**Table 1: Head of the Family of the Respondents**

	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Husband	161	89.4
Wife	19	10.6
Total	180	100

### **Variable 2: Marriages of Husband**

Table 2 reveals that 57 husbands/respondents are polygamous. This is a typical depiction in many of the families in Bangladesh. When a husband has more than one wife, it is difficult to

treat all of them equally. Since equal treatment of wives is unlikely, wives who have been deprived of basic rights from a husband may be likely to face domestic violence.

**Table 2: Marriages of Husband**

Number of marriages	Number of respondents	Percentage
1	123	68.3
2	37	20.6
More than 2	20	11.1
Total	180	100.0

### Variable 3: Addiction and Violence

Many people from Bangladesh have simple and severe addictions. For example, approximately 21.2 million males smoke (Alam et al., 2013). It has also been evident that the children exposed to violence at early childhood are likely to smoke and become addicted to drugs, and later during adulthood they also are likely to abuse partners (WHO, n.d.). This situation is more common, severe, and dangerous at slum areas as the living condition is much unfit for human habitation. However, we can see in Table 3 that among survey respondents, 45.6% of husbands are addicted to smoking, 6.1% are addicted to ganja<sup>4</sup> and 6.1% are addicted to drinking.

**Table 3: Different Addictions of Husband**

Addictions	Number of respondents	Percentage
Smoking	82	45.6
Ganja	11	6.1
Drinking	11	6.1
Other addictions	22	12.2
Not addicted	54	30
Total	180	100

### Variable 4: Violent When Intoxicated

As noted in Table 4, 74.4% of husbands physically abuse<sup>5</sup> their wives when intoxicated. Those who are addicted to drinking or ganja are less capable of understanding consequences of an act and they frequently perpetrate violence against their wives.

<sup>4</sup> Ganja often refers to cannabis (one kind of narcotic illegal in Bangladesh).

<sup>5</sup> Physical abuse indicates any intentional act to someone's body causing injury.

**Table 4: Violent When Intoxicated**

	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Addicted and physically abuse	134	74.4
Addicted and not physically abuse	46	21.1
Total	180	100.0

**Variable 5: Violence as Learned Behaviour by Husband**

From Table 5, 137 respondents affirmed that husbands abuse their wives as a result of previously learned/witnessed violence. 43 male respondents also noted that violence is learned from other sources such as media and the Internet.

**Table 5: Violence as Learned Behaviour by Husband**

	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Violence learnt from family members	103	57.2
Violence learnt from peer	34	18.9
Violence learnt from other sources	43	23.9
Total	180	100

**Variable 6: Experience of Violence in Childhood and During Personality Development**

Table 6 reveals that among 180 respondents, 130 admitted that they experienced or were exposed to violence at some point during their childhood or adolescence and that subsequently impacted their personality.

**Table 6: Experience of Violence in Childhood**

	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
The perpetrator experienced violence in earliest stage of childhood that moulds his personality	138	76.6
The perpetrator didn't experience	25	13.9

violence in earliest stage of childhood and still commits violence		
No violence exposed in childhood and no records of violence	17	9.4
Total	180	100

### Variable 7: Personality of Husband

Table 7 reveals that 52.2% respondents believe that personal stress and depression promote husbands' violent behaviour toward their wives. 13.9% respondents believe that isolation also increases the risk of violence. Finally, 33.9% think though men may possess a positive personality, they still have the potential to commit violence.

**Table 7: Personality of Husband**

	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Husband most often stressed and aggressive	94	52.2
Husband often isolated personality	25	13.9
Husband does have positive personality	61	33.9
Total	180	100.0

### Variable 8: Husband Considers Wife as Subordinate and Unequal in Status

As noted in Table 8, 53.3% of husbands accept the subordinate status of their wives and view them as unequal to them. 18.9% think wives are able to earn equal compensation to that of their as husbands but that they have less physical force. 26.7% were not eager to specify the answers.

**Table 8: Perceived Equality Between Husband and Wife**

	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Wives are unequal to husbands	96	53.3
Wives are not unequal to husbands	34	18.9
Others	40	26.7
Total	180	100

### Variable 9: Husband's Justification of Wife Abuse

Table 9 reveals that among 180 respondents, 119 admitted that they sometimes beat wives for a justified cause. 61 respondents think wives should not be beaten as they are also part of the family.

**Table 9: Husband's Justification of Wife Abuse**

	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Husband justifies spousal abuse	119	66.1
Husband doesn't justify spousal abuse	61	33.9
Total	180	100

### Research Findings

Domestic violence is one of form of female subjugation or repression. It exists for multiple reasons that include witnessing violence as well as social norms of acceptance and gender dominance and subordination. This study was guided by major criminological rationales for domestic violence rates between husbands and wives. The results and expectations were developed following a review of previous research, developing theory integration, and implementing a field survey. This paper argues, as previously stated, that the status of women is primarily shaped by the treatment of family members especially by husbands who believe that the wife should not be treated as an equal. Male violence is justified in this hierarchy as a form of correcting women and is characterized as a deserved response for wives' misdemeanours against husbands or other males in the family (Hossain, 2016). Furthermore, in Bangladesh, as a result of male-dominated social norms, domestic violence continues to be normalized.

The survey data collected in this paper were assembled from slum areas of Dhaka. Most of the families were male-headed allowing the husband to dominate domestic decision making. The results also revealed that men felt their dominant status and justified domestic violence as a household corrective measure.

The majority of the men, especially in the slum areas, are drug addicted and as a consequence to that addiction, they suffer from a significant irrationality in their behaviour which very often translates into abuse of their wives through beatings and physical abuse.

A significant portion of the respondents admitted witnessing and experiencing instances of domestic violence during their childhood. By experiencing it for themselves at home or witnessing violence in media and other platforms, a lot of perpetrators picked up the tendency of domestic violence towards women whom they have considered as inferiors given social norms. Research also surfaced that there are other external factors that trigger attribution of violence among men. Issues like poverty, deprivation or depression incite frustration and distress in men that eventually surface as violence against women in the family.

A very insignificant proportion of the respondents believed that women or wives are men's equal partners. For perpetrators, there was no recognition of equality; instead, an assumption of the subordinate status of women given existing social norms and behaviors dominated. From this

latter perspective, violence against women has an intergenerational component that perpetuates a vicious cycle of violence against women.

The findings from this research reveal that violence is not an inherent attribute of men but instead is an outcome of misconstrued socialisation. That violence is learned and imitated, puts forward food for thought for all of us. It compels us to look closely and question the prevailing social norms of the society. It compels us to draw attention to psychological and sociological developments that possess the power to create deviance or criminality in an individual.

## **Conclusion**

Domestic violence against women has been prevalent across the globe for some time and the situation within Bangladesh is consistent with these findings. The purpose of this paper was to provide an integrated framework for explaining and describing domestic violence toward women from the perspective of crime. Variables from existing theories were employed to devise a rationale for the widespread nature of this crime. The basic argument is that, since violence within intimate partner relationships involves a crime but occurs within home structures having variations, a single explanation for its cause cannot exist.

The level of domestic violence in Bangladesh has been widespread and has been exacerbated by the socio-economic status of women being subjugated to men in combination with the socially constructed gender role of men being superior to women. From this perspective, the feminist theory of violence is very relevant in context to this country's societal setting. However, other relevant micro theories like the personality disorder, addiction and psychodynamic theory also help to understand how certain men are nurtured and psychologically developed through their years of socialisation into a potential perpetrator of domestic violence against women. Correspondingly, women too, through an almost similar process of modelling and upbringing, are raised being subdued to these kinds of unjust and violent treatment.

Domestic violence against women has received a great deal of attention given the widespread statistics of the crime across in Bangladesh. However, arguably the time has come for a shift in our attention from monitoring statistics to directly identifying the root causes, especially the criminological causes, that enable domestic violence. We can only take productive steps in curbing this phenomenon once when we understand how and why these acts of criminality occur in the first place.

## Appendix 1

### *Methodological analysis*

This study comprises both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection carried out on the basis of primary and secondary data. For primary data collection, a questionnaire survey was conducted upon randomly selected 180 slum dwellers as respondents (100 male and 80 female). Due to the unavailability of any data identifying domestic violence perpetrators in context of Bangladesh, snowball sampling technique was used to discover the sample population; thereby participants mentioned people belonging to the same situation as to theirs, all the while maintaining confidentiality among the participants.

On the other hand, survey results were produced with the most straightforward and reasonable form of analysis by means of tabulating the results, question by question, in the form of ‘one-way-tables’. The respondents were provided an original questionnaire and counts were kept of the frequency or number of people who ‘ticked each number’. Thus, a quick and comprehensible summary was produced entailing the respondent’s personality, mentality and violent behaviour perpetrated towards their intimate partner.

Theories relevant to domestic violence from a crime perspective were studied in order to comprehend the conceptual framework of the issue at hand. The secondary data was collected from sources like government and non-government official documents and statistics, yearly reports, various books, research papers, journals, maps, daily newspapers, etc. Eventually, the collected data was processed and analysed by computer based statistical software package SPSS 14.00 for windows seven and Microsoft office Excel 2007 and qualitative descriptive explanation. Finally, the analyzed data was integrated and systematically presented in tables coherently supporting different criminological theories.

### *Limitations of the paper*

1. The sample size of the paper is restricted within the slum people in Dhaka city. Thus, to testify the validity of criminological theories effectively discussed in the paper, the sample size would have to be selected from village, sub-urban and urban areas from both economic and social strata.
2. Owing to the limited sample size population (only 180 respondents), reliability might lack and it might be inexpedient to implement these criminological theories in practical context of domestic violence against women in Bangladesh.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Survey Questionnaire for Husbands**

**Name of the respondent (optional)**

**Age:**

**Profession:**

1. Who is the head of your family?  
a. husband b. Wife
2. How many wives do you have?  
a.1 b.2 c. more than 2
3. Do you have/try any kind of addiction including regularly/occasionally?  
a. smoking b. ganja c. drinking d. other addictions e.not addicted
4. Do you use to abuse your wife while intoxicated?  
a. yes b.no
5. Do you think you learn to abuse you wife from the socialization process?  
a. yes b. no  
If yes specify the source:
6. Which one of the following you think suited to your personality?  
a. you have experienced violence being a child and adolescent and commit violence often in family  
b. you experience violence in earliest stage of childhood and don't commit violence  
c. you have not been exposed in childhood and no records of violence is found
7. Do you think which of the following personality/feelings you do belong?  
a. personally stressed b. isolated from peers/family members c. positive personality
8. Do you think your wife is equal to you?  
a. yes b. no
9. Do you think beating your wife is justified?  
a. yes b. no



## Survey Questionnaire for Wife

Name of the respondent (optional)

Age:

Profession:

- 1) Who is the head of your family?  
a. husband b. Wife
- 2) How many wives does your husband have?  
a. 1 b. 2 c. more than 2
- 3) In your knowledge, does your husband try any kind of addiction/drugs including regularly/occasionally?  
a. smoking b. ganja c. drinking d. other addictions e. not addicted
- 4) Do you experience any kind of abuse while your husband intoxicated?  
a. yes b. no
- 5) Do you think the socialization process of your husband influence his tendency to abuse you?  
a. yes b. no  
If yes specify some examples:
- 6) Which one of the following do you think suited to your husband's personality?  
a. he does have experienced violence being a child and adolescent and commit violence often in family  
b. he does experience violence in earliest stage of childhood and don't commit violence  
c. he has not been exposed in childhood and no records of violence is found
- 7) Do you think which of the following personality/feelings you husband does belong?  
a. personally stressed b. isolated from peers/family members c. positive personality
- 8) Do you think your husband considers you equal to him?  
a. yes b. no
- 9) Do you see your husband justified abusing or creating violence against you?  
a. yes b. no

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