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## Lived Experiences of Battered Women in Ozamiz City, Philippines

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## Lived Experiences of Battered Women in Ozamiz City, Philippines

### Abstract

Domestic violence is prevalent not only in the Philippines but also in other countries. This study explored how battered women viewed their experiences as victims using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach (van Manen, 2016). Using purposive sampling and snowball technique, the study identified six battered women who were interviewed using researcher-made guide questions. The responses generated from the interviews were transcribed and analyzed using Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology which aimed to understand the lived experiences of the participants. Four central themes were identified, namely recurrence of physical abuse, endurance to pain, disempowerment of women, and love for family. Battered women prefer to stay home and endure their husbands' battering to protect children and family from social stigma.

### Keywords

Battered Woman, Lived Experiences, Physical Abuse, Ozamiz City

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## Lived Experiences of Battered Women in Ozamiz City, Philippines

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### Introduction

A number of women have become victims of battery and other forms of abuse, but many of these cases remain unreported and unresolved. *Battering* pertains to the recurrent use of physical and sexual aggression through the use of force to a person closely associated with (Campbell & Lewandowski, 1997). Similarly, wife beating refers to violent acts that are psychological, sexual, and/or physical by a husband with the intent of instilling control of one's wife through inducement of fear and pain (Fischbach & Herbert, 1997). Recurrence of this domestic violence is usually caused by the silence of victims. Martin (1981) asserts that battered women keep their silence because they are usually held responsible for and stigmatized over their condition.

Wife battering is a prevalent case in Asian countries. For example, the Department of Social Welfare and Development in the Philippines in 2012 reported that one out of five women aged 15-49 years old or 14.40 percent of married women suffered from physical abuse from their husbands; one in ten women experienced sexual violence. A total of 12, 948 cases of abuse against women were recorded in that year.

Despite the existing laws like the R.A. 9262 or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004 (Philippine Official Gazette, 2004), being inflicted with physical injuries is the most common form of physical battering that a number of married women in the Philippines suffer. Nevertheless, R.A. 9262 allows the Philippine government to interfere in domestic affairs when aggression is committed against women and children.

The present study looked into the real-life experiences of six battered women in Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, Philippines. Responses pertaining to the circumstances before, during, and after the physical and emotional abuse were analyzed. It also uncovered how these women coped with their recurrent unfavorable conditions.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on the following theories concerning intimate partner violence (IPV) namely the social learning theory, attribution theory, and feminist theory.

Social learning theory claims that abusive behavior is learned from exposure to violence and by imitation (Bandura, 1962). In this framework, abuse is learned as a normative means of control that is passed down within the family. Thus, children who witness parental conflict are prone to become violent individuals themselves against other people (Geffner, Igelman, & Zellner, 2013). Similarly, children witnessing the violence against their mothers is at risk of behavioural problems (Blair, McFarlane, Nava, Gilroy, & Maddoux, 2015; Burazeri, Qirjako, Roshi, & Brand, 2011; Geffner et al., 2013; Ibabe, Jaureguizar, & Bentler, 2013). A young male child witnessing an abusive behaviour of his father toward the child's mother may construe the use of force or aggressive behaviour as a means of solving conflicts. In this vein, the connection between household struggle and eventual manifestation is more on the male children than on the female (Evans, Davies, & DiLillo, 2008).

Attribution theory gives emphasis on a person's means of rationalizing experiences and the way a concept is discerned by one's point of view of a happening (Fiske & Taylor, 2013). Battered women, for instance, are stigmatized or blamed for allegedly causing the battery and for not ending the predicament promptly. They are held responsible for the occurrence of abusive situations (Vidal-Fernández & Megías, 2014). In this sense, the women, as victims, are perceived as having character problems which propel their husbands to hurt them. Hence, battered women develop negative perceptions of themselves as they become conscious of what other people may think of them.

On the other hand, feminist theory emphasizes the power of inequality among the opposite sexes. In a patriarchal society, men are regarded as heads of families, economic providers, and decision makers and these social norms are used to justify males' resort of assault to ascertain deference by females (Wallach, Weingram, & Avitan, 2010). According to feminist theorists, IPV is prone to develop in male individuals who live in an environment which accepts violence in a close relationship and shows hostile attitude toward women as a way of projecting a "macho" image (Basile, Hall, & Walters, 2013). Further, men who witnessed interparental violence during childhood have a higher risk for physical and sexual IPV perpetration (Capaldi, Knoble, Shortt, & Kim 2012; Dardis, Dixon, Edwards, & Turchik, 2014; Lee, Walters, Hall, & Basile, 2013; Temple, Shorey, Tortolero, Wolfe, & Stuart, 2013).

The theories aforementioned provide insights as to the factors and conditions that necessitate or justify the occurrence of women battering in the society. The theories offer a background understanding of a social phenomenon with women depicted as the typical victims.

## **Review of Related Literature**

Battery as a form of an abuse may happen to any woman, elite or poor. A victim who has repeatedly experienced physical and psychological abuse by her husband is called a battered woman. Filipino women can also be victims of this domestic problem, especially that a Filipino family is patriarchal which expects wives to be submissive to their husbands (David, 1994; Hune & Nomura, 2003).

There are several factors associated with battered women. First, some husbands traditionally view their wives as mere possessions (Wallach et al., 2010). The males believe that family heads should be respected and be served by their wives (Wallach et al., 2010). Second, the influence of substance abuse such as alcohol and prohibited drugs resulting in mental misconception proves to be unfavourable to women (Subodh et al., 2014; Wilson, Graham, & Taft, 2016). Third, physically abused women have the feeling of worthlessness as

an indication of poor self-esteem. Battered women are usually prohibited by their husbands to associate with friends and families, or to participate in social activities. Last, battered women believe that they cannot survive without their husbands whom their families rely for support. In this regard, family considerations prevail over the personal desires or interest of women or mothers (Estrellado & Loh, 2013; Jack, 2014; Loke, Wan, & Hayter, 2012). Women could not undermine the welfare of families by putting an end to a marriage (Reich et al., 2014).

One of the major problems among physically abused women is the lack of empowerment. Most of the battered women are unable to handle situations. Battered women believe that they have no control over their situation and consequently become submissive toward their abusers - the husbands (Cortes, 2013; Walker, 1979).

On the other hand, battered women may manifest the *Stockholm Syndrome*, a condition which refers to the “traumatic bonding” (Reina, Lohman, & Maldonado, 2014) and “terror” (Henriot, 2001) with one’s abusive partner. This syndrome connotes a strong emotional attachment that is developed in a relation defined by two reasons: inequality of power and irregularity of positive-negative regard. The inequality of power produces a power mechanism wherein the inferior and superior partners become progressively reliant on each other.

In a relationship where battering occurs, bodily and emotional abuse by the superior partner forges and upholds the inequality of power. The alternation of reinforcement and punishment creates a cohesive emotional attachment of the victim to the abuser. Battered women may have coped with the perceived inescapable violence by traumatically bonding with their abusers as indicated by their verbalization of feeling of profound love (Henriot, 2001; Reina et al., 2014).

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study used the qualitative research design employing phenomenology as an approach. A qualitative study explores and understands phenomena (Creswell, 2012). It is especially useful in discovering the meanings people give to the events they experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Phenomenology is a qualitative approach that seeks to “explain the meaning of the lived experiences of individuals” (Moran & Mooney, 2002). For this study, I used Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology in describing and understanding the lived experiences of battered women in terms of understanding their feelings toward their husbands, the possible causes of battery, the predicament experienced during the actual assault, and the coping mechanisms of the victims.

### **Research Setting**

This study was conducted in Ozamiz City. It is a third-class city that is situated in the Province of Misamis Occidental, Philippines. The city is composed of 51 barangays.

### **Research Participants and Sampling**

There were six participants in the study. The criteria for the selection of the participants included the following: (1) living with their legal or common-law husbands (2) having experienced not less three times of physical battering by their husbands, whether the battering could be continuous or intermittent; (3) having at least one child with the husbands; and (4) having given the consent to serve as participants of the research. Before the interviews were conducted, the participants confirmed that they met the criteria.

Snowball and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting the participants. Patton (2005) described snowball or chain sampling as an approach for locating information in research. Key contacts usually suggest possible individuals who can serve as additional participants for the research being undertaken. In this study, purposive sampling was observed since the researcher had the criteria for selecting the participants.

### **Research Instruments**

A researcher-made interview guide was used in gathering data. After the participants were identified, a series of scheduled interviews was conducted. I sought the permission of the participants for the use of a tape recorder during the actual interviews which were held individually in separate days. Each interview session lasted for about an hour.

In ensuring the validity of the interview questions, two women who admitted that they had been battered wives and who were not considered the target participants of the research were made to respond to the questions. Vague or confusing questions were modified or revised. The final questions used for the actual interviews were those clear enough to elicit responses based on the objectives of the study.

### **Data Collection**

Before conducting the interviews, I introduced myself to the selected participants. Rapport was established, and informed consent was obtained, including the consent to record conversations. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of their answers and the anonymity of their identities. A free-flowing mode of conversation was observed to promote the participants' expression of their experiences. The demographic profile of the participants was first obtained and was then followed by the conduct of the series of interviews. After the interview sessions, the participants were made to understand that I would present back to them the data gathered as part of the validation process.

### **Data Analysis**

The six steps of van Manen (2016) were used as a guide in exploring the experiences of the battered women. These six steps include the following: (1) turning to a phenomenon of interest—formulating research questions to elicit information pertaining to wife battering; (2) investigating experience as being lived—conducting interviews to allow the participants to describe their lived experiences and feelings toward the abusive behaviour of their partners/husbands; (3) indicating on the salient themes which describe the phenomenon—analyzing the participants' statements as to early themes and sub-themes leading to the formulation of salient essential themes; (4) explaining the experience in the art of writing and rewriting—revising the written output to describe vividly the experiences of the battered women; (5) upholding a firm and conscious relation to the experience—incorporating the prior observations made and the suggestions received; and (6) observing a balance in the research context through recognizing the parts and the whole—understanding the phenomenon based on the individual and holistic perspectives. These steps were followed carefully in the study and in the presentation of the data.

### **Ethical Consideration**

Before the study commenced, I sought permission from the barangay captains of the places where the individual participants have established residence. Prior to the actual

interviews, each participant was provided with an information sheet indicating the mobile number and a document stating clearly the rights of the participants. The latter were informed of their right to terminate participation anytime they wanted. Clarifications and apprehensions of the participants were addressed accordingly before they signed the document for informed consent. Respect for human privacy was observed during the conduct of the interviews and the writing of the data. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and the anonymity of their identities.

## Results and Discussions

The study involved six battered women who met the criteria for the selection of participants. In this study, the participants are residents of Ozamiz City, Philippines. Their ages range from 24 to 35 years old. Four have husbands who work as farmers, while the other two husbands attend to the households including child-rearing.

Of the six participants, only one graduated college and works as a teacher while the other one is connected in the government service. The remaining four participants depend mainly on the meager income of their spouses wherein one admitted living with a live-in partner.

Four central themes emerged in this study pertaining to the experiences of battered women, namely: (1) recurrence of physical abuse, (2) endurance to pain, (3) disempowerment of women, and (4) love for family. The themes were based on the interview transcripts and the literature and studies reviewed for the present study.

### Recurrence of Physical Abuse

This theme pertains to the physical abuse suffered by the six participants for a long period of time. As victims, the women have been accustomed to the violent and controlling behaviour of their husbands. Participant RB cited,

*“I have experienced being physically abused by my husband for 12 years now. I am already used to being beaten and slapped.”*

Similarly, participant RE contended,

*“It does not matter if I am being beaten by my husband. Anyway, it does not happen always.”*

The statements of RB and RE reflect passive submission to their plight of being physically assaulted by their husbands. Resisting physical abuse has been difficult for these women because the perpetrators are the same individuals whom the wives profess love and loyalty. These women remain hopeful that eventually their spouses end their violent behaviours. Thus, RA cited,

*“I always pray that my husband will realize that what he has been doing to me is not good.”*

Though there can be battered women who may want to free themselves from the hostile relationship with their husbands, they do not have the financial capacity to become independent, especially in meeting children's needs. Hence, economic status serves a crucial consideration of women seeking for separation. The participants cited:

*“I have endured all of his beatings, and I don’t mind at all. Anyway, there is nothing I can do. If I leave him, I am afraid of what he will do to our children.”*

*“I have two children. If I leave my husband who is the breadwinner of the family, how will I support the children?”*

*“It is difficult if we separate ways because I do not have any other place to go.”*

The statements above reflect the women’s justification to their ordeal. They exemplify the Filipino value of considering future consequences of present actions. In this regard, Rodriguez (2011) asserts that women consider not only their own survival, but more importantly their children’s. This principle of saving family relationship undermines the victims’ dignity as human beings.

Moreover, the love for their husbands made the participants to believe that physical abuse is part of marriage. A number of participants claimed:

*“I view his beating as part of our relationship being husband and wife. I also think that I have some shortcomings. It is my responsibility to take care of my husband.”*

*“Even if he is like that, I cannot think of leaving him or be separated from him. I don’t even think of getting an annulment.”*

These statements illustrate the women viewing the acts of battering as normal happenings between spouses. Also, the victims see themselves as partly accountable for the pain inflicted on them.

### **Endurance to Pain**

Wife battering is one of the most prevalent types of violence in a household; however, it is a situation that is rarely made into public. Battering may include threatening and harming physically such as severe and frequent beatings like punching, slapping, kicking, and choking. Acts of physical abuse may include biting, kicking, hitting, slapping, hair-pulling, burning, twisting, throwing, and hurting with the use of weapons (Barkley Burnett, 2017). It also pertains to verbal and emotional abuse as direct or implied forms of violence. All these acts of battering have been experienced by the participants. The present study revealed that the victims endured them all as indicated by the following statements:

*“Sometimes he would slap me. If I were near the wall, he would slam or bump my head against it.”*

*“When he is angry, he punches me in any part of my body. If I talk back at him, he would squeeze my mouth to prevent me from doing so. He also slaps me.”*

*“When he catches me, he punches anywhere on my body.”*

*“When I am out for work, my husband hangs out with his friends, goes into drinking session, and uses prohibited drugs. My neighbours tell that these happen whenever I leave for work.”*



On the other hand, the husband who stays home to attend to children and the household had developed mistrust toward his wife. The participant cited:

*“He cannot understand the nature of my work that as a teacher I have to participate in school activities. While I work as a high school teacher, my husband stays home to take care of our children. He did not finish the course of BS Criminology.”*

Another cause of marital strife is conflicting religious beliefs. This is evidenced by the following statement by one participant:

*“We have different outlooks in life, particularly in our religious beliefs. This usually causes our confrontation as to whose church we will attend.”*

Physical abuse is associated with the Filipino culture of male superiority wherein husbands are regarded as heads of families while women as subordinates. Men symbolize power and strength in the family, being the main sources of authority and provision. At present, this culture is slowly changing as women assert their independence being breadwinners and decision-makers as well. However, this shift in familial roles is severely damaging to the male identity and pride that some men regain power and control even through violent means (Lee et al., 2013). However, the study of Natividad (2013) revealed a low percentage of women who believe that wife beating is not justifiable.

### **Disempowerment of Women**

The third theme reflects the participants' subordinate existence and helplessness. The women suffered battering in various forms, yet they have conditioned their minds to the dysfunctional situation. According to participant RE,

*“I just cry my anger toward my husband. I feel terrified when he seems unable to recognize me when he is at the height of his anger.”*

Household conventions to wife battering hold prejudice against women (Bograd, 1984), and it has roots in historical attitudes toward women and the institution of marriage (Martin, 1981). Thus, seeking outside help and leaving home have social repercussions for battered women. For example, Filipino women are traditionally expected to ensure that family members stay together regardless of circumstances. Breaking away from marital ties causes shame or disgrace to the entire family. Thus, a number of the participants hesitated to take decisive actions like filing legal charges in accordance with the law on Violence Against Women and Children (Philippine Official Gazette, 2004), as it could drastically change family dynamics. Hence, the victims of battery had chosen to keep their silence over domestic violence.

In “The Battered Woman” by Walker (1979), the author argued that an abused woman often becomes “paralyzed” as a result of learned helplessness. The woman is said to believe she has no control over her situation as manifested by her submission toward punishment and violence. She blames herself for her own inability to change the situation which leads to low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression.

In this study, one participant cited,

*“Sometimes when I feel outraged by his severe beating, I would run away to get even with my husband. He hates it when I leave the house.”*

Similarly, another participant stressed,

*“I hide or get away from the house so as not to be beaten or punched again.”*

These statements of the participants reflect their sense of fear and hatred about their deplorable conditions, especially toward their abusive spouses. Leaving the family household can sometimes be their way of expressing defiance.

In contrast, there were participants who simply accepted their miserable conditions. They asserted that they love their husbands and children and that they are willing to endure the pain. Participant RC cited that

*“I tolerated all of his beatings because I do not have plans to leave him, nor do I want our marriage to be annulled. A number of people advised me to leave him, but I pity and love him so much. I also cannot let my children grow without a father.”*

The participants asserted affection toward their partners and hoped that the latter might eventually change for the better. Thus, the victims found it difficult to leave their abusive partners (Peled, Eisikovits, Enosh, & Winstok, 2000).

Furthermore, an abusive husband always apologizes for his wrongdoings (Mullaney, 2007). It is exemplified by the experience of participant RC who stated,

*“After beating me, he would ask for forgiveness and display sweetness and affection by hugging me. Because I can be easily persuaded by his acts, I tend to forgive him right away.”*

This statement of RC as shared by the other participants reveals that these victims forgive their husbands. Though the participants were aware of the gravity of the situation, they were determined to keep families intact, whether their husbands change for good or not. The men serve as providers of the family’s basic needs and the source of affection to their wives. Despite the loss of self-esteem, the participants of the study have remained optimistic that their husbands care for them amidst the seeming aggression.

Also, these women believed that they could not live in the absence of their husbands. RD pointed out,

*“Despite the times when he would physically hurt me, my love for him has never changed because I understand him. After our confrontation, he would kneel while asking for forgiveness. Also, he would cook my favourite foods. He would make sure that when I arrive home, everything is taken care of. He also makes sure that I am sexually satisfied.”*

The statement of RD reveals her willingness to stay with her husband despite their seemingly unhealthy relationship. The gesture of asking forgiveness by the husband with the promise that the abuse would not happen again made the woman to remain optimistic with the situation. The victim might have suffered from low self-esteem that she claimed deserving of her fate and that she could not find a better spouse. The woman viewed herself helpless due to her financial dependence on her husband that leaving him has not been an option.

The assertion of the participant above exemplifies a “Stockholm Syndrome,”—a condition wherein an abused woman develops unhealthy positive attachments to her abuser. In this study, a number of the battered women made justifications of the aggressive acts of their

spouses. Thus, when the abusive husbands asked for forgiveness through the giving of gifts and the showing of tender acts, the wives immediately yielded believing that the former really cared for them despite the occasional violence.

During the actual instance of physical abuse, the participants would just cry and run away from their husbands. Majority of these women refrained themselves from fighting back for fear of their lives and out of shame toward their neighbours. In this regard, participant RF revealed,

*“I cried over the nasty words he uttered against me and his beatings. I could not fight back because of shame that our neighbours would hear our heated argument. I am afraid that my family would know that I am physically battered.”*

This study shows that becoming a battered woman is a humiliating and demeaning condition. Physical abuse by a husband lowers a wife's self-esteem. Leaving home is also construed as a sign of giving up, admitting defeat, and yielding to the situation. The participants were ashamed to admit that they have chosen the wrong persons as lifetime partners.

Not reporting domestic violence to families, friends, or proper authorities may be indicative of the lack of knowledge of the people from whom women seek for support. Battered women may be aware of the law on Violence Against Women and Children (Philippine Official Gazette, 2004), but reporting their case is perceived to cause upheaval to family and children. In this sense, battered victims who have succumbed to physical abuse may also be emotionally drained and helpless. Denial to the existing problem and pretence over the situation caused the persistence of these women's predicaments. The victims may tell other people that, “It is not that bad,” or “It is not him,” or “It is the alcohol, etc.” The women looked at domestic violence differently. Often, it takes years of repeated physical abuse before these women realize that they have endangered not only their own lives but also of their children's.

The nature of Filipino family relationship forces the participants to keep domestic violence within the confines of the home. Hence, the participants of the study were silent about their experiences for fear of demeaning their family's reputation. The social stigma attached to the situation may jeopardize the security of children's future. Thus, the aftermath of the condition of the battered women takes place gradually and silently with the attempt of keeping families intact. In this regard, upholding family interest is a value that preserves the honor of a number of Filipinos and their Asian counterparts (Estrellado & Loh, 2013; Jack, 2014; Loke et al., 2012). A great number of cultures in Asia strongly condemn divorce which demeans women and their families (Buchbinder & Karayanni, 2015; Deitz, Williams, Rife, & Cantrell, 2015).

### **Love for Family**

In the Philippines, marriage is more than an expected life event while divorce or separation is a source of stigma. Divorced or separated women are perceived as unable to fulfil their roles in maintaining sound marriages. Thus, they are often compelled to raise their children with fathers who manifest violent tendencies (Dasgupta, 2000). Marriage is maintained when any problems within the family are kept private. Hence, a Filipino married woman makes sacrifices for the sake of her children and family. She makes efforts to keep the marriage intact at any cost. Participant RD stated,

*“Even if my husband is like that, I cannot make myself to leave him or be separated from him. I don't even think of getting an annulment. Since the start of our relationship, I already know that he is violent when angry. Hence, I avoid*

*having confrontation with him. Sometimes, I can say that my busy work schedule causes me not to take care of him even when I am at home. Hence, I try to give him my full attention during weekends.”*

As illustrated by the statements of RD, the participants of this study exerted their best efforts and stretched their patience to make their marriage work; they disregarded separation as an option. The women intended to maintain the integrity in their families. Lynch and Guzman (1970) claim that a steady core value in the typical Filipino family is family solidarity. An ideal Filipino family consists of a breadwinner father, a caring mother, and children (Ochi, 2005). Similarly, RF cited,

*“He cares for me, and that is why I am afraid to lose him. Since I do not have parents, I consider my husband as my only family.”*

Thus, the responsibility to make marriage work is considered a woman’s task. If the marriage fails, it is attributed against the woman. Consequently, any women tend to endure all the hardships and abuses just to keep marriage unbroken.

Based on the interviews conducted and as indicated by the transcripts of the participants’ responses, the battered women did not view separation from their husbands as an easy option. Family welfare is given more consideration over personal desire. If silence about the violence committed meant keeping families intact, it is the choice that the battered wives were willing to take.

Along this line, some participants shared the following revelation:

*“I did not let my family to know that my husband beats me. I am afraid that in case they know, they will take me away from my spouse.”*

Thus, one participant explained,

*“I placed a considerable amount of foundation (cosmetic powder) on my face to hide the bruises that my husband caused through slapping. Also, I refrained from wearing a sleeveless garment so as not to expose my shoulders with dark marks caused by my husband’s beatings.”*

The statements given by the participants are reflective of the women’s desire to keep family issues private. This is meant not only to spare themselves from shame being labelled as battered women, but more importantly to shield their families, especially children, from social stigma.

The following poem entitled “The Bitter Side of Me” gives an overall view of the experiences of the battered women.

### **The Bitter Side of Me**

by Cynthia S. Superable

I close my eyes as tears fall  
Asking myself if I can endure it all  
The physical pain that torments me  
Making me wonder to let it be.

I may have suffered already too much  
That I tremble at his violent touch

Yet after hurting he shows seeming regret  
The pain I suffer he wants me to forget.

Am I a fool to just ignore?  
To take the bruises, insults and more  
Hoping someday he will realize  
That hurting me has never been wise.

I need to hide the trace of abuse  
Revealing it will be of no use  
Thinking of what other people say  
I cannot opt for come what may.

I sometimes ask if I am to blame  
Why he continues to inflict me this pain  
Has my timid silence given him a reason?  
To insist on his vicious inclination.

Do I care for him so badly?  
That I condone his act of cruelty  
Or am I simply a hopeless being  
That with him I desperately cling.

I may have grown weary of this misery  
Yet from him I cannot set myself free.  
To leave him has not been an option  
Keeping the family intact is my intention.

My wishful thinking is the coming of the day  
When my better-half departs from his old way  
So I may cease to live in dreadful tension  
And live a life with real self-estimation.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Relationships between husbands and wives typically begin well. However, such relations may be changed with the passing of time and with the rising of domestic concerns. Husbands may develop aggressive behavior leading to violence against their wives, either verbally, physically, and emotionally. Asserting ones' rights may just result in the women being further assaulted. Thus, keeping ones' silence is viewed as the sober option. Familial welfare prevails over the personal desires of women who are compelled by their situations to find reasons in staying within the bounds of marriage.

In the light of the findings and conclusion of the research, it is recommended that wives who are battered by their husbands need to take more decisive steps in addressing their unfavourable condition. These women have to seek for support or assistance from other people who can or may put an end to marital violence and traumatic experiences through proper measures and due process.

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