

PERCEPTION ABOUT SELF DEFENSE AND WOMEN TRAINING FOR SELF PROTECTION

Faiza Parveen¹, ADEELA REHMAN², Dr. Naimatullah Hashmi², and Uzma Arshad Mughal²

¹Muslim Law College, RAWALPINDI

²Affiliation not available

September 16, 2019

Abstract

This paper was made from my master thesis entitled “Perception about self-defense and women self-defense training”. The study was conducted in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The main objective of the research was a comparison of the strategies which self-defense trained and untrained girls used to attempt for their self-protection in order to reduce the risk of violence. The study finds out the effectiveness of self-defense training towards women’s self-protection. Non random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The study used statistical techniques of analysis. The study constitute 120 respondents falling in the age range- range 18-30 years.

The findings support the hypothesis that women who take self-defense training are better equipped with physical and mental skills which allows her to defend herself from assailant than a woman who did not have training. Self-defense training, increased confidence, self-efficiency in women and reduce the chances of victimization.

PERCEPTION ABOUT SELF DEFENSE AND WOMEN TRAINING FOR SELF PROTECTION

Faiza Perveen 11Department of Gender Studies, Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi, Pakistan faizamumraiz26@gmail.com, Dr. Adeela Rehman 22Department of Gender Studies, Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi, Pakistan dradeelarehman@gmail.com , Dr. Naimatullah Hashmi 33Department of Sociology, PMAS Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, Pakistan drhashmi@uaar.edu.pk, Uzma Arshad Mughal 44Department of Economics, PMAS Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, Pakistan Uzma_arshad17@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT:

Protecting oneself from potential assault by using defensive strategies is called self-protection. Self-defense training teaches women effective physical and verbal skills to cope with the assault situation. The study was conducted in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The main objective of the research was a comparison of the strategies which self-defense trained and untrained girls used to attempt for their self-protection in order to reduce the risk of violence. The study finds out the effectiveness of self-defense training towards women’s self-protection. Non random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The study used statistical techniques of analysis. The study constitute 120 respondents falling in the age range- range 18-30 years. The findings support the hypothesis that women who take self-defense training are better equipped with physical and mental skills which allows her to defend herself from assailant than a woman who did not have training. Self-defense training, increased confidence, self-efficiency in women and reduce the chances of victimization.

Key words: Self Defense; sexual violence prevention; Violence against women; women empowerment; resistance

INTRODUCTION

Every woman around the globe has self-defense and personal protection concern because of violence against women, both corporeal and intimate which is an institutional setback that remains embedded in our society which needs attention at both personal and community level (Weitlauf, et al., 2000). Now women are deliberately refusing to the mistreatment and aggression from their families, husband, boyfriends, strangers (Schneider and Jordan, 1978). For these motives, women learn diverse assault avoidance programs such as carrying weapons, executing crime prevention strategies and self-defense skills.

Women experience more of violence than those of men. Hollander (2010) observed in her study that 75% students had experienced about an intimate victimization, violence, and an oppression while ten percent confide any prior physical victimization due to their enrollment in self-defense classes. Brecklin (2004) stated that women are more likely to involve in self-protection strategies due to their experiences of the different form of violence and oppression in both childhood and adult intimate, physical and emotional violence and tyranny. Violence residues different psychological and physical effects on women's lives. In order to avoid being victimized, women should learn to limit their mobility and depend upon their men, burglar alarms, chemical sprays, guard dogs as well as other external agents for self-shield.

In addition, other challenges are providing trainings to avoid danger and encourage change spectator interference or social norms (Hollander, 2014). The main target of self-defense training programs is to educate women on how to resist efficiently if confront with a latent assault. However, it does not impart girls how to fight but inculcate them how to defend themselves when needed.

Self-defense training offers women an entrance to a new set of combative responses in assorted assault states. It trains women both physically and spiritually for potential attacks (Follansbee, 1982 as cited in Brecklin & Ullman, 2005) by providing them with opportunities to learn social and cognitive skills through the use of role-plays, conversation and simulation of exercises (Peretz, 1991; Thompson, 1991 as cited in Brecklin & Ullman, 2005 and Cummings, 1992). Self-defense training is very significant for women because it pact with three main issues of women survival, for example the fear of sexual assault and violence, the gender, and the selfhood (Hollander, 2004). It holds various levels start from white belt to black belt. Numerous girls participate in self-defense training classes and may learn distinct techniques such as how to cope with assault circumstances, break free of the fingers of an assailant, dent the breathing capacity of an assailant, displacing the shoulder or elbow of an assailant, free oneself when grabbed at the rear and getting strangled or free oneself when tackled to the ground (Weitlauf, et al., 2000).

Women are often idealized as susceptible, submissive and subject to male vicious behavior and violence (McCaughey, 1998). Women have overlooked the opportunities of taking physical training and participating in athletes due to their stereotypical roles. They also have been dispirited from learning self-protection strategies because it may not suitable for their feminine roles (Schneider & Jordan, 1978). In Pakistan mostly, girls feel communal pressure to defend them due to family's reverence. Due to conventional societal beliefs about women and men's roles, habitually they are reinforced by families to avoid physical resistance because it can be harmful for being aggressive. In the study of Hollander (2009) perception about women self-defense training is that male thinks that after getting self-defense training (SDT) they become overconfident and they always set to fight with men and the result would be imperiled for women. The idea behind that, women are not intelligent, smart enough and even do not think prudently. Some women assume that self-defense training increases the chances of victim blame, for example, women had self-defense training, but if they fail to protect herself then everyone blame her for assault. At the same time, there are many winning stories of female resistance. In the study of (Cermele, 2004) some girl's perception about fighting back is that they can't fight back against men because it just made condition more horrible and they can only defend themselves when they have weapons. The alarm of being victimize also keep women at home and they don't walk alone in street at night. In the study of (Harris and Miller 2000 as cited in Williams & Hebl, 2005) asked from participants to put forward proper strategies for men and women who have a fear of becoming assault victims. Then outcome showed that most physical strategies comprise physical fighting and taking up body building were suggested for men, whereas more submissive strategies included carrying a

paper spray, cellular phone, being escorted and screaming were recommended to women. In order to reduce rape victims, woman should avoid going alone on the outside, wearing the dress in a proactive manner and franking with strangers or male employees at workplace as well as learning defensive techniques. Rozee & Koss (2001) state that even though some parts of rapes are inescapable we bicker that women could resist against possible rapists if they take training on overcoming psychological barriers to resistance, diagnosing as early as possible they are facing impending rape and giving an expected ladder through which to progress from verbal to physical resistance.

Violence against women is a very serious problem in almost all cities of Pakistan. Pakistani women had become a victim of domestic and street violence, murder, acid throwing, intimate partner violence, abduction, honor killing, rape, sexual harassment, verbal violence, Karokari and other sexual abuse. Nowadays media shows horrible stories of crime against women like rape, acid burning for the sake of dowry and murder in the name of so called honor. Despite being a religious country, many women, young and small girls were victims of rape in Pakistan. As commonly, the majority of rapes are perpetrated by men whom women know and men suppose that women will be acquiescent and don't be able to hassle back. As stated by Aurat Foundation in 2012, maximum cases of sexual assaults were reported in Rawalpindi, Sukkur, Karachi, Khairpur, Tando Allah Yar, Badin, Nawab Shah, Kashmore, Sanghar and Dadu. At the same time it is somber to note that people arduously report for the sexual assaults in Baluchistan, KPK, FATA and ICT regions (Annual Report, 2012). Physical violence upon women is more likely to befall in the private sphere. Women are becoming sufferer due to their intimate partner violence. Thus, women had a great scare of sexual abuse, physical violence and they need protection. For the empowerment of women, many violence prevention programs were developed such as self-defense training. It empowers women to effectively resist assault and not confining their mobility (McCaughey, 1997; Ozer & Bandura, 1990; Rozee & Koss, 2001 as cited in Hollander, 2014).

Although women had made progress in almost all regions of life, but they are still at a vulnerable spot at public places. At public places women are not sure about when and which activity of man creates hindrance and harm to them. In order to demote the chances of their victimization they used different strategies to conquer the violence included wearing a wedding ring though unwed (Gardner, C. 1990), in taxi made a fake call to someone and tell them about their arrival and information about taxi, wearing a casual dress that doesn't entice others, walking close to a group of people, sitting in a car with male employee minimize their dread, wearing a flat shoes aid them, escaping when needed, carrying a weapon (Gun, knife, lights, Distractions, personal alarms, handbag). Sometime women use disparate techniques in order to decrease risk like when they are strolling alone and carry a home key in their hands and act in such a way that their house is near to them; they started feeling secure by standing near a convenient police officer or near a group of other women are walking along with their male partner and other family members (Gardner, 1990). Clay-Warner (2002) evaluates the situational effectiveness of protective strategies used by women during attempted and completed rape. She also says that women are victorious in protecting themselves when aggressor is a foreigner rather than someone who knows them included acquaintance, family member and friend. She also points out that the use of physical force is amid the vital strategies for escaping a possible rape. Self-defense training imparts students various physical and verbal skills that not only help them to effectively defend themselves but also able to assist others. Mostly women choose to employ self-proactive acts when an encounter to sexual abuse by running away, screaming, physically fighting, etc. with the assailants (Brecklin & Ullman, 2001; Siegel, Sorenson, Golding, Burnam, & Stein, 1989 as cited in Clay-Warner 2003).

Now there are different self-defense programs in all over Pakistani cities. The approach is personal safety and risk reduction. For example, self-defense for Women in Karachi, Self Defense, Shotokan Karate, Kobudo, & Fitness Instructor training for Females in Rawalpindi. There is need for change; otherwise Pakistani society will push itself with back to dark ages. Men and women should be equal donors of social change. The research will help to evaluate how self-defense can help women. In this study comparison have been made between the perception of both self defense trained and untrained girls towards their self protection. And the strategies of both self defense trained and untrained girls towards their self protection have been evaluated.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The Purposive Sampling Technique was used to select sample size. The sample of 120 women was selected to reach the objectives of the study. The sample includes both trained and untrained women. Data were collected through questionnaires. The schooling levels of respondents were matriculation to M. Phil level. The data on self-defense trained girls were collected from Shotokan karate international school, Army sports club, GHQ, and the data of untrained women was collected from Fatima Jinnah Women University. The Age range of participants was from 18 to 28. All self-defense trained students having minimum orange belt training and above were selected below this belt were excluded. All respondents were educated therefore; researcher used English and Urdu language for communication. Participants were requested not to omit any questions in the questionnaire. The independent t - test is used to compare the perceptions of self defense trained and untrained women towards their self protection. Along with the t-test, descriptive analysis is used to evaluate the strategies of both self defense trained and untrained women towards their self-protection.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION:

The study was conducted after taking the appointment from the head of the organizations of selected sample. The researcher provided them institutional support letter and informed them about the objective and nature of the study to the respondents as well. It was assured that the participant's privacy must be maintained. Written informed consent was obtained from all the participants. The study was approved by research committee at Fatima Jinnah Women University, The Mall, Rawalpindi. Plagiarism was also checked by the quality enhancement cell (QEC) of the university.

DISCUSSION

Data was collected from 60 untrained and 60 trained women. 25.8 percent of women were less than 20 years old where as 47.5 percent in between 21 to 23 and 26.7 percent of the women were above 24. 54.2 percent women were residing in Rawalpindi whereas remaining in Islamabad. 10 percent of women were have qualification under SSC level and 47.5 percent were having 11 to 14 years of education whereas 42.5 percent were highly qualified. Level of training shows that 50 percent were untrained but in remaining 50 percent, 14.2 percent were Yellow belt and 35.8 percent of trained women were having orange belt (Table 1).

To meet first objective data was analyzed through statistical techniques. Mann-Whitney technique of non-parametric tests was used to compare the perception of self defense trained and untrained group of women. Here group 1 is of untrained women and group 2 comprises trained women. Results of comparison in different components are given in Table 1. The result of this study are supported by the study of Hollander (2016). Table 2 shows that SDT empowers women that leads to differences in perception of self defense trained and untrained women. 0.039 is less than critical value 0.05 which shows that SDT reduces the fear of being assaulted. 0.005 tells that never trusting anyone is the main rule of safety. 0.841 shows that SDT improves assertiveness, aggressiveness, cognitive, physical and verbal skills in trained women. 0.012 rejects the hypothesis that SDT women do not feel safer to go out in public places, but those women feel safer than untrained women to face public. To meet second objective, descriptive analysis is used. The results of the study are related to the findings of William and Hebl study in 2005. Certain most relevant questions were asked from both trained and untrained women to depict strategies of self defense. Results in table 3 show that 66.7 percent of the respondents cumulatively agree on never trust others to secure yourself. To self protection, 85 percent of women collectively agree to give importance to ourselves. 60 percent of respondents are aware of self protection in dangerous environment. Whereas, 75 percent of women are aware of what happening around them. 68.3 percent of women know about use of drugs in gathering that can be cause of danger and 1.7 percent of women disagree on the danger in gathering caused by use of drugs. So through these components, strategies of self protection in different environment can be shown supported by Brecklin and Ullman (1999).

Conclusion

The focus of the study was to audit the perception of self-defense trained and untrained girls towards their self-protection and comprise the strategies that both groups has used for their self-protection.

There are numerous articles published on the matter of women self-defense training and the problems that they confront along the way at the global level. This proves that actively participating in self-defense classes for women is a challenge across the globe. however the causes may vary like some women learn self-defense training before their assault experience and some were learned after their victimization.

The study found that it is the socio-cultural norms and the stereotypical gender roles assigned to women, which create barrier their tectonic and active participation in self-defense classes. Women who had the self-defense training are less likely to become a victim of assault than average women. Self-defense trained women use appropriate strategies for their self-protection when required in order to reduce the chances of being victimized.

Analysis denotes that there is insignificant relationship exists between self-defense trained and untrained girls about attitude for self-protection. Both groups coincide that to avoid is the best attitude of self-protection. Self-defense training teaches women different skills and improve their physical and verbal skills and self-defense trained women feel safer than average women those do not have self-defense training in public places. Untrained women contemplate that self-defense training implies victim blaming if self-defense trained women failed to protect themselves from violence and then in consequence everyone will blame her for assault. While self-defense trained women do not concur with them.

Self-defense training gives freedom to move freely in public domain. Therefore, it is necessary that women learn self-defense training because findings manifest that girls with self-defense training are better able to tackle with assault situations and more likely to reduce the risk of violence and confident to talk with stranger than women which do not have training.

REFERENCES

- Brecklin, L. R., & Ullman, S. E. (2005). Self-defense or assertiveness training and women's responses to sexual attacks. *Journal of interpersonal violence* , 20 (6), 738-762.
- Weitlauf, J. C., Smith, R. E., & Cervone, D. (2000). Generalization effects of coping-skills training: Influence of self-defense training on women's efficacy beliefs, assertiveness, and aggression. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85, 625-633.
- Hollander, J. A. (2009). The roots of resistance to women's self-defense. *Violence Against Women* , 15 , 574-594.
- Hollander, J. (2010). Why Do Women Take Self-Defense Classes? *Violence Against Women* .
- Brecklin, L. R., & Ullman, S. E. (2004). Correlates of post-assault self-defense/assertiveness training participation for sexual assault survivors. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 28,147-158.
- Hollander, J. A. (2014). Does Self-Defense Training Prevent Sexual Violence Against Women? *Violence Against Women* , 1-18.
- Brecklin, L. R., & Ullman, S. E. (2005). Self-defense or assertiveness training and women's responses to sexual attacks. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 20, 738-762.
- Smith, S. (1989). *Tourism Analysis: A Handbook*. Longman. New York.
- Hopwood, k. (1991). Women and Self—Defense Weapons. Off Our Backs, a women new's journal, Vol. 21, No. 6, (The Conference Issue: National Lesbian Conference), pp. 16-17.
- Madden, M. E., & Sokol, J. S. (1997). Teaching women self-defense: Pedagogical issues. *Feminist Teacher* , 11 , 133-151
- McCaughey, M. (1998). The Fighting Spirit: Women's Self-Defense Training and the Discourse of Sexed Embodiment. *Gender and Society*, Vol. 12, No. 3 , pp. 277-300.

- Searles, P., & Follansbee, P. (1984). Self- defense for women: Translating theory into practice. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 8, 65-70.
- Sochting, I., Fairbrother, N., & Koch, W.J., (2004). Sexual Assault of Women. *Violence Against Women*, 10 (1), 73-93.
- Soo-Warr, L. (2010). *A young woman's guide to Health and Well Being, self defense for women*. 9 East 21st Street, New York, NY 10010: *The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc.*
- Clay-Warner, J. (2002). Avoiding rape: The effects of protective actions and situational factors on rape outcome. *Violence and Victims*, 17, 691-705.
- Clay-Warner, J. (2003). The Context of Sexual Violence:Situational Predictors of Self-Protective Actions. *Violence and Victims*, Volume 18, Number 5 , 543-556.
- Elizabeth M.Schneider and Susan B. Jordan. (1978). Representation of women who defend themselves in response to physical or sexual assault.*Family Law Review*, Vol1.No.2. , 118-130.
- Hollander, J. A. (2016). The importance of self-defense training for sexual violence prevention. *Feminism & Psychology* , 26 (2), 207-226.
- Perveen, D. R. (2013). *Beyond Denial Violence against women in Pakistan A qualitative review of reported incidents January – December 2012*. Islamabad: Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation.
- Pava, W.S., Bateman, P. & Glascock, J. (1991, December). Self defense training for visually impaired women. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness*, 397-401.
- Rozee, P.D., & Koss, M.P. (2001). Rape: A century of resistance.*Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 25, 295-311.
- Rentschler, C. A. (1999). Women's Self- defense: Physical Education for Everyday Life. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 1/2(Teaching About Violence Against Women), pp. 152-161.
- Williams ,M. J., Michelle R. H. (2005). Warding Off the Attacker:Self-Defense in Theory and in Practice1. *Applied Social Psychology* , pp. 366-382.

ANNEXURE

Table 1:

Demographic	Categories	Frequency with percentage
Age	Less than 20 21-23 24 and above	31(25.8%) 57(47.5%) 32(26.7%)
Residence	Rawalpind Islamabad	65(54.2%) 55(45.8%)
Education	Less than 10 11-14 15 and above	12(10%) 57(47.5%) 51(42.5%)
Level of training	Nill Yellow belt Orange belt	60(50%) 17(14.2%) 43(35.8%)

Table:2

Statement	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed)
SDT empower women.	392.500	888.500	-.929	.035
SDT reduce the fear of being assaulted.	281.500	606.500	-.855	.039

Statement	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed)
The main rule of safety is to never ever trust to someone.	119.500	822.500	-2.793	.005
SDT, improves my assertiveness, aggressiveness, cognitive, physical and verbal skills	328.000	1363.000	-.201	.841
SDT women feel safer than to go out in public places than average women who have not such training	313.000	778.000	-1.591	.012
SDT implies victim blaming	168.500	288.500	-.573	.567

Table: 3

Statements	Strongly agree	agree	Uncertain	disagree	S
The main rule of safety is to never ever trust to someone.	23 (19.2)	57(47.5)	18(15)	22(18.3)	0
Value to own self is important for self protection .	55(45.8)	47(39.2)	17(14.2)	1(0.8)	0
I have awarness what to do in dangerous situation.	28(23.3)	44(36.7)	34(28.3)	14(11.7)	0
I have awareness of what happened around me.	29(24.2)	61(50.8)	16(13.3)	10(8.3)	4
The use of drugs in social gathering increases the chances of danger.	37(30.8)	45(37.5)	3(2.5)	33(27.5)	2