

## INCREASING BURDEN OF VIOLENCE: A FACT FILE.

FARAH ASAD MANSURI

Global trends of diseases shifting not only from communicable to non communicable but also to increased incidence of accidents and violence all over the world. The reason is self explanatory when we review the epidemiological transition in last few decades. Unfortunately living conditions were improved but life styles and values are deteriorated over a certain time with all its implications on our society.

The World Health Organization in its recently published first *World Report on Violence and Health* defined violence as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation.”

Among all emerging health issues, violence is taken as a significant public health, human rights and human developmental problem. WHO estimates that each year around 1.6 million lives, corresponding to 4000 deaths per day, are lost worldwide due to violence. Violence and resultant injuries affect us all, regardless of sex, race, or economic status but research shows that three quarters of all deaths in young people are the result of injuries and violence. Violence is seen as a result of prevailing frustration due to unemployment or poverty, violent media, lack of respect in the home or neighborhood and a tendency to see other people's actions as hostile even when they're not. Moreover, personal ill habits like drinking etc and environmental factors like heat and overcrowding raise the bar further.

Of those killed by violence, just over half die by their own hand, over 35% because of injuries inflicted intentionally by another person, and over 11% as a direct result of war or some other form of collective violence. Approximately 90% of deaths due to violence occur in low- and middle-income countries especially poorest communities.

The cost of injury and violence can be measured on both personal and societal levels including depression, mental disorders, suicide attempts, chronic pain syndromes, unwanted pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. Even a higher risk of alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, and high-risk sexual behavior reported among children victims with a disproportionate loss of productivity.

Therefore it is imperative to promote safer environments in communities and to enable the people to reach to their fullest potential. That is achievable through improved parenting skills, education, gender equality, school based and family based training programs for all vulnerable groups or individuals. Nevertheless, prevention strategies can be implemented as well whereby addressing societal factors like controlling use of liquor, smoking etc and more stress is to be on reducing the access to lethal means, including guns, knives and pesticides.

Lately, a measure known as Global Peace Index has been introduced and 153 countries are ranked according to the “absence of violence”. The Global Peace Index (GPI) is comprised of 23 indicators that

cover both the internal and external measures of peacefulness for 153 nations. GPI consists of eight elements: Well? functioning government, sound business environment, equitable distribution

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<sup>1</sup> Dept.of Community Health Sciences  
Karachi Medical & Dental College

of resources, acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbors, free flow of information, high levels of education and low levels of corruption.

Peace, prosperity and health of the nation are integrated processes and a multipronged approach should be adopted to control violence in the region in order to have a healthy prosperous nation.

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