

Newsletter Voice Against Torture

Voice Against Torture is an interdisciplinary organization that condemns all forms of torture and aims to raise awareness about various human rights issues.

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ABSTRACT

This Newsletter brings forth the avenues that either remain unexplored or do not get a chance of being published and in turn introduced or shared throughout the globe. It does have major areas of concern that encircle the rights of people, being overlooked for some specific internal motives or otherwise. This newsletter is being published with a strong hope of having a torture-free society.

This issue includes articles from throughout the globe making the newsletter a sort of a shared pool, used to exchange views. The global enigma of torture, its various manifestations, and the long-lasting effects it leaves on the minds of the victims, are discussed at length.

The variety of contributions, dealing with different forms of racking, carried in various parts of the world give a queer splendor to the newsletter, creating a sense of awareness and imbuing a row of obligation that we owe to such mucky happenings.

The issues of providing therapeutic treatment to the victims are discussed at length. In addition to this, laws governing corporal punishment, aftermaths of wars on the minds of young children, problems of fundamentalism, communalism, violence, and gender justice, and problems of torturous punishments have been discussed in detail. Similarly reports concerning child labor, and the quality of life in the post-war scenario have been included.

Voice Against Torture presents this humble endeavor with a ray of hope that the world may be brought to the rectilinear path. It as well welcomes an active participation in the form of arguments/discussions, news and articles.

x Integrative Therapy Principles as an Approach in Treatment of the Victims of Torture and Members of Their Families

Radojka Kraljeviæ, M.A., Clinical Psychologist, IRCT, Zagreb

Abstract

This article addresses one of the most severe problems – torture and the rehabilitation process. Papers underline some Integrative Therapy (IT) principles as an approach in treatment victims of torture (case report presented) and members of their families.

Introduction

Torture occurs in many countries all over the world. There are several reasons speaking in favour of why this phenomenon should be paid attention to. Firstly, the problem in question is a global one. Torture is the most effective weapon used against democracy. The United Nations has repeatedly committed to fight torture, but in spite of this, torture is still practised in a large number of member states.¹

The definition of torture used today is the definition from UN “Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment”, 1984. In this Convention, torture is defined as “any act by which severe pain or suffering whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.”

Psychological studies of survivors of torture stress out the following symptoms: anxiety, memory gaps, depression, low self-esteem, feeling of changed personality, frequent nightmares, difficulty in remembering and concentrating, and a tendency toward withdrawal. Fatigue, headaches and sexual disturbances are also common. We consider all these reactions to be normal in ordinary people who have been exposed to something as abnormal and cruel as torture.

Victims of torture and members of their families need rehabilitation which shall make it possible for them to re-establish control over their lives and live in their community, as those enjoying equal rights and as accepted members of the society.

In the last 10-15 years, a number of institutions working with survivors of torture have emerged ². The rehabilitation of torture survivors has become a new field, and communication between teams of professionals has opened the ways for discussion about their treatment orientation. The search for an effective treatment approach still continues.

Today psychotherapy for torture survivors, spans a wide range of therapies and it is increasingly understood that no single category of therapy holds all the answers.

In this work, we want to demonstrate a psychotherapeutic approach, according to which we work at IRCT, Zagreb, based on Integrative Therapy (IT) principles, developed by Petzold, 1966.

We shall stress out some of the statements from literature and basic IT principles for which we think that they are of great importance in the therapeutic work with victims of torture and members of their families.

Certain issues concerning the treatment of torture survivors are of fundamental importance and thus deserve attention:

- Physical and/or psychological trauma evokes psychological reactions in anyone. For this reasons it is not justified to stigmatize victims of torture as psychiatric patients. There is no evidence to suggest that torture survivors have any excess premorbid psychopathology.

- The individuals are not equally vulnerable to, nor similarly affected by potentially traumatic events. The reaction to stress is related not only to its intensity, duration,

And members of stressful events, but also it is connected with factors such as personality, structure, cognitive and conative characteristics of a person, previous traumatic experience, age, social status, and reception by other people after trauma [3].

- The torture endured by most survivors is often of sufficient severity and duration to cause psychological problems and impairment in social functioning. The individuals are not equally vulnerable to nor similarly affected by potentially traumatic events.

- Man's social and human nature is realized only through interaction and participation with others.

- Since torture often affects the body as well as the mind, it is necessary to deal with both physical and psychological sequel of torture.

- Torture reflects the society in which it is perpetrated. Similarly, the treatment offered to survivors is a product of the culture and the circumstances of the individual rehabilitation programme e.g. organizational model, hierarchy structure, dominant professional group, funding, etc. In countries with European cultural background, it is based on western concepts and classification of psychiatric symptoms; these concepts have limitations. Psychological attributes on human beings are best understood in multiperspectivity context: Cultural, ecological, antropological context and the individual reactions to events are best understood in light of the values, behaviours, and skills.

- Cultural multiperspectivities presented here posits that each individual's reaction to violent and traumatic events will be influenced by the combined attributes of those communities, to which a person belongs, and from which she/he draws

identity.

- The treatment of patients from different parts of the world needs not be identical.
- Clinical intervention in the aftermath of traumatic exposure is no guarantee of recovery.
- All collected information is confidential and it is necessary to secure a safe place for their safekeeping and preservation.

Having in mind the basic IT principles, we consider that it is necessary to also single out and additionally clarify some of the IT concepts which we use in our ordinary work with victims of torture.

- In accordance with the constructs of IT, a trauma means too much stimulation, in the course of the diagnostic process, single information can be observed as such (the principle of synopsis), however, the whole cannot be dropped as well (the principle of synergy).
- To understand the traumatic experience and to observe it within the framework of a continuum and the context through the past (retrospectively), the present (actual causal observation) and the future (prospectively).
- A diagnosis is not understood as a one-time procedure, but as a process which lasts as long as we work with the client, so we talk about a process diagnostics (area of analysis: an analysis of needs, an analysis of problems and a conflict, an analysis of the bodily functions, an analysis of the living space, an analysis of the continuum, an analysis of a resource, and an analysis of interactions).
- While working, it is the necessity of highest order to stick to ethical principles and the clinical legitimacy.

Method

Work with victims of torture and members of their families is a part of daily activities, which are conducted by the multidisciplinary team at IRCT Zagreb:

1. Identification of victims of torture and sending them to the centre for rehabilitation
2. Establishing indication for treatment
3. Inclusion in the treatment monitoring of the course of treatment (monitoring)
4. Preparation for return-process of making a decision (when it comes to clients outside

Zagreb)

5. Going to visit the former place of living
6. Visiting after return (follow-up)

Within the framework of the rehabilitation process, the victims of torture and members of their families are given medical, social, and psychological help.

The primary objective of the treatment is to rehabilitate and re-integrate torture survivors into society in order for them to be able to have control over and take responsibility for their own lives.

IRCT clients during 2002 /2003 years

Sources: IRCT Zagreb		N=224
Sex	Female	38.7 %
	Male	61.3 %
Age	01-18 years	2.4 %
	19-30 years	6.5 %
	31-40 years	13.7 %
	41-50 years	18.5 %
	51-60 years	18.5 %
	61-70 years	28.2 %
Marital Status	71-80 years	7.3 %
	Single	12.5 %
	Married	63.9 %
	Separated	2.8 %
	Widowed	19.4 %
Education (years)	Other	1.4 %
	0	7.1 %
	1 - 4	21.4 %
	5 - 8	17.1 %
	9 - 12	37.1 %
	13 - 16	11.4 %
Country of origin	17 +	5.9 %
	Croatia	19.0 %
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	76.5 %
	Other	4.5 %

Table 1

Results and Discussion

A system of monitoring was developed, which includes measurements of the level of trauma (measured by Harvat Trauma Questionnaire (HTQ)), and the degree of psychological problems: Anxiety, measured by STAI-Stait-Trait Anxiety Scale; and depression, measured by The Zung Scale of Depression; PTSP (PTSD Questionnaire for Adults, Watson 1991); and health-related problems,

measured by Zerssen's Health scale. We have decided in favour of the stated instruments in the first place, because we possess referent information for Croatia. We have also used from IT a model of the social atom as a measure of the social network of our client (in this case understood as a number and kind of contacts he/she realizes).

Monitoring-case report / Results as per phases of work

Level of health symptoms, depression, anxiety and PTSD during one year therapy (case report)

	Health-related Problems	Depression Scale	Anxiety State	Anxiety Trait	PTSD
I measuring	47	46	49	50	7
II measuring	35	37	40	49	4
III measuring	38	45	46	50	5
IV measuring	37	43	41	47	4

Table 2

Comment on results

I Measuring/Measuring at the beginning of the rehabilitation process

As regards the traumatic events, the client singles out the lack of food and water, forced separation from others, being close to death, murder of a family member, or torture. The results speak in favour of the expressed exposure to traumatic events.

At the PTSD scale, he/she states sleeping disturbances, nightmares, irritability, bodily tension, fear when approaching the place of trauma.

On the scale of depression, information are obtained which speak for achievement suggesting lowered mood, the feeling of uselessness and lack of prospects.

Through the analysis of results on the scale of anxiety there are information which speak in favour of expressed anxiety as a trait of personality as well as a state.

Uneasiness, fretfulness and constant expectation that something bad is going to happen are

dominating. One may feel to depend on a moment.

On the scale of health problems, he/she states pains in the back (the disturbance was present even before the traumatic event, before the war), dizziness, the feeling of suffocation, and pressure in the stomach, are disturbances he/she first felt in the exile.

The social atom speaks in favour of a small number of actual social contacts (has a contact with his wife and occasionally with a female neighbour).

II Measuring/Measuring in the final phase of rehabilitation

In the course of rehabilitation, there is a trend of lowering the symptomatology and reduction of anxiety and depression, as well as health problems.

The social network has been enriched by contacts with other clients at the centre, socializing before and after the therapy.

III Measuring/Measuring immediately after the return to the former place of living

Upon returning to the place of living, the monitored parameters have been rising to the values close to the ones, which we obtained at the beginning of the treatment.

As regards social contacts, they have been reduced to the people in the place he/she knew before who are, however, not very numerous.

IV Measuring/Measuring after a three-month stay in the former place of living

Through the inspection in Table 2, we can see that visiting the client and collecting information from the field, after living three months in the place of return, leads to a result that is closer and more similar to the data obtained after finishing the treatment.

Results obtained are closer to the values obtained during the course of rehabilitation, in the final stage.

At the social level, new contacts have been established with newly come neighbours.

Experience says that before we get to collect information, it is necessary to prepare clients for examination. It is necessary to inform them of the aim and purpose of examination which will be implemented. However, the basic purpose of examination must be to ensure dignity and welfare of a torture victim.

Considering those ethical principles, a professional, conducting the examination should avoid all additional factors which may cause re-traumatization. The creditworthiness of the collected data is in direct connection with the quality of the established contact with a victim of torture, or a member of the family, and the authenticity of the set aim because of which whole procedure is conducted. The context in which the examination is conducted, should ensure a parallel relationship between the client and the person conducting the examination.

Namely, if a point of their cooperation may not be identified, rather it be envisaged as going through the same

process of pain again, the examination may lead to an additional traumatization.

It is necessary to present to the client, in an understandable way, each registered achievement on single measuring instruments, especially if it is about progress in the form of reducing trauma-related difficulties.

Each applied measuring instrument is primarily a proof of an experienced trauma, copied to a psychological-psychometric language, and is an integral part of the course of the rehabilitation process being conducted. The achieved results make it possible for us to observe a single person and a group through health-related, social, and psychological aspects of the traumatic experience. They represent an indicator of strength and effectiveness of the conducted rehabilitation procedures the degree of recovery.

Through the case presentation, we shall demonstrate the tetradic model of work, which the Integrative therapy takes for structuring the therapeutical process and which was developed by Petzold, in 1972,1973,1974, the application of which we have tried while working with traumatized persons. We differentiate four phases:

1. the initial phase
2. the phase of action
3. the phase of integration
4. the phase of new direction

Case Report

The Initial Phase

The client was directed to the centre upon recommendation of the social

worker. He was born in 1932, finished an incomplete elementary school, married, father of three grown-up children. His son was killed during the war. Two daughters live with their families in Germany. Since 1992, he has been living in exile. While reporting on biographical information, he is sitting on a chair, bent down, looking insecure and frightened.

Before the war he lived at a place where everyone lived harmoniously. He spent a month as a prisoner. After the camp, he came with his wife to Zagreb, waiting for the news about his son: "While a person is waiting, there is hope; however, I did not see my son again he was killed." An exile carries in itself a new re-traumatisation and the need to mobilize additional adaptation forces one waits for accommodation, the realization of refugees' rights, one keeps waiting for the old life, for news from one's own region, waiting for news about relatives and acquaintances, waiting for some other life probably. Very often thinking about one's former life and can see no prospect. Lately he had been suffering from insomnia and difficulties in functioning, had high blood pressure, and most of the time he felt the incapability of changing something, he felt that he had lost control over his life. He thinks that there is nothing bad about coming once a week as he has too much time on his hands anyway. He does not see how he could be helped; however, he does not feel discomfort while we are talking.

(I Measuring)

The Phase of Action

Going back to his posture of sitting and his body position; we experimented with being bent down even more and lowering the head. He remembers the imprisonment, the torturer who was his neighbour practically until yesterday. It is known that in that particular region, during the World War II, Serbs and Muslims mutually helped each other. In this war, this was not the case, at least not when it comes to him. In the middle of the night, he was taken away and imprisoned in an old mine, together with other people from the same place. He was exposed to psychological and physical torture. "We waited for each day as a special one. It was not known whether we would survive. We were not allowed to lift our heads. When I was little I also lowered my head in front of my father if I was disobedient. Now I can clearly see myself at the table in the camp. Until today, I have not observed that I lower my head, I do not like either unknown situations or new people."

(II Measuring)

The Phase of Integration

I request him to look at the room from another, more upright position, and to report on how he sees it "in a different way." The same problem from different positions and angles is not the same. What does it mean to seat in a more upright way and to walk in such a way through the world having back one's dignity. How he sees himself, how other people see him, here in Zagreb? He reports on the feeling of not being accepted, he socializes only with his wife and a female neighbour. The housing conditions are also bad, he compares them with the living conditions before the war.

(III Measuring)

The Phase of New Direction

We are considering the possibility to visit his home in Bosnia, from the aspect of the new way of perceiving the reality through direct observation (the look of a boy, the look of a grown-up man). We evaluate our work through his sentence: "If I were not coming to the Centre, it would be difficult, each time when I leave you, I leave light-hearted." We pay special attention to the preparation for the return and the process of making a decision on his further place of living - - whether to return to his former place of living, or to some other place, whether to leave for third countries or stay here, in Zagreb. There is a fear of return as well as of an encounter with people who are living there now. We imagine solutions for his further life (advantages and disadvantages). We inform him of the possibility to visit his devastated home in Bosnia, to be accompanied by us. He leaves satisfied and touched.

After some time, we leave together to visit his devastated home in Bosnia. On the way to his home, we pass by the place where he was tortured, he expects to encounter his neighbours, he expects an encounter with the place where the trauma was experienced. At the same time, the first visit to the devastated home, as we accompany him, and the confrontation with the monument to the victims, he shows with his finger, the name of his son and wants us to take a photograph of him. We go back to Zagreb, he is touched, with greater hope as regards the return and with more prospects. The journey to the threshold of his house, in our accompaniment, is a

movement from the position of passive waiting to active doing. The visit to his own home contributes to his decision to return to the former place of living. He goes back to the neighbouring place and waits for his house to be re-built. He wants to go on with his life as it used to be. Many things have changed, the people and the place. It is necessary to renew the old social network and to establish a new one. After some time, he comes to visit us at the Centre. The encounter is full of emotions, he is satisfied that he is back; soon he will move into his house. He waits for a new start in his old-new place. Through us he connects his life in the exile and the return.

(IV Measuring)

Comment Regarding the Concept "Four Ways to Recovery"

The bodily memory showed itself as an initial point for reconstruction and re-experiencing the traumatic event and that is the first way to recovery.

The client has come into contact with his emotions and traumatization through the body, work directed in such a way, and reproduction of the past in our case has led to a more intense emotional living through at the level of experiencing in pictures.

Catching a firm hold of emotional and bodily feelings, which have appeared in the traumatic situation, has led to disencumbrance and the change of perspective of observing the totality of living and further tasks of life the decision to return.

Integration of the traumatic event in a new way has been made possible. As especially important in this example, we consider our engagement the visit of the devastated house that has contributed to taking over the responsibility of one's own life and for making a decision to return with one's head, high up. Generally speaking, it is our observation that the experience of solidarity is a very significant way to recovery, in work with victims of torture. It makes it possible to regain dignity and the humanity of approach as a whole, as unfortunately, torture has become a daily issue and that is something that can happen to anybody and can lead anybody to the same feeling of incapability and helplessness.

Conclusion

Multiperspectivity, multidisciplinary, and respect for ethical principles, are important guidelines in the treatment of victims of torture and members of their families. All those guidelines are unified by IT in a new way, through making it possible for the clients to have better self-realisation and integration, which can be achieved within the framework of the existing potentials. Traces left by a trauma are difficult to erase; however, if we do not treat them correctly, they will be left as a pledge to new generations and will continue the chain-transfer of suffering and evil.

In accordance with the IT principles, each client has his/her past before traumatic events, his/her present-life situation as well as what awaits him/her in the perspective.

We are trying in the course of the rehabilitation work to consider him/her

in the continuum and the context, in his/her totality of living. The client already bears in himself/herself at each moment of the present, events he/she has already lived through, possibilities of his/her future, he/she in the socio-cultural context, and he/she in the ecological context [6,7].

There are different approaches in the treatment of torture survivors and are not mutually exclusive.

Our results only point out another area in which the Integrative therapy can find its application in work with victims of torture and members of their families.

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Some Aspects Regarding Torture as a Punishment Tool

Enache Alexandra, Petcu Magda, Baboiu Eugenia Oana

After 1989, several terrifying confessions about torture applied in the communist prisons have been published. Torture is the way used by totalitarian regimes of all times, trying to oppress through their representatives, disproportionately vulnerable people. The purpose however, is to gain and then maintaining the power. For the first phase, using torture seems to be justified, but later the dignitaries are afraid not to be replaced by someone else and start using the punishment procedures. Different definitions of torture have been coined including the new meanings and the evolution of torture methods.

The democratic changes in our country determined new laws for the forensic medicine practice, which are based on the definition of the torture and differential diagnosis of it from other entities.

Torture was used as a punishment tool, because the criminal had to be punished and it was also to be used as a clearing tool. This idea is based on the concept, according to which the person, who committed a bad act, has to pay for it.

In the past, the punishment was public; not only to make it legitimate but also to decrease the crime rate and to discourage the people who intended to commit an illegal act.

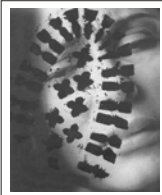
The change of focus on humans, a concept getting birth during "Enlightenment", replaced cruel punishments with milder ones, and with the purpose to bring the criminals on the right path.

Beccaria, in a chapter included in his book, shows the reasons for which the torture was applied, to obtain the confession from the victim, to avoid the confusion regarding his/her act, and to betray his/her accomplices. The author notes that torture was applied for reasons, which he considers unreasonable, in order to cleanse the shame and to make the victim testify some facts which he/she was

not accused of. At that time, there was the theory that a criminal can be the author of some criminal facts, undiscovered yet, and this had been used for quite some time as a justification of the use of torture.

Beccaria created a sort of dissimilitude between the divine and the human justice, showing the facts that were considered heretic, were over-punished and "covered Europe with human blood and built morbid pyres".

He formulated the "moderation principle", saying the proportional punishment would make an impression, as strong and lasting as possible over the people, while being as little tormenting as possible, on the victim's body. The author showed that the intensity of the physical punishment has to be decreased, repeating an early idea of Montesquieu: "The people must not be ruled using extreme measures".



Regarding the death penalty, he opined that it was frightening for the society because of the cruel instances it provides to the people thus hardening the matters. People on the other hand hate the death penalty as well as the executioner, even if he only does his job.

Beccaria's contribution in reforming the inquisitorial lawsuit is represented by the principle of free judgment of the probes and judge's deep belief, which was considered as heretic, compared with the old system where the judge was powerless. Beccaria was the instigator of the presumption of innocence and opposed to acquiring of the confession through use of torture. He rather denounced this method of extracting of information.

Beccaria's influenced almost all humanistic penal systems. His theories were the fundamentals of a trend that softened the punishment methods.

MicroAgenda's Torture

reasons for using torture are: accusing other people, indoctrination, intimidation, and isolation of the victim from the social group he/she belonged to.

Torture produces numerous physical and mental sequels. The victim loses self-esteem and would not trust anyone. The victim as well finds him/herself at a point where taking a decision may look impossible. Surviving a torture experience becomes extremely difficult; the victim develops likelihood for suicide.

Refugees are many a times subjected to abuses for purposes not unknown to others. The number of victims is hard to be estimated. In 1992, the number of refugees was estimated to 50 million throughout the world; 23 million of these were forced to leave their country of origin. The victims are males or females, children, young or elderly people who lost their families, homes, culture, and language, an abuse that brought safety and stability to them. They suffer from malnutrition or illnesses; they live in wretched conditions, in campuses and are exposed to violence and intimidation. Many were tortured, and presented symptoms directly related to torture. It is estimated that about 5-35 percent of all refugees were subjected to torture, which means that the population at risk is between 1.1 and 8 million people. To these, we add a substantial number of people who remained in countries of origin, as well as the people who were indirectly tortured, through their friends and relatives.

Organizations like Amnesty International tried to present the variety of procedures that induce suffering and

Punishment is at some point a way of defending the society, but torture without any doubt dishonors and decreases the cohesion of society. For a long time torture remained a legal and an accepted weapon. It appeared as a response to the loss of religious or political adepts who left their leaders. Banishing of torture strengthened the social cohesion and even abated the fear of the authorities that ever made people vulnerable. Unfortunately, there were times when punishment became harder and torture being employed to get information.

The goals of using torture are several, mostly for obtaining information. Initially the purpose is to make the victim testify but later the torturer getting some information even if not sure of tapping the right source. Other

harm to the victims. According to Amnesty International report, 1984, even if the experiences of the tortures are different, common aspects can still be traced.

Torture is practiced in some countries, such as Argentina, Chile, Salvador, Guatemala, and South Africa. Organizations like Amnesty International, Doctors for Human Rights, and Lawyers for Human Rights work for discovering and reporting new torture cases. In 1992, torture was applied in 93 countries according to Amnesty International.

Contribution of Different Institution in Implementing Torture

Police department got originated as a tool for implementation of laws. In the second half of the 18th century, the law procedures were reformed, and in 19th century the legal system appeared. French historian, Michel Foucault was of the view that schools, police, and jails were used by the state to control peoples' behavior and to reprimand them. Development of the bureaucracy in Europe and North America at the end of the 19th century was at the same time as that of the police forces, which were partly independent from the political control and even with some political duties. These facts caused the re-emergence of torture in some countries, some with a strong judicial system, where torture was legally banned. Growth of political police and state security was the most important factor in re-emergence of the torture in the 20th century, in Europe; this happened in Russia (1917), Italy (1929), and Germany (1932) as well. In Germany, state was the administrative device of the

national socialist party, this party augmented the definition of political crime and intensified the methods of torture and interrogation.

The decision of "Volkgerichtshof" (people court of law) could not be appealed. In June 1942, Heinrich Himmler, one of the key officials of the German national party, authorized using 'third degree' at interrogation against communists, Jehovah's Witnesses, saboteurs, terrorists, guerrilla members, antisocial elements, and Polish or Russian homeless. "Third degree" implied bread and water diet, physical exercises, isolation, sleep deprivation, and beatings.

In Russia, during 1922, F.E. Dzerzhinsky created "Cheka". The goal of Cheka was to defend the new revolutionary state. The suspects were arrested late during the night, physically and verbal abused, and taken to the prison. They were threatened to be killed and were judged without any legal procedures. The interrogation was accompanied by physical aggression, and at the same time new torture methods were devised. Most frequently used methods were: scalping and peeling skin from the hands; putting naked victim in a barrel where nails were introduced from the exterior to interior, and later the barrel was rolled over with the victim inside; or branding the forehead of victims with five-corner star. At Kiev (Ukraine), a new method was discovered. It consisted of putting a tube with an end on the victim chest and a rat was introduced at the opposite end, which was closed with a wire mesh. The tube was heated and the rat tried to escape eating the victim's flesh. Officially, the authorities denied using

torture, still others recognized it unofficially.

Physical aggression was used in the communist prisons of Romania. Information about this started appearing after 1989 and continues to present. The prisoners that opposed communist regime were assaulted by the guards or by poisoned prisoners. The torturers switched when they got tired, and the victims were waken up with cold water and the beatings could last for hours. Medical theories of the time that tried to justify the abuses, maintained that instances of the use of water, presented no risk to the victim's health; however, on the other hand numerous victims presented physical and mental sequels.

Torture does not simply mean physical aggression but also arrests during late hours at night, blind-folding and taking to unknown destinations, threats of rape, beating or execution, unprotected exposure to extreme temperature, threatening about the family members, that they may die as a result of accident, and questioning about present medication; so the authorities know how far they can go with torture procedures.

For the religious persons, torture means banning the practice of religion. In Romania, at Sighet prison, numerous Greek Catholic priests and bishops were incarcerated. There was no chapel, mass could not be arranged, and worshipers were not allowed to carry out religious ceremonies in loud voice. The priests were not allowed to wear their religious outfits and forced to wear regular clothes and were punished by giving most degrading chores. Deprivation of outside information pushed the priests to do extreme actions: "If we found at toilet, a

piece of a newspaper dirty with fecal material, left by one of the guards, we took and read it very impatiently".

Torture means isolation, whispered talk, abduction, secret and illegal detention, and banning the communication with outside of the jail (no visits or mail). Blindfolding during the interrogation increase the feeling of loneliness and helplessness of the victim. The isolation can be from the family, friends, or other prisoners. In communist prisons, this method was pretty popular. The prisoners were brought here for the disobedience to internal regulations. The priest Ratiu remembered: "Because I was caught talking at the prisoners doors I was taken to a small, dark cell, called 'the little one' undressed to undergarments. I stayed there three days, slept on the floor, and I received food once a day".

For torturer, it is very important to be in control while still in possessing of power. This can create a kind of dependence on the interrogator, who can offer even small rewards. The gun at the head of the victim, buried alive in the desert, represents a demonstration of power to the victim.

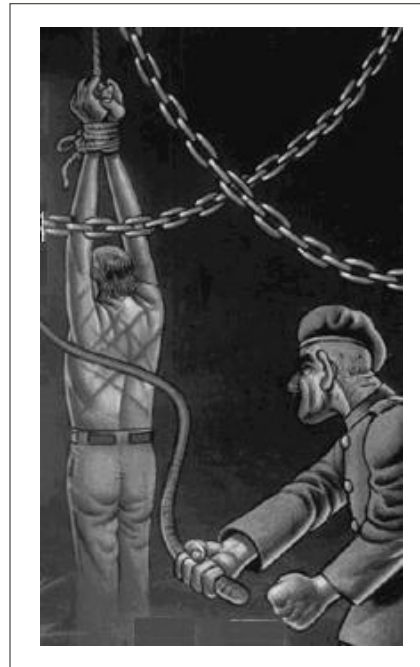
Torture means self or family degradation, insult, sexual threat or abuse, forced ingestion of fecal material, and the like. Torture means refusing the medical assistance to the sick persons, neglecting the symptoms of the disease and pain. It also means giving up because of a high pressure or unbearable pain, no matter whether confession is true or false.

Victims tell various reasons for their torture, but the most frequent is to obtain confessions. The means of reaching the

goal are various, ranging from physical pain to mental torment; sometimes a clear-cut distinction between them may not be possible even.

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Forgotten Children Of War
Tehmeed Razvi

Psychological trauma resulting from war leaves children to face one of the greatest tragedies of their lives: loss of innocence, family and home as well as a distorted view of the entire world and the people they are to live with. Every conflict forces children to live through such terrible experiences. Indeed, millions of children have been witnesses to events far beyond the worst nightmares of most adults. Because of the silence of young children and their influenced minds, their traumas and plights can be easily ignored but certainly this will tend to haunt us or the society we live in, at some stage now or in future. These forgotten children are the future of tomorrow with their needs that must be addressed to.

The last edition of the newsletter dealt with the trauma of children as witnesses to domestic abuse and some of the psychological disorders that occurred following it. In the current issue, we are addressing the trauma and effects of wars on children and some of the resulting behavioral disorders following separation and displacement. The following article, 'Play Therapy', affords explanation into how play can serve as an effective measure to overcome the trauma and the loss of child war victims.

According to UNICEF, in the past decade:


- 2 million children have died as a result of armed conflict
- 8,000-10,000 killed by landmines each year
- 4-5 million children have had their bodies maimed
- 1 million children have been orphaned or separated from their parents
- 10 million children have experienced severe emotional trauma as a result of the atrocities they have witnessed

Tens of millions of children are still caught up in the horrors of war.

In Sarajevo, where almost one child in four has been wounded in the conflict, 97% of the children had experienced shelling nearby, some 50% had been shot at by snipers, and 66% had been in a situation where they thought they would die. Another survey in 1995, in Angola, found that 66% of children had seen people being murdered, 91% had seen dead bodies, and 67% had seen people being tortured, beaten, or hurt.

Afghanistan has been involved in two decades of war stunting its development. For many children war has been very damaging, since its consequences have stunted every aspect of their growth. Children have not only lost their homes and families but have also witnessed torturous acts by their innocent and stunned eyes. Surrounded by bomb, droughts, and mine explosions, they suffer helplessly, facing one loss after another. Following the warfare and torments due to their political affiliations or religious beliefs, many a children along with their families have been displaced from fear of being pulverized, murdered or sold like commodities, and crossed the geographical boundaries, sometimes successfully and sometimes unsuccessfully. But this migration does not prove to be an end to the sufferings, so due to their illegal entry, many are denied basic human rights.

The mental health of the refugees seems less important as more urgent help and aid is required such as, medical aid. A breakdown in health, sanitation and water systems, leave children more vulnerable to even basic diseases. In many countries due to the war, roads are closed off, hospitals destroyed, hampering plans of health aid to reach victims. During war in Peru, many children died of fevers, violent diseases and diarrhea since



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Micro/Against/Dispute

problems; each either affecting the child directly or indirectly.

Two-thirds of refugees approved for resettlement are children. During the early war years in Afghanistan, more than one-quarter of combatants were under 18, and towards the end of the war, children may have constituted nearly half the number of total combatants. Many children were forced to join the forces; this was a traumatic experience for most of the innocent children at a time they were meant to be playing. It is a chilling thought that many children as young as 10 years are seen playing soldiers for real. More than 250,000 children under 18 years of age are combatants. In places such as Burma and Sierra Leone, children are intoxicated with drugs or alcohol to desensitize them to witnessing torturous killings as well as participating in such brutal acts. In Guatemala too, children have been psychologically broken down to be rebuilt as killing machines in order to inflict punishments and traumas on others in the name of war. For many children this is the only skill they ever get to acquire, education and play are forgotten and killing becomes their only means of survival and gives them the power that they otherwise lack in the war-trodden countries. Some children, who intend to leave and return home, assuming that the house still exists, face another challenge on return. Family and relatives face difficulties in accepting the returned soldier because of what one has now become. Even if these children are to stay within their homes, without some psychological support to overcome their trauma, the war will never end for them. Surely these early childhood experiences are serious reasons to worry about values and the diminishing human decency.

medicine and health aid workers were not available on time. Between 1981 and 1988, while a protracted civil war waged in Mozambique, 454,000 children died above the expected mortality, victims of the lack of medical care as well as violence.

The collapse of social services and the loss of community and family support can hit children hard. Most women may be unable to access assistance of gynecologists or pregnancy care and lack advice about breast-feeding, that amounts to the poor condition of the infants. One quarter of the women and children are in need of medical attention for a variety of ailments, including stress-related high blood pressure, post-traumatic stress disorder, physical injury or disability, impaired hearing, vision loss, and a variety of cardiac, kidney, respiratory, and gastrointestinal

Many children are too young to process the consequence of traumas, they encounter when losing a parent. Children are likely to undergo difficulty in the adjustment and absorption of trauma. The separation from parents during childhood and subsequent loss of the parents may in itself be a severe stress and a risk factor that causes social and psychological problems during childhood and later in adult life.

“The children are immediately traumatized, producing high levels of anxiety and anguish affecting their psycho-social development which then leads to even greater levels of violence. If thousands of soldiers who have been taught to kill and traumatize by acts of terror are simply returned to their communities without any psychological support, then the horror will continue, but this time under peace, so even though the war will be over, the war will continue.”¹

Unaccompanied children who have been separated from their families in war zones, face heightened dangers of exploitation, sexual abuse, torture and murder. The children that are left behind as orphans due to losing parents in the war, face enormous problems when they are left at the mercy of a merciless society when they are left to fend for themselves. Many children, who are left without any caretaker, following the death of his parent(s), leave their homes and become the rolling stones of the streets. Many are unable to live a normal and a happy life, since they are unable to provide the birth certificates, a proof of their birth in Pakistan. This contributes to the lack of true figures to estimate the extent of orphans and their plights.

Shelter is given to continue living, yet provide little to live for. Shockingly, one of the defining realities of war in our time is that armed conflicts now kill and maim more children and women than soldiers. Some children are placed in orphanages that do not have the facilities or trained staff to help these children productively. The conditions of some of these shelters can not only hinder recovery but can also inflict further damages. Conditions of orphanages in Romania were well publicized in 1989 for their appalling states that shocked the world, and in countries such as China, documented mortality rates are staggering in the orphanages.

In case of Pakistan, there is a distinct lack of facilities that could cater for children that need specialist care and rehabilitation. However, in Pakistan, most children that are orphaned are taken care of, with difficulty and sometimes resentment, by the extended family. The reason is that it may add financial pressure to an already-impooverished family. Incidentally, without parental protection and support, orphans are at risk of mortality, malnutrition, and are less likely to be immunized while lacking in medical care.

War-orphans can be subjected to double discrimination; firstly, because their parents have died and secondly, because the relatives see the children, they are to care for, as unwanted mouths to feed when resources are scarce. Many children that are left destitute or who take to the streets are vulnerable to further abuse and exploitation. The abuse deters many from attending school even in the cases where it seems

affordable. Teachers and priests in some institutions subsequently abuse many of such children either psychologically or physically. One would think that the loss of family and home were more than enough traumatic experiences to deal with.

Nancy Verrier in "Primal Wound (1993), while putting down the aftereffects of the separation of child from the mother, points to the irreparable loss in the following manner: "The separation of mother and child causes psychic shock and should never occur unless there is no other choice. The wound makes the infant feel that part of itself has disappeared, leaving it with a feeling of incompleteness or lack of wholeness."

According to UNICEF, some 10 million children from throughout the world suffer psychological trauma as a result of war experiences. It was found that almost 80% of Rwandan children witnessed atrocities during the country's 1994 massacre of 1 million people.

Fear is one of the universally true and profound experiences of children, witnessing the horrific and traumatic events of war, resulting in nightmares and flashbacks. Many of the children are left overwhelmed, insecure and bitter.

"For children, the deepest scars of war and flight are the hidden ones. Loss of childhood and education, and the horror of flight, rape and forced combat cut deep into the psyche of children. The results can be loss of trust, aggressive behavior and tendency toward revenge, which, in time, may manifest in another cycle of violence." 2

The trauma that is experienced by the many war-affected children is a deep and complicate psychological process (intrapsychic). Separation and loss of parent is perhaps as equally devastating for a child as for any sensitive and a sensible man. Witnessing a parent dying or being killed makes the loss even more difficult to overcome, and an utter unsafe row runs through the witness. Time does not always prove to be curative for trauma, and if the experience or feeling is not managed appropriately with support and empathy, instead memories are forced to be repressed, the road to recovery further goes out of reach. The consequences of which can be a devastation of social, personal and economic growth.

According to Bowlby, internal working models of attachment serve to provide mental representations of self and the way others relate it to, which guide a person's expectations of and behavior in relationships throughout life. Even though the child may not be mature enough to cognitively process the trauma or linguistically developed to vocalize his sufferings, his behavior and reactions will reflect the loss in one way or the other.

Witnessing of traumatic events, anxiety disorders also occur. Children respond to certain things or situations with fear and dread, as well as with physical signs of anxiety (nervousness), such as a rapid heartbeat and sweating.

Following parental separation or loss, children can experience several symptoms of separation anxiety disorder, crying, whimpering, screaming, immobility and/or aimless motion, trembling, frightened facial

expressions, or excessive clinging. Children may also return to regressive behaviors, such as thumb sucking, bedwetting, or fear of darkness. Older children may show extreme withdrawal, disruptive behavior, and/or inability to pay attention. Regressive behaviors, nightmares, sleep problems, irrational fears, irritability, refusal to attend school; outbursts of anger and fighting are also common in traumatized children of this age. The child as well may complain of stomachaches or other bodily symptoms that have no medical basis. Academic and social school performance of such children often suffers. Depressions, anxiety, feelings of guilt and emotional numbing or “flatness” are often present as well.

Aid workers in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been encountering adolescents, who have 'weeping crises,' who are in a state of depression and were found to have increased levels of aggression and delinquency. Adolescents, exposed to traumatic experience such as war, may display loss of trust in adults and fear of the event occurring again.

Those children, who feel they have been abandoned and cannot process the reasons for their circumstances, perhaps due to parental death, may go for self-mutilation. Adolescents who have difficulty talking about their feelings may show emotional problems, physical discomfort, pain, and low self-esteem. Some may feel like the “steam” in the “pressure cooker” will be released following the act of hurting themselves. Children may cause self-injury or self-mutilation by picking and pulling skin and hair, setting fires in the home when they are lacking in emotional warmth and security, biting, and head banging.

Episodic and repetitive self-mutilation can also be motivated by an intense desire for security and uniqueness, desire to exercise control over others, self-hate, pressure from multiple personalities, relief of alienation, and impassivity. Many children injure themselves out of desperation or anger over the war-struck situation, to show their hopelessness and sense of worthlessness.

Medication can sometimes help children overcome the traumatic experience, but behavior therapies can be very effective in helping the child recover. It may take months or even years to overcome the torturous experiences. Unfortunately, in Pakistan, there is a distinct lack of provisions available to the refugees. Often due to their status, lack of education, and language barriers, they are unable to avail the available preconditions. Many of the most severely affected countries have little or no policies and insufficient money to cater for the abandoned or crisis-ridden children of war.

It is only when people become aware and recognize the needs of children caught up in wars that these innocent children will be able to be helped rather than further reprimanded for a crime they have not committed.

Food shortages, poverty, illiteracy, which are the aftermaths of the war, will leave many as a growing destitute class. Allowing sleeping dogs lie will only increase the number of children whose lives have been ruined, not by any disease, but by the pain that is inflicted upon them by society, the pain that is inflicted by the war trauma, and many other such heinous acts. So there is a dire need of going for some tangible

steps in order to bring the mighty monster under control to save mankind from its colossal damages.

“On the seashore of endless worlds
children meet.

Tempest roams in the pathless sky,
Ships are wrecked in the trackless water,
Death is abroad and children play”

Children of war face some of the most devastating and torturous experiences imaginable to many an adult minds. Childhood, ridden with guns and bombs instead of dolls and sandcastles, calls for specialist intervention such as Play Therapy, to overcome and reinstall positive and soothing experiences in the naïve and innocent minds.

Children lose the opportunity to experience love, care, security, the right to education, and basic healthcare provisions due to wars. Children suffer from multiple short- and long-term psychological problems as well as develop a kind of distorted and dichotomic image of social behaviors.

Play therapy serves a significant role in helping children overcome their trauma through release of suppressed emotions. In addition to this, it is the environment where their physical, intellectual, lingual, emotional, and social skills are able to be developed. This is necessary, as many children have not had the opportunity to ever experience play. Play takes many forms and each in turn stimulates different aspects of development. For example, some toys can encourage hand-eye co-ordination as well as strengthen muscles of various parts of the body. Women who have not been able to tend to their children's needs, perhaps due to their own traumatic experiences have had a pretty bad neglect, that now tantamount to such behaviors. Play therapy provides a safe and dynamic forum for the expression of

emotions in a creative, non-threatening, comforting, and reassuring environment offering a wide range of benefits to war-struck children. Children need reciprocity, communication and concentration from the therapist.

The environment of play therapy room is the most important factor in engaging a child, since the first impression must be a positive one. The therapy room should be welcoming, friendly and decorated with appropriate colors that stimulate and soothe the emotions. Child-orientated images and pictures that are non-threatening, do also serve the purpose. As soon as the child enters such a room a sense of security, warmth, and comfort may arise from within the heart.

Even though, it is easy for most children to relate to toys, many that are grief-stricken and under-stimulated are often faced with confusions, they may feel even more isolated and bewildered. Often, children do not know what to do with toys and various play materials, the environment is new and possibly there may be a language barrier as well. It is the art of the therapist and the environment that is likely to influence the children to the most.

Many of the children who attend for rehabilitation are involved in some form of creative therapy as this is the most appropriate and easy way of helping children overcome their trauma, grief and loss. Children's paramount feelings are that of anger, sadness, grief and loss; inevitably leading to depression, and other Post Traumatic Syndrome symptoms as well as Exile Syndrome. This does not exist as a clinical entity but has symptoms similar to that of

PTSD, yet some of these are unique to Exile Syndrome. These differences are due to the fact that the children not only try to recover from the trauma they have suffered, from the abuse they have been subjected to, and the psychological experiences they have suffered due to the social displacement they have experienced.

The tools required for effective play therapy are many and could even be any. It requires the imagination and expertise of the play therapist that determines the effectiveness of the play material. Each element used in play has a significant role, affecting the child in different ways, depending on their experiences and gives value accordingly, e.g; properties of materials such as water, sand and dough are soothing and relaxing for the child. Some children use manipulation of dough and hammering to exert and emancipate their anger and frustration by pounding and bashing. Eventually it may lead to a state of emotional stability and relaxation. This may also improve their motor skills and coordination as well as help building muscle-strength that perhaps a very young neglected child would need.

Soft toys such as monsters as well as puppets, slimy creatures can help symbolize various ideas, denoting scary emotions for the child. The traumatized children use these toys to recreate traumatic experiences and enact those situations, which has possibly engulfed them into a deep sense of anesthesia.

During one such session, a child used the monster to represent the soldier who had shot his father. He represented himself as the lion puppet that eats the soldier. This way the child exerted his feeling of

anger and revenge towards the soldier, which relieved him of his fear and anger. He liked being the lion, which symbolized strength and power and made him feel confident. Besides gaining emotional relief, his linguistic skills also improved through the process that was spread over a long period of time.

Children below three years of age may also be seen in a state that is quite upsetting. Their presentation is scattered, faces dull, usually either crying or emotionless, hesitant and physically malnourished. Play therapy is vital and perhaps the only source of stimulation and relief for these young children, who are too cognitively immature to comprehend their terror. Since many of these children's needs have been neglected, they have poor locomotive skills and reflexes. Their physical development is also improved by manipulating, squeezing and experimenting with different toys that are colorful, and with different textures. This gives them the ability to link information together to form mental concepts; hence through play therapy the child endures intellectual development.

The most important behavior that is observed in very young children when they first attend play therapy is their inability to control their emotions. Relaxation using music as a tool provides children with a sense of comfort and security.

To encourage and develop socially, these children sit in a group, playing with dolls, singing poems together, playing pretend, all helps in collective interaction of children. Group therapy can relieve feelings of isolation, sharing

their experiences as well as learning social behavior rules of taking turns and being considerate for each other's feelings.

Case study

An 8-year-old Afghan refugee girl, whom we shall call Y for anonymity, was one of the many children who had to abandon her house due to the fear of Taliban. Initially Y presented as being very apprehensive and agitated. There was little eye contact and she resisted in talking about her feelings of the time that her home was raided. She did however, talk of the situation more openly and explicitly, but the scenario was told in a story-like manner with no emotions being expressed.

She told us that the Taliban forces, forcefully entered their family home at night and took her father to jail. There was screaming and wailing from her mother, Y was scared but silently watched the events. Her baby sister was still for a while, as if in shock. Y didn't understand why they took her father and felt to be very much confused. Her baby sister needed feeding, but her mother was delirious and then fainted. Her 10-year-old brother kept crying and was begging for the release of his father but was in reaction simply kicked away by the insurgents. He sat in the corner holding his knees, looking really scared; Y felt this too but was helpless and did not know what to do. Y was sweating slightly as she recollected the events and rubbed the palms of her hands together. She said she did not know how to help her mother who was emotionally so distraught. At one moment she thought her mother had died when she fainted. Y said she wanted to call for help, but it

was dark in the night and there was nobody to help them. Y said she felt really angry as to why this was happening and felt helpless for not knowing or being able to do anything. She said she was confused when all this was happening. She had a severe headache, felt dizzy, and her heart started pounding. The small girl thought of feeling a load of responsibility on her meager shoulders. Children usually feel responsible for their parents when they are suffering or hurting which can be so overwhelming that they no longer realize what they themselves are feeling. Here when her mother wasn't in her proper senses and her father had been taken away, she felt pressurized to do something for her mother and the sibling. Her baby sister never cried again, since the poor soul died that very night. She looked down as she tried to hide the tears in her eyes whilst talking about the death of her sister. She mentioned many times that she was angry, yet she showed little emotions, even though this word occurred several times in the sessions.

Y is still bewildered as to the whereabouts of her father and lives in the hope that she will again find him one day. Y has great difficulty in coming to terms with the anger and the fear that is depicted and projected in her behavior. She no longer fears being left alone in the room for therapy and in fact has participated in many group activities and has learnt many new skills that have made her feel more confident, providing a good distraction. Y still suffers nightmares, feeling as though somebody will or has come to kidnap her. She occasionally suffers anxiety attacks, but seldom cries. Even though she now knows that the incident took place

because her family was Shi'ite, she still cannot really conceptualize and understand as to why it did happen. Years on from the tragedy she has begun to lead a life without letting the anguish interfere but much more therapy is required before she recovers from within. There is no justification for these kinds of incidents and tragedies.

Play therapy has given her and many children like her, a healthy environment to overcome trauma and develop her skills so that she can get out of her distressed life and be happy and normal again. It plays a significant role in the growing and developing of child. Hence, giving them a chance to re-discover a person within them.

Play Therapy is a ray of hope for the child victims of traumas, who are engulfed in the dark shadows of pain and distress. Though the past cannot be changed but by helping them out of their distress at least their future will be brighter. These children are flowers to me that have been crushed or trampled by the adverse happenings and circumstances, and play therapy gives them just the right nutrients so that they may blossom once again. Through mental sunshine, flowers of happiness, peace and prosperity will be jubilating on this earth.



Fundamentalism, Communalism and Gender Justice

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It is with the firm belief that if we don't engender our understanding on fundamentalism and communalism, lives of women will be endangered.

Articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India guarantee freedom and equality to women irrespective of their caste, class, creed, race, and religion. But fundamentalists of all hues prevent them to be realized in Indian women's lives. Communal conflicts in the civil society leave permanent scars on the psyche of women from different communities/religions/ethnic groups, and prevent their joint efforts in realizing gender justice in the personal and public settings.

Fundamentalism has a connotation of a religious dogma that aggressively furthers/promotes rather imposes traditionalist beliefs and practices, including patriarchal gender roles [14]. It is oppressive because it asserts that women should be confined to the care of children and that of their homes, and must always submit to male chauvinistic rules and regulations. Fundamentalism insists that patriarchal control over women's sexuality, fertility and labour are God-given and should not be contested in any way or by any means. Thus it reinforces its ideology by using vehicles such as family and kinship networks, media, state apparatus, criminal justice system, cultural constructs, and the like. Fundamentalism is in fact a response to modernization, socio-economic changes, demographic shifts and multiculturalism.

Communalism, about two centuries back, had a connotation of identity based on community. In the post-colonial discourse, communalism was known to be an antagonistic, collective mobilization on the basis of religion, leading to the partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan and recurrence of communal conflicts riots and carnages [15].



Background

The issue of fundamentalism, communalism and gender justice acquired prominence in the political agenda during mid 80s, both globally as well as in India. End of the UN Decade for Women (1975-85) Conference in Nairobi brought to fore firsthand experiences of women who were at the receiving end of fundamentalist backlash. In several Latin American countries Philippines, Spain and Italy the Christian fundamentalists had penalised women who used contraceptives or had undergone abortions. Similarly, in many Islamic countries, the Muslim fundamentalists demanded denial of higher education for women. When women's rights activists of Kuwait were actively

taking part in the deliberations of Nairobi Conference, back home their government had trampled upon the basic rights of Kuwaiti women to higher education, because the fundamentalist forces felt that higher education made women uncontrollable. In Algeria, female-headed houses and their households were burnt. The fundamentalists felt, "How dare women divorcees, widows, deserted, single, and minors stay without male protection?" In the North African countries, women's groups that opposed

clitoridectomy of the African girls were witch-hunted. Dr. Naval Saadawi, who as a medical practitioner refused to perform clitoridectomy and wrote best-seller books on the subject, was imprisoned [23]. Women scholars, writers, novelists and professionals had to leave their native countries and live under exile due to fundamentalist backlash. Dr. Tasleema Nasreen from Bangladesh is still leading a nomadic life as fundamentalists are madly after her. In several Asian countries, women's rights activists, who demanded gender-just family laws were penalised and implicated in false charges of sedition. In South Asia, Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim fundamentalists imposed strict dress codes as per their own version

Women's Gender Forum

happen to be feminism and fundamentalism.

Disintegration of the organised working-class-movements has made the toiling poor to search for new identities. In the contexts of homogenising influence of corporate capitalism supported by the economic globalisation, religion, ethnicity, and caste-based identities have become aggressively assertive. All patriarchal powers perceive women as a repository serving for their identity and honour. Hence women end up shouldering greater burden of identity politics. Scores of power-struggles of identity politics are settled over women's bodies by control (dress-code, restriction on mobility, code of racial purity and punishment for inter-caste mixed marriages, inter-religious and inter-racial diversities), violence (rape, tearing of pregnant woman's stomach and assault), forced fertility (ethnic cleansing) and psychological damage (by keeping women continuously under the state of terrorisation, humiliation and subjugation).

Gender Question in Identity Politics

Communal forces had strengthened their hold on important spheres of the state and civil society and include subversion of constitution and judiciary, and communalisation of culture, media, religion, and lifestyle, while women remain the major casualties in the bargain.

Communal politics has always played the major role in determining rights and limits of women. From the beginning of the constitutional debates, the question of personal laws, which govern important areas of man-woman

of religion. They punished women who cut hair; by throwing acid-bulbs on their face, physical assaults, social boycott and the sort. Antiquated, medieval, atrocious, and anti-women family laws were imposed, dealing with important issues such as marriage, divorce, custody of children, alimony, maintenance, right to stay in the matrimonial or parental homes, and the list is endless...

It is in this context that all those interested in upholding women's dignity were forced to examine gender question in identity politics; for past two decades, it has remained one of the central concerns of the women's movement. During the last quarter of 20th century, only two movements have gained strength simultaneously, and they

relationship viz. marriage, divorce, custody of children, guardianship rights, maintenance, alimony, and property has remained controversial. On one hand, the constitution of India guaranteed equality to all its citizens irrespective of caste, class, religion, and sex, while on the other, in the name of respecting all religions it formulated discriminatory family laws for women from different religions. The majority communalists are demanding Uniform Civil Code from a Hindu perspective. The Bharatiya Janata Party's concern for Shah Bano's plight and its criminal indifference and abetment of Sati as in the Roop Kanwar case should be seen from this perspective to Hinduise the democratic norms of the Uniform Civil Code. This also creates genuine fear in the minds of minority communities that takes a perverse form in increasing rigidification and restrictions on women who are demanding gender-justice in the personal arena.

Any fundamentalist propaganda that concerns itself with identity, makes use of the gender question, to impose rigid norms on women who are identified as repositories of culture and tradition. These norms manifest themselves in son-preference and female infanticide.¹ Glorification and sati (widow-burning) is evident by the fact that thousands of sati temples have flourished all over India and Global Association for Glorification of Sati has its headquarter in Chicago (USA). Witch-hunting of widows, as they are perceived to be inauspicious, dress code, general demeanour and the social construction of an ideal woman who submissively accepts the patriarchal norm imposed by fundamentalists' agendas are the main issues that are being influenced for one cause or the

other. In the last Kumbh Mela, 60,000 women devotees were deserted by their brothers, sons, or relatives. Allahabad police tried its best to reach them to their respective families but the family members refused to have known them. Now the government has made a special budgetary provision for the abandoned widows at the pilgrimage centres, and for women living in difficult circumstances.

The fundamentalist belief also takes form of forced marriage of a widow to her brother-in-law (known as chader-nawazi) among Sikhs to stop division of property. Among one sect of Muslims, the qazis and agents organize mutta (temporary) marriages. Young girls are often victimized by their poor, illiterate, parasite, and unemployed relatives in these marriages that are not registered and hence have no legal status. Main attraction for such contract marriages is Meher amount (cash as well as goodies). The fact to be emphasized is that regardless of the creed, women are exploited in order to gratify personal dispositions or even to keep the prestige of the family intact. The girls are mostly cheated and sexploited [11]. The criminal justice system of the demanding countries and supplying countries don't take stern measures since the hard-currency, received through tourism is the most crucial concern in this religious form of flesh trade. The Kinship network is used by the fundamentalist forces for cross-country trafficking of women. Young, frail, weeping and hungry girls are wrapped in burqa while being transported from the South Asian Countries (India, Pakistan, Srilanka and Bangladesh) to the Gulf countries. Many die or disappear in the process, and those who either survive the torturous assaults

or become physically disease-ridden as a result of developing sexually transmitted diseases or HIV-AIDS and mental illness, are brought back to the native country by the same nexus.

Valorisation of Barbaric Behaviour with Women of Minority Communities

In the riots that broke after the issue of Babri Mosque, the use of video cameras to capture the gory details of the rape of Muslim women in Surat, in the presence of military and paramilitary forces, revealed the most horrific dimensions of brutalisation of the psyche of civil society. Showing of these video-films in front of jeering crowd left permanent scars on the minds of women and children of minorities. Even in Somalia, the fundamentalist forces used videotapes capturing weeping and wailing naked women victims of rape to terrorise, humiliate, and intimidate women and show them their place of restricted existence. Cleansing Operations in Bhopal (1992) and Gujarat Riots (February 2002) have created nightmarish situation for the Muslim women, who experienced worst forms of sexual violence rape, torture and tearing of uterus of pregnant women [7]. While rape is a crime, perpetrated during communal conflicts, the use of media to record, duplicate and even sell videos of rape victims is unprecedented and speaks of the threatening and the most horrific use of media. Apart from this, the insular feelings created after each riot results into confinement and restriction of mobility of women and girls.

Nations and states from all around the globe, without exception have proved to be ruthlessly against minorities. In

England, when temples or mosques are demolished by skinheads, state machinery chooses not to address these issues on the grounds of non-interference with minorities. The policy of 'multi-culturalism' in Britain, and 'respect for all religions' in India should be seen in this light. Patriarchal bias of the state always compromises women's interests so that the ruling party can fetch block votes by pleasing the patriarchs of the minority/migrant communities. 'Non-interference' by the state when adult girls are confined by their family members so that they don't elope with their boyfriends and can be hurriedly forced into arranged marriage, is part of this game.

Root of Communalisation of the Minorities

During the last two decades the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) and economic globalisation at the behest of Trans-National Corporations (TNCs) and Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) have perpetrated tremendous human miseries by super-exploiting women workers and by attacking basic sources of livelihood and sustenance of large majority of the urban, rural, and tribal poor people. Insecurity in the day-to-day survival needs has opened the avenues for religious sectarian forces that promote 'dog eating dog culture'. "Catch them and kill/maim/burn/rape them" policy of the custodians of law and order in Gujarat has resulted into complete dwindling of the faith from the state administration and the criminal justice machinery. The whole of the existence seems to be segmented to sustain super-exploitation of women belonging to minority communities. Dual economy thrives on

fundamentalist/communist-supported discrimination based on religion, language, migratory status gender, and even caste of the workers. [21] Revolutionary mass movements of the working class and oppressed nationalities have faced tremendous crisis of leadership, and the void thus created has opened the avenues for the flourishing of fascist forces.

This phenomenon has now become global, as is apparent from the deteriorating situation in Somalia, Bosnia and the Middle East. In this uni-polar world, the aggressive stance of the Orwellian BIG BROTHER -- the USA, in its economic and foreign policies, to retain its hegemonic power, aids and abets these fascist forces. The US after Kabul's overthrow of Mujahideen, made women's liberation a major issue. At the same time, the USA allowed fundamentalist warlords into acquisition of power. In Iraq, the USA is joining hands with the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, a conservative Islamic group tied to the clerics of Iran. Patriarchs of Pentagon, in charge of Iraq's reconstruction have appointed only male judges and male lawyers to develop a legal code for Iraq [3]. Educated women in Iraq feel that the power vacuum left by Saddam's fall will be massively filled by Shia Muslim political figures, who may seek to impose conservative social mores such as hijab, weeding out of women from the public life and double standards of sexual morality [13].

International networking of the chauvinist forces of all hues: racist, casteist and, religious have posed threat to all secular forces wedded to the ethos of pluralism in social, cultural,

educational, and political governance of human existence, as never before. They are making extensive use of electronic media televisions, radios, and Internet, and merely poisoning young minds with xenophobia. "Catch them young" policy of fundamentalist forces, snatch away milk and textbooks from children and groom them to be gun-totting terrorists. Science and technology in their hands generate death and devastation, instead of providing solace and cosiness; women suffer the most in this destructive game. Their hate campaigns generate endless human miseries in the form of either September 11 tragedies in the U.S. or the Gujarat Riots of India. Thousands of women become widows and millions of children become orphans. In the absence of economic independence (as fundamentalists don't approve of working women), the weaker sex is forced to marry surviving and already married men. After each war/riot/carnage, polygamy flourishes with the blessings of religious bigots. It happened in Afghanistan during the last decade [5]; at present it is happening in Iraq. Chasm generated due to identity politics comes to the fore even in the relief operations for natural disaster (such as Latur and Kutch) or man-made disasters as the communal ideological weapon of 'WE' versus "THEY" prevents minorities to take any advantage. After every disaster, the minorities are further marginalized and get thrown in the stigmatized labour market for intensive capital accumulation by the economically and politically dominant groups.

Fundamentalism, Communalism and Violence Against Women

Denial of human rights and fundamental rights, enshrined in the Constitution of India, by the fundamentalists by imposition of dress code, not granting rights to work, and attacking the female-headed households have been objected by women's rights groups throughout the world. Extreme form of punishment meted to women by the fundamentalists is in the form of stoning to death of "an adulterous woman" by the assembled community. During the last decade, innumerable women in several countries have lost their lives in painful and undignified manner at the hands of self-appointed 'custodians of morality.' 'Honour killing' has become most widespread among all types of fundamentalists and communalists throughout Asia, Africa and the Middle East, of course not only among the tribes, but among the so-called civilized sections of the nation states as well. Recently, the law court of Shariat in Nigeria has passed a judgement of stoning to death to mother of an infant, Ms. Amina Lowal for committing adultery. There has been an international uproar against the judgement; as a result, for the first time the state has not executed the decision of the Shariat.

Sex Segregation: The fundamentalist forces have prevailed upon the state to enforce sex-segregation in Iran, Albania, Sahel in West Africa, Afghanistan, Malaysia, and Turkey [9]. "Women in Saudi Arabia live complex existence which mingles strict traditions and codes of conduct with modern demands of education and freedom" [16]. Non-entry of women in the stadium and sports complexes is practiced in several theocratic states. On January 22, 2003, chief justice of Afghanistan ordered

nationwide ban on cable television and coeducation [27].

Al Badr Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Jabbar, an offshoot of Lashkar-e-Toiba are known to have pasted a poster outside the government Higher Secondary School, asking girls to discontinue their studies on December 19, 2002.

Dress Code: Kashmir conflict has created a situation of great fear and insecurity for the lives of women [6]. Those who opposed the imposition of burqa by Kashmiri militants, had to face dire consequences. Under Taliban rule, Afghanistan went to absurd lengths to implement Islamic laws that made women's life a never-ending punishment. They imposed ban on drivers of all types of vehicles from carrying women not wearing chador or chadri. Talibans also stopped women from washing their linen in rivers and ponds [22]. A senior Shiv Sena leader, Mr. Nanak Ram Thavani, has urged the federal and state governments to formulate and implement a dress code for girls in all schools, colleges and other teaching institutes [27].

Within hours of the expiry of their deadline given to Muslim women and girls to observe pardah, the Kashmiri fundamentalist militants killed three women, including 2 students and a teacher on the morning of 20th December 2002, at Hasiyot in Thanamandi tehsil of Rajouri district.2

Right to Work: Women were the first targets of theocratic states in the neo-colonial phase and the post liberation phases in the Middle Eastern, the Mediterranean, and the North Western

countries. In all these countries, women bravely fought along with their male comrades against the imperialist forces. But once, the 'revolution' or 'the national liberation' was attained, the fundamentalist forces dumped women into the four walls of domesticity. Arab News, the Saudi English Daily has revealed that Saudi women are more concerned about finding good work in tough jobs than being veiled.

The Kashmiri militant group, Lashkar-e-Jabbar has asked Muslim women to quit their jobs and stay home, or face punishment, including death.³

In spite of the threats by the fundamentalists, women are entering male bastions such as foreign services, diplomatic missions, judiciary, military, police force, sports, such as soccer, political bodies, academic institutions, industrial chambers even in the theocratic states.

Female-Headed Households: Fundamentalists of all hues perceive female-headed households as eye-sores and make all efforts to persecute, stigmatise, isolate, marginalize, and terrorise the deserted, divorced, single and separated women leading an independent, economically self-sufficient life with dependent children or senior citizens. They don't accept women as heads of the household. Wherever, the fundamentalist forces become powerful, female-headed households face persecution and witch-hunting.

Communalised Education: In the Xth National Conference of The Indian Association of Women's Studies, the issue of communalisation of school and

college textbooks was discussed at length since representatives of different states had reported that there was "a systematic attempt by the Sangh Parivar to 'educate' young and old through schools, shakhas, temple networks, satsangs, etc. Through such education which encompasses a whole range of institutions, the Sangh Parivar has managed to draw into its fold large number of women, who in turn seem to transmit this hatred to their children." [10]

Changes in the curriculum that is being pushed through the National Curriculum Framework and the new NCERT textbooks, portray women only in highly regressive patriarchal terms within the framework of the family. They have targeted women's movement as being responsible for the break-up of the family system. Many of the scholars of women studies have interpreted Gujarat tragedy as a failure of education that created brutalised masculinity.

Kashmir situation has jeopardized education of women. The same happened in the ULFA-affected areas in Assam and LTTE-prone areas in Jaffna, Sri Lanka. The Christian fundamentalists in Latin America are no different; all of them use young women in suicide squads and as cannon fodder for their barbaric agenda. In the camps of Vishva Hindu Parishad, young girls are brain-washed first with an ideological investment of communal education ("Muslims will outnumber Hindus", "Muslim men are lustful and Muslim women are breeders", "Muslims are born criminals", "Caste system is crucial for racial purity", "Shudras and ati-shudras are pollutants") and at the same time given training to use weapons lathis, swords, and daggers [26].

Communal mindset created by Hindutva forces is so powerful that young college students of the enlightened Wilson College got a humorous article based on stereotypes about 'MUSLIM' as a murderer, a drug seller, a cheater in cricket, a kidnapper, and a terrorist. Its title is PAKISTANI MATH QUESTION PAPER. The very first question signifies man-woman relationship among the Muslims. It goes like this:

“Abdul was sent to jail for murder. He had seven wives in his house. Abdul distributed money to his wives in such a proportion that the youngest and the most recent wife receives maximum, and oldest wife gets minimum, and each wife gets double of her former competitor. Abdul has 1700 Rupees left in his house. His oldest wife needs at least 25 Rupees per month. Find out the time when Abdul will have to break jail to come out and sop that his wives don't have to starve.” There are innumerable websites with similar constructions that demonise Muslim men.

The most widely circulated cassettes of the speeches and slogans by Sadhvi Ritambhara, the crudest version of Hindutva ideology provides Ram, centered and RSS-led perspective that has nothing in store for women but “Agni pariksha” (i.e. enter the fire to prove chastity and purity). Sadhvi Ritambhara's speeches and pet slogan “If there has to be bloodshed, let it happen once and for all” during Ram Janmabhoomi campaigns organised by Hindutva forces between 1986-1990, played crucial role in massacre of Muslims in the 1992 riots [24].

Ban on Inter-caste, Inter-religious and Inter-racial Marriages: Obsessions about racial, caste, and religious purity are so deep in the psyche of fundamentalists having strong aversion against inter-mixing and inter-marriages among citizens of different caste groups, religious communities, or racial backgrounds. Newspapers are full of incidences of torture, abduction, forced abortion, lynching, and murder of newly married couples belonging to different castes, religions, ethnic or racial backgrounds. Even the state and criminal justice system miserably fails to provide adequate protection to such love marriages. Such couples have to face social boycott, do not easily get jobs, accommodation, and school admissions for their children.

Conversion of husband or wife as conditionality for 'allowing' couples to get married is a logical extension of inward-looking mentality, generated by the fundamentalist mindset.

Communalized Violence Against Women

The communal violence that women have experienced recently in Gujarat is unprecedented in terms of the degree of state complicity, the unashamed valorization of these acts of depravity, the horrific participation of women in the violence and the creation of an implacable wall of hatred that provides the reason and then the justification of its spiral effect. It took us 50 years to document excesses against women during the partition; one wonders how much longer it will take now.

The following poem by Ms. Lara Jesani vividly captures the pain and pathos of

women victims of fundamentalist wrath and communal carnage, whether they were women victims in 1992-93 Mumbai riots, or women in refugee camps of Gujarat 10 years later, in 2002-2003.

Eyes raining, without mere control,
Scruples hurt, thus dew drops roll.
Lightened, piercing, still with grief,
Forever, staring in disbelief.

Hearts melting, defences down,
Afflicted feelings, all around.
Timeless moments, of unending sorrow,
Darkened scars, that none can borrow.

Deep in hurdles, full with distress,
Pleasures replaced, by pure sadness.
Love's demise, of responsive pain,
A day's repose, then it starts again.

In response to rising communal violence, several women's organizations in Bombay have formed a united front to co-ordinate work, regarding relief and rehabilitation based on the reports of fact-finding committees of riot affected areas in the rural, urban, and tribal regions of Gujarat. Aawaaz-E-Niswan, Akshara, All India Democratic Women's Association, Documentation, Research and Training Centre Justice and Peace Commission, Forum Against Oppression of Women, Forum For Women's Health, Maharashtra Mahila Parishad, Maharashtra Stree Abhyas Vyaspeeth, Mahila Daxata Samiti, Majlis, NFIW, Sakhya, Special Cell for Women and Children, Stree Manch, Stree Mukti Sangathana, Stree Sangam, Swadhar, Vacha, Women's Centre, Young Women Christian Association, all joined the commemoration of national protest day on May 13, 2002, against sexual assault, beating, rape, and burning of women and

young girls, the cutting open of a pregnant woman and killing her foetus, the burning of babies and children. They condemned this violence and demanded that:

1. FIRs should be registered, especially in all reported cases of sexual assault and violence against women, accepting testimonies of survivors as witnesses, in all police stations with copies made available to public groups.

Due to the state and central governments' complicity, women's groups felt the necessity of organizing a special public hearing on Gujarat carnage in front of an independent Women's Human Rights Commission [17].

A crisis center dealing with violence against women, housed in the Bombay Municipal Corporation Hospital, Dilaasa (sympathy) team, visited refugee camps for women victims of Gujarat Carnage and recommended that trauma counseling for the victims needs to be undertaken on a long-term basis [4].

Global Initiatives

In March 2003, the International Criminal Court was established for the local groups spread all over the globe, seeking justice at international level when there is no hope in the domestic system [8].

A dramatic development shocked most delegates and observers on the last day of the 47th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York. Only half an hour before the 15-day session was to end, Iran's representative, supported by

delegates from Egypt and Sudan, rose to register his government's objection to paragraph (o), which read: "Condemn violence against women and refrain from invoking any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination.

They were not prepared to have their reservations on the paragraph, officially recorded after the document had been adopted by consensus in its entirety. Nor were other delegations willing to drop the paragraph so that the rest of the document could be adopted by consensus.

The session was suspended in the absence of consensus on the 'agreed conclusions' relating to women's human rights and the elimination of all forms of violence against women, and delegates were told they would be informed about a fresh date for the resumption of work. The crisis was caused by the inflexibility of a tiny minority and some observers felt that efforts towards the elimination of violence against women had been sacrificed at the altar of a few male egos.

By the time the session is reconvened, most non-US based delegates and NGO representatives, who had come for the CSW, will not be around to keep a watch on the document. The agreed conclusions emerging, are meant to provide direction to policy and action at the national and international levels to promote women's human rights.

Women's human rights and the elimination of all forms of violence against women was one of the two themes addressed by the commission, this year. However, the final document that will presumably be adopted (with or

without the 'controversial' paragraph) includes several significant features, such as the recognition that economic and social sector policies which increase economic disparities among and within countries can also exacerbate gender-based inequalities and violence; the recognition that violence against women is intimately linked to gender-based discrimination and stereotypes; and that men can play an active part in preventing violence against women if they are enabled to recognize their role and responsibility through education and sensitization.

Current Debates

Women are not victims of their gender alone, they also bear the brunt of a patriarchal system that operates at the level of the community too even a besieged community. The very same community, which stuck together in terrified solidarity for its survival, has also sometimes turned its back to women who have been 'defiled' by the enemy. Women's rights activists have seen this prejudice in operation before and it should not come as a surprise. Yet, it does seem rather unfortunate that a community that has intimate knowledge of large-scale violations does not hesitate to further marginalize its women. It is therefore a complex motif, creating women specific safety nets, autonomously managed by women, becoming crucial in this context.

Women's groups such as Majlis (Mumbai) and Masum (Pune) are spearheading the campaign to stop funding hate "to bring an end to electronic collection and transfer of

funds from the US to organizations that spread sectarian hatred in India.”⁴

Women and Family Laws

For past two decades, women's groups providing support to women in distress have been demanding gender-just family laws in the Asian, African, and Latin American countries [2]. The gender-just family laws should also govern migrant women from the developing countries, settled in the industrialized world.

In India, majority of secular women's groups support reforms in the family laws to ensure gender justice to the women of different religious groups [1]. Hindu Communal organizations are demanding the Uniform Civil Code. Due to pressure of women's groups, there have been reforms in the antiquated Christian Divorce Act. Hindu Undivided Property Act has been reformed to give share in the ancestral property to the daughters. The state of Andhra Pradesh has granted Land Rights to women. In the post-independence period, the only act directly concerning Muslim lives that was passed, is the notorious Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986. The Act takes Muslim women out of the purview of section 125 of Criminal Procedure Code that ensures maintenance to a divorced wife. “The 1986 Act empowers the magistrate to order mehr, maintenance during iddat (3 months following divorce) and a fair provision to be paid within a month of application. Following this payment, the husband is absolved of any financial responsibility and the onus of maintenance of the woman, falls on the parental family, or as a last resort, on the Wakf Board” [28]. Hence, the secular women's rights groups have

evolved a slogan “All women are Hindu, All minorities are men, but some of us are Brave”. It signifies double burden of 'patriarchy that controls women's sexuality, fertility and labour,' and 'communalism that brutalizes minority and dalit women’ shouldered by women in the identity politics.

This year, on 6th January, women's groups in Bahrain demonstrated outside the Justice and Islamic Affairs Ministry, to press for the establishment of civil courts to handle divorce and family cases.⁵

Hindutva and discourse on equality have been at loggerheads in the current past. Domestic Violence Act, 2002, generated heated debate around the issue, whether casual/occasional beating should be considered as “domestic violence” [12].

Centre for Women's Development Studies (Delhi) and Majlis (Mumbai) organized a national seminar for women activists and lawyers on “Maintenance Rights of Muslim Women Issues and Concerns” during 6-7 May 2001, in Delhi. The seminar concluded with the three broad statements.

1 The personal laws of all communities should be strengthened to make them more gender-just and weed out gender-discrimination.

2 The Muslim Women (Protection of Right on Divorce) Act, 1986, must be strengthened to uphold positive and gender-just interpretation.

3 The ceiling under section 125 should be removed.

The National Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2001 declares that:

“At the initiative of and with the full participation of all stakeholders including community and religious leaders, the policy would aim to encourage changes in personal laws such as those related to marriage, divorce, maintenance, and guardianship, so as to eliminate discrimination against women.

The evolution of property rights in a patriarchal system has contributed to the subordinate status of women. The Policy would aim to encourage changes in laws relating to ownership of property and inheritance by evolving consensus in order to make them gender-just.”

Summary and Conclusion

Globalization has made civil society more introvert. Fundamentalist and communal elements are using casteist, religious and kinship networks for their sectarian, short-term and narrow motives. Chauvinist forces all over the world have been supported by an equal number of women, just as they are supported by men [19]. All networks with global connections are executing the projects of xenophobia, misogyny and jingoism. In this situation, only women's rights activists with multicultural perspective, can play important role as catalysts for women's empowerment by promoting education, capacity building programmes, employment and economic self-sufficiency, political and legal rights for women. Without ensuring women's rights, no civilisation can have a human face. We should not forget that globalisation has widened income gap between the resource poor and resource rich countries. Free play of market forces have made majority of Indian

women more vulnerable. We need, both distributive justice in the political economy and gender justice in the civil society, the state apparatus and the political structures to strengthen both the system and ourselves. NGOs have provided islands of security in some pockets. Inspiring experiences of Mohallah Committee movement, in which people and police work in collaboration for communal amity, should be replicated [25]. In this situation, affirmative action by the democratic institutions and the nation state, in secular areas of human governance, is the only answer. Because women are considered to be repository of culture and tradition, women will have to evolve creative ways of dealing with identity politics. New symbols, icons, imagery representing multicultural ethos and praxis of gender-justice will have to be actively promoted to counter fundamentalists and communalist forces.

Building solidarity and sisterhood transcending religious barriers on global and local levels, is a major challenge. At an interpersonal level, in schools, offices, communities, restaurants, pluralism in food, dress and recreational activities has come about. But the political use of religion creates an artificial barrier. We need to stress that one can be 'religious' and 'plural'. The liberative aspect of religion can be highlighted and symbols of Bhakti movement, Sufism, and liberation theology in Christianity can be popularised by us. Sweeping generalisations about secularism may become extinguished; the need is to generate alternatives in our socialisation patterns, celebrations and overall lifestyle [18].

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Throughout the world, statutes are enacted to counter indecent and untoward happenings, but the irony of the situation is that in case of laws concerning the juveniles, the laws appear

to be somewhat torturous in nature rather than implying to prevent the corporal punishments, the youth is subjected to. This situation warrants a close scrutiny of our child-related laws. In case of Pakistan, there are around 80 laws that need to be amended or discarded because they do not conform to Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC). For example, section-89 of Pakistan Penal Code 1860 allows “acts committed in good faith for the benefit of children under 12 years of age by or with the consent of the guardians.”

These laws might thought to be punitive in nature, but probably can never be termed to be the ones, used to protect children from being punished. The fact however, remains that these laws need to be reconsidered, amended, or even repealed. Children are vulnerable to such ruthless principles, they cannot raise voice against any such laws that are enacted by the government, and are detrimental to their well-being. Corporal punishment of children is also a form of torture that has not been addressed in the world countries including Pakistan.

Though Pakistan is a signatory of Convention on the Rights of Child (CRC), it has not worked out to bring them in accordance with CRC. There are around 80 laws that need amendments or relegation. The implementation of these laws is another problem that has never been handled seriously.

Violence has ever remained deeply rooted in human societies; to which children have ever been exposed. The basic rights of the children are violated unabatedly almost on daily basis, as children do not enjoy any legal

protection against any kind of violence whatsoever.

Children face violence at homes, in the classrooms, and at the workplaces where they are sent to work in order to keep the family going. According to newspaper reports, only 60 % children are enrolled in schools for primary education. Girls face discrimination, thus the number of girls enrolled is half the number of boys. Again the dropout ratio at primary level is fairly high. Nearly half of the children enrolled in school leave the institution before completing their primary education; only one student out of every 1000, reaches graduation level.

The reasons for such a high dropout rate are multiple, poverty being major one. Another significant reason is corporal punishment that is rampant in most of our schools. Children are usually afraid of their teachers who punish them regularly. Recently, a case was reported in Shehdadkot (District Larkana), where a student, Anis ur Rahman was severely beaten by his teacher for having arrived late; the beating was so severe that Anis fell unconscious. This kind of treatment at schools certainly leads to bad performance in studies, which in turn brings more punishment. A child finally starts despising his teacher, school, studies, and every thing related to studies.

Many students suffer corporal punishment a form of punishment that has been banned in almost all developed countries. CRC also discourages this practice in very unambiguous words. According to article 28-2 of CRC, a child must be protected from physical and mental torture while in the care of parents or any other guardian. Article 37 says, "No child shall be subjected to

torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

This is exactly what is happening in our schools and madrassas. In the second week of February 2004, a student of class 9 received severe punishment, resulting in the loss of his left eye. The child had made a whistling sound while he was playing in the ground during recess. This act of whistling enraged the teacher. And now the boy will have to live with one eye for the rest of his life.

The point to be pondered over is that the suffering of a child as a result of making small mischief can ever be justified? Are there any reasons that may be posed to rationalize a happening that has in fact impaired the life of the little angel? Probably none would ever be able to justify the sad happening.

Ministry of Social Welfare reports that on the average around 10,000 children flee their homes every year, after being maltreated or tortured by their own parents or other family members. According to a survey conducted by NGOs' Coalition on Child Rights (NCCR) in eight districts of NWFP, some 404 children ran away from home to evade torture inflicted by either the family members or the teachers, last year. The Survey further revealed that over 77 % of the parents avoided reporting the disappearance of their children to police.

Mental torture suffered by people in hospitals and police custody generates frustration among people making them less caring parents. Mothers are thought to be the benevolent figures, but those who are subjected to maltreatment by their husbands or in-laws are most likely

to abuse their own children. And outside the houses, children are to face social injustices, police tyranny, and what not. Similarly, the ever-growing trends of violence in society and lack of appropriate laws to check domestic violence, make children vulnerable to torture not only by the parents and other family members but also at the hands of those, whom the children come in contact with.

Teachers of religious institutions, particularly those belonging to underdeveloped areas of the western province of Balochistan and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) are famed to be the cruelest. They have been accused of chaining children and beating them mercilessly. NCCR studies conducted in NWFP reveal that over 57% of the head of institutions feel that punishment is a requisite in maintaining discipline, building character, and facilitating the learning process. Though 78% of parents say corporal punishment is practiced in schools, and 64.1% knew their children are punished, only 40% of them say it is right.

There may be numerous cases where children have suffered at the hands of their teachers, the benefactors; however, a few of them get a chance of rising to the occasion or getting a projection through media, coming to public knowledge. One of such incident was the beating of few students including the son of Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports. The minister took serious note of the incident and using his influence got the teacher suspended. The teacher was arrested and remained in police custody for quite sometime. This incident led to the statement of the Education Minister in which he declared that corporal

punishment is banned in schools. But the thing that needs to be thought over is that had the child been from a poor family, was such a statement expected from the Education Minister.

Most recently, molestation of about 25 boys, in a private cadet school, by the principal has come to the limelight. It has also caused much consternation in general public and many people have protested and demanded quick and stern action against the culprit. The victims were sent to Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences for their medical checkup, and the medical reports confirmed their molestation.

This shows the apathy of Pakistani legislators towards public issues. A law, enacted in colonial period, continues to be the rule of the land for more than a century, without any reconsideration. Many other such laws need a revision since there has been an enormous change in the circumstances, which might possibly be difficult for the law to encompass.

Pakistan's Education Minister, Zubaida Jalal had announced that a law banning corporal punishment in schools was in the offing on Nov. 21, 2003. There has been no outcome even after the elapse of three months.

It is not the surrounding that affects our day-to-day relationships; religion plays a very important role in a society like us. Religious teachings sometimes provide instructions that are not easy to understand in their implied meanings and settings, leading to confusion among the simple men. It is the cultural interpretation of religion that does influence our decisions as well. So it is

the perception that affects our decisions to a large extent.

There are other Ulema who emphasize on strict punishments if teenagers do not pray five times a day. But the life of Prophet Mohammad (SAW) stands witness to the fact that he has ever been kind to towards children. Islam in itself is a religion that promotes love for children. It is the religion that is more than concerned in dealing and treating the children in the best possible manner. Many examples can be cited in this regard showing the concern about children, e.g; if a woman is praying and her child starts weeping, she is required to shorten her prayer to feed her child.

But the religious teachings cannot simply work, if not implemented in the best manner, so that a humane attitude may be adopted towards everybody. We are witness that the juvenile prisoners are subject to worse kind of treatment, even if we have the best teachings with us. According to a survey held in 1998, there were 2700 juvenile prisoners in Punjab alone, of these, 91% were awaiting the conclusion of their trial. The conviction rate is around 15%, which means that most of those detained have to stay in prisons with other criminals, without having committed any crime. There are no educational or recreational facilities, and the authorities of the prisons are notorious for their brutality and callousness.

According to another report published by Amnesty International, there are 4500 children awaiting their trial in different prisons of Pakistan. "The legal system is failing in its role as guardian of detained children and even lawyers and judges are not fully aware of children's rights under the law," said Amnesty International UK

media director Lesley Warner. The report lists various case studies to highlight its findings, including that of a 13-year-old boy who spent four years in prison because his case file was lost. Another 13-year-old Afghan boy has been in prison since the age of 10 because his charge sheet was missing.

The government has promulgated Juvenile Justice System Ordinance, 2000, consisting of some 15 sections. According to this Ordinance, a child is defined as a person who at the time of the commission of an offence has not attained the age of 18 years. Every child who is an accused or a victim of an offence shall have the right to legal assistance and shall be provided with an attorney having at least five years standing at Bar.

Again this established law needs implementation, the area we lack most. Amnesty International commented on this state of affairs in the following words, "However, a widespread lack of awareness and failure to implement these measures means that the rights of children in police custody or prison in Pakistan are often neglected."

The JJSO does not even allow a court to hear children and adult cases on the same day but this happens regularly. This results in children, including first-time offenders, being transported and held in lock-ups with adults, where they are at risk of abuse in violation of the law.

Both international human rights law and the JJSO strictly prohibit the award of death penalty to children, but children continue to be sentenced to death in Pakistan. This happens in the lower

courts where not all magistrates are aware of the JJSO and in the Tribally and Provincially Administered Areas where the Ordinance is not in force. Children whose ages are contested remain imprisoned with adults, sometimes on death row, until their age is confirmed and the matter clarified. According to reports, in Punjab alone, there are over 300 cases where the age of the children is being contested.

The Secretary General of Amnesty International visited Pakistan in 2001 and met President General Pervez Musharraf. The president then commuted the death sentences of several child offenders, but they are still languishing in jails, probably the matter needs to be looked into.

The situation in tribal belt is even worse, as the writ of law does not stand applicable in its true essence. The condition of children is even worse and needs a very organized effort to rectify the situation in those areas.

These tribal areas are spread over 27,220 square kilometers of land and are populated by 3.7 million people; these areas consist of 7 political agencies and 6 frontier regions, enjoying a special status, while remaining part of Pakistan. This special status of the areas along the Afghan border is a legacy of the colonial rule that still haunts us. Pakistan has not made any concrete effort to commit a change in their status. Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) was enacted in 1901. This law allows tribal elders to punish criminals by imprisonment. But the plight of children being punished in these areas for one reason or the other, or those being maltreated at the hands of their own parents or relatives needs to be paid heed to. And the task is not a

molehill of course. It does voice for a concrete and a systematic effort on the part of the government to have the things in order.

It may appear an alarming revelation for other Pakistanis as well as for the rest of the world, but it remains a fact after all, which must be condemned with full force and vigor. This sorry state of affairs needs serious attention of the authorities concerned.

There needs to be an amendment of the laws that deal with juvenile cases and at the same time the juvenile offenders may need be treated in a more tactful manner, so that after completing their turn in the jails, they may turn to the rectilinear path. It is however possible by reducing their imprisonment period, awarding easy bails, and not subjecting them to rigorous punishments. To supplement these efforts it would be worth appreciating to extend the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance 2000 throughout the length of the country, so that the children living in less privileged areas get the same treatment as their counterparts in other parts of the country get.

Prevention of Torture New Strategies

Dr. S.D. Singh, Hon. Director & Ms. Anjana Madhavan, Project Co-ordinator

India with her population over one billion, claims to be having the biggest democracy in the world. Indian scenario requires an in depth study to know the direction in which India is moving as far as torture and human rights violations are concerned. The scenario that we see from outside could be a tip of the iceberg. Democracy at its political level, could be a blanket to cover many noxious events like torture.

It is worth re-reflecting that Indian population is still in the unconscious collective memories of the cruelties, they had to suffer during the past colonial rule. The modern democracy of India, at the conceptual and perceptual level, has imbibed certain negative components from the past colonial rule and Kingdoms. These concepts are still dwelling in the brains of some of the so-called democratic leaders, thus it can safely be said that Indian democracy badly requires thorough clearing. In a democratic system, the elected leaders have to be well-informed about the needs of the society, with regard to prevalence of torture and other such atrocities. In a country like India, the role of elected leaders, in preventing torture is vital and pivotal. Delivering the information on prevention of torture to the public and to its elected leaders, in view of new enactment or implementation and activation of the existing laws, need hard, sustained and coordinated efforts from the supporters of democracy.

Prevention of Torture

From our work experience in the prevention of torture, we are convinced that:

1. Torture is prevalent all over the world.
2. Awareness of public, to co-operate with law, is distorted due to many reasons.
3. Indian system is deeply rooted in the past colonial and feudal system
4. Training of the law enforcing agencies is inadequate to meet the needs of India.
5. Proactive Torture prevention strategies are not planned in India.
6. Multi party political leadership, implementations by the executive, watch And opinion expressions of the media and legal guidelines by the judiciary are not functioning in

a balanced state as envisaged in Indian Constitution.

In the genesis of an event of torture, two components namely; perpetrator's and victim's are confronting at a given time in the community or in the premises of detention places. To prevent an event of torture, the two or more parties getting involved have to be aware and co-operative to abort an event of torture for the betterment of the concerned individuals, or for the nation as a whole. In all prevention programs, primarily the effort must be to avert the event of torture. To achieve this objective the concerned individuals or groups also has to get involved and co-operate to design the torture prevention program. The international tools implemented in many countries are playing significant roles in the prevention of torture. However, in some countries like India, these activities have not gained adequate momentum due to multiple factors.

Components and partners in an event of Torture could be:

1. Alleged offender/Criminal/POW
2. Law enforcing agency/Armed forces/Local Police/Paramilitary
3. A situation in the detention place/community/Jail/Police custody

Prevention levels

The above three are usual classical components and partners in the event of torture. In planning the prevention activities following levels may be followed.

1. Primary Prevention

Primary prevention means, an event of torture should not take place, it should be avoided and aborted then and there. The objective of the law enforcing agency or the alleged offender is not a matter of concern here. The objective of primary prevention is stopping the occurrence of an event of torture, altogether. The situation also can be modified or altered in such a way as to prevent the occurrence of torture.

2. Secondary prevention

Sometimes the effort by the agency (NGO) or the

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TORTURE PREVENTION STRATEGIES I. ROLE OF LAW ENFORCING AGENCIES		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training before joining Service training Clear directions from higher officials Presence of NGO Identify the perpetrator and terminate services Encourage public/public relations Gain the trust of citizen Learn from about community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intervention by higher officials Intervention by NGOs Keeping the perpetrator away Transfer the victim to a medical institution Providing Legal assistance Mobilization of public opinion Positive media coverage Liaison works Peace talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure medical care to the victim Keeping the perpetrators away Investment of higher officials Involvement of NGOs Legal assistance Punish the perpetrator Liaison works Peace talk Positive media coverage Take accurate testimonies

Table-1

role in preventing torture with the support of non-governmental organizations at all the three levels. This can be done only if the state is willing to implement the torture prevention program. The proposed action to be taken by the state through law enforcing agency is given in Table-1

Role of Community Leaders/Vulnerable Group/POW/Offender

The general awareness about human rights has almost reached every nation and community.

The community can initiate 'Legal Watch' about the activities of the known perpetrators within the community. If they take adequate efforts to prevent torture at all the three levels, productive torture prevention activities can be launched. The proposed actions to be taken by the community are given in the Table-2.

TORTURE PREVENTION STRATEGIES II. ROLE OF COMMUNITY (offender-criminal/POW)		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness building Cooperation with LEA Pass information to NGOs Involvement of Community Leaders Good relation with LEA Provide accurate information to media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Control of the situation by community systems & NGOs Liaison between state & NGOs Extend medical care to the victim Mobilization of positive public opinion Legal assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend medical care to the victim Prevent impunity Liaison between state & NGOs Punish perpetrator Keep the perpetrator away Investment of higher officials Continuous peace talks Liaison work

Table-2

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concerned parties, working to prevent torture at primary level, fails. After taking all best possible steps to prevent or abort an event of torture, still if it happens, immediate further steps are to be taken by the concerned (NGO) or the concerned parties playing the role of liaison to prevent further worsening of the torture; it may be termed as early intervention. With such early interventions the sufferings of the victims are minimized. The main objective is prevention of the worsening of torture.

3. Tertiary Prevention

In spite of all efforts to prevent torture if still the event of torture takes place at some occasions, and the perpetrator gets the opportunity to impart maximum torture to the victim. At this level the concerned agency (NGO) or concerned parties working for prevention can do all possible actions to prevent the development of physical, psychological and legal complications; intervention of the agency (NGO) at this level is of great relief to the victims. The objective is, however, prevention of complication of torture which had already happened.

Role of NGO

An NGO can play a paramount role while working for any of the three levels of prevention. The role of NGO and practical working guidelines are given in the following three diagrams. In any expected events of Torture, the NGO playing the role of liaison, to facilitate prevention should be physically present at the location/premises. The NGO should initiate positive communications with the perpetrator (state) and offender (expected victim) sufficiently earlier in view of aborting the event of torture. In other words, physical presence, initiation of proactive communication between the alleged offender and persons representing the authority is vital and important in preventing or aborting an event of torture. In other words, the event of torture is likely to take place in the absence of a liaison (NGO) agency and other concerned authorities. Physical presence and systematically planned effort through dialogue and communication, is the key role of the NGO in prevention of torture.

Voice Against Torture

(absence of NGO and torture occurs) Genesis and Components of Torture



Diagram-I

(presence of NGO and torture is aborted) Segments of Torture Role of NGOs



Diagram-II

(presence of NGO and torture is aborted) Segments of Torture-Separated and No Torture event occurs



Diagram-III

Role of Law-Enforcing Agency

In any state/community the law enforcing agency, which are the known perpetrators, can take proactive

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On the Occasion of 'Events'

If torture is considered as an event or group of events, episode or continuous happening in a community, the state authority and NGOs can necessarily work in collaboration to prevent torture

At primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Just think of a group of people taken into custody or group of POW, the state authority is willing to join with NGOs or if the NGO can persuade the state authority both can work hand in hand for the noble cause of planning and working for torture prevention programs. The proposed action is given in Table-3.

Discussion

The concept given above is a hypothesis. Our center is working with the theme 'Prevent Torture, Resist Torture & Help Victims of Torture'. This theme is based on the above hypothesis. In the first two aspects, that is, for prevention and resistance of torture, we are working at primary prevention levels. At the secondary level, with our

presence and early interventions, we were able to prevent worsening of many situations. In most of the situations, media and elected representatives of the region joined in our ventures.

At tertiary level prevention, even though we experience resistance from the authorities, we are able to help the victims of torture. The resistance from the authority is experienced especially during the legal procedure when the issue is tried to be taken up to the higher authorities for pursuance of the perpetrators. With the help and treatment of torture survivors, we are able to prevent worsening and development of complications.

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Characteristics of Quality of Life in the Post-war Circumstances of the War Torture Survivors, According to Gender

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Introduction

During the recent decades, in many areas of medicine including psychiatry, there has been an evident trend of evaluating the patients' quality of life. Determining the quality of life, makes the evaluation of treatment possible, on one hand, and on the other hand, it makes also possible to evaluate the need for a treatment in the first place.

Quality of Life

When defining the quality of life, it is necessary to make a distinction between the standard of life and quality of life. Standard of life means objective satisfaction of basic needs. Conversely, the quality of life is determined by subjective feelings of an individual. According to a research by Skante and all [5], the optimum standard of life does not have a direct correlation with an appropriate quality of life. The quoted finding actually shows the importance of subjective feeling and evaluation of an individual when it comes to quality of life, emphasizing here the psychological aspects of life, versus the material aspects. Frieberg and Melin [3] define the psychological quality of life as the “engagement of an individual in the

world that surrounds him, in interpersonal relations, self-confidence, and basic feeling of happiness and harmony.” Evaluation of the quality of life varies from one culture to another, from one historical period to another, but it also depends on the age of the individual. Butler [2] underlines that in addition to some prerequisites, such as physical, financial, personal and social well being, the quality of life also includes aspects of freedom, legal protection, and human rights.

War Torture in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Review and Consequences

Torture is a deliberate act of inflicting physical and/or mental suffering to one person by another person, for the purpose of breaking the personality or identity of an individual. It is a horrible human experience that often leaves very serious consequences on psychical, physical, and social levels.

According to the data provided by the Association of Ex-Camp Prisoners of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2002), during the war (1992-1995) in Bosnia and Herzegovina there were 620 locations of imprisonment, where the most monstrous methods were applied to torture the prisoners. According to the same source, around 200,000 civilians survived torture in such places, while somewhere around 30,000 camp prisoners were either killed or are considered missing.

Exposure to psychical, physical or sexual forms of torture had lead in most of the survivor population to numerous consequences on psychical, somatic, and social levels. Psychological consequences, the war torture survivors

most often feel, manifest themselves as the symptoms of the post-traumatic stress disorder. The cases of permanent personality changes, following a catastrophic experience are not rare either.

Special Characteristics of Life in the Post-War Society of the War Torture Survivors

The post-war society carries along a set of special characteristics that additionally contribute to difficulty of the lives of people, traumatized by the aftermaths of war. The population of the war torture survivors has its particularities and peculiarities. These are mostly the people, who had used to live in rural areas and small places before, people with lower levels of education. However, most of them had lived in their own homes, and their socio-economic circumstances were, in general, satisfactory.

During the war, and especially after the war, there was a strong tendency of this population moving to larger centers, where they lived in flats, assigned to them for temporary use, and on top of that, they were in most part unemployed and at the verge of survival. Their existential problems have become more and more complex over time, as a consequence of their housing becoming more insecure, them being unable to find jobs, unable to work, and of the lack of any kind of compensation by the state for the consequences of the torture they were subjected to. Generally, the circumstances of painstaking post-war period and unsatisfactory standard of life cause an additional trauma to the torture survivors. Arcel [1] emphasizes that, according to Pedersen, mental health

does not only depend on the traumatic experience one has been through, but on the problems one faces in the post-conflict social environment.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to determine whether there is a difference in quality of life in the post-war circumstances, characterized by low standard of living, amongst men and women who have survived torture during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Method Used

This research is analytical-descriptive and retrospective. The research has been conducted on the bases of two sample groups made of 22 interviewees, each of the groups being homogeneous by sex. All the interviewees were the war trauma survivors, and due to serious consequences that torture had left on them, they were all clients of the Association for Rehabilitation of Torture Victims, Center for Torture Victims in Sarajevo. All interviewees have been through a comprehensive torture victim's rehabilitation program, designed for torture victims, at somatic, psychological, or social levels, depending upon the actual consequences of torture, in the institution where the research was made.

During the research, the MANSA questionnaire, which was designed by Pribe, was used to check the quality of life. The questionnaire contained 16 questions. Questions numbers 1, 2, 2a, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 12a, 13, 14, 15, and 16 can be by the numbers 1 through 7, where:

- 1= could not be worse
- 2= very unsatisfactory
- 3= mostly unsatisfied
- 4= both satisfied and unsatisfied
- 5= mostly satisfied
- 6= very satisfied
- 7= could not be better

The interviewees were given choice to answer 'yes' or 'no' to the questions number 4, 5, 9, and 10.

Descriptive statistics for questions in the Quality of Life Questionnaire (Quality of life MANSa)

Question	W/M	N	Arithmetic medium	Std. Deviation
1. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life today?	W	22	3.41	1.18
	M	22	2.91	1.23
2. How satisfied are you with your job (or schooling, if that is your main occupation)?	W	11	3.09	1.38
	M	11	2.59	1.45
2a. If you are unemployed / pensioner, how satisfied are you with that?W	W	11	2.18	0.87
	M	11	2.27	1.49
3. How satisfied are you with your financial situation?	W	22	2.50	1.10
	M	22	1.91	1.07
6. How satisfied are you with the quality and number of your friendships?	W	22	3.91	1.07
	M	22	3.68	1.17
7. How satisfied are you with your activities in your free time?	W	22	3.32	1.13
	M	22	3.19	1.01
8. How satisfied are you with your housing?	W	22	2.95	1.68
	M	22	3.41	1.79
11. How satisfied are you with your personal security?	W	22	4.68	0.65
	M	22	4.65	0.74
11. How satisfied are you with your personal security?	W	21	5.05	1.07
	M	16	5.25	0.86
12a. If you do live alone, how satisfied are you with that?	W	1	1.00	
	M	6	3.00	1.26
13. How satisfied are you with your sex life?	W	18	3.67	1.61
	M	21	3.52	1.29
14. How satisfied are you with the relations with your family?	W	22	5.18	1.05
	M	22	4.76	1.53
15. How satisfied are you with your health?	W	22	4.14	1.36
	M	22	3.00	1.02
16. How satisfied are you with your physical (mental) health?	W	22	3.85	1.00
	M	22	3.09	1.02

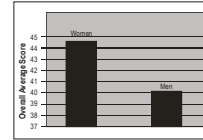
Results

The results of descriptive statistics are shown for the sample of women and men, and there is also the chart depicting the average scores of both groups. The significance of the difference in the results shown by the two groups has been determined by the t-test for independent samples.

50% men and 50% of women are unemployed or pensioners, while 27.3 % of men and 4.5% of one woman live alone.

Question	W/M	Yes/No	Frequency	Percentage
4. Do you have a partner when you are not at home?	W	Yes	10	45.4
		No	1	4.5
	M	Yes	11	50.0
		No	4	18.2
5. How do you rate a friend during last week?	W	Yes	10	45.4
		No	1	4.5
	M	Yes	11	50.0
		No	1	4.5
9. How do you rate your physical (mental) health?	W	Yes	22	100.00
		No	0	0.00
	M	Yes	22	100.00
		No	0	0.00
10. How do you rate your physical (mental) health?	W	Yes	11	50.0
		No	11	50.0
	M	Yes	22	100.00
		No	0	0.00

Graphic presentation of the overall score of men and women on the Quality of life MANSa



of women, this difference is not statistically significant, in accordance with the t-test for independent samples.

The general results of the examined samples indicate that the quality of life in both groups of interviewees goes between the "both satisfied and unsatisfied" (4) and "mostly satisfied" (5). In case of men, the result is closer to "both satisfied and unsatisfied" (4), while in case of women, it approximates "mostly satisfied" (5).

The results of this research show that the women who had survived war torture have a bit better quality of life in the postwar society, compared with men, after they had all been through a comprehensive rehabilitation program.

Discussion

The results of this research are in the similar correlation with results of other psychological studies (not discussed in this paper) that have been conducted upon completion of a multi-disciplinary rehabilitation program for torture survivors. Both sets of results confirm that a significant health recovery has been achieved in most of the interviewees, while the circumstances that indicate unsatisfactory standard of life have remained practically unchanged.

The results show that the women are on the average more satisfied with their life overall, with their financial situations, relationships with the family, with their health and mental health, while the men are somewhat more satisfied with their housing. In other areas, the differences in average results of men and women are small.

According to the results of the t-test for independent samples, although there are differences between men and women when it comes to satisfaction in various areas of life, this difference is statistically significant only in the category of satisfaction with health and satisfaction with physical (mental) health, $p < 0.01$, and this goes to the advantage of women.

Although the chart shows a difference between men's and women's average overall scores in the quality of life questionnaire to the advantage

Conclusion

The results of this research indicate, on the basis of comparison between the men and women war torture survivors who have been covered by the psychosocial and somatic rehabilitation, that the women, in spite of unsatisfactory standard of life in the post-war society, see their lives as better than the men do. They have valued highly their living with other people, with whom they have harmonious relations. Their evaluation of their general health, and mental health, was better than that of men. Considering the importance of the evaluation of quality of lives of persons, covered by a treatment, for the purpose of evaluating the outcome of the treatment, the results of this research emphasize the effectiveness of a multi-disciplinary program of torture victims' rehabilitation. From the point of view of evaluation of needs for treatment, the results of this research reflect the full value of the fact that there is a dire need of an institution that provides a

comprehensive multi-disciplinary treatment to this specific group of clients.

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children become labourers almost as soon as they can walk, and the reason is none other than economic. Much of the country's farmland is worked by toddlers, yoked teams of three-, four-, or five-year-old, who plough, seed, and glean fields from dawn to dusk. On any morning the canal banks and irrigation ditches in rural villages are lined with children who stand no taller than the piles of laundry they wash, for their wealthier neighbours. Even the world-class industries of Islamabad, the capital city, are staffed in large part by children. Politicians travelling to the National Assembly can't help noticing the ragged youth entering and exiting the brick factories, steel mills, and stone-crushing plants all hours of the day. These children work with a minimum of adult supervision. An overseer comes by periodically to mark their progress and to give them instructions or a few encouraging blows, but for the better part of the workday, they are left to themselves. Children are cheaper to run than toddlers and smarter than oxen," explains one Rawalpindi landowner. He prefers field hands between seven and ten years old, "because they have the most energy, although they lack discipline."

Rationale of the Study

The problem of child exploitation and child rights has been the focus of worldwide attention in 20th-century Pakistan, has signed and ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Children of Pakistan are supposed to be protected from child labour through Employment of Children's Act 1991 and other such legislations. However, these laws have loopholes and are not always implemented.

This study has been carried out keeping in mind the fact that South Asia unfortunately has all the worst forms of child labour. It is thus important for the society and the government to admit that they have child bonded labour, and that they have children who are working in hazardous occupations, at the cost of their physical as well as psychological health. Not only such an acknowledgement but also some concrete steps to the eradication of such crimes is necessary to be taken at all levels.

In a developing country like Pakistan, the implementation of CRC has to be carried out with great effort and care. The problem of child labour is multidimensional; it is linked with poverty, lack of family management, illiteracy, lack of information and awareness on the part of the community, family, tradition, a long-standing feudal system, and above all a distortion in the thinking. In order to make CRC applicable, concrete steps are required at all fronts.

The present study is designed to assess the behavioural problems of working children. This study is also significant because it has further implications and provides basis for further researches. It is an effort towards the implementation of child rights in developing countries, to preserve the future of the nation. It can help in raising awareness about the issue of child abuse, exploitation, and child labour. The study not only raises awareness on rights of children but also explains the problems of mental, emotional, and psychological health along with behavioural problems faced by the working children. Objectives of the study are to:

- Find out the impacts of torture on the behavior

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Behavioral Problems Amongst Child laborers

Ms. Fizza Sabir & Ms. Kiana Saleem

Terming children as the future of any nation has almost become aphoristic. Still the fact remains that these little angles have ever suffered the worst forms of exploitation and neglect since times immemorial, and to add to it, they suffered for the mistakes they never made. Even parents have been known to sell their children in order to appease their sufferings, even at the price of a day's meal. Rich amuse themselves by making children act as jockeys during the camel races, of which many die during the horrific game, meant to amuse the wealthy. It is the man that creates the mass and it is the child that is forced to sacrifice.

Situation in Pakistan

It is not the choice that makes people work; it is in fact the financial pressure they have to succumb to. And it is this pressure that forces children to be forcefully sent to workplaces, which of course do not provide that child-friendly environment needed for a healthy development of the toddler. In Pakistan most of the people living below the poverty line are forced to send their children to work and add to the fall economic condition of the family. Everywhere throughout the country, blatant situation of children being pushed to workplaces without having even a single prick to the conscience is pretty much obvious. This situation forces most of the families to increase their income by a strange abstraction of being able to get rid of the economic pressure as a result of increase in the family size, where children are put to work at a very early age. It is because of such perceptions that child labour is the most common type of child abuse found in Pakistan. At least a million children in Pakistan, under the age of 15, work at different places without the slightest touch of the hush-sign.

Many children work with their families in brick kilns or in the work for which bonding of labour are still

permitted. Several hundred children have been sent, with their parents' consent, as camel riders for races in the Gulf States.

In order to further worsen the situation of the illegally employed children, working conditions for them are not well defined, no rules and regulations have been set by the employer regarding their work hours and wages. They are in fact at the mercy of the employers, who have nothing to do with the introduction of the suffering children. Although there are statutes concerning child labour, still the category of domestic servants is not dealt by any of them [4]. Work generally keeps children away from schools, resulting in a loss to the individual, to a family and finally to the whole of the society.

According to Silvers [4] child labor has assumed epidemic proportions in Pakistan. Statistics are unreliable, but last year, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) estimated the number of Pakistani working children to be "realistically in the region of 11-12 million." At least half of these children are under the age of ten, earning on average, a third of the wages of an adult. As long as children are put to work, poverty will spread and standards of living are likely to decline.

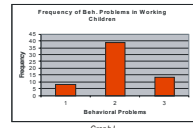
"Action speaks louder than words," says I. A. Rehman, the director of the HRCP. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is in continuous violation, and has consistently refused to enforce those very laws, enacted to protect its vulnerable citizens. We have far more resources and legal remedies than China, India, and Indonesia, and we do far less for our young than others are doing. The problem is that of lack of political will, and nothing more else.

The median age of children now entering the Pakistani workforce is 7; two years ago it was 8, and two years from now it may be 6, in low castes,



- of working children.
- Identify behavior problems caused by torture (whether verbal or physical) in hazardous working conditions of child labor.
 - Explore the relationship between the gender of the children and the nature of behavioral problems in working children.
 - Find out the relationship between the age and the nature of behavioral problems among working children.
 - Explore if there is any relationship between the place of work and the behavioral problems they have to face.

A sample of 60 working children, not school going, from Sargodha district was selected for the study, among whom 33 were boys and 27 were girls, and the age range was from 6-14 years. The group of working children comprised of 21 children in the age range of 6-10 years, and 39 children in the age range of 10-14 years. Among those, 29 were domestic servants and 31 worked outside the home surroundings (in brick kilns, shops, hotels, works-hops, vendors).

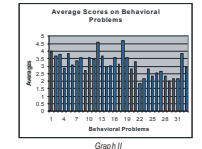


Behavioral Problem	Identify	Range of scores on behavioral problems on pre and post torture
1	Mild to moderate behavioral problems	20-35
2	Average or moderate level of behavioral problems	15-20
3	Extreme cases of behavioral problems	100-105

Results and Discussion

The above graph shows that the proportion of less behaviour problems is smallest, proportion of extreme cases of behaviour problems is higher, and the proportion of working children in the moderate level of behaviour problems is the highest. These are the children who are more vulnerable, hence more at risk. The figures indicate that most of the working children exhibit a greater number of behavioural problems and these behavioural problems in a very young age reflect their conditions of work. These poor conditions in turn disfigure their personalities and these deformities can be seen in their problematic behaviours. The results match with findings of some other studies e.g. Wolf and Mosk [5], which indicate that children facing abuse display a significantly greater number of behavioural problems.

Child labour is one of the worst forms of child abuse where children continuously face all forms of neglect and abuse (physical as well as psychological). They are exposed to physical and mental torture because they are supposed to do whatever their masters want them to, without considering their limited physical capacities and abilities. Physical punishments (like beating, hitting etc.) as well as verbal threats are commonly used for working children, and sometimes they also have to face sexual violence. According to reports [4], working children are frequently exposed to jobs that are morally or psychologically damaging, hours that are excessive, conditions that are unsafe, or employment contracts that do not equate with

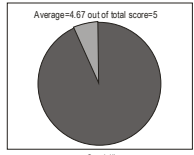


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slavery, leading to economic exploitation. The activities in which child workers are concentrated agriculture, domestic service, and the urban informal sector, place them at high risk of maltreatment, denial of basic human rights, and lack of access to those who could help them.

This graph indicates the average scores of working children on each item with the median score 3, prevalence rate and ratio of each behavioural problem can be observed. As seen in this graph, averages on most of the behavioural problems are higher than the median score 3, and the averages which are not higher than 3, are even closer to the median score. These ratios indicate how significantly the behavioural problems exist in working children. Prevalence rate of most of the behavioural problems is much higher and alarming.

Highest average scores are found on the following three items of the behavioural problem questionnaire.



Graph III

Graph III shows the fear of working children in having a discourse with elders. It indicates that they cannot converse with elders; these elders may either be parents or masters. In case of child labour, children spend most of their time with their masters instead of their own family. Most of the people keep child servants because children are an easy to tame

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and cheap in hiring. Children do not know their own rights and cannot voice any unjust happening. These and the same torturing conditions induce fear in working children, making them afraid of elders. People who keep children as their servants also don't want them to be more talkative, demanding them to work silently without giving vent to their inner feelings. They are unable to talk freely since most of the time they are unaware of what may make their masters annoyed.

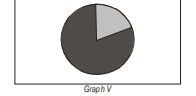
Average=4.58 out of total score=5



Graph IV

Graph IV reflects that the working children can't take any decision even about their own self, since they lack self-confidence. Torturing conditions of child labour shatter their confidence and limit their decision-making power. As they are more dependent on their masters even for their basic needs, which are not fulfilled, resulting in maltreat and loss of confidence. Researches have proved that free, healthy and playful environment full of love and support is necessary for the normal development of a confident child. All these necessities become unnecessary for the working children because their own parents cannot fulfil their needs.

Average=4.02 out of total score=5



Graph V

They had to work to increase their family income by straining their own justified desires of getting education their birthright.

Children are regarded as a source of hope and inspiration. They are thought to be the most sacred and beautiful blessings showered by the Almighty Allah. Irrespective of caste, group, skin colour, or socio-economic status, they deserve love, affection, and special consideration for their proper upbringing, schooling and feeding. They deserve the childhood rights, and environment that can help them thrive. UN Convention on the Rights of the Children has ensured that every child has right to survival, development and protection. This ensures the right to protection from every sort of exploitation, harm, and maltreatment or torture.

Child labour is the state where children are physically, economically and socially exploited, abused, and victimized. Child labour is a cause as well as a consequence of the socio-economic and political reality. It is a bitter reality that an overwhelming majority of children is deprived of some fundamental rights. This situation is even worse in the developing countries where a big majority of children are living and working in the most difficult circumstances. These children are not only suffering hunger, malnutrition and physical torture, but are also subjected to mental and severe physical torture [2].

Conclusion

On the one hand children are thought to be the prophets of elusive hope in the prevailing darkling scenario, and on the other hand these messengers of hope are drenched with the fetters of bonded labor, coercion, torture, and the like.

There is a dire need of looking into the serious problem of the present indent state of the working children. It is the issue that not only needs to be vocalized but to be recognized and respected at the same time. According to Salyerthi [6], the lack of social concern has been the biggest problem behind it. Unless each one of us realizes the obligations that we owe to this small and innocent angel, we would never be able to liberate them from the shackles we have plunged them in. It is the emancipated, literate, confident, self-esteem and a vivacious child that can make our hopes come true.

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Graph V shows the high prevalence of aggression in working children. These aggressive tendencies are due to the deficiencies and exploitive situations that they regularly face or are in contact with. Their desires and needs are continuously being repressed because of every kind of abuses (physical, emotional, at times even sexual), and exploitation. Children can't express their emotions freely and independently. Their natural growth is affected as a result of these happenings. According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the conflicts that remain in the personality of a child, due to his/her early childhood experiences, may lead to aggressive and destructive tendencies in later life as well. The repressed thoughts and emotions lead them to the intense desires and a show of anger. This anger might be towards the whole world around them, which can be the reason of their exploitation. The present findings also concur with the findings of Saleem [2] indicating that working children show extremely high need for aggression as compared to non-working children. It may be because of the reason that working children live in quite a different environment from their home settings, where they face aggression of their masters. This in turn induces aggressive feelings in children and this aggression grows higher and higher as it finds no outlet. Working children have these repressed aggressive feelings toward those around them in the torturing circumstances.

The results show non-significant differences on behavioural problems between working boys and working girls. It indicates that working boys and girls face almost similar behavioural problems and there is no much difference due to the gender difference.

There is a non-significant difference in behavioural problems between the groups of working children of 6-10 years and of 11-14 years of age. It seems that age does not play much in the behavioural problems of working children. Of note is the fact that the number of children in both groups is not the same, even then younger children showed somewhat higher average scores on behavioural problems. Thus it can be assumed that by increasing the number of children in the younger group so as to maintain the balance amongst the groups, significant differences may be obtained.

The results indicate a non-significant difference between domestic child workers and others children working in shops, hotels, workshops, brick kilns, and vendors, regarding the behavioural problems. It reflects that all working children regardless of the place of work have to face almost similar nature of behavioural problems.

The results depict that violation of child rights, most of the time starts at a very young age by adults in the surroundings leaving scars on the behaviors of working children, which in turn affects their personalities throughout their lives. Working children are the children who are not the responsibility of anybody, neither of their parents nor of their masters. Whether inside the boundaries of their own homes or at the workplace, poor working children have to face serious consequences. For those children who work for the betterment of their family's economic standards, it becomes a common practice to be treated abusively and be exploited by anybody in capacity of doing so. The working children whether boys and girls become the property of their masters and they may abuse them emotionally, physically and sexually, various forms of the torture they are being subjected to. Consequently the poor children lose happiness, independence, and reasons to live. These children are disadvantaged in many ways, and there is evidence that the early involvement of children in work can have serious health and developmental consequences [3]. How can a nation and country be strong and healthy with a large number of such exploited and abused children? The main issue is that the children themselves are not aware of their rights. They are unaware of their own privileges that are conferred by their religion and state.

Something that is worth noting is that 76.67% working children, in their responses showed dissatisfaction with their working conditions, and they don't want to stay in the same settings any more. Just 23.33% showed satisfaction with their work settings. All the working children, mentioned poverty as the main reason for their work/labor, some of whom were forced to work, since their parents owed heavy debts. Many of the working children longed for studying but they had to suppress such desires because of extreme poverty.

Voice Against Torture

Rehabilitation of Torture Survivor Families



Events

International Women's Day at Roshni

Roshni, a project of Voice Against Torture, held a program to celebrate the International Women's Day at its premises on Sunday, March 07, 2004.

The speakers elaborated the problems women face in their daily life. Speakers highlighted about the historic background of the women's day. Special emphasis was given to the need for concerted efforts to emancipate women, and encouraged the women to continue with their struggle for their basic rights and equality.

The services of Roshni for the torture survivor women were also spotlighted. Roshni provides medical, psychological and legal aid to tortured women and works for their comprehensive rehabilitation. It also provides them training in different skills, so that they can achieve financial independence. It was translated in Dari language for the Afghan refugee audience.

Later, some of the girls attending Roshni for their rehabilitation performed a play depicting the plight of women and the state indifference towards their problems. It received much applause from audience. Afghan refugee children presented a song at the end of the program.

Certificates Distribution

Roshni, a project of Voice Against Torture, arranged a certificate distribution ceremony on March 15, 2004. The girls who had completed their six-month course received their certificates. They learnt sewing, embroidery, and designing of male- and female-dresses at Roshni Skill Development Center.

Roshni arranges such courses for torture survivor women to help them earn for themselves. Such courses enable them to gain economic independence, which gives them self-confidence, and courage to cope with after effects of torture.

Visits

UNVFT

Kitty Arambulo and Miss Sabika Masood from UNVFT visited the office of Voice Against Torture on February 18, 2004. They visited RAHAT, a project of Voice Against Torture and met the torture survivors, receiving treatment for their rehabilitation at RAHAT.

UNICEF

Two members of UNICEF, Miss Silvia Pasti, Children Protection Officer, and Tebunaga Eki, Assistant Program Officer, Child Protection of Pakistan Country Office of UNICEF, visited Voice Against Torture on February 20, 2004. They took keen interest in the activities of Children Crisis Center and appreciated the efforts of the staff for providing good atmosphere for torture survivor children.

Voice Against Torture

News

International Scenario

The deplorable occurrence of torture incidents and other human rights violations should be condemned vigorously by every one who has any regard for humanity. We are enlisting a few incidents that took place around the world. It does not mean that these are the only incidents of torture and human rights violations that transpired in past few months. There were many that did not reach us and many more that went unreported.

Afghanistan

Human Rights Watch, in a report released on March 08, 2004, U.S. forces operating in Afghanistan have arbitrarily detained civilians, used excessive force during arrests of non-combatants, and mistreated detainees. The United States is setting a terrible example in Afghanistan on detention practices.

Released detainees have said that U.S. forces severely beat them, doused them with cold water and subjected them to freezing temperatures. Many said they were forced to stay awake, or to stand or kneel in painful positions for extended periods of time.

There is compelling evidence suggesting that U.S. personnel have committed acts against detainees amounting to torture or cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment, said Adams.

Sri Lanka

Mr. Tennakoon Mudryanselage Gunesekera has been tortured by six policemen from the Mahiyangaya Police Station in Sri Lanka. The victim was severely assaulted by the perpetrators with wooden bats solely because he did not see one policeman's bicycle parked near the hotel. More seriously, the police did not allow the victim's wife to lodge a complaint about the incident and even tried to hush up the case by offering her Rs 500,000 and 6.5 US \$.

expect fair investigations. Often they are even threatened by the perpetrators who remain employed at the police station. The incident was reported on December 31, 2003.

Turkey

On February 13, 2004, after a four-year trial, Dr. Alp Ayan was sentenced to 18 months and one day in prison, and Mrs. Günsel Kaya, together with the other 28 defendants, to 18 months in prison. Another defendant, Mr. Adnan Akin was sentenced to three years in prison. The rest of the defendants (37) were acquitted. They were prosecuted for having attended the funeral of Nevzat Ofluo that took place on 30 September 1999.

This spring, Dr. Alp Ayan is appearing in court in three different cases against him. He and his friends are members of the board of Human Rights Federation of Turkey. The charged leveled against them are "having collected contributions without obtaining permission" and "co-operating with international organizations without permission".

Most of these cases have been postponed repeatedly and sent from one court to another, resulting only in fear and insecurity for the human rights defenders who are the targets of these abuses.

Malaysia

The Malaysian government is about to extend the detention of seven men being held for more than two years without trial for their alleged involvement in terrorist activities. Deputy Director of Human Rights Watch's Asia Division, Mr Sam Zee-Zarif said, "After two years, the government's claim that they must hold these seven men without charge in order to continue investigations no longer makes sense."

In the second week of February 2004, another badge of six men received two years extension in their detentions. There are reports that nearly 100 men were detained under Internal Security Act, which allows for two years detention without trial.

Voice Against Torture

News

National News

Torture and violence continued unabated in Pakistan. There were innumerable cases that appeared in the national press. Many women lost their lives owing to the evil practices of Kato Kari. Journalists also remained targets of harassment and physical violence, and police excesses and custodial killings and torture did not show any signs of decline.

Islamabad

A mind-boggling incident of child sexual abuse that took place in the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad, was uncovered recently. Many students of National Cadet College, F-11, Islamabad, were molested by the principal of the college Capt. (rtd) Shaqeeb. The said college was not registered with the education department and was being run without any legal authorization. At least 17 students were sent to Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences for their medical checkup, which confirmed the molestation of 77, while the report for the rest of the two students was awaited. This news came to fore on February 23, 2004. It caused much consternation in the public and many people raised their voice against it. It shows that the children are not safe even in the capital city. One can imagine the plight of the children living in far-flung areas of the country.

Punjab

In Dera Ghazi Khan, Muhammad Rafiq killed his sister Sardara Mai and her husband, because they had married without the consent of their families. In another case, the legs of Musarat Sultana were amputated by her brother in law on the pretext of honor. The incident took place in Chak 75 NB District Saigodha on February 8, 2004.

Lubna Rahtor was found dead, slit wrists and throat on January 9, 2004. She had accused her father of harassing her. She had not been living at her home since then. She was staying as paying guest in Islamabad. Another young woman Faveen was murdered by her brother Jaffar at Saranpur in Mardan on February 5, 2004. According to a news report published in Dawn on March 4, 2004, a CIA team of the Kotwali Police in Lahore raided the shop of a prize bond dealer Irfan Ahmed. Policemen were dragging him in the street when a neighbor Shafiq intervened. The policemen gave him a severe beating and left him in the street. He was taken to hospital and his last period was reported by local.

Saf Ullah (20-year-old) was picked up by Choti Zareen, police, while he was playing snooker in Dera Ghazi Khan on January 3, 2003. He was severely tortured by police officials, after which he was taken to District Headquarters Hospital and later referred to Niazee Hospital Multan. Saf was found in a state of shock with high fever and marks of torture on the lower parts of the body.

Sindh

The most callous and disgusting incident of police callousness and disregard for laws is the murder of two children, both girls, in Karachi, Hejra, 8 and Sassi, 5, went missing on February 21, 2004. Their parents approached police but police officials of Gadap Police Station refused to register a case. Later, the dead bodies of the girls were found from a building being used by policemen. This triggered a violent protest and condemnation. The autopsy reports of the dead bodies confirmed that the girls were brutally and severely murdered.

NWFP

In another incident of police excess, a teenage girl in police lockup. Riaz Ali was picked up by police on charges of carrying narcotics in Mardan, on February 23, 2004. The next day, his physical remains were taken from a local court. The same day, he was found dead in the lockup. Police claims that he committed suicide. However, the autopsy report the death was caused by torture. Initially, police refused to register the case, which resulted in wide spread protests. Finally, the higher authorities intervened and a case was registered against some police officials.

Once again, the women in many parts of NWFP have been barred from voting in the by-elections scheduled towards the end of this month. The political parties including Pakistan People's Party and Islamic Jamaat reached an agreement in which they decided that they would not allow women to contest or take part in the polling.

Balochistan

Rashed Azam was arrested on charges of sedition after being allegedly found in possession of some photographs showing army men beating some Baloch young men. He has been tortured in detention, and his last period was reported by local court, while Balochistan High Court has yet to set a date for the hearing of his petition.

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Nearly 20 of them received two years' extension in their detention period.

South Africa

The rape survivors in South Africa cannot benefit adequately from the government-run Aids-AIDS program. According to a report prepared by Human Rights Watch, government inaction and misinformation from high-level officials have undermined the effectiveness of the South Africa's program to provide rape survivors with antiretroviral drugs that reduce the risk of contracting HIV from five positive to one.

Police often respond inadequately to rape complaints, even refuse to register a case. On the other hand health professionals resist on police report for the treatment of rape survivors.

Sudan

Dr. Mudawi Ibrahim Adam, the head of a voluntary organization that provides humanitarian assistance and human rights training, was arrested on December 29 and has been charged with a variety of capital offenses against the state. Mudawi, director of the Sudan Social Development Organization (SDO), had just returned from a humanitarian mission to Darfur, where he distributed aid to internally displaced persons. He was arrested by security forces in Khartoum and is detained in Kober prison, Khartoum. On February 8 he was charged with waging war against the state, provoking hatred among religious sects, spying, releasing secret information, revealing military information and establishing a criminal organization. Some of these charges carry the death penalty.

Saleh Mahmud Osman, a human rights lawyer, was arrested on February 1, 2004 and has been held without charge. Saleh Mahmud provides free legal assistance to persons accused or convicted of crimes without fair trial. He is a member of the lawyers' network of the Sudan Organization Against Torture (SOAT). He was arrested in Wad Madani, Gezira state in eastern Sudan, by security forces on February 1, and transferred to Khartoum two days later. He is currently being held in Kober prison and has not been charged with a crime.

Venezuela

There have been reports of at least nine protesters killed and dozens of people injured including several journalists during confrontations with the National Guard in Venezuela in the first week of March. There have also been numerous allegations of beatings and ill treatment of civilians detained by the guard and by police. A commission appointed by the Supreme Court is reported to have summarily fired three judges in Caracas this week after they exercised their authority to grant provisional release from detention to opposition protesters.

Iraq

The US-backed Iraqi Governing Council has canceled current family laws and moved family law under the jurisdiction of Islamic (sharia) law. Iraqi women's rights activists protested putting these areas under Islamic law because they would destroy the status of Iraqi women's rights regarding marriage, child custody, divorce and inheritance. According to Zakia Ismael Haki, a prominent Iraqi female judge, this new law will send Iraqi families back to the Middle Ages. It will allow men to have four or five or six wives. It will take away children from their mothers. It will allow anyone who calls himself a cleric to open an Islamic court in his house and decide who can marry and divorce and have rights.

Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwean government has set up some camps, which it claims are meant for job training, but those who have escaped from these camps say that young teenagers are tortured and when they break down, they are encouraged to torture others and commit atrocities.

In accounts gathered by BBC Panorama from dozens of youths, it appears that for many of them the training in the camps begins with rape. Debbie said she was raped three times on the first night, but claimed that the abuse didn't stop then. She told the programme: "I was raped again at night and they said no-one can complain because it's part of training." She claims she used to share a blanket with an 11-year-old girl. The little girl was also raped night after night.

Voice Against Torture

Call for Articles

Voice Against Torture, an interdisciplinary human rights organization, aims at making methodical efforts in order to combat serious problems of torture in any part of the globe. It does strive to raise consciousness within the general public, regarding their rights.

Quarterly Newsletter is one of the publications of Voice Against Torture, for which contributions are invited in the form of articles, researches, reports, comments on current issues, news items, poems or short stories, relating either to the issue of torture or to human rights infringements, in any part of the world. It thus serves as a nexus amongst those living poles apart, in distant lands, for exchanging and sharing of the views, thus minimizing the psychic, social, and physical boundaries.

Manuscripts must be from 3000-5000 words, typed in English language, double-spaced, and sent via e-mail. References/bibliography need be numbered, if provided with the article. Similarly, brief biographical details must be supplied, including the author's name, designation, qualifications, etc. The editor however, retains the right to suggest any change in style, if required.

Final date for submission: 1st May, 2004
We would highly appreciate your contribution.

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Note: The contributors' opinions and statements are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board.