

ASSESSMENT OF INDIRECT EFFECTS OF PESHAWAR MASSACRE ON PARENTS DUE TO MEDIA COVERAGE

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Abstract

The aim of the present study was to assess indirect effects of Peshawar Massacre on parents due to media coverage. For this purpose, 480 parents having age 25 to 55 years and their children were also school going children were selected through purposive sampling method from Rawalpindi. Inclusion criteria of parents was that at least they had one school going child. Data from parents were collected using Urdu version of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist (PCL-C) (Mushtaq & Rehman 2005). Reliability of Urdu version of (PCL-C) was 0.84 and inter scale correlation among subscales was 0.68, 0.73 and 0.74 that shows high construct validity of the scale. The results of chi square analysis that parents experienced indirect effects of Peshawar Massacre due to media coverage but significance means differences do not existed among groups. Fathers reported high PTSD as compare to mothers. The possible reason of this is may be due to the cultural differences as culture of Pakistani society is residing on collectivistic society and social terms are strong among people. Another possible reason is the belief system of the people that it happened by the will of Allah or predestined to happen.

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Introduction

UN Security Council Resolution (1994) defines terrorism as criminal activities against civilians with the intention to cause death, serious injury or the taking of hostages with a sole purpose of terror activity as a terror causing medium in the general public, specific people or a group of individual to achieve their stated or unstated goal of forcing the government or an international organization to do something or force it to not do it (Ahmed et al., 2011).

9/11 Attack

Human welfare is seriously affected by terrorist activities and they have a serious problem for the international community and the attacks of 9/11 is one of the more prominent terrorist attacks in the recent history.

Tangible effects

A lot of research has been carried out on the 9/11 attacks and some studies suggest that these attacks effect the financial market and fiscal position of New York in a negative way. They also reduced the number of people opting to use Air travel as mode of communication and there has been a significant increase in the number of serious traffic accidents after 9/11 (Metcalf et al., 2010).

Psychological Consequences

Apart from tangible effects of 9/11, it also severely undermine people's mental health and psychological wellbeing like study interviewed a sample of 1009 people living or working in New York between 3 and 6 months after the 9/11 attack. By using validated measure of psychological that addressed the frequency and severity of 17 symptoms as painful memories, avoidance of feeling and sleep problems. More than half of people surveyed (56.3%) had a least one

very severe symptom or two or more mild or moderate symptoms. Another study which included more than 2000 adults in New York and Washington, Dc the prevalence rate of PTSD was 11.2%, a figure that was higher than the national average of 4.2%. However, findings with regard to the persistence of symptoms beyond the first few weeks after the attack are inconclusive. Several studies suggest that the elevated rates of PTSD in general population returned to baseline level within few months after the attack (Krahe, 2013).

Media Coverage of Terrorist Attacks

The media has thoroughly reported the recent terrorist activities live. It has come to knowledge during the last 50 years that exposure to seeing violence in the media often leads to the development of aggression in memory, hostile biases and antagonistic belief systems, effects lasting short-term and long-term. A study (Bushman et al., 1994) shows the connection between extended episodes of exposure to violence media and development of violent tendencies. Similarly, two other studies (Caprara et al., 1984) & (Anderson et al., 2003) show that a person is more likely to feel negative mood and aggravated violent emotions if they are exposed to heavy media usage containing violence. Two separate, but closely linked studies (Huesmann et al., 2003; Coyne & Archer, 2005) mention that if a children are exposed to indirect aggression when they are young, they are more likely to develop violent and aggressive tendencies. Another study (Blanchard et al., 2004) found results on watching a specific incident (9/11), it was brought into knowledge by them that number of hours of 9/11 events created stress disorder in student who lived from cities other than New York. If a person received indirect exposure to violence via a proxy (a friend being hurt or killed in a bombing), they could also develop significant symptoms showing aggression (Prfefferbaum et al., 2000). A yet another study shows (Gil-Rivas et al., 2004) that a combination of

parent-children conflict and vicarious exposure to 9/11 events had a heightened chance of experience mild to moderate symptoms of stress. The negative effects of exposure to such violent and destructive events are further exemplified by the presence of dream changes as studied by Propper et al. (2007) and they reported an increase of 5-6 percent increase in violent dreams for every hour subjects were exposed to violence relating to 9/11. However, the conversation that followed such exposure, and dream sequences did not necessarily focus on such events. The authors compiled their findings and asserted that media could have played a deleterious impact on the emotional well being of citizens of United States. Pfefferbaum et al. (2000) found that a child whose friend died in Oklahoma bombing was more likely to show symptoms of PTSD than a child who had lost an acquaintance which indicates that degree of personal association and attachment plays a major role in develop of PTSD. However, there was no significant change between two children belonging to the same community. The perception of chronic PTSD patients did change after exposure to 9/11 images even though their symptoms did not deteriorate further as show by Rosen et al. (2005). So the authors concluded that the patients might be misattributing the symptoms to recent episodes. Feliciono (2009) show that terrorism might induce PTSD as a main form of anxiety and it can also be seen as indirect effect on work as it is an anxiety disorder during which a person experiences hyper arousal symptoms again.

History of terrorism in Pakistan

Various type of fundamentalists, religious, sectarian, ethnic, secessionist, and political, have conducted terrorist activities in Pakistan resulting in loss of many lives throughout the history of Pakistan. There has been a noticeable rise in such activities targeting both civilian and government institutions alike after September

11, 2001. The number of suicide attacks after this period increased more in Pakistan, increasing up to two times, than in other countries where they saw an increase of just 18% and during the time between 2007 and 2008, the number of deaths by terror attacks had risen to 1839 (Ahmed et al, 2011). Overall, 2008 had 2155 such deaths 2010 being the lowest of 1796 and 2009 with the highest causality number of 2323. This increase presents a matter of serious concern in Pakistan, with its biggest and most populated city (Karachi) seeing 133 such terror incidents alone in 2010 compared to 45 of 2009. The terrorist became so bold that they attacked the highly guarded CID building and bomb blasted the heavily attended the shrine of Abdullah Shah Ghazi in Karachi (Essays, 2013).

Television viewing in Pakistan

Television viewing is the main hobby of Pakistani People (Essays, 2013) and News coverage that occurs through such a medium may act as a method of delivering indirect victimization. It determines what is seen as public tragedy. They might serve to shatter the perceptions of a person, especially if they present a distorted image, about the basic life especially after a tragic event such as Columbine's School shootings (Fallahi & Lesik, 2009).

The number of public television channels has increased which in turn means more people are tuning now than ever. At present 26 news channel are present that are often watched by whole families and this results in creating a relationship with what is being shown in the news (Essays, 2013).

The effect of terror activities, especially the onset of PTSD and its symptoms, who experience it second hand through news or through discussion of such events (as defined by some researchers) has not been focused as much as those who are affected directly. Some studies suggest that if a person lives far away from a

terror situation then a study might be carried out to check the effect of distance from the terror site (Ahmed et al, 2011).

It has also been shown that perceived or actual discrimination might cause the onset of certain parenting behaviors especially in African American mothers, where such perceptions caused stress related issues that were in turn caused by depression. Similarly, the depressive symptoms caused by such perceptions affected the level of competent parenting with parent being more negligent in their behavior, being less warm and vigilant and higher levels of argumentation in relationships. These symptoms were not studied in Aboriginal parents; however, it can be hypothesized on the basis of effects on African American parents that such depressive symptoms might also affect behaviors of Aboriginal parents (Bombay et al., 2009).

In this study, we are trying to prove that the terrorism in Pakistan has affected Pakistani society not only directly but also indirectly and many studies have found indirect effects of terrorist attacks like those of 9/11. We are trying to explore the effects of Peshawar massacre on the lives of people especially parents who were exposed through news. This is because the news has the ability to distort reality and define 'what is a public tragedy'. This distorted image affects the perceptions of people about life and might also change our basic assumptions of a normal life (Fallahi & Lesik 2009); moreover, they might also increase fear in a community.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the present study is to explore the indirect effects of Peshawar Massacre on parents due to media coverage.

Hypotheses

1. Parents of school going children will experience more indirect effects of Peshawar Massacre due to media coverage.
2. Mothers will experience more re-experiencing symptoms as compared to fathers.
3. Mothers will experience more avoidance symptoms as compared to fathers.
4. Mothers will experience hyper arousal symptoms as compared to fathers.

Method

Participants

This study was conducted on parents of school going children in Rawalpindi. Participants for the presents study were 480 individuals who have at least one school going child. Participants were of both genders with age range of 25-55 including employed and unemployed, literate and illiterate, and have at least one school going child whose age must fall within range of 4-18.

Inclusion Criteria

People who have at least one school going child.

Exclusion Criteria

Parents who don't have school going child. In addition to that relative of the children were excluded from the study as well.

Measurement Instrument

Basic demographic data was collected through a demographic questionnaire based on participant's age, gender, education level, experience, number of school going children and their respective age.

Post-traumatic stress is clinically diagnosed as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) with a person having a history marred with traumatic events. Symptoms of PTS usually appear within 3 months of the trauma, but sometimes the disorder appears later. PTSD symptoms of cluster include (a) re-experiencing the trauma (e.g., unwanted intrusive memories, distressing trauma related dreams), (b) avoidance (e.g., efforts to avoid thinking about the trauma, (c). emotional numbing (e.g., detachment from others, inability to experience positive emotions), and (d) hyper arousal (e.g., insomnia, hyper vigilance, difficulty concentrating) (DSM IV, 1994).

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for Civilians (PCL)

The Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist, designed by a research team of National Centre for PTSD (Weathers et al., 1993), for Civilians, it is practical, brief assessing methodology for checking the level of severity of PTSD. It comprise of 17 items that have been changed from B-D criteria of DSM-IV. The scale is divide into three main sub-scores based on the syndromes of the disorder; Reexperiencing (items 1-5), avoidance (items 6-12) and hyperarousal (items 13-17). PCL is reported to distinguish markedly between the PTSD group and control group.

The present study measured post-traumatic stress, in terms of the scores of parents on Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for Civilians (PCL). Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist for Civilians (PCL) was translated in Urdu for local population of Pakistan. It was translated by Mushtaq and Rehman (2005). Alpha reliability of Urdu version was assessed as .86 and for its subscales .80 for re-experiencing, .76 for avoidance and .80 for hyper arousal. Translated version of PCL was used for the present research. It contains 17 items arranged on a 5- Point rating Scale. Possible score range is 17 – 85, and cut off score is 44.

Respondent was asked to rate on a 5-point scale (ranging from 1= Not at all, to 5 = extremely) considering how much “is annoying effect of the problem on the person”. Possible score range of PCL is 17-85. Cut off score of PCL is 44. Score of 44 and above indicates presence of moderate to high stress and vice versa. Low score of PCL shows low level of stress, while a high score indicates high post-traumatic stress.

Procedure

For data collection, the researcher individually approached the sample of the study and took informed consent. The subjects were informed about the purpose and ethics of the study that the data will purely be used for research purpose and their identities should not be disclosed to anyone. They are humbly requested to provide their true responses. The patients who agree to participate and fulfill the required criteria were given the questionnaire. It took almost month to collect the data. It was one to one way of data collection and approximately 15 minutes with an individual.

Analysis

The data was analyzed using the software SPSS 21 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Results

In order to fulfill the objectives of the study and to test the formulated hypothesis, following statistical analysis were performed.

To assess the psychometric properties of the measures, reliability and validity indices were estimated.

- i) Reliability estimates of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist.

In order to see the internal consistency reliability of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist and its sub scales, Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients were computed for the present sample.

The table below represents Alpha reliability coefficient of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist and its sub scales.

Table-1: Alpha reliability coefficient of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist and its sub scales (N=480)

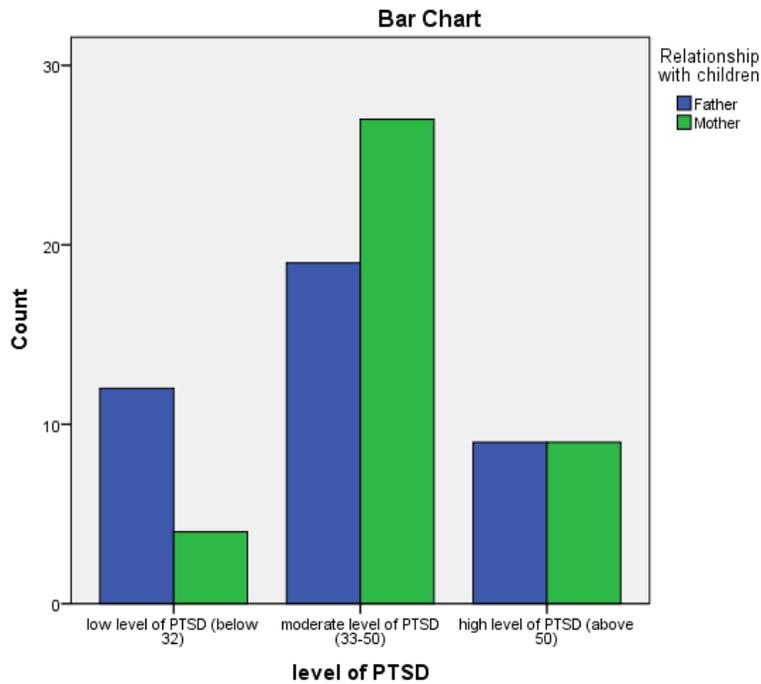
Scale	Total items	Alpha reliability Coefficient
Re-experiencing	5	.68
Avoidance	7	.73
Hyper arousal	5	.74
Total scale	17	.84

Table 1 shows the values of Alpha reliability coefficient of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist and its sub scales. Results showed that Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist (total scale) has relatively high Alpha reliability coefficient ($\alpha = .84$) indicating that the measure is internally consistent tool for assessing Post-traumatic stress among parents. The subscales measure have has Alpha reliability coefficient ($\alpha = .68$, $\alpha = .73$ $\alpha = .74$).

Table-2: ii). Chi Square analysis on the overall levels of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist (N=480)

Levels	Father	Mother	χ^2	<i>p</i>
Low level of PTSD	12	4		
Moderate level of PTSD	19	27	5.39	.067
High level of PTSD	9	9		

Table 2 shows the overall levels of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist. Results showed that on overall levels of PTSD, chi square value is 5.3 and p value is .06 which is non-significant.



Level of PTSD among parents based on post traumatic stress disorder checklist is shown in the form of bar graph.

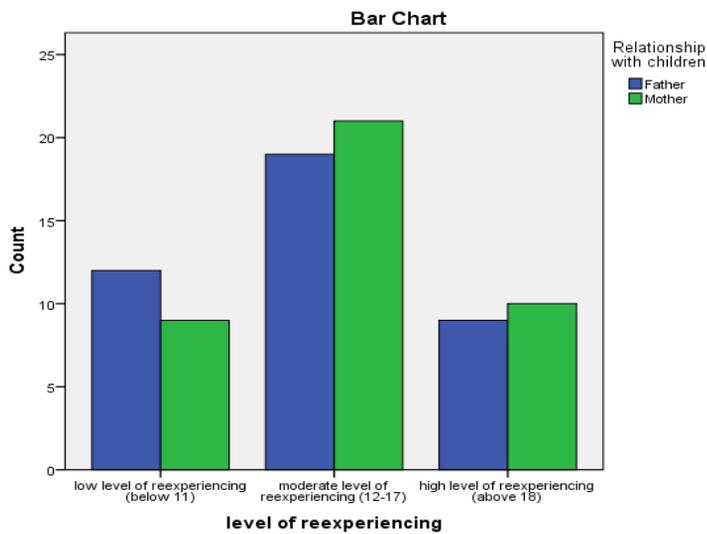
iii) Chi Square analysis on the re-experiencing subscale of the Post-traumatic stress checklist.

The table below represents Chi Square analysis on the levels of the Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist.

Table-3: iii). *Chi Square analysis on the subscale of re-experiencing of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist (N=480)*

Levels	Father	Mother	χ^2	p
Low level of re-experiencing	12	9		
Moderate level of re-experiencing	19	21	.58	.74
High level of re-experiencing	9	10		

Table 3 shows re-experiencing level of Post-traumatic stress among parents. Results showed that on re-experiencing level, chi square value is .58 and p value is .74 respectively.

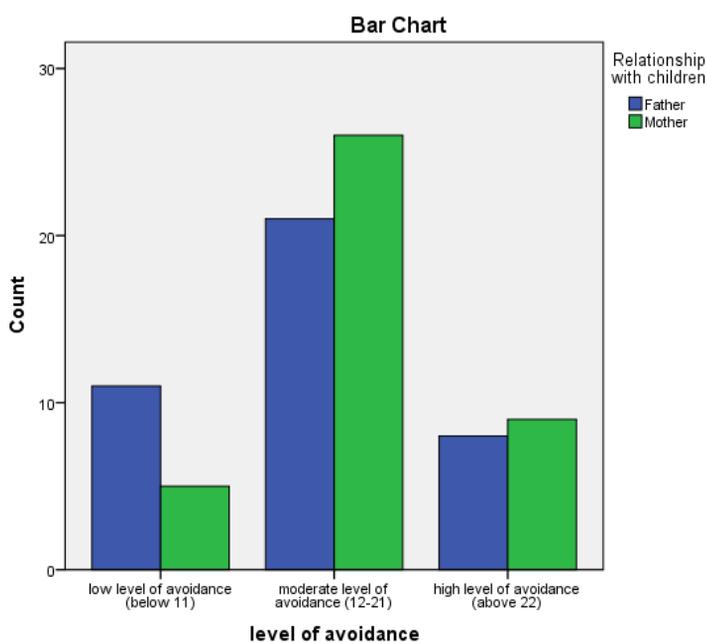


Bar chart represents level of re-experiencing among parents based on post-traumatic stress disorder checklist.

Table-4: iv). Chi Square analysis on the subscale of avoidance on Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist (N=480)

Levels	Father	Mother	χ^2	<i>p</i>
Low level of avoidance	11	5		
Moderate level of avoidance	21	26	2.84	.24
high level of avoidance	8	9		

Table 4 shows avoidance level of Post-traumatic stress among parents. Results showed that on avoidance level, chi square value is 2.84 and p value is .24 respectively.

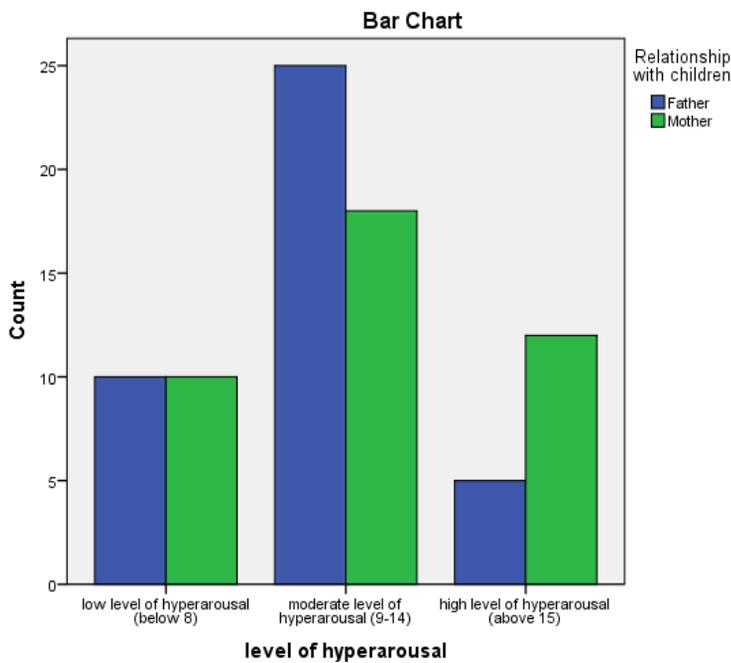


Level of avoidance among parents based on post traumatic stress disorder checklist is shown in above mentioned bar graph.

Table-5: v). *Chi Square analysis on the levels of hyper arousal on Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist (N=480)*

Levels	Father	Mother	χ^2	<i>p</i>
Low level of hyper arousal	10	10		
Moderate level of hyper arousal	25	18	4.0	.13
High level of hyper arousal	5	12		

Table 5 shows hyper arousal level of Post-traumatic stress among parents. Results showed that on hyper arousal level, chi square value is 4.0 and p value is .13 respectively.



Level of hyper arousal among parents based on post traumatic stress disorder checklist is shown in the form of bar graph.

Discussion

The present study was conducted to explore the indirect effects of Peshawar Massacre on parents due to media coverage. The total sample of 480 respondents 240 Males and 240 females within the age range of 25 – 55 was selected by using purposive sampling technique. The sample was selected from Rawalpindi. The indirect effects of Peshawar Massacre on parents due to media coverage was assessed with translated revised version of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist (Weathers et al., 1993). Weathers et al. (1994) have reported experiments and their results on the 3 main symptoms clusters that make up PTSD, including alpha coefficient (internal consistency) values between .89-.92. The internal consistency for the PCL total score and for each of the three sub scores was measured by Cronbach alpha using the total sample (n = 144). Alpha was .86 for PCL total score, .67 for Re-experiencing, .69 for Avoidance and .69 for Hyper arousal. Correlations between PCL total score and 3 sub score were significantly high ($p < .0001$). The following scale has three subscales: re-experiencing, avoidance and hyper arousal. The Urdu version of Post-traumatic stress disorder was also developed by Mushtaq and Rehman (2005). According to them alpha reliability of Urdu version of scale was .86 and for its subscales it was like .80 for re-experiencing, .76 for avoidance and .80 for hyper arousal. In the present research also reliability of Urdu version of Post traumatic stress disorder checklist is also found out. The results shows Urdu version of Post-traumatic stress disorder checklist has alpha reliability coefficients of .84 that is quite satisfactory like the study done by Mushtaq & Rehman (2005). Inter Scale Correlation among Subscales and Total Scores on Urdu version of Post traumatic stress disorder checklist was also assessed. The finding indicated that the inter scale correlation among subscales is .68, .73 and .74 that indicating high construct validity of the

measure. Like in the research by Mushtaq and Rehman (2005) it was like .80 for re-experiencing, .76 for avoidance and .80 for hyper arousal. Inter scale correlation between scale items is quite complimentary to each other.

The study hypothesized indirect effects of Peshawar Massacre on parents due to media coverage. For exploring indirect effects among parents high, moderate and low scorer was identified. To see statistical significance of mean differences among high, moderate and low scorers, Chi square was computed. The result indicated that parents experienced indirect effects of Peshawar Massacre due to media coverage but significant mean differences do not existed among groups. Chi square value on overall level of PTSD among parents was .53 and *p value* is 0.067 which is non significant which shows that on low level PTSD of more fathers are there as compare to mothers like 12 and 4. 19 fathers and 27 mothers have moderate level of PTSD and on high level of PTSD both mother and father experienced PTSD equally. A study by Hoffman and Kruczek (2011) showed that media had a role in increasing terrorism and community violence and that after 9/11, people from a random sample after the incident showed the symptoms of PTSD and they were also more worried about the well-being of their relatives/friends. A study conducted by Besser et al. (2009) in Sderot and its neighboring communities (in the proximity of Gaza strip) that had experienced 8 years of bombing with 20 killing and 400 injuries in 2000-2008 compared those who were in these areas and those who were not present there. The people with increased exposure showed a very high level of PTSD.

The study hypothesized that mothers will experience more re-experiencing symptoms as compare to fathers on score of PTSD checklist. For this purpose chi square was calculated. The analysis on chi square on re-experiencing level shows that there is non significant ($p>.05$) difference between fathers and mothers. The

graphical representation of level of re-experiencing shows that among fathers low level of re-experiencing symptoms of PTSD exists while among mother moderate to level of re-experiencing symptoms are there. Study conducted by Neria et al. (2010) were unsuccessful in finding differences between demographic group as their samples were similar. For example, gender or being married or not might not effect the symptoms of PTSD as these people might belong to a modal culture or an urban, low-income, immigrant individuals.

The study also hypothesized that mothers will experience more avoidance symptoms as compare to fathers on score of PTSD checklist. For this purpose chi square was calculated. The analysis on chi square on re-experiencing level shows that there is non-significant ($p>.05$) difference between fathers and mothers. The graphical representation on the level of avoidance on PTSD among parents showed that among mothers low level of avoidance symptoms of PTSD exists but it is high among fathers. In moderate and high level of avoidance fathers have low level of avoidance is there but it is high for mothers. Another study explained that People that show more avoidance-focused coping are seen as more vulnerable to PTSD. The investigation also found that women and less educated people were most vulnerable to PTSD-symptoms (Baschnagel et al., 2009).

The study hypothesized that mothers will experience more hyper arousal symptoms as compare to fathers on score of PTSD checklist. For this purpose chi square was calculated. The analysis on chi square of hyper arousal level showed that there is non-significant ($p>.05$) difference between fathers and mothers. The graphical representation of level of hyper arousal showed that on low of hyper arousal both mothers and fathers experienced hyper arousal symptoms on equal level but in moderate level of hyper arousal father experienced more as compare to mothers. High level of hyper arousal symptoms are experienced by mothers

more as compare to fathers. Previous researches reveal a link between terrorism and the harm effects of covering such events in the mass media. Slone and Shoshani (2008) show in their study that people were more likely experience PTSD symptoms of nightmares and hyper arousal and also were more likely to be depressed, angry and vulnerable if they were heavily exposed to the traumatic events of 9/11 through media.

From the results it shows that indirect effects of Peshawar Massacre on parents due media coverage are non-significant. The possible reason of this is may be due to the cultural differences. In Pakistan there exist a collectivist culture that means that social bonding among people are very strong so after a bad incident they usually come close to each other to solve the issues. It may be the possible reason that indirect effects are non significant that Peshawar Massacre event has been passed almost months ago so there almost a long duration has been passed so now people become insensitive to the event. They can't stick at one point of life and they have to move on with the life. One more reason for these kind of result is that Pakistani people belief on fate that after the event of Peshawar school people thought that it happened by the will of Allah. So we need to get along with it and move the life further so that who are alive can live life better.

Conclusion

It is concluded that terrorist attacks and traumatic events have not only the direct effects who experience it at first hand but also may perpetuate indirect effects on normal population as well. By exposing the population by media coverage to terrorist attack can be a source of indirect effects but they vary. Some people experience it more while others less like as experiencing and avoidance is

more as compare to hyper arousal symptoms but the effect of incidence varies across cultures.

Limitations

The following are the limitations of the present study that must be taken into consideration. Sample size for the present study was small and further sample was collected from Rawalpindi for future study finding should be replicated by more samples from different areas.

Suggestions

On the bases of present study there are few recommendations for the future studies. Further work should be done on the indirect effects of terrorist attacks as Parents are main pillars of any society it is very important that there psychological wellbeing must be maintained so they can brought up their children in an effective manner so society as a whole can become productive. The following research has opened new area of search so it must be explored further in future by using large sample size and among different areas. More than one questionnaire and interviews can be conducted to explore the indirect of the traumatic event.

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