



Breaking the Cycle of Intergenerational Violence: The Role of Government Policy

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Abstract

In this paper, we study the impact of childhood exposure to violence, of the woman or her spouse, on her well-being during adulthood and the effectiveness of province-wise legislative changes aimed at greater protection of women against violence. Using a difference in differences estimation technique, we estimate the causal impact of childhood exposure to violence on the well-being of women married before and after the roll-out of a government policy package in Punjab. For this purpose, we use the Women's Social and Economic Wellbeing in Pakistan Survey data (2017 – 18). We find that childhood exposure to shocks has long-run effects on future well-being. We show that the government's protection initiatives were partially successful in safeguarding women, especially in metropolitan cities of Punjab. We find suggestive evidence that the effectiveness of the protection initiatives on exposure to intimate partner violence may be due to the greater inclusion of women in household decisions.

Keywords: Childhood Exposure to Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, Intergenerational Transmission of Violence, Policy, Women Protection