



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE'S EFFECT ON WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Dr. Chandni Kumari

Guest teacher (Psychology), S.M.College, Bhagalpur, T.M.B.U, Bhagalpur.

ABSTRACT Domestic violence is intolerable due to the harm it inflicts. It encompasses physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, verbal, and financial mistreatment. This current research aims to illustrate the impact of domestic violence on women's mental well-being. Women subjected to domestic abuse face an elevated risk of mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, disordered eating, aggression, dissociation, somatization, and PTSD. The scale of violence against women is astonishing when considering offenses committed by intimate partners and strangers alike. The Fourth World Conference on Women, convened in Beijing in 1995, characterizes violence against women as any act of gender-based aggression that leads to, or is likely to lead to, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering in women, encompassing threats of such actions, coercion, or arbitrary loss of freedom, whether occurring in public or private spheres.

KEYWORDS : Domestic violence, Mental Health, and Women.

A global public health concern is domestic violence. Regardless of race, nationality, or age, it is one of the most serious human rights abuses that impact women worldwide. This issue has gotten to the point where women seem to be just as vulnerable to violence from their spouses or partners at home as they are from strangers outside. It is one of the main causes of poor mental health and a prevalent hidden issue for women. Domestic violence is defined by the World Health Organization (2005) as any activity that results in physical, psychological, or sexual harm in an intimate relationship. Acts of physical violence, psychological abuse, forced sexual relations and other types of coercion, and other controlling behaviors are examples of this type of conduct. According to a WHO multi-country research on women's health, between 15 and 71 % of women reported having experienced physical or sexual abuse at the hands of their spouses.

Sexual and physical abuse are not the only forms of domestic violence. Acts of emotional and financial violence are also included. One pervasive social phenomena is the prevalence of domestic violence. It transcends national boundaries and cultural boundaries. Violence against women and girls must therefore be seen as systemic prejudice rather than being simply seen as an individual fate. The historical and traditional hierarchy of social values and uneven power relations between the sexes are expressed through violence against women. Thus, in addition to a robust legal support system, it necessitates economic independence, understanding of the importance of education, alternative accommodations, a shift in the mindset and attitude of society, the judiciary, the government, and—above all—women.

"Acts of violence that occur between people who have an intimate relationship" is how the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2012-2022 defines domestic violence. The main component of domestic violence is a persistent pattern of behavior intended to use threats and violence to instill fear in a spouse. The majority of the time, violent behavior—which can be both illegal and non-criminal—is a component of a variety of strategies used to exert control over women.

Various Types Of Domestic Violence Include:

Physical abuse Punching, choking, striking, pushing, shoving, hurling, shattering, ruining property, abusing children, and hurting pets are examples of physical violence that women have experienced. **sexual abuse** Rape and unwelcome sexual contact were examples of sexual abuse.

Verbal and psychological abuse included humiliation, threats, insults, profanity, harassment, or persistent criticism and denigration. Isolating a spouse from friends and/or family, preventing them from using the phone, and regulating and limiting their outings are examples of social abuse. Controlling household or family income by denying someone else access to money and financial freedom is known as economic abuse.

Spiritual abuse includes denying or manipulating religious beliefs of practices to force victims into subordinate roles or to justify other forms of abuse, Intimate Partner Violence, family violence, violence

against women with disabilities are the similar term used for domestic violence.

Risk Factor For Domestic Violence:

There are several risk factors that have been linked to those who commit domestic violence. According to Mouzos and Makkie (2004), drinking habits were the most frequently reported characteristics of the male perpetrator's conduct among women who had recently been victims of intimate relationship abuse. The following are the main risk factors for domestic violence:

1. Attitudes towards violence -One Perceptions of violence According to a number of studies, men who have negative views of women and traditional gender role beliefs that justify using violence as a means of conflict resolution are more likely to commit violence against women (Flood & Pease 2006; NCRVWC 2009b).

2. Situational Factor: A number of situational factors may make domestic violence more likely. According to Memmott et al. (2001), these characteristics include recent stressful events or circumstances, such as the death of a family member, financial difficulties, unemployment, and issues with relationships or family. One important risk factor for domestic violence is alcohol consumption. According to Marcus & Braaf's (2007) research, women who have partners who often drink excessively are more likely to be victims of violence. Alcohol's role in domestic violence is a greater problem in indigenous cultures, claim Dearden & Payne (2009). The component most strongly linked to the risk of victimization among Indigenous people is high-risk alcohol consumption, which raises the likelihood that an Indigenous person may experience real or threatened violence.

3. Relationship Elements Numerous studies demonstrate that domestic violence is caused by interpersonal characteristics. The following are these factors: Marital conflict includes arguments, stress, and other difficulties. instability in marriage, such as separation or divorce, dominance and control of one spouse over the other in the relationship, financial strain, as well as unhealthy family dynamics and relationships.

Effects Of Domestic Violence

The immediate and long-term health and well-being of women can be severely harmed by domestic abuse. Domestic violence can have wide-ranging, severe, and protracted effects. The WHO (2011) states that the repercussions of domestic violence can affect society at large.

On Physical Health- The primary factor affecting women's physical health has been found to be domestic abuse. Obesity, smoking, and high blood pressure are all more likely. Abdominal injuries and mortality, hemorrhage and infection in the latter trimester, and miscarriage are all consequences of violence against pregnant women. Pregnant women who endure violence have both immediate and long-term consequences for their unborn children. This covers low birth weight, damage, fetal mortality, and fetal fractures. Sexual assault can also happen in close relationships. Infections, pain and damage, infertility issues, unintended pregnancy, and miscarriage are all consequences of sexual abuse.

On Emotional Health- Women who experience domestic abuse may experience a variety of emotional effects. It includes "repeated verbal abuse, harassment, confinement and deprivation of physical, financial and personal resources." 38% of women reported feeling confused and disappointed, and 35% reported feeling angry, which was the most common effect of spousal violence on women. The majority of women report feeling depressed, hopeless, and that things would only get worse. According to Stark (2007), social seclusion from friends and family is a common method used by women. Homelessness, job loss, and medical care are also linked to domestic violence.

On Mental Health - Women's mental health can be negatively impacted by domestic abuse in a variety of ways. It is now widely acknowledged that abuse frequently serves as the primary cause of a number of mental health issues. Numerous studies have shown that domestic abuse has detrimental, frequently long-lasting effects on victims' mental health. Mental diseases' start, progression, and recurrence are linked to domestic abuse. Depression, anxiety, PTSD, substance misuse for self-medication, suicide, and other mental health outcomes are all impacted. Sleep disruption and self-harm.

(1) Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): A number of studies concurred that a history of domestic abuse was positively linked to a higher prevalence of PTSD diagnoses and PTSD symptoms. According to O Campo et al. (2006), women who have experienced domestic abuse are 2.3% more likely to develop PTSD. After adjusting for income, marital status, and race, in comparison to women who had never experienced abuse. According to a study by Pico-Alfonso et al. (2006), most women had comorbid PTSD and depressive symptoms, making PTSD alone uncommon.

(2) Depression: When it comes to mental health and domestic violence, depression is the most prevalent and significant factor. According to Vos et al. (2006), depression was responsible for 34.7% of all illness burdens related to domestic abuse. Numerous research showed a correlation between more severe depression symptoms and the intensity or chronicity of violence. Compared to more "objective" measures of domestic violence, such frequency and intensity, subjective assessments of the "stressfulness" of an event may have a greater effect on women's depressive symptoms (Martinez-torteya et al. 2003).

(3) Anxiety: Linked to a past, anxiety is the second most significant contributing factor. of violence in the home. The results of a number of reviewed studies on anxiety indicate that women who have experienced domestic abuse are more likely to have anxiety. Even after accounting for demographic factors including age, income, and education, this link persisted. According to Pico-Alfonso et al. (2006), there is a connection between the degree of anxiety symptoms and comorbidity with depression. They found that abused women who also had depressive symptoms had greater anxiety levels.

(4) Suicide and Self-Harm: Various studies indicate a link between a lifetime of abuse and a higher risk of suicidal thoughts and attempts in women. A WHO multicounty investigation also found a substantial correlation between suicide attempts and domestic abuse. Ishida et al. (2010) also discovered a connection between suicidal ideation and domestic abuse. Self-harm was found to be a statistically significant predictor of domestic violence by Sansone et al. (2007).

(5) Sleep Disturbance: Domestic abuse can lead to insomnia and other sleep disorders. Sleep quality and quantity are negatively impacted for women who encounter domestic violence. According to victims of domestic abuse, "sleeping tightly" is the cause of their teeth grinding, hurting limbs, and interrupted and mild sleep issues. Additionally, they frequently had nightmares in which they heard or saw their ex-partner. Domestic violence victims had sleep deprivation, which resulted in a variety of health issues, such as exhaustion, generalized pain, headaches and migraines, elevated blood pressure, persistent exhaustion, and digestive issues. The "ability to cope" of women was also being diminished by sleep deprivation.

CONCLUSION

According to the current analysis, women who are victims of domestic abuse have much worse mental health, including PTSD, sadness, anxiety, and other conditions. This highlights the significant and enduring harm that domestic violence poses to women's health and well-being. To ensure the safety of women in our society, the government needs to take various steps to ensure their safety so that not

only women can be safe but a better society can be created.

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