



FROM WAR ZONES TO PEOPLES HOME

Social Science

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ABSTRACT

Lockdowns and quarantines are essential to suppressing COVID-19. People across the world are staying indoors during lockdowns to stop the spread of the corona virus. However several effective measures have undoubtedly been taken for battling the pandemic, but at the same time gendered inequalities and the threats to women and children across the world have exposed on a dangerous mark. As the variant corona virus continues to spread across the globe it brings with it multiple new stresses, including physical and psychological health risks, isolation and loneliness, the closure of many schools and businesses, economic vulnerability and job losses. Through all of that children and their mothers are particularly vulnerable to the threatening risk of domestic violence.

Though the domestic violence was a global pandemic long before the COVID-19 outbreak. It refers to a range of violations that happen within a domestic space. It is a broad term that encompasses Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), a form of abuse that is perpetrated by a current or ex-partner. In this editorial, we talk about "domestic violence" because this is the term used most often in the media. It is important to clarify though that we are mainly referring to IPV and its impact on children who live with or are exposed to IPV between adults. We also focus mainly on women, because they are disproportionately affected by domestic violence; however, we recognise that domestic abuse happens to men and occurs within same-sex relationships. [1]

KEYWORDS

The National Commission for Women (NCW), Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), Delhi Commission for Women (DCW)

INTRODUCTION

As the world is off and on under lockdown to fight the virus, yet domestic violence has posed a bigger alarming challenge for the female society worldwide to fight the home virus. Such violence goes up whenever families spend more time together. Violence and abuse are not just a problem of lower and middle classes, it is prevalent even among prominent and famous people too. As we assume that home is the safest place to be while a corona virus pandemic rages outside but it is miserable to say that female society appear to be quite unsafe in their home itself. There is a higher risk of domestic abuse when the couples are self-isolated, as the moral bindings and self-control lose their way during prolonged coreciding together. Self-isolation is again a dangerous scenario for women and children who face domestic violence due to the loss of patience. Physically violent tendencies enabled and further inflamed by economic stressors. Past epidemics, including Ebola and Zika, suggest violence against women may shift in nature and scale as pandemic outbreaks affect social and economic life also. More than half of the world's population is being asked to stay at home to slow down the spread of covid-19. For women already in abusive relationships, or at risk of such abuse, staying at home increases their risk of intimate partner violence. It is remarkable to notice that children may also be exposed to intimate partner violence. According to statistic released by the United Nations, reports of domestic violence in France increased 30 percent following the country's lockdown on March 17, 2020, during the first two weeks of lockdowns in Spain, the emergency number for domestic violence received 18 percent more calls; and help lines in Singapore have received 30 percent more calls. As NBC news reported, law enforcement agencies across the U.S. have seen domestic violence cases rise up to 35 percent. [2]



<https://www.thehindu.com/data/data-domestic-violence-complaints-received-in-past-five-months-reach-a-21-year-high/article34877182.ece/amp/>

EMOTIONAL STRESS

Emotional abuse is also a serious phenomenon, in fact it is more serious than physical abuse. Miserably it is overlooked by others because it do not leave a visible sign for naked eyes to see, like physical abuse, it is skin deep. Certainly the corona virus has heightened

emotional stress for many people. Social distancing and social isolation are really a big problem because that is one of the tactics that abusers use. It is to alienate a victim from their social network, from their family and friends but social distancing should not mean emotional distancing. In other words, we must continue supporting friends, neighbours, those in need of help. [3]

External factors like stress and financial strains can negatively impact victims and create circumstances where their safety is further compromised. Here it is worthwhile to note, Pope Francis said that society had to stand behind women victims of domestic violence, as abuse increased around the world during corona virus lockdowns. Francis praised women in frontline roles in helping society weather the crisis, mentioning doctors, nurses, police officers, prison guards and sales staff in stores selling essential goods. [4]

It might be further added that Claire Barnett, executive director for UN Women UK, said there is "clear evidence" from across the world that in times of economic uncertainty and societal instability, this abuse increases. "When communities undergo additional stress – from disease, to drought, to their local football team losing a match – rates of violence rise". [5]



<https://images.dawn.com/news/1184957>

The National Commission for Women (NCW) has raised concerns about the increase in the number of cases of domestic violence and abuse during the lockdown period in India in the wake of the corona virus outbreak. It has received 69 complaints of domestic violence – twice the usual number which it said has been increasing since the official lockdown began on March 25, 2020. The states with the highest number of complaints include Uttar Pradesh with 90, Delhi with 37, Bihar with 18, Madhya Pradesh with 11 and Maharashtra with 18. In the pre-lockdown period, Uttar Pradesh had 36 cases in the same number of days, Delhi had 16, Bihar had 8, and Madhya Pradesh had 4 and Maharashtra five. [6] On the contrary the Delhi commission for women said that the cases of domestic violence have also not increased during the time when men and women are at home. [7]

SHADOW PANDEMIC

Violence against women is a public issue and encompasses virtually all spheres of public relations. It influences various spheres of social life,

including public health, protection of juvenile's rights and social and economic welfare. Studies conducted reveal the complexity of domestic violence character, variety of its causes and need for inter-sectoral cooperation and multi-pronged approach in addressing the issue. As male-dominated power structures underpin everything from national economies, to political systems, to the corporate world and beyond, the patriarchy also has an impact on men and boys, trapping them in rigid gender stereotypes, declaring that a systemic change is long overdue. Although social isolation measures have been mandated around the world to contain the spread of corona virus, yet these have had undesirable side-effects also. In the preceding months, 243 million women and girls (aged 15-49) across the world have been subjected to sexual or physical violence by an intimate partner. [8]

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, this number is likely to grow with multiple impacts on women's wellbeing, their sexual and reproductive health, their mental health, and their ability to participate and lead in the recovery of our societies and economy. To add fuel to injury it has been observed that the cooking abilities of women are drifting from proper method and are imposing unpalatable effect for the family.

IS LOCKDOWN-A PEACE MISSION?

Families are extremely complex and therefore there is no straight answer to whether the corona virus lockdown is actually leading to strengthening of relationship. The survey reports explain that for some people families are the primary triggers of their mental health issues while some others are part of deeply abusive families. Positively noted that quarantine schedule is sure to test those untouched gel in a relationship, one can also take this time to assess and enhance their relationship, instead of bickering over unnecessary issues.

When studied the social structure of laymen society in India the scenario comes worse in itself. Particularly women of such scenario do not have their personal commutating instruments as compared to their male counterparts. This adverse situation leads to burst out their grievances through tears, revenge and heightened abuses. Firstly there is a gender gap when it comes to using communication technology. Many Indian households have not more than one phone and that is usually with the man of the house. Even if women possess phones, they run out of prepaid currency and they cannot venture out to top up without raising suspicion at home and most of these women live in single-room homes. That means they cannot make calls without being overheard by family members. Men are frustrated sitting at home and are taking out that frustration on women. In many situations, women have to tolerate the violence because being homeless is worse. The problem, according to activists, is that domestic violence is not taken seriously in normal times as well. Not every woman is exposed to war or natural disasters, but every single woman can potentially be exposed to violence in her own home. Therefore more attention and money should be directed towards stopping domestic violence.

CONCLUSION

The violence that is emerging now as a dark feature of this pandemic is a mirror and a challenge to our values, our resilience and shared humanity. Also, Gender inequality is an abuse of power that is damaging our communities, our economies, our environment, our relationships and our health. It is time to stop trying to change women, and start changing the systems that prevent them from achieving their potential. It is high time for us to urgently transform and redistribute power, if we are to safeguard our future and our planet.

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RECOMMENDATION

1. We are supposed to be emotionally more connected and develop our soft temperament towards the family members and.
2. We can intensify our cordately through by phone or video call, or be a part of their safety plan.
3. One who has experienced domestic or intimate partner violence or sexual abuse, can connect the concerning help line number for immediate remedy.
4. It is always better for a person themselves to reach out to the organizations for help as they can explain their case better.
5. You have to be willing to help yourself first together with positive attitude. As the saying goes, God helps those who help themselves.
6. Grassroots and women's organizations and communities have played an appreciable role in preventing and responding to crises and need to be supported strongly in their current frontline role including with funding that remains in the longer-term.
7. Helplines, psychosocial support and online counselling should be boosted, using latest technology, finding the solution based solutions such as SMS, online tools and networks to expand social support, and to reach women with no access to phones or internet.
8. Police and justice services must mobilize to ensure that incidents of violence against women and girls are given high priority with no impunity for perpetrators.
9. The private enterprise is free enough to play an important role, sharing information, alerting staff to the facts and the dangers of domestic violence and encouraging positive steps like sharing care responsibilities at home, discarding creep episodes of society.

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