

Domestic Violence Being Normalised

Zenab Hussain, Dr. Rama Srivastava

*Amity Institute of Social Sciences (AISS)
Department of Social Work
Amity University, Uttar Pradesh Noida*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is a pattern of harmful behaviour inside a relationship when one person seeks to gain or uphold power and control over the other intimate partner. Domestic violence includes physical, emotional, sexual, economic, psychological, or technical actions, threats, or any controlling behaviour that affects a person inside an intimate relationship. It might involve behaviours such as intimidation, humiliation, manipulation, isolation, and physical or emotional harm towards an individual.

Domestic violence is intentional intimidation, battering, physical assault, sexual assault, or any other abusive behaviour that occurs repeatedly as a professional means of exerting power and control by one intimate partner over another. Domestic abuse can occur to anyone of any class, gender, ethnicity, age, religion, or gender. Furthermore, it can impact individuals from all socioeconomic backgrounds and academic levels. Celebrities and well-known individuals have also been affected by this issue, and their cases receive more attention due to their public profile.

Emotional abuse and controlling behaviours are part of a larger, systematic pattern of dominance and control that often follows physical assault. Domestic violence can result in bodily harm, psychological distress, and in severe cases, fatality.

Rationale of the Study

Crime against women is the most vivid, painful, and controversial issue for discussion inside India. While not a primary developmental concern, this issue hinders women's progress by limiting their involvement in national development initiatives and receiving their fair portion of developmental resources. This issue has not been fully investigated yet we know that throughout history, women in many regions of the world have been seen as the physically inferior sex. Crime against women is expression of authority over them and stems from the baser tendencies of society. It

not only signifies the greater physical strength of males over women but also takes the shape of the assertion of control of power and of money over the women of the poorer classes.

The powerful and the affluent want the women of lesser class to serve them in numerous ways one of which is sexual favours and in case they reject them by resistance, rape, abduction, and molestation take happen. Familial crime was unusual in Indian civilization.

The phenomena which lead to most crimes in Indian civilization were the periodic invasions throughout history. The winning army sought vengeance on the women of the vanquished by making them slaves, raping them, selling them, or even forcing them into marriages. The ancient Hindu scriptures have always taken a very dim view of offenses against women, Brahmins, and cows. This is not however to suggest that atrocities against women were not perpetrated during Hindu domination or authority. This specific research article focuses on investigation of such events and seeks to discover and solution to it.

Objective of the Study

This research tries to place the attention on how domestic violence is getting normalized. The aims are to:

- Establish the extent, contributing factors.
- Accessing on how to solve such challenges.
- Make suggestions and addressing the issue as to what may be done and by which suitable individuals or bodies to put a halt to domestic violence to guarantee that victims are safeguarded from its impact on them.

Domestic Violence Normalization Factors: Cultural and social norms:

Due to cultural and societal standards that promote harmful actions, domestic violence is normalised in modern culture. Power imbalances result from patriarchal ideas and gender norms, which teach men to control and dominate their partners and women to tolerate subservience and

abuse in intimate relationships. Media portrays violence as a way to exert power or resolve issues, desensitizing people to domestic abuse. Cultural values about privacy and family can also impair domestic violence prevention. Many cultures consider family affairs private and taboo, making it hard for survivors to speak out or get support. Social pressure to maintain family peace and traditional values may dissuade survivors from leaving abusive relationships or seeking treatment.

Systemic problems including limited legal safeguards and social resources for survivors normalize domestic abuse. Laws and laws may not address domestic violence or help survivors leave violent settings. A lack of financing and resources for shelters, therapy services, and other types of help further exacerbates the situation.

Addressing the normalization of domestic abuse entails questioning established gender roles, battling attitudes that condone violence, and making structural changes to help survivors and hold offenders responsible. By establishing a culture of respect, equality, and support, society may strive towards eliminating domestic violence and building safer communities for all individuals.

Gender role and power dynamics:

In India, conventional gender roles and power dynamics have long been linked with cases of domestic violence. One such example is the 2020 incident involving a woman from Uttar Pradesh who was reportedly beaten to death by her husband for refusing to make a meal during the COVID-19 lockdown. This sad occurrence demonstrates how ingrained gender stereotypes may lead to violence inside intimate relationships, with women typically carrying the brunt of household tasks and facing punishments for defying customary expectations.

Similarly, in the United States, incidences of domestic violence have been worsened by the COVID-19 epidemic. For example, a study from the National Domestic Violence Hotline found a large rise in calls and messages from survivors during the lockdown period, highlighting the heightened risk faced by victims confined to their homes with violent spouses. These cases illustrate the ways in which power dynamics inside partnerships can be magnified by external pressures, such as economic instability and social isolation.

Furthermore, in South Africa, gender-based violence has reached worrisome proportions, with women and girls disproportionately victimized by intimate partner abuse. The country has one of

the highest rates of femicide in the world, with women often enduring horrific maltreatment at the hands of their spouses. The COVID-19 epidemic has further aggravated this problem, with lockdown tactics locking many survivors in abusive conditions and limiting their access to support resources.

These instances reveal the complicated relationship between gender roles, power dynamics, and domestic violence, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive interventions to address this prevalent issue. By questioning conventional gender norms, promoting gender equality, and giving assistance to survivors, cultures may move towards establishing safer and more equitable communities for all persons.

Economic variables:

Economic factors can considerably impact the frequency and dynamics of domestic violence. Financial difficulty, unemployment, and economic instability can intensify tensions within homes and raise the likelihood of abuse. In many circumstances, perpetrators may use economic control as a method to retain power and control over their relationships, such as restricting access to money, ruining work possibilities, or preventing survivors from leaving abusive situations owing to financial reliance. Additionally, gaps in economic resources and opportunities can connect with other types of oppression, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and immigrant status, to further heighten vulnerabilities to domestic violence. For example, women who experience economic inequality may face extra challenges to obtaining treatment or leaving abusive relationships, particularly if they lack access to financial resources or social networks.

Moreover, economic considerations might limit survivors' capacity to access support services and resources. Limited financing for shelters, therapy, and legal help may restrict survivors' options for fleeing abusive relationships or pursuing justice. Economic instability can also impair survivors' capacity to reconstruct their lives after leaving abusive relationships, as they may struggle to acquire stable housing, job, and financial security.

Research methodology

For this study on the normalization of domestic violence, secondary data analysis was employed as the primary research method. Secondary data, sourced from academic journals, books, government reports, and reputable websites,

formed the basis of the investigation. The research objectives were guided by a thorough examination of existing literature, aiming to identify factors contributing to the normalization of domestic violence and understand its societal implications. Thematic analysis was employed to discern patterns, themes, and trends within the secondary data, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of the phenomenon. Ethical considerations were carefully addressed, ensuring the confidentiality and anonymity of individuals referenced in the literature. Despite inherent limitations, such as potential biases in the existing literature and lack of control over data collection methods, the validity and reliability of the secondary data were upheld through rigorous scrutiny and critical evaluation.

Through this methodological approach, the study aimed to contribute to a deeper understanding of the normalization of domestic violence within contemporary society.

Statistics on the prevalence of domestic violence:

According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, law enforcement is notified of around half of all domestic violence events. According to statistics from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the number of domestic violence occurrences that were recorded between 2010 and 2019 did not significantly vary; nonetheless, data from the criminal victimization survey indicates that the issue is still widespread.

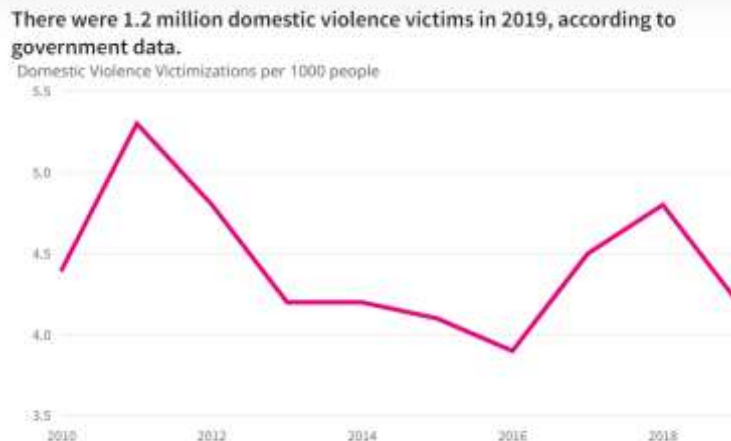


Figure 1: 1.2 million domestic violence victims in 2019, according to government data.

Sources:

US Department of Justice

According to one study, the number of victims of intimate partner or family member domestic abuse fell from 4.8 per 1,000 people in 2018 to 4.2 per 1,000 people in 2019. The average victimization rate was 4.4 per 1,000 individuals between 2010 and 2019.

The National Crime Victimization Survey provides information on the frequency with which victims report occurrences of domestic abuse. In

the poll, members of the public are asked whether they have ever been the victim of a crime and if so, whether they reported it to the police. It was found in the survey that 52% of victims of domestic abuse reported the incident. Compared to 2010, fewer people are reporting cases of domestic abuse to the police. Approximately 2/3 of the victims of the crime came forward to the police in that year as opposed to 52% in 2019.

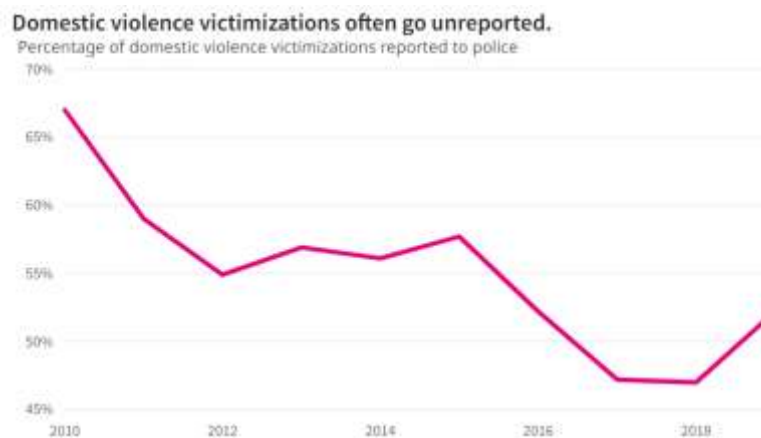


Figure 2: Domestic victimizations often go unreported.

According to data from the Department of Justice, women between the ages of 18 and 34 often have the greatest rates of intimate partner violence. Of those women, 75% had previously been harmed by the same perpetrator.

The 2015 National Intimate Partner and Sexual abuse study, carried out by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), found that around one in four women and nearly one in ten males had experienced sexual and physical abuse

and/or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lives. Since 2015, the CDC has not carried out the survey.

In the US, 38 million men and over 43 million women have ever been the victim of psychological abuse by a close spouse. According to the CDC, psychological aggression is defined as verbal and nonverbal communication that aims to cause mental or emotional injury to another person and to exert control over them.

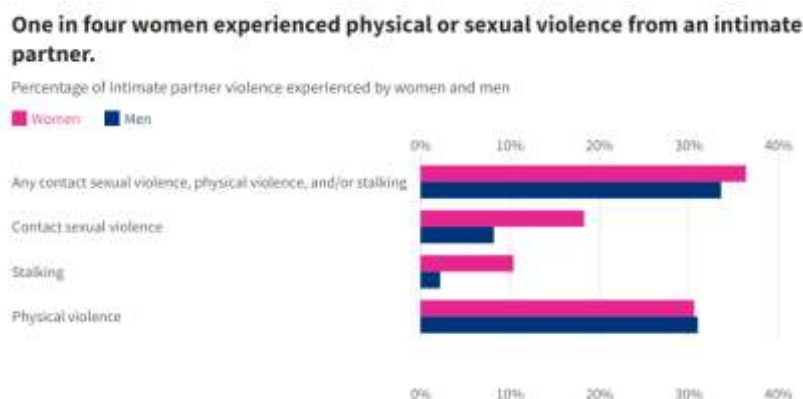


Figure 3: 1/4 women experienced physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner.

Other research shows that due to onset of Covid 19 there has been violent outbreak of gender disparities. In India, women respond to diseases at home and at work in a disproportionately large way. Regrettably, the crisis response has not been able to provide plans that protect the most severely affected half.

Gendered disparity in power relations, both at home and at work, is the root cause of violations against women. There is a clear bias in power dynamics towards women who are marginalized. Flavia Agnes claims that despite the Domestic Violence Act's attempt to recognize the

complexity of domestic abuse, decadal overwhelming legislative inertia has prevented the promises made by the law from coming to pass. The legislation was unable to create a more complex understanding of domestic abuse as times evolved. Agnes notes that seeing women as a monolithic whole is a major error in the Domestic Violence Act. The profound socioeconomic class disparities that affect women in India are not taken into consideration by the Domestic Violence Act. Socioeconomic disparities are likely to worsen during a pandemic, creating a larger gap in access to legal and healthcare systems based on class. The

Domestic Violence Act prioritizes legal improvements; yet, it is overshadowed by the social realities that impoverished urban and rural women, in particular, face while trying to use legal processes. Consequently, preventing the planned legal reforms from being actively implemented. The most obvious takeaway from previous pandemics is that they exacerbate pre-existing gender vulnerabilities to the point where, occasionally, the collateral harm outweighs the direct effect. The impoverished are more acutely affected by the intersecting inequities that result from prejudice and limited access to resources.

Since the lockdown, the unemployment rate has skyrocketed, going from 8% to 23%. According to reports, there is a significant increase in cases of domestic violence and sexual exploitation in a workforce dominated by men when homes experience extraordinary stress brought on by a lack of economic stability. In a widely read work, Cecile Jackson discusses the feminization of poverty and emphasizes how urgent it is to assess and address gender bias in government programs aimed at reducing poverty. Loss of income has a negative impact on women's access to support networks since these systems rely on women being financially independent. Due to the pandemic's devastating effects on largely feminized services in the unofficial sector, such retail and hospitality, female unemployment rates

in the workforce are at an all-time high. Due to the lack of government-sponsored aid programs, women are particularly susceptible to poverty and are left at the mercy of their abusers. Although there is abundant evidence linking alcohol intake to an increase in incidents of gender-based violence, India's pandemic reaction gave priority to the establishment of liquor stores above the declaration of a crisis. It is crucial to prioritize women in stimulus initiatives as a result.

Numerous news stories have claimed that the global COVID-19 lockdown tactics have increased the incidence of domestic abuse (DA). As per the New York Times, there has been a notable surge in domestic violence emergency calls, with over 20% more calls in nations like France, China, India, Spain, and the UK than in prior months. Preventing a COVID-19 health catastrophe has resulted in inadvertent implications for victims of domestic violence. More accurate estimations of the impact of lockdowns on domestic abuse have been reported by recent academic study. There is conflicting data in this research. While some studies (Leslie and Wilson, 2020; Ravindran and Shah, 2020) show a rise in domestic abuse reports, other studies (Campedelli, Aziani and Favarin, 2020; Payne and Morgan, 2020; Piquero et al., 2020) show no appreciable change in domestic abuse during the lockdown.

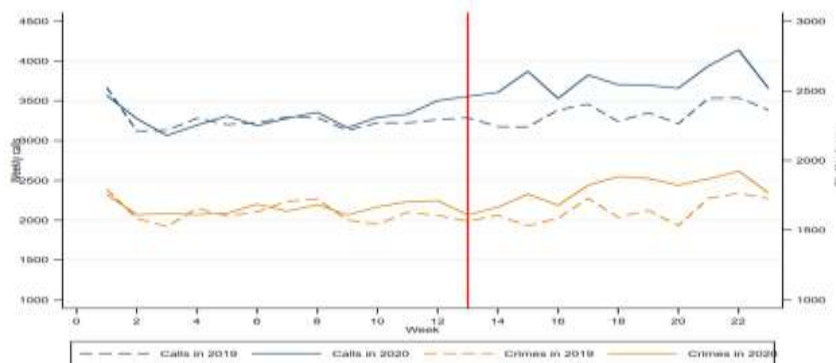


Figure 4: Weekly calls for domestic incidents/crimes, 2019 vs. 2020

Figure 4 shows the general patterns of domestic abuse during lockdown in 2020, compared to patterns in 2019 and the weeks leading up to the lockdown. First, from the first week of January to the start of March, the weekly patterns in calls and crimes in 2020 were a perfect replica of those in 2019. The 2020 and 2019 patterns begin to diverge two weeks prior to the lockdown, in the first week of March, and the number of calls begins to rise and stays higher throughout the lockdown.

Figure 4 also shows that, although at a slower and more variable rate than in the prior year, domestic abuse offenses during lockdown increased. In the part that follows, we delve into further depth and rigor about these developments and talk about the mechanics underlying how domestic violence is evolving when people are under lockdown. Additionally, we see that two weeks before to the lockdown in the UK, the 2020 statistics began to diverge from the 2019 trend. Prior to the lockout,

reports from Italy began to circulate in March, which may have preceded the notable declines in mobility levels by raising fear and causing controlling behaviour (a behaviour linked to domestic violence). This suggests that the different study designs that take advantage of variations across cities or nations might not be suitable in this context.

Figure 4 illustrates that there were more domestic abuse offenses committed during the lockdown period compared to the same period the previous year. However, there are considerable differences in the types of domestic abuse crimes. For instance, the percentage of crimes involving present partners is identical to that of past partners (35–36%). Changes brought about by the lockdown included a sharp decline in mobility, a decrease in alcohol consumption at bars and athletic activities, a rise in time spent at home, and elevated feelings of social and financial concern. These modifications could have had a significant impact on the type of abuse. When analyzing general trends in domestic abuse, breaking down crimes involving domestic abuse according to the features of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator highlights a significant shift in the nature of the abuse.

Addressing the normalization of domestic violence

Addressing the normalization of domestic violence is crucial for creating safer and more equitable societies. Normalization perpetuates harmful attitudes and behaviours, allowing abuse to thrive behind closed doors and undermining efforts to support survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. Challenge normalization by challenging it, fostering a culture of respect, equality, and support.

Education and awareness campaigns are essential for challenging normalization, debunking myths, and stereotypes, and promoting empathy and understanding. Legal reforms are necessary to strengthen protections for survivors and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable for their actions. This includes enacting and enforcing laws criminalizing domestic violence, providing survivors with access to legal aid and support services, and training law enforcement and judicial personnel to respond effectively to domestic violence cases.

Providing survivors with access to support services, such as shelters, counselling, and financial assistance, is critical for helping them escape abusive situations and rebuild their lives.

Community involvement and bystander intervention programs can also play a pivotal role in challenging normalization and creating a supportive environment for survivors.

Legal and policy interventions for domestic violence globally include legislation that criminalizes domestic abuse, such as restraining orders and mandatory arrest policies. Many countries have enacted laws specifically addressing domestic violence, such as the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in the United States. These laws often provide survivors with access to protection orders, shelter, and support services. In India, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) enacted in 2005 provides a comprehensive framework for the protection of women from domestic abuse, including physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse. The National Commission for Women (NCW) plays a crucial role in monitoring and enforcing legal protections for survivors of domestic violence, advocating for policy reforms, and raising awareness about women's rights.

The Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, introduced in 2012, amends the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 and the Special Marriage Act, 1954 to make divorce easier on grounds of irretrievable breakdown of marriage.

The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 provides for equal remuneration to men and women workers and prevents discrimination based on sex in employment. The Government of India has established several special initiatives for the protection and empowerment of women, including the National Commission for Women (NCW), the National Plan of Action for the Girl Child for 1991-2000, and the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001.

Education and awareness programs play a crucial role in addressing domestic violence by challenging societal norms, empowering individuals to recognize and respond to abuse, and fostering a culture of respect and equality. Educational initiatives, such as school programs, workshops, and community outreach, help individuals learn about the dynamics of domestic violence and its prevalence, impact, and root causes.

Awareness campaigns like "Orange the World Campaign" in the United States, "It's on Us" in the United States, and the "Bell Bajao" campaign in India encourage bystanders to intervene and take action when they witness domestic violence. The Ministry of Women and Child Development in India launched the Sexual Harassment Electronic

Box (SHE Box) portal to enable women employees to file complaints of sexual harassment at the workplace.

Support services for survivors of domestic violence encompass a comprehensive array of resources aimed at providing assistance, protection, and empowerment to individuals affected by abuse. These services include safe and confidential shelters, counselling, and support groups, 24-hour hotlines and helplines, legal advocates, economic empowerment programs, child and family services, community-based organizations, and social service agencies.

In India, various organizations and initiatives provide support services for survivors of domestic violence, such as the "One Stop Centre (OSC)" scheme implemented by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. These centres offer medical assistance, counselling, legal aid, temporary shelter, and rehabilitation support. Organizations like "Sakhi for South Asian Women," "Majlis Legal Centre," "SNEHA," and "Maitri" provide tailored support services to survivors, advocating for policy changes to address the root causes of gender-based violence.

II. CONCLUSION

The normalization of domestic violence is a significant issue that affects individuals in profound ways, with the impact suffered by victims being comparable to the suffering experienced by soldiers during war. Addressing and preventing domestic violence requires seriousness and commitment, similar to the efforts made during times of war.

The research structure provides a framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of domestic violence and its normalization. It begins with view of how important it is to address this issue, and Factors contributing to the normalization of domestic violence include cultural and societal norms, media influence, gender roles, and economic factors. By humanizing these factors, we can better understand the complexities that perpetuate domestic violence and work towards meaningful solutions.

The effects of normalized domestic violence are far-reaching and profound, impacting not only immediate victims but also inter-generational and societal implications. Addressing the normalization of domestic violence through legal and policy interventions, education and awareness programs, and support services for survivors is not just about enacting abstract measures; it is about providing real, tangible

support to individuals who have experienced harm. Case studies and comparative analysis offer real-life examples of the impact of normalized domestic violence in different cultural contexts. By humanizing these experiences, we can gain a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities for intervention in diverse settings.

The research structure provides a human-centred approach to understanding and addressing the normalization of domestic violence, working towards a future where domestic violence is no longer a pervasive and normalized issue.

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