

COVID-19-RELATED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ESCALATION FACTORS

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ABSTRACT

During the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, the following factors are contributing to the escalation of domestic violence. The installation of physical distancing measures as a reaction to the Covid-19 outbreak has resulted in an increase in marital violence, which was predicted given the circumstances. Instances of domestic violence have a tendency to increase at times when families spend extended amounts of time together, such as during the holiday seasons like Christmas and summer vacations. This phenomena is consistent with the well-established view that this phenomenon is a result of this phenomenon. There is a link between increasing family togetherness and the prevalence of violence, wherein acts of violence may occur without evident cause, according to scientific works in the fields of sociology and gender studies. This association has been demonstrated.

Keywords: *domestic violence, family disputes, covid19 outbreak, outbreak violence*

INTRODUCTION

In light of the findings presented by Booth (2017) and Nofziger and Kurtz (2005), it is possible that this occurrence is connected to psychological aspects. On the other hand, one may make the case that Covid-19 can be seen as an underlying element that contributes to occurrences of violence.

As the number of people infected with the Covid-19 virus continues to climb, countries are being forced to act by enacting regulations that restrict certain modes of transportation. The implementation of this strategy has led to a reduction in workforce size, the loss of jobs, and a decrease in income.

It has been established by Peprah and Koomson (2017) that there is a widespread agreement among academics that there is a connection between low income and the occurrence of domestic violence. In the context of a pandemic, it is essential to keep in mind that occurrences of violence within a family unit might be impacted by circumstances that are not related to a history of abuse. To be more specific, the chance of such violence occurring might be increased by economic difficulties that are the consequence of financial strain and a lack of social support. This conclusion is consistent with previous academic research, which reveals that higher levels of stress within couples are connected with a three and a half times increased probability of suffering violence, in

comparison to couples that have lower levels of stress. As an additional point of interest, it is likely that a reallocation of responsibilities might be the cause of domestic violence.

Alterations in duties and responsibilities within relationships create a situation in which individuals who find themselves in abusive partnerships may be harassed by their abusers. This is a predicament that can occur when the roles and responsibilities within relationships are altered. According to findings from recent research, the installation of lockdown procedures in reaction to uncommon events such as natural disasters and pandemics results in longer durations of close closeness among members of the same family. As a consequence of this, the amount of time that is available for safe separation is reduced, for example, when one person leaves the family to go to work, which in turn increases the risk that there will be occurrences of domestic violence. Furthermore, it is essential to recognise that domestic violence can be the result of greater interactions within a familial environment, which can be related to increased time spent together. This is something that should be acknowledged. As a result of this increased closeness, different routines and behaviours that might not be compatible with one another may be brought to light.

THE EFFECTS OF MARITAL VIOLENCE ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN WHICH CHILDREN ARE RAISED

Although it is possible that there are other variables that are contributing to the increase in violence that has been associated with the COVID-19 epidemic, it is evident that the increase in the number of incidents of domestic violence would make both economic and social problems much worse. Individuals who were going through social problems were able to make use of a variety of types of aid prior to the beginning of the Covid-19 epidemic. These forms of assistance included access to safe housing facilities, support networks for their families and relationships, and legal redress in the form of protection orders. On the other hand, when a lockdown is in effect, these choices are no longer freely available. Taking into consideration the fact that victims are confined to their homes, it is quite likely that the level of violence and suffering they experience will become more severe on their end. Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance to recognise that children are profoundly affected by the phenomenon of domestic violence. It is becoming increasingly difficult for parents to receive aid from their family and community as a consequence of the growing number of incidents.

On top of that, the lack of childcare resources places a tremendous load on victims, which in turn leads to increased levels of stress and responsibility for both the victim and their children. As a result, the challenges that children face in terms of their dietary intake, educational possibilities, and overall development are exacerbated by the fact that locations within confinement zones may not be easily accessible to daycare providers. This further complicates the situation. Furthermore, the installation of lockdown measures may have a negative influence on the psychological well-being of children (Browne and Finkelhor, 1986; Finkelhor, 2010; Wood and Sommers, 2011). This is because the implementation of lockdown measures may result in an increase in the level of violence and unpleasant interactions between parents and children. Furthermore, the effects of

Covid-19 on occurrences of domestic violence may also appear via the social relationships that an individual has with other people.

In the context of this discussion, the term "relationship" refers to the ties that individuals have with their social peers, which may include friends, extended family members, neighbours, and coworkers. According to the findings of previous studies (Flood and Fergus, 2008; Levendosky et al., 2003), there is a connection between domestic violence and its influence on the relationships that exist between mothers and children, the growth of children who are of preschool age, and the quality of interactions that occur between young people. Individuals who have been victims of victimisation are put in a position where they are at danger of experiencing a decrease in their social ties as a result of the installation of lockdown measures and the associated limits on social contacts. When it comes to providing assistance to those who have been victims of domestic abuse, the support of colleagues is an extremely important factor.

Nevertheless, the widespread adoption of work-from-home or remote working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has had an effect on people's social networks and the interactions they have on a daily basis. Furthermore, it has significantly hindered the capacity of in-person support teams to fulfil their responsibilities and assist victims in overcoming abusive situations (Goodman et al., 2016; MacGregor et al., 2016; Rogers et al., 2019). Community members who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, particularly women of colour, women from marginalised social strata, and immigrants, face considerable problems as a result of the aforementioned challenges. There is a possibility that these individuals may face obstacles in gaining access to help from the government and the community even before the pandemic has begun (Sokoloff and Dupont 2005; Tam et al. 2016). These obstacles may be caused by both structural and cultural reasons.

During the aftermath of the pandemic, it is projected that communities would be confronted with increased issues, which may potentially exacerbate societal imbalances across a variety of sectors. When seen from an economic point of view, the rise of violence calls for involvement from the government. In order to safeguard those who have been affected by violence, governments need to create protective measures, which may include isolating them or providing them with security. However, in order to carry out such activities, financial investment is necessary, which in and of itself presents a possible threat to the economy (Heath, 2012; Houghton, 2009).

It is anticipated that the Covid-19 pandemic will contribute to an increase in domestic violence incidents across a variety of civilizations, primarily as a result of financial difficulties brought on by income losses (Purvin, 2003; Williams & Mickelson, 2004). This is in accordance with the findings of previous academic research that indicates a positive correlation between the rates of intimate partner violence and the socioeconomic deprivation that exists within communities (Bonomi et al., 2014; Kiss et al., 2012). As a result of the incidence of domestic violence, it has been discovered that it has a consequential influence on the likelihood of separations and divorces, which in turn leads to the utilisation of government resources and imposes an extra burden on the economy (Moon and Joung, 1997).

There is a substantial body of research that offers detailed documentation of the negative effects that domestic abuse has on both physical and mental health. These effects span a wide range of outcomes, some of which include but are not limited to depression, participation in risky sexual conduct, and substance abuse. Furthermore, the development of chronic diseases is one of the long-term consequences of domestic abuse (Delara, 2016; Friis et al., 2019; Rivara et al., 2019). It is important to note that these findings are supported by research. The deleterious effects of domestic violence prevent individuals from making meaningful contributions to the economy as they struggle with the mental and physical ramifications of such abuse. This is a significant challenge for governments, as they are presented with the possibility of losing a productive workforce as a result of the negative impact of domestic violence. It is possible that the long-term effects of this phenomena will not become apparent within a short period of time, such as one or two days, despite the fact that this is an inescapable consequence. There is a significant interaction between economic factors as both causes and consequences in the association between Covid-19 and domestic violence. This interaction is a remarkable component of the relationship.

There is a possibility that issues such as mental illness might play a role in the association between domestic violence and economic misery. This is another hypothesis that could be considered. The simultaneous occurrence of economic causes, violence, and economic repercussions, in addition to the possible effect of a variety of other elements on this dynamic, makes it difficult to establish a conclusive causal link. This is owing to the fact that established causal relationships are methodologically complicated. On the other hand, it is possible to assert that the primary reason for the rise in domestic violence is the economic difficulties that have surfaced in regions that have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is especially true in relation to the growing number of cases and the turbulence that has resulted in the affected areas. Pandemics, like as the continuing Covid-19 problem, as well as other uncommon events have been seen to increase the number of instances of domestic violence and to amplify the size of violent behaviours. There was a discernible increase in the number of instances of domestic violence that occurred in New Zealand in 2011, following the occurrence of the earthquake that occurred in Christchurch. This rise was equivalent to one sixth of the levels that existed before to the accident. This increase may be linked to a number of factors, the most important of which was the shift in the patterns of alcohol consumption that occurred inside families as a direct result of the closure of enterprises in the aftermath of the earthquake. It was demonstrated that the offer of temporary sanctuary allowed for an increase in the number of instances of sexual assault that occurred in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The majority of these occurrences were committed by persons who were unknown to the victims. In the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, there was a considerable rise in the intensity of sexual attacks, as seen by the increased brutality of rapes, which usually involved many assailants from different groups. It is important to take note of the fact that over one year after the hurricanes occurred, the number of instances of domestic violence rebounded to the levels that were before to the disasters. In view of the aforementioned impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on domestic violence and the subsequent economic and social turbulence, it is of the utmost need

to devise comprehensive policies and strategies with the objective of mitigating the adverse effects that the pandemic has had on the economic and social landscape.

METHODS FOR REDUCING THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STRATEGIES

Recent study carried out by Peterman et al. (2020) has brought to light a number of significant strategic initiatives that are required to be put into action in order to combat the problem of domestic violence during the Covid-19 epidemic. Among these initiatives are the strengthening of first-response systems for occurrences connected to violence, the incorporation of domestic violence into healthcare response systems, the expansion and reinforcement of social safety nets, the provision of shelter and temporary accommodation, and the promotion of temporary social support networks.

WORKING TO IMPROVE THE DOCUMENTATION OF CASES INVOLVING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

According to the findings of previous research, domestic violence episodes, in contrast to other types of violent acts, are frequently reported by victims, typically after the offender has left the scene of the crime (Campbell et al., 2017). This is in contrast to other types of violent acts. Due to the fact that people who are victims of abuse may encounter major difficulties in reporting their experiences, the present Covid-19 epidemic makes this problem much worse. This is mostly because of the imposed lockdown measures that imprison both the victims and the perpetrators inside the same family. In situations in which victims are unable to report crimes, the relevance of neighbours, members of the community, and other bystanders becomes increasingly important. According to Katz and Moore (2013), academics argue that a feasible method to tackling this situation requires giving education and training to these particular groups on the subject of domestic abuse. This is a viable approach. The promotion of education among members of the community with the goal of successfully raising awareness and swiftly notifying authorities in situations that are comparable has the potential to result in a significant rise in the number of incidents that are reported. These training sessions have the potential to be offered by governmental agencies or through promotional programmes that are targeted at encouraging members of the community to report cases of domestic violence that occur within their own communities. Furthermore, academic study has revealed that messaging has a significant role in achieving an increased level of accomplishment within the context of this particular circumstance.

According to Katz and Moore (2013), a constructive strategy that places an emphasis on the actions of bystanders is more effective than a pessimistic approach that places an emphasis on the problem of domestic violence. As a consequence of this, the transmission of information regarding the preferred behaviour of witnesses has the potential to increase the chance that occurrences of domestic abuse will be reported. This assumption is supported by the comments made by one of the individuals who took part in our survey about the subject of working together with victims.

This individual stated that coordination has been a difficult thing to deal with. The provision of on-site services is something that is quite important for the majority of victims; nevertheless, our capacity to provide such help has been hindered as a result of closures. As at this moment, there has been no formal instruction issued regarding the right course of action that should be taken in order to handle this concern. In the present moment, we are concentrating our efforts on efficiently organising and providing assistance to the best of our ability. The goal is to improve the reporting process, and the way to accomplish this goal is to encourage increased cooperation among the organisations involved. In order to address these issues, politicians and governmental entities may decide to develop legal frameworks and rules that promote adaptive reporting methods and timely interventions. This would make it possible for victims to easily obtain support. People who have been victims of victimisation frequently choose not to disclose their experiences since the administrative processes that are involved in the reporting process are cumbersome and the process itself takes a considerable amount of time. The process of reporting may be made more efficient by reducing the amount of time spent waiting for reports and increasing the amount of flexibility in the distribution of information. By actively involving neighbours, community members, and other bystanders in the process of swiftly reporting events, contacting law enforcement authorities, and spreading information through self-help and online support groups, it is feasible to reduce the severity of violent conduct and ensure that it does not continue to exist.

THE SPEED IS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE SIGNIFICANCE

The promptness with which law enforcement may take actions against the perpetrator is the subsequent factor in the process, assuming that we consider reporting to be the initial component of the process. According to Tasca et al. (2013), there is empirical data that implies that the identification of the suspect is more likely to occur when there is a familial tie between the suspect and the victim. On the other hand, the chance of getting arrested is higher in situations when the suspect and the victim are not familiar with one other during the investigation. As a matter of fact, it is not uncommon for the victim's history, which may include instances of substance abuse, to be a factor that may lead to the suspension of charges. Due to the fact that a delay in apprehension increases the chance of the victim and the perpetrator sharing the same physical space, the present pandemic of the COVID-19 virus makes this problem even more widespread. In the absence of rapid court interventions, the execution of lockdown and social distancing measures may provide difficulties in successfully isolating the parties involved in the conflict. In addition, it is of the utmost importance to adequately communicate to the general public the promptness with which an arrest will be carried out in response to the occurrence of the aforementioned offence. This can serve as a catalyst for both victims and witnesses to report incidents of domestic abuse, as seen by the remarks of one of the participants: "Our intention is to reach out to individuals residing in areas with fewer reported cases." In response to a previous comment, another respondent expressed the viewpoint that expediting actions is necessary in order to effectively mitigate instances of misuse. Furthermore, an additional participant informed us that the beginning of the Covid-19 outbreak began suddenly and without any prior warning, and as a result, safeguards that were appropriate

were not in place. In the process of dealing with crises, the distribution of resources is of the utmost importance, particularly when a rapid reaction is sought. As a consequence of this, an increase in resources is required in order to support increased reaction times. We have created a rapid response system, despite the fact that we have received funding from outside sources; nonetheless, we have not yet noticed the results of this system. In light of the fact that promptness is of the utmost significance when it comes to treating domestic violence, it is very necessary for policymakers to include responses to domestic violence into the comprehensive agenda for pandemic response. The allocation of critical resources, such as financial assistance, human resources, and legal power relevant to cases of domestic abuse, to government institutions is a necessary step in this process. It is possible to improve the speed with which reaction attempts are carried out because of this. Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance to create a predetermined period of time during which victims may be assured that they will receive the essential treatment without any doubt. The implementation of this policy will provide those who have been victimised with the comfort that they will have access to legal aid, regardless of any limits in the resources that are immediately accessible to them. The decision of certain victims to pursue legal redress or to involve law enforcement may be influenced by a number of different variables. Concerns about the possibility of a loss of social standing and feelings of embarrassment are among these factors. Other factors include the desire to protect the perpetrator from legal consequences, apprehension regarding the possibility of retaliation, the consideration of opportunity costs, and the presence of a criminal history on the part of the victim (Felson et al., 2002; Rodriguez et al., 2001). Through the use of self-help groups, social networks, and online support communities, it is possible to hasten the process of reducing the impact that violence has on persons in situations of this nature.

THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF HETEROGENEITY

It is essential to devise a methodical methodology in order to determine whether or not those who are vulnerable are also subjected to a higher incidence of violent situations. According to Choi and Byoun (2014), the migrant community has been highlighted as a group that is particularly vulnerable. It is possible that persons who live in these communities would have difficulties in their efforts to travel back to their respective places of origin as a result of the installation of lockdown measures. When there are fewer opportunities for employment, persons are more likely to be subjected to mistreatment, which may lead to a reduction in the number of instances of such mistreatment that are reported. The community of migrants is confronted with a number of different expressions of prejudice, some of which include cultural discrimination, stigmatisation, and outgroup bias, amongst different types of prejudice. Furthermore, there are additional groups of people who are especially prone to catching the Covid-19 virus and enduring severe repercussions as a result of their exposure to it. People who have a higher risk of getting severe illness, people who have immune systems that are compromised, people who are older, and people who have pre-existing medical conditions might be included in this category. Some examples of these conditions are asthma, HIV, and liver diseases. In light of this, it is of the utmost importance to offer individualised interventions and support to these communities in the context of the

pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus. An example of a potential solution is the antioppressive model, which seeks to educate disadvantaged communities about the critical services and resources required to establish a safe living environment free from domestic violence (Dominelli and Campling 2002). This model is an example of a potential solution. Through the use of these practises, power imbalances are reduced, and the likelihood of reporting is perhaps increased. It was communicated to us by one of the participants that "the disclosure of one's identity is advantageous for individuals who have experienced harm." It is essential to use caution while interacting with individuals who are members of vulnerable populations. It is possible that the difficulties that people experience in their lives are not just attributable to the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic, but also to the unintended consequences of their overuse. In order to address and alleviate the effects of such conditions, policies are required. It is of the highest significance for policymakers to devote special attention to the vulnerable population, whether it be via the implementation of efforts to raise awareness or by the implementation of measures to isolate and give required care. It is possible to assist victims who belong to vulnerable groups in gaining access to priority services by informing service providers about their vulnerable status in advance. The establishment of a specialised response group, the implementation of a specialist hotline, and the development of a different service manner are all recommendations that service providers should make in order to properly fulfil the requirements of vulnerable populations. All of these precautions have the potential to successfully limit the negative effects.

THE UTILISATION OF DIGITAL MONITORING SYSTEMS BY THE ORGANISATION

During the crisis caused by the COVID-19 virus, a number of countries have begun the practice of deploying digital monitoring in order to effectively monitor their own people. Specialised apps have the capacity to keep an eye on potential persons of interest, and they may be activated by means of an emergency response system that enables victims to report occurrences that are associated with domestic violence. It is of the utmost importance that governments make deliberate efforts to guarantee that hotlines are always available, regardless of the time of day or night. It is possible that this specific technique may generate considerable expenditures in the beginning; nevertheless, it will ultimately result in long-term benefits in both the economic and society spheres. The consideration of digital monitoring as a future step is emphasised by one of the providers we interviewed, who stated, "We acknowledge that digital monitoring is the progressive direction to pursue." We are commencing the development of a digital monitoring programme with the anticipation that it will expeditiously provide assistance to the affected individuals. It is important to take note of the fact that the quantity of calls that are received on a daily basis is persistently growing. Due to the fact that the world is moving in the direction of a complete digital transformation, the installation of digital monitoring has become an absolute need. In light of the current circumstances, it is of the utmost importance for policymakers and governments to demonstrate their agreement with innovative service models that are designed to provide assistance to victims. At the same time, service providers must to take an active part in the process of

developing and implementing a digital reporting system. As a way of catering to the requirements of victims and communities, this approach need to be taken into consideration for adoption. The development of psychological capital The absence of financial stability is a main element that contributes to the occurrence of cases of domestic violence. The amount of research that is currently available on the topic of well-being suggests that the development of positive psychological capital, which includes characteristics such as hope, resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy, plays a significant part in the process of cultivating a favourable trajectory for the future (Luthans et al., 2006). It is fair to imply that having an optimistic attitude towards the future would be of value given the inherent unpredictability of such circumstances, despite the fact that there is presently a paucity of research being conducted that particularly examines the notion of psychological capital in relation to domestic violence. When it comes to combating domestic violence within the Covid-19 epidemic, using a proactive approach rather than a reactive strategy, which includes dealing to incidents of violence after they have occurred, may contribute to minimising the social and economic implications. This is because the reactive method entails responding to instances of violence after they have already occurred.

CONCLUSION

The external shock caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on the incidence of domestic violence that occurs all across the world. The unexpected increase in the number of events that have occurred throughout the world calls for a concerted effort on the part of law enforcement agencies, governments, and society as a whole to devise effective measures that are geared at reducing the negative influence that Covid-19 has had on cases of domestic violence. This article outlines a number of strategies that have the potential to be effective in the fight against domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic and other extraordinary conditions that may arise in the future.

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