



## A Study on Domestic Violence during COVID 19 Pandemic

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### **Abstract:**

During the summer of 2020, India was subjected to precautionary measures and limitations because to the COVID-19 epidemic. Multiple societal issues arose as a result of these insecure and anxious times (e.g., domestic violence and divorce). During the current COVID-19 epidemic, academics, policymakers, governments, and civil society organisations across Concerns have been raised across the globe concerning an increase in domestic violence against women and children. As a consequence of the COVID-19 epidemic, domestic violence against women and children has also increased in India. The most frequent kind of violence against women is domestic violence (which includes social, legal, and health-related violence). This form of violence has escalated during the 2019 pandemic as a result of variables such as the present quarantine.

During the April 2021, this online cross-sectional research was done among Delhi NCR women. A domestic abuse questionnaire was used to collect the data, which rated three categories of violence: physical, emotional, and sexual. A link to the questionnaire was sent to an anonymous person using social media platforms such as social media apps. Individuals were asked to complete a survey regarding the COVID-19 outbreak based on their own experiences.

**Keywords:** Domestic, Violence, Covid-19, Quarantine, family violence

### **Introduction:**

“COVID-19 is the world's most catastrophic pandemic in recent memory. Although the Black Death, which originally swept over Europe from 1347 to 1351 and killed 75–200 million people in Eurasia and North Africa, had a larger fatality rate than COVID-19, there are certain similarities between the pandemics, such as societal changes. COVID-19 originally appeared in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 and has since spread throughout the globe, resulting in an



upsurge in worldwide deaths. Taking India as an example, Economic, psychological, medicinal, and social difficulties face the country (including domestic violence). Any kind of abuse or maltreatment performed on a family member by another family member is characterised as family violence. It comprises the use of violence and other forms of abuse in a relationship to establish authority and fear. Physical assault, psychological abuse, social abuse, financial abuse, and sexual assault are all examples of family violence. The frequency of the violence might range from once in a while to on a regular basis. Suicides, violent incidents, and female and child torture are often recorded as a consequence of familial violence. During epidemic situations, family violence has escalated. There is no single notion in the literature that can assist physicians treating family violence survivors with useful information. On March 22, 2020, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a one-day lockdown of the nation. The lockdown was extended for a week, then 21 days, and finally until May 3rd, 2020, in order to stem the spread of COVID-19. As a result of India's 2005 Catastrophe Management Act, COVID-19 has been classified as a declared catastrophe. Longer lockdowns and other methods of social isolation used by the epidemic made women more vulnerable to domestic violence. Women were fighting a silent plague in their own homes (UN Women 2020).

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will issue a joint statement urging for efforts to prevent children from being abused, as well as a UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' grave warning: We know lockdowns and quarantines are essential to suppressing COVID-19, but they can trap women with abusive partners... We've seen an alarming rise in domestic violence in recent weeks, as the economic and social pressures and fears have grown (U.N. Chief Urges Governments: Prioritize Women's Safety As Domestic Abuse Surges During Coronavirus Lockdowns (forbes.com); Global Lockdowns Leading To Horrifying Surge In Domestic Violence, U.N. Warns: Coronavirus Updates: NPR). Lockdown orders and a surge in domestic violence have been linked since then, according to media sources (How Domestic Abuse Has Increased Worldwide Since Coronavirus - New York Times (nytimes.com))

### **Review of Literature:**

(Kr- Akshaya, 2021) in the study Understanding Domestic Violence in India During COVID-19: a Routine Activity Approach says that Domestic violence in India increased during the



COVID-19 shutdown. This article applies regular activity theory (RAT) to examine an upsurge in domestic violence incidences during COVID-19. Newspapers reported domestic violence instances. Using content analysis, three primary themes—motivated criminal, appropriate target, and absent guardian—were developed. During the lockdown, alcohol and unemployment motivated domestic violence abusers. Domestic abuse offenders targeted women because of their symbolic significance, low inertia, visibility, and accessibility. Due to a lack of police and travel limitations, there were no suitable guardians. It is inferred that the COVID-19 shutdown allowed domestic violence abusers extra opportunity.

(Machi Sucharita, 2020) in the article Domestic violence during COVID-19 pandemic: The case for Indian women says that Domestic violence is a societal scourge. Physical, sexual, and emotional domestic abuse increases psychopathology and physical morbidity, according to research. Domestic violence is widespread in India, and the epidemic has exacerbated the problem. This research examined domestic abuse among Indian women during COVID-19. Newspapers reporting domestic violence over the previous 5 years were analysed to study the spike in incidences during COVID-19. Comparing COVID-19 to prior years, domestic violence instances increased significantly. Initial pandemic cases were greater but reduced over time. COVID-19 has a devastating influence on women. Home confinement, a method to preserve public health and well-being, has increased women's sickness and domestic violence. (Shreyaa Mohanty, 2021) in the article Covid-19 Lockdown: A Refuge from the Pandemic or The Harbinger of a Woman's Agony says that COVID-19 breakout and isolation have hampered efforts to avoid domestic violence, although studies have shown the issue existed before the pandemic. The epidemic has limited domestic violence prevention efforts. Conditions during pandemic seemed startlingly similar to those before disasters- loss of work, isolation from social support, and economic hardship. It wouldn't be farfetched to assume that such identical situations following the pandemic may contain family violence. Psychological abuse includes humiliating, belittling, insults, threats of abandonment, harming a loved one, or spouse infidelity. Despite regulations to prohibit domestic abuse, such as the PWDVA and IPC, these laws scarcely helped domestic violence victims during the lockdown. Under-reporting in India tends to be caused by widespread unawareness, victim-blaming mindset, careless attitude of police officials, and unequal power dynamics in families. The PWDVA's complex inquiry and processes have sometimes hampered remedy.



(Lin-Chi Hsu, 2020) in the article COVID-19, staying at home, and domestic violence says that We investigate how remaining indoors during the epidemic may have an impact on the prevalence of domestic violence in the United States. We found that there was an increase in reported occurrences of domestic violence as the number of persons who stayed at home increased. This was determined by using data on police dispatch as well as crime statistics from 36 different police and sheriff's agencies. To be more specific, we predict that the number of incidents of domestic violence rose by over 5 percent on average from March 13, 2020 to May 24, 2020 as a direct result of people staying home because of COVID-19. This finding is in line with the exposure reduction hypothesis, according to which victims and abusers who are confined to their homes are more inclined to engage in violent behaviour.

## **Methodology**

### **Data Collection**

India has seen an increase in domestic violence as a direct outcome of the epidemic. Data about India's pandemic of domestic violence was gathered using an online survey. To acquire data, I made use of an online survey. For this research, I created a collection of questions relating to family violence using the Google Docs online platform. This link was provided to the respondent by email, messenger, and Facebook to collect data. In only ten days, I had 120 answers. I included variables such as age, gender, marital status, marital status, educational attainment, profession, family type, the number of family members, the number of earning members, the head of family, religion, location, wealth status, income before, income after, and job loss during coronavirus were among the variables in our data collection. Based on the values of these variables, It was assessed the state of domestic violence in India during the COVID-19 outbreak. For data processing and analysis, SPSS V26" was used

### **Data Analysis:**

The total of each statement was computed independently, and each statement was assigned a weight depending on the quantity of its components, in order to obtain the overall score of domestic abuse against Indian woman during the 2019 epidemic. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) as well as a reliability test in SPSS version 26. The significance threshold was fixed at P 0.05 in all



statistical analyses. Given the study's circumstances, a reliability analysis was undertaken to confirm the questionnaire's dependability.

### Reliability Analysis

Reliability Analysis using Cronbach Alpha analysis has been administrated and the alpha values have been shown in the following table.

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	120	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	0.0
	Total	120	100.0
Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items	
0.960		26	

From the above table it can be inferred that responses have obtained a score of 0.960 which is considered as an excellent score and much higher than the critical value of 0.7. Hence I have an excellent, valid and reliable set of variables.

### Results and Interpretations:

According to the findings, 60% of females and 40 % of men were included in the research using a questionnaire and answers obtained from respondents. When questioned about their educational qualifications, 80% of the respondents were married, while 20% were divorced. Only 10% of the respondents had a post-graduate certificate, whereas 30% of the respondents had a 10th grade education, 30% had a 12th grade education, and 30% had a bachelor's degree. When the researcher queried the respondents about their employment, I discovered that 10%



were students and 20% were government workers. 20% were semi-government workers, with the remaining 50% working for private companies.

70% of the respondents belong to a nuclear family whereas 30% respondents work from joint family 30% of the respondents had 2 family members, 40% of the respondents had 3 members whereas 30% of the respondents had 5 or more members in the family. 60% of the families had only one earning member whereas 40% of the families had only 2 earning persons in the house asking about the head of the family, it came to knowledge that 20% of the families had their father in charge 10% of the families had mother in charge 50% of the families had husband in charge and the rest had others in charge of the family.

Question		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean
Gender	Male	48	40	40	1.2000
	Female	72	60	100	
Marital status	Married	96	80	80	1.6000
	Divorced	24	20	100	
Educational qualification	10th	36	30	30	2.2000
	12th	36	30	60	
	Graduation	36	30	90	
	PG and above	12	10	100	
Occupation	Student	12	10	10	3.1000
	Govt. Employee	24	20	30	
	Semi-govt employee	24	20	50	
	Private employee	60	50	100	
Family type	Nuclear	84	70	70	1.3000
	Joint	36	30	100	
Number of Family member	02-Mar	36	30	30	2.0000
	03-May	48	40	70	
	05-Jul	36	30	100	
Number of earning person	1	72	60	60	1.4000
	2	48	40	100	
Who is the head of your family?	Father	24	20	20	2.8000
	Mother	12	10	30	
	Husband	60	50	80	
	Wife	12	10	90	



	Others	12	10	100	
Religion	Muslim	24	20	20	2.0000
	Hindu	72	60	80	
	Others	24	20	100	
Place of residence	Urban	60	50	50	1.5000
	Rural	60	50	100	
Wealth index	Poor	36	30	30	2.4000
	Poorest	12	10	40	
	Middle class	60	50	90	
	Rich	12	10	100	
Your/Your Family Monthly income before corona	16000-25000	60	50	50	3.9000
	26000-35000	24	20	70	
	36000-50000	24	20	90	
	More than 50,000	12	10	100	
Your/Your Family Monthly income after corona	<5000	24	20	20	2.3000
	5000-15000	36	30	50	
	16000-25000	60	50	100	
Have you or any family member lost job during pandemic situation?	Yes	72	60	60	1.4000
	No	48	40	100	
Have you or your family members faced any violence in your family during Covid -19?	Yes	72	60	60	1.4000
	No	48	40	100	
If yes, what kind of violence you or your family members have faced? (If No pls select Not applicable)	Physical	24	20	20	3.8000
	Sexual	12	10	30	
	Mental	24	20	50	
	Economical	12	10	60	
	Others	48	40	100	
Normally, in leisure time what do you like to do?	Stay home with family member	24	20	20	3.3000
	Visit relative house	12	10	30	
	Read book	12	10	40	





	Work official activities	48	40	80	
	Others	24	20	100	
Do you think that the Covid-19 is liable for causes of family violence?	Strongly Agree	24	20	20	2.7000
	Agree	36	30	50	
	Neutral	24	20	70	
	Disagree	24	20	90	
	Strongly Disagree	12	10	100	
What is your opinion on low income can be a cause of family violence?	Strongly Agree	24	20	20	2.4000
	Agree	60	50	70	
	Neutral	12	10	80	
	Disagree	12	10	90	
	Strongly Disagree	12	10	100	
Do you think that, family violence may happen due to the losing job of any family member?	Strongly Agree	48	40	40	2.1000
	Agree	24	20	60	
	Neutral	36	30	90	
	Disagree	12	10	100	
Are you agreeing with the statement that, violence may happen due to small or big family?	Strongly Agree	48	40	40	2.2000
	Agree	36	30	70	
	Neutral	12	10	80	
	Disagree	12	10	90	
	Strongly Disagree	12	10	100	
Do you think that family violence is caused due to long time stay at home?	Strongly Agree	36	30	30	2.4000
	Agree	36	30	60	
	Neutral	24	20	80	
	Disagree	12	10	90	
	Strongly Disagree	12	10	100	
Do you think that due to lack of basic needs family violence may happen?	Strongly Agree	36	30	30	2.5000
	Agree	36	30	60	
	Neutral	12	10	70	
	Disagree	24	20	90	
	Strongly Disagree	12	10	100	
What Do you think that family violence may	Strongly Agree	36	30	30	2.6000
	Agree	24	20	50	
	Neutral	24	20	70	
	Disagree	24	20	90	





occur due to dowry?	Strongly Disagree	12	10	100	
Do you think that the amount of time you spent with your partner or family member before corona was sufficient?	Strongly Agree	36	30	30	2.4000
	Agree	36	30	60	
	Neutral	24	20	80	
	Disagree	12	10	90	
	Strongly Disagree	12	10	100	
Do you think that the amount of time you spent with your partner or family member during corona is sufficient?	Strongly Agree	48	40	40	2.2000
	Agree	36	30	70	
	Neutral	12	10	80	
	Disagree	12	10	90	
	Strongly Disagree	12	10	100	

50% of the residents were from urban places and 50% of respondents were from rural places, 30% of the respondents belong to the poor wealth index, 10% of the respondents were from the poorest wealth index, 50% that is majority of the respondents were from middle class families and 10% of the families belonged to the rich class of the society. It was asked the respondents about their before and after Corona, monthly income and came to know that before covid 50% of the families earned ₹16,000 - 25,000, 20% of the families earned in the range of ₹26,000 - 35,000, 20% of the families earned in a range of ₹36,000 – 50,000 whereas only 10% of the respondents earned more than ₹50,000 whereas after the covid 20% of the respondents earned below ₹5000, 30% of the families earned in a range of rupees 5000 – 15,000 and the rest that is 50% of the families earned in a range of ₹16,000- 25,000 which can be considered as a significant effect and fall of monthly income before and after the covid situations, moving on to the next question 60% of the respondents confirmed that any family members have lost their job during tough times whereas 40% of the respondents responded no.

In the next section of the questionnaire 60% of the respondents confirmed that they have gone through any kind of domestic violence and it came to knowledge that 20% of the respondents confirmed physical domestic violence 10% of the respondents confirm sexual domestic violence 20% of the respondents responded with mental domestic violence 10% of the respondents responded with economical domestic violence whereas 40% of the respondents responded with no. 20% of the respondents told that they spent leisure time at home with family



members 10% of the respondents used to visit relative houses 10% of respondents used to read books and 40% of the respondents used the work official activities in their leisure times.

In the next section of the questionnaire 20% of the respondents strongly agreed that they think COVID-19 is implicated as a contributing factor in domestic violence, according to the survey results, which found that 30% of respondents agreed with the hypothesis while 20% disagreed. The statement full store was highly disagreed with by 20% of those polled, with 10% of those polled severely disagreeing. The assertion that poor income may lead to domestic violence was highly agreed with by 20% of the respondents. In a poll, 50% of people said they agreed with the remark, while 10% of people said they were unsure. One-tenth of the respondents were in agreement, while the remaining one-tenth were highly in agreement with the results. 40% of those polled said they strongly agreed with the assertion that losing a family member's work might result in domestic violence. According to these findings, 20% of respondents agreed with the statement, whilst 30% of respondents were indifferent, and 10% disagreed with the statement. Small or large families may lead to violent incidents, according to 40% of respondents. Thirty percent of respondents agreed with the statement, whilst ten percent of respondents were indifferent, and ten percent of respondents opposed and strongly disagreed with the statement, respectively.

30 percent of the respondents strongly felt that family violence is closed owing to a lengthy period of time spent at home. The statement was agreed with by 20% of the respondents. When asked if they believed that lack of fundamental family requirements may lead to violence, 30% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement and 30% agreed with the statement when it was posed as the following question. According to 20 percent of the respondents, family violence may be a result of dowry, whereas 20 percent agreed. the time they spend with their spouse or family member is important to them, according to 30 percent of the respondents. More over two-thirds of respondents agreed with the statement, whereas just one-tenth of those respondents disagreed with it.

### **Economic Stress and Domestic Violence: A Reciprocal Relationship**

The relationship between financial stress and domestic violence has been discovered by researchers. Domestic violence seems to escalate in tandem with rising financial hardship. Research also reveals that women are more likely to be victimised again when their families are experiencing financial difficulties. The cause-and-effect connection may now be used in



both directions. Domestic violence may cause women to be distressed and poor, keeping them in a cycle of poverty and abuse. More frequently than not, a woman's choice to leave an abusive husband is influenced by her financial situation. For eg., a woman with little financial resources and means of support may face considerable financial hardship if she decides to leave her violent relationship. Sometimes, financial insecurity, along with a lack of empowerment and self-worth, leads women to choose to remain with their abusers for the rest of their lives. India launched the first phase of lockdown on March 24th, resulting in the closure of all public transportation networks, restaurants, businesses, industries, and educational institutions.

What we thought would take just 21 days turned out to be months lengthy and completely devastated the Indian economy. Economists estimated that the unorganised sector had lost almost 40 million jobs by the first week of April. Most economic activity were prohibited by severe lockdown laws, leading millions of people to lose their source of income. By June, about 84 percent of Indian families had seen a drop in income. 10 People experienced worry and feelings of powerlessness as a result of the economic downturn. Abusers expressed their dissatisfaction by inflicting further violence on women. Domestic violence allegations had reached a ten-year high by the end of May. When it comes to domestic abuse, India has an issue with underreporting, with 90 percent of victims seeking aid from friends and family members. Due to the lockdown, however, the victims were unable to seek refuge or assistance because of a lack of social support. Normally, victims would be able to evacuate and seek refuge elsewhere, but this is not allowed during a lockdown. One of the key reasons that contributes to domestic violence is a lack of social support. This is not a unique condition to India; many women throughout the world face similar issues of being imprisoned alongside their abusers.

### **Laws Dealing With Domestic Violence in India**

There are a number of rules that, when followed, will protect a married woman from being harmed by her husband or, for that matter, by any of her in-laws.

#### **“Section 498a of India Penal Code**

The law states that if a woman's husband or family members harass her or engage in any other kind of abuse, they might face up to three years in prison and a fine. The same statute defines



cruelty as any action that supports a woman in committing suicide or causing serious injury or harm to herself in order to satisfy dowry demands (mental or physical). The PWDVA (The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005) is often consulted by women who have been raped by their husbands or boyfriends.

### **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005**

For example, the Act prohibits a broad range of sex and financial abuse against women that is outlined in the Act. The Act also applies to women who are in a live-in relationship. When it comes to protecting a woman's rights under this Act, she has a number of alternatives to choose from. When she reports her abusers, she has the right to request a restraining order, to stay in the same location, to seek maintenance, to have access to her children, to seek compensation and to keep her marital home.

### **Family Court Act, 1984**

Marriage, personal, and family disputes should be handled by distinct courts, the Law Commission's 59th report said in its recommendations. Establishing such courts will help expedite the settlement of marital and personal issues that have been languishing in civil and criminal courts. the purpose of enacting the Family Court Act was to create a court that would deal with issues involving family members in a way that was fundamentally different from how civil cases were handled, as stated in K.A Abdul Jaleel v. T.A. Shahida by the Supreme Court.

### **Measures Taken In India to Combat Increase In Domestic Violence Post Covid-19 Lockdown**

Following the implementation of Lockdown 1.0, there was a sharp increase in the number of complaints submitted to the National Commission for Women (NCW). In India, the number of incidents of domestic violence climbed by double the rates that were seen in the period beginning the first week of March and continuing through the beginning of April. It wasn't until April 10 that the National Council on Women (NCW) released a unique WhatsApp hotline number, despite the fact that most nations had already implemented a great deal of preventative measures in anticipation of an increase in incidents of domestic abuse. The pattern was then followed by a variety of other helpline numbers provided by a variety of state governments and the national government. During the first lockdown phase that began on March 25th, 2020, the Courts limited its operations to just dealing with cases that were time-sensitive, essential, and demanding via the use of video conferences. The major legislation dealing with domestic violence concerns, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005, comes under



civil law; nonetheless, the Court did not consider matters and cases that came under this category during this time period. This is due to the fact that the Act is governed by civil law. In addition, the Solicitor General indicated in the case All India Council of Human Rights, Liberties and Social Justice v Union of India that the National Commission of Women has developed a complaint webpage and a WhatsApp line to help women who are victims of assault. Both of these steps have been done to help women who are victims of domestic abuse. Furthermore, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has made a call to all radio stations and commercial satellite TV stations, demanding that they analyse information on the emergency response support system in place for the protection of women and women in challenging circumstances”.

### **Conclusion:**

According to the findings, it is established that women living in times of covid 19 have been subjected to an increasing rate of domestic abuse in all of its forms, including physical, sexual, emotional, and mental violence. This is the case regardless of the kind of violence. Because pandemic such as the COVID-19, increase the likelihood of violence against women, it is imperative that enough attention be paid to the underlying socioeconomic conditions that contribute to this problem. In this regard, researcher proposed a few social work intervention strategies for the prevention of domestic violence against women, including the provision of educational opportunities for women and other social groups that are vulnerable, the raising of young people's levels of awareness, tele counselling services, case work. Group work, the promotion of pre marriage and post marriage counselling, and the provision of social support and rehabilitation opportunities for women who are in vulnerable positions (e.g., women with disabilities or those with previous marriages). In order to effectively combat COVID-19, we need to devise plans that provide women, particularly disadvantaged women, help in the areas of social services and medical care.

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