

# Violence against Women - Issues, Challenges and Solutions

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**Abstract:** *This paper focuses on what is violence against women, the many types of violence, and the reasons for violence against women and girls. Violence against women and girls has serious physical, economic, and psychological consequences in the short and long - run. Violence against women may cost the state, victims/survivors, and communities much money. Costs might be direct or indirect, tangible or immaterial. Partners or ex - partners commit the majority of femicide cases. One in every 10 European Union women has experienced cyber - harassment since 15 years of age. Alcohol has emerged as a consistent risk factor for partner violence in various settings. Violence against women has been associated with unmarried, separated or divorced, or in a live - in relationship. All levels of law enforcement must be efficient and responsible. Increasing public knowledge is another possible solution—safe consultations with survivors of violence against women and girls.*

**Keywords:** Domestic violence, emotional abuse, the economic cost of abuse, violence in cyberspace, and law enforcement

## 1. Introduction

Violence against women and girls violates human rights, and the immediate and long - term physical, sexual, and emotional effects for women and girls, including death, can be catastrophic. In addition, violence severely impacts women's overall well - being and stops women from fully participating in society, according to UN Women (2013).

The United Nations define violence against women as "any act of gender - based violence that causes or is likely to cause physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life." The United Nations (1993).

Globally, an estimated 736 million women, nearly one - third of all women, have experienced physical and sexually intimate relationship abuse, non - partner sexual assault, or both at some point in their lives (30 per cent of women aged 15 and older). This statistic excludes sexual harassment. In addition, women who have experienced violence have increased incidences of depression, anxiety disorders, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV, as well as many other health issues that can persist even after the violence has ceased, according to WHO (2021).

One in every three women worldwide has suffered physical or sexual violence, most often at the hands of an intimate partner. When sexual harassment is factored in, the figure becomes even higher. In 2017, nearly three out of every five women slain were killed by their spouses or family, according to WHO (2013).

Gender - based violence (GBV), also known as violence against women and girls (VAWG), is a global epidemic that affects one out of every three women throughout her lifetime. The figures are staggering: Physical and sexually intimate relationship violence or non - partner sexual violence has been experienced by 35% of women globally. 7% of women worldwide have been sexually

abused by someone other than a spouse. An intimate partner is responsible for up to 38% of female killings worldwide. Female genital mutilation/cutting has occurred in 200 million women. This problem is not only traumatic for victims of violence and their families, but it also has substantial societal and economic consequences. Violence against women is projected to cost countries up to 3.7% of their GDP in some countries, which is more than double what most governments spend on education, according to the World Bank (2019).

### Purpose of the Study

Violence against women and girls is the most pervasive human rights violation, rooted in unequal power relations, structural inequalities, and discrimination. This review study highlights types or forms of violence and reasons for violence against women and girls. Then, it focuses on solutions and some recommendations.

## 2. Review of Literature

Violence against women is a massive health and social problem that affects almost all nations. However, it often goes unnoticed and unreported, and it is still viewed as normal behaviour in many countries. The manifestations and forms of violence vary depending on the context. However, most violence against women occurs inside families, and the offenders are nearly always males who are or have been in a close connection with the woman. Krantz (2002). Information technology has become a powerful force in reshaping social, economic, and political life worldwide, and countries cannot thrive without it, Lal (2004).

Telecommunications and television in India can aid in active population control, increased food production, social and economic growth, and access to education. Because of computer assistance, many persons with disabilities can work and support themselves, leading independent lives. Lal (2004).

Alcoholism is linked to many personal, social, and health issues. Both personal and societal consequences are reduced

occupational and educational performance, familial and social upheaval, and engagement with the criminal justice system. Individuals are also badly impacted by the drinking of others. Furthermore, alcohol abuse has a negative economic impact in the form of lost productivity, law enforcement expenditures, and direct health care costs. Naik (2013).

Women's empowerment is critical for the growth of society and the economy. Women now undertake different tasks in the workplace, yet they still need to be treated equally with males. Women's empowerment involves women's understanding of their rights, self - confidence, control over their life at home and outside of the house, and ability to affect societal change. Lal (2016).

The state and civic society must create political space for marginalised groups to empower them. However, with prolonged fighting and resistance, it is possible to declare that it is a process of emancipation from artificial bondage. Lal (2005).

### 3. Objectives of the Study

To make an understanding of violence against women and to study types of violence, various reasons, and its solutions in contemporary society.

### 4. Methods and Materials

The present study has been carried out keeping the given objectives and violence against women by exploring various studies conducted in different regions. In addition, the study has used secondary data and information.

### 5. Results and Discussion

Violence against women and girls is one of the most common human rights abuses in the world, occurring every day, many times over, in every corner of the planet. It has substantial short and long - term medical, economic, and psychological effects on women and girls, prohibiting them from participating fully and equally in society. The enormity of its influence on people, families, and society as a whole is enormous. The pandemic's conditions, such as lockdowns, limited mobility, increased isolation, stress, and economic instability, have resulted in an alarming increase in domestic violence and have exposed women and girls to new types of violence, ranging from child marriage to online sexual harassment.

#### 1) Violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls is defined as any act of gender - based violence that causes or is likely to cause physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women or girls, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether committed in public or private life. Violence against women and girls includes, but is not limited to, physical, sexual, and psychological violence that occurs inside the family or in the broader society and is perpetrated or supported by the state.

#### 2) Victim of violence

Any individual who has endured sexual or gender - based violence is referred to as a survivor of violence. It has a similar connotation to "victim, " but it is more commonly used since it suggests resiliency.

#### 3) Consent

No equals No. Yes implies Yes. Consent is a mutual agreement between people to engage in sexual behaviour or marry. It must be offered freely and actively and cannot be given by someone under the influence of drugs or alcohol or under 18. Consent is both particular (consent to one act does not imply consent to any others) and reversible (it may be cancelled at any time).

### Types of Violence against Women - V

#### 1) Domestic abuse

Domestic violence is any conduct intended to obtain or retain power and control over an intimate relationship. It is also known as domestic abuse or intimate partner violence. It includes any physical, sexual, emotional, financial, and psychological activities or threats of action that impact another person. It includes the following;

#### 2) The economic cost of violence

Violence against women can result in high costs to the state, victims/survivors, and communities. Costs are both direct and indirect and tangible and intangible. For example, the costs of the salaries of individuals working at shelters are direct tangible costs. Costs are borne by everyone, including individual victims/survivors, perpetrators, the government and society in general.

#### 3) Economic violence

Economic violence is defined as creating or attempting to make a person financially dependent by controlling financial resources, withholding access to money, and prohibiting school or job attendance.

#### 4) Psychological abuse

Intimidation to cause fear; physical injury to self, partner, or children; destruction of pets and property; "mind games"; or imposing isolation from friends, family, school, and job are all examples of psychological violence.

#### 5) Emotional abuse

Undermining a person's feeling of self - worth by repeated criticism; demeaning one's talents; name - calling or other verbal abuse; harming a spouse's connection with the children; or not allowing a partner to visit friends and relatives are all examples of emotional violence.

#### 6) Physical abuse

Physical violence includes striking, kicking, burning, grasping, squeezing, shoving, slapping, hair - pulling, biting, withholding medical treatment, imposing drinking and drug usage, or using other physical force on a partner. Property damage is possible, UN Women (2022).

#### 7) Sexual assault

Non - consensual physical contact, such as grasping, squeezing, slapping, or sexually rubbing against another

person, is considered sexual harassment. Catcalls, sexual remarks about a person's physique or looks, demands for sexual favours, sexually suggestive looking, stalking, and displaying one's sex organs are additional examples of non-physical manifestations.

### 8) Rape

Any non-consensual vaginal, anal, or oral penetration of another individual with any body part or object is considered rape. This can be done by anybody, known or unknown to the victim, in marriage and relationships, or during the armed war.

### 9) Correctional rape

Corrective rape is a type of rape that is committed against someone because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Its goal is to make the victim conform to heterosexuality or conventional gender identification.

### 10) Culture of rape

Rape culture refers to the social milieu in which sexual assault is accepted and condoned. It is based on patriarchy and is driven by ongoing gender inequality and gender and sexuality prejudices.

### 11) Human smuggling

Human trafficking is the illegal acquisition and exploitation of individuals via force, fraud, coercion, or deceit. This horrible crime traps millions of women and girls worldwide, many sexually abused, UN Women (2022).

### 12) Femicide

Femicide is defined as the intentional murder of women because they are women, although it can also apply to any killing of women or girls. Femicide is distinct from male homicide in several respects. Most incidents of femicide, for example, are perpetrated by partners or ex-partners and entail chronic domestic abuse, threats or intimidation, sexual assault, or conditions in which women have less authority or resources than their partners.

### 13) Honour - based murder

Honour killing is the assassination of a family member, generally a woman or girl, ostensibly because the individual has brought disgrace or shame to the family. These deaths are frequently motivated by sexual purity and alleged violations by female family members. Sexual violence is defined as any sexual act conducted against another person's will, whether that person does not consent or cannot consent because the person is a child, has a mental condition, or is excessively inebriated or unconscious as a result of alcohol or drugs, UN Women (2022).

### 14) Genital mutilation among women

In the 31 nations where the practice is prevalent, at least 200 million women and girls aged 15 to 49 have undergone female genital mutilation. West Africa is home to half of these countries. Moreover, there are still places where female genital mutilation is nearly every day, where at least 9 out of 10 girls and women aged 15 to 49 have had their genitals cut, UNICEF (2022) & UN (2020).

### 15) Marriage of a child

Child marriage is any marriage in which one or both partners are under 18. It goes against the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which specifies that "marriage must be entered into only with the free and complete agreement of the intended spouses." As a result, girls are more likely to be child brides, drop out of school and experience various types of abuse, Lal (2015).

### 16) Violence against Girls

Gender-based violence in schools is a crucial impediment to universal education and girls' right to an education. One in every three kids aged 11 to 15 has been bullied at school at least once in the last month, with girls and boys equally likely to be tormented. While males are more likely than girls to be physically bullied, girls are more likely than boys to be psychologically bullied, and they report being made fun of because of how their face or body appears more frequently than boys, UNGEI (2014&2015).

### 17) Violence in politics

Across five regions, 82 per cent of women parliamentarians reported having experienced psychological violence while serving their terms. This included remarks, gestures, images of a sexist or humiliating sexual nature, threats, and mobbing. Women cited social media as the main channel of this type of violence, and nearly half (44 per cent) reported receiving death, rape, assault, or abduction threats towards themselves or their families. Sixty-five per cent had been subjected to sexist remarks, primarily by male colleagues in parliament, Inter-Parliamentary Union (2016).

### 18) Violence in cyberspace

Any act of violence performed, aided, or worsened by the use of information and communication technology (mobile phones, the internet, social media, computer games, text messaging, email, and so on) against a woman because she is a woman is referred to as online or digital violence against women. One in ten European Union women report having been subjected to cyber-harassment since the age of 15. This includes receiving unwelcome and offensive sexually explicit emails or SMS messages and rude and improper social networking site approaches. The risk is most significant among women aged 18 to 29, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). The following are examples of online violence. Cyberbullying is the transmission of frightening or threatening communications over the internet.

### 19) Sexting without mutual consent

Non-consensual sexting is sending explicit messages or photographs without the recipient's permission.

### 20) Doxing

Doxing is the public disclosure of personal or identifiable information about the victim, UN Women (2022).

### Challenges Women and Girls are Facing - VI

Psychiatric morbidity

Regular consumption of alcohol by the husband has been strongly associated with the poor mental health of women. [13, 21]

Alcohol has consistently emerged as a risk marker for partner violence that is incredibly consistent across a range of settings [22] for all types of violence. [23] Alcohol operates as a situational factor, increasing the likelihood of violence by reducing inhibitions, clouding judgment and impairing an individual's ability to interpret cues. [24] Others morbidities such as bipolar disorder, paranoid schizophrenia, delusional and antisocial personality disorder make the man more vulnerable to commit sexual crimes. There is evidence from many forensic cases (Bobbit, Manu Sharma, Nirbhaya etc.) that alcohol was the common denominator of violence against women.

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#### 1) Morbidity in psychiatry

Regular alcohol drinking by the husband has been substantially linked to poor mental health in women. Alcohol has regularly appeared as a risk marker for partner violence, particularly in various settings and for all forms of violence (Naik, 2013). Alcohol acts as a situational element, raising the chance of aggression by lowering inhibitions, clouding judgement, and weakening the capacity to perceive cues. Other morbidities, such as bipolar disorder, paranoid schizophrenia, and delusional and antisocial personality disorder, increase the man's vulnerability to sexual offences. Many forensic instances show that alcohol was a common factor in violence against women, McCauley (1995).

#### 2) Sociodemographic factors

Factors of socioeconomic status, the primary cause of violence against women, have been identified as patriarchy. Early (15 - 19 years; 10 - 19 years) and young age (31 - 39

years), illiteracy, low education level, poor socioeconomic status, women without income, and urban domicile have all been identified as risk factors for domestic violence. Women who worked in small businesses and farming were more likely to be assaulted than homemakers or women with the same vocational level as husbands. Violence is more likely if women have a more significant economic standing than their husbands and are perceived to have the authority to change established gender norms. Unmarriedness, being separated or divorced, or being in a live - in relationship have all been linked to violence against women, Sarkar (2010).

#### 3) Factors of the family

Childhood exposure to harsh physical discipline and watching the father hitting the mother is a predictor of victimisation and perpetration of violence towards his wife in adulthood. Kumar (2005) Childlessness, longer marriage duration, having more children, extended family, and big family size have all been linked to domestic abuse victimisation and perpetration. Furthermore, the age - old habit of dowry and presents for husbands and in - laws has been linked to violence against women in India, Jayaseelan (2007).

#### 4) Dowry - related Violence

Dowry is an age - old tradition that has pushed many women to suicide. There was dowry - related violence in India. There were 120 dowry fatalities and 20 dowry - related deliberate injuries documented. Physical abuse (59%), mental torture (28%), molestation by family members and perversity (10%), and starvation 3% were all purposeful injuries Seshu (2000). Burns killed 46% of the women who died while drowning killed 34%. It is worth mentioning that the ladies were relatively young, with 88% being under 25 years old, 58% being childless, and 22% having solely female offspring. Harassment by in - laws over dowry concerns has emerged as a risk factor for poor mental health, Seshu (2000).

#### Solutions - VII

UN Women works to prevent and respond to violence, increase access to survivors' services, and make private and public spaces safer for women and girls. At the global level, we work to advance international policies, supporting the United Nations General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women and ensuring that the post - 2015 development agenda includes specific targets to end violence against women and girls.

#### 1) A Survivor - Centered Approach

The Necessary Services Package (ESP) contains overlapping principles that govern the delivery of all essential services and their coordination. Among these concepts are; A rights - based approach, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, being culturally and age - appropriate and sensitive, ensuring safety and holding perpetrators accountable, UN Women (2022a).

#### 2) Understand consent

Consent must be freely given and enthusiastically given every time, rather than waiting for a "no, " ensure an active "yes" from everyone involved. Adopt and discuss enthusiastic consent in your life.

**3) Start a conversation**

Show your solidarity with survivors and where you stand in the fight for women's rights by oranging your social media profile.

**4) Stand against rape culture.**

Rape culture is the social environment that allows sexual violence to be normalised and justified, fueled by persistent gender inequalities and attitudes about gender and sexuality. Naming it is the first step to dismantling rape culture.

**5) Listen to and believe survivors.**

When a woman shares her story of violence, she takes the first step to breaking the cycle of abuse. We all need to give her the safe space to speak up and be heard. It is important to remember that when discussing cases of sexual violence, a victim's sobriety, clothes, and sexuality are irrelevant.

**6) Laws on Violence against Women and Girls**

At least 158 nations have laws against domestic abuse, and 141 have laws prohibiting sexual harassment in the workplace. Even though laws exist, this does not guarantee that they are always by international standards and guidelines or that they are applied and enforced. For the first time in 2020, Kuwait and Madagascar enacted comprehensive domestic abuse legislation.

**a) International Society**

International treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women uphold a woman's right to live free from violence.

We collaborate with governments, UN agencies, civil society groups, and other institutions to discover solutions to violence against women and girls, emphasising early education, respectful relationships, and engaging with men and boys. Prevention is the most cost - effective and long - term method of reducing violence.

As part of UN Women's holistic strategy, we collaborate with partners to improve data collection and analysis to understand better the nature, scope, and effects of violence against women and girls. Data gathering and analysis also assist UN Women and our partners in understanding what works and does not work in combating violence, UN Women (2022b).

**b) Domestic Violence Protection Act of 2005**

The Protection of Women from Domestic Abuse Act (PWDVA) of 2005 was enacted to ensure more effective protection of the constitutionally given rights of women who are victims of violence of any sort happening inside the family, as well as problems related to it. It distinguishes four categories of domestic violence: physical, verbal, and emotional (including not having a kid or a male child and marrying without consent), economic (including stridhan, dowry, and property violence), and sexual (includes sexual abuse and marital rape), PWDVA (2005).

**c) Law enforcement**

Efficient and accountable law enforcement machinery at all levels (administration, government, police and judiciary) is needed.

**6. Conclusion**

Ending violence against women and girls is critical to achieving sustainable development. Decades of progress and millions of lives are at stake. Keeping gender - based violence at the top of government agendas and engaging the public is more critical than ever. Creating awareness among the public is also one of the solutions. Involvement of various non - governmental organisations (NGOs) is the need for the hours and establishing counselling centres for extending help to victims. Finally, creating a value system in the family is the ultimate solution. It includes respecting family members with affection.

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