

Review of Psychological Impact of Quarantine in Domestic Violence

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Abstract

This write up is about highlighting mental issues in disaster and pandemic situations. We did a commentary by acknowledging, reviewing already published articles focusing on the psychological crisis during the lockdown situation when more than half of the world was confined in home quarantine. Further, we discussed human issues that how they cope and go through struggling periods facing problematic times. Moreover, concentrating on current COVID-19 pandemic insecurities leading to health and social crisis.

1. Introduction

With the advent of novel coronavirus in December 2019 when its first case was reported in Wuhan state of China, the world began to enter an entirely different era of changing physical, psychological and socioeconomic state. Individual's lives were drastically affected with negative and positive impacts of lockdown all over the globe affecting 219 countries with 114,428, 411 cases reported resulting in 2,538,475 deaths and 89,977,677 recovered patients according to current statistics reported by WHO.

2. Impact of Lockdown on Aggravating Domestic Violence

On 23 January 2020, Wuhan, the state of China, went under strict lockdown after being identified as the epicenter of disease [1]. Restraining public activities and putting people under quarantine while playing a pivotal role in controlling the spread of disease has its own repercussions in the form of financial crisis, psychological distress and conflicts among the family members specially contributing in domestic and sexual abuse [2].

Mood swings, depression, insomnia, Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), anxiety, fear, Post-traumatic stress is found to be the most debilitating psychological problem [3]. In the present world social media is the number one platform for people to discuss their social and domestic issues and a forum to exchange their thoughts. Increased vulnerability, types of family violence, forms of social, verbal and physical violence, victims of family violence, risk factors linked to family violence, social services for victims and law enforcement responses, social movements domestic violence-related news were the highlighted topics under discussion on social media in the span of 4 months' time from 12 April 2020 to 16 July 2020. According to the research conducted in 2020 on 274,501,992 tweets out of which 1,015,874 tweets were found to be related to family violence, emotional, physical and sexual abuse and people raising these issues as a major social dilemma during lockdown [4].

Loss of connectivity of children with their school friends and teachers increased anxiety among school going children. Also, these children face or observe domestic violence at home by the dominant members of family causing negative impact on their physical and psychological well-being ("Violence against children: A hidden crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic," 8 April 2020) Pregnant women are more vulnerable. Around one third of pregnant women faced domestic abuse with emotional violence the most common form followed by sexual and physical violence from their partners. Emotional and physical well-being is naturally deranged during pregnancy which is further aggravated during quarantine and lack of connectivity with the outside world.

Domestic violence in such cases is more devastating not only for women but for the baby also. Loss of income, financial crises and already abusive partners were found to be the underlying causes [5]. During lockdown family members are confined in their houses and spend more time with abusers. Also, it makes the victim helpless and unable to come out and seek help from social services, friends, family or neighbors [6].

Violence against Women (VAW) [7]. Intimate partner violence (IPV) [8]. gender-based violence, domestic abuse (DA) are becoming increasingly popular terms under the heading of negative psychological impacts of lockdown. In the world where majority of people are habitual of going to their work are now confined in their houses 24/7 with abusing family members raising up the personnel conflicts adding fuel to the fights leading to verbal, physical and sexual abuse especially on vulnerable members of the family, mainly women and children. The constant state of irritation and anger was found to be present in people due to the continuous threat of getting infected with Covid along with the burden of financial loss and hence contributed in converting a normal person into an abuser [9].

According to the study the likelihood of turning an intimate partner into an abuser is the result of individual, relationship and community factors. A person becomes violent as a result of personality disorders, anxiety issues, financial crisis, prior experience of violence and his/her cultural and social beliefs about gender inequality. Having said that one in every three women experience domestic violence in their lives [10].

Governments implementation of strict lockdown during pandemic of covid 19 results in confinement of victims with abusers for a longer period of time than before. When in normal days an intimate partner is out for work and there is less proximity and now the couples are forced to spend all day together. Without coping mechanisms and strategies there are more chances of conflicts among them [7].

Family violence is itself a social dilemma in some cultures especially where gender inequality is more intense, and one gender is considered superior over the other. A study conducted in Bangladesh recorded that domestic violence is growing at a higher rate in lockdown with women and children being the easy victims [11]. Emphasizing on the fact that domestic violence has increased many folds globally.

3. Discussion

Although lockdown brought with itself some positive changes all around the world like decrease in air pollution (<https://agupubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1029/2020GL087978>), a drop in overall crime rate [12]. increasing digitalization [13]. and advancement in telemedicine [14]. Having said that, the risks versus benefits of quarantine are still a matter of debate.

4. Conclusion

Domestic violence and sexual abuse, family conflicts have always been a social dilemma around the world. The dominant one playing the abuser and the weaker one being the victim. World pandemics always brought devastating consequences with them along with few new opportunities which many of the times completely changed the dynamics mainly intensifying the present issues or creating a new one. Domestic and family violence is increased 20% with the advent of pandemic by Covid 19 due to quarantine and its effects have resulted in damage to the much more greater extent [15].

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