

Every day, one in three women encounter intimate partner violence (IVP) (Agumaise et al., 2019). The paramount conflict amongst them being domestic violence, which occurs to roughly 55%, with the main categories being physical, psychological, and sexual violence (Agumaise et al., 2019). Domestic violence is defined as “any act of omission or conduct resulting in physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, or economic abuse” which ranges from name calling or insults to humiliating and controlling behaviors, to actual physical or sexual assault (Vora et al., 2020). Studies have shown that violence against women has a correlation to natural disasters or other extreme circumstances such as a “shelter in place” during the pandemic (Vora et al., 2020). Because of these tragedies influencing the activity of domestic violence, it is vital to have a more determined approach to guiding surveillance and management of domestic violence needs. This includes providing education to those that work in abuse shelters to identify and help manage PTSD and depression that the inhabitants could be experiencing.

COVID-19 and Domestic Violence Against Women:

This article addresses the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which included lockdown measures in many countries. While these measures were essential for controlling the spread of the virus, they also posed consequences, one of which is an increase in domestic violence against women. This article highlights that domestic violence against women has increased worldwide following the implementation of lockdowns. Statistics from India's National Commission for Women (NCW) indicate a 100% increase in complaints related to violence against women after the nationwide lockdown was imposed in March 2020. This significant surge in cases prompted the NCW to establish Mental Health Helplines to support those affected by domestic violence (Vora et al., 2020). This article defines domestic violence according to The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (India, 2005) as "any act of commission or

omission or conduct resulting in physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse."

Several factors were identified as contributing to the rise in domestic violence during lockdowns such as economic disruption, unemployment for females, household work disparity, and substance use disorder (Vora et al., 2020).

Are interventions Focused on Gender-Norms Effective in Preventing Domestic Violence Against Women in Low and Lower-Middle Income Countries?

This study aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the prevalence of intimate partner violence against women in low and lower-middle-income countries. This is done by systematically reviewing and analyzing available primary studies. The research aimed to contribute to evidence-based decision-making in addressing domestic violence against women in previously studied regions. The methodology involved data extraction, statistical analysis, and exploration of potential biases in the included studies. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a significant global issue, with approximately one in three women experiencing IPV (Semahegn et al., 2019). However, according to Semahegn et al., 2019, despite the amount of IPV, there is a limited systematic review and meta-analysis on this topic. The objective of this study is to address this by summarizing the findings of existing primary studies on IPV against women in low and lower-middle-income countries. The aim is to generate evidence that can inform decisions and strategies to combat domestic violence.

Predicting Changes in PTSD and Depression Among Female Intimate Partner Violence Survivors During Shelter Residency: A Longitudinal Study

According to Shaked et al. (2021) study, "findings have demonstrated that the risk for major depressive disorder among individuals exposed to traumatic events is significantly higher

for individuals who develop PTSD than for individuals who do not develop PTSD." There is intimate partner violence among cohabiting, dating, and married couples. Typically, the need for shelter is not determined until after a seriously devastating occurrence, such as the perception of impending death due to their partner's aggressive behavior. Depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are now the two mental illnesses that victims of violent crimes suffer from the most. Among occupants of shelters, helplessness, acquired helplessness, perceived danger, and terror are most frequently observed. Because of the sheltering assistance that shelters offer, PTSD and depression are now less common. An important safety net while dealing with difficult situations is social support. Social support helps people in shelters connect with others who are going through similar things in their lives. Despite the fact that the aid provided by shelters for women and children with intimate partner abuse, depression, and PTSD can recur depending on its severity, social support enables the sheltered to accept, cultivate empathy, and have a deeper feeling of belonging. The study made it very evident that peer support in a shelter would help depression, which would subsequently halt the development of PTSD. According to Shaked et al. (2021) research, "counting the intensity of violence by the frequency of violent events may not be adequately precise, as frequency does not necessarily signify severity.

Silver-Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy:

When a woman is uncomfortable, terrified, threatened, or subjected to abuse, her only alternative is to survive. The fight-or-flight reaction to stay alive is survival sex. She would rather keep living than give up her body. Then, a woman might trade sex for monetary stability, childcare assistance, and food. While PTSD is present, intimate partner abuse and survival sex are linked. According to Silver et al.'s study from 2023, exposure to IPV might result in PTSD symptoms by altering mood and cognition and reliving the painful incident. An abused partner's

unpleasant experiences, health, drug usage, and sense of empowerment are all impacted by survival sex. To survive, the abused partner must regain authority in their eyes. Survival sex behavior "displays the potential for empowerment as a source of resilience, such as allowing individuals to live more authentically (Silver et al., 2023), producing a sense of calm and positive outcomes. This study regarding survival sex produced results that encompassed two-thirds of women who have sought shelter have reported survival sex behaviors.

The Covid-19: Implications of Intimate Partner Violence:

This article provides an inside look at the rise of intimate partner violence during the pandemic. According to Ceroni et al. (2023), more than one in three women experience intimate violence, such as stalking physical and emotional abuse. In the article, it is discussed that there are multiple barriers to intimate partner violence, such as economic stress, childcare stress, and social and physical isolation. Intimate partner violence has always been a concern, though, in the pandemic, incidents have risen. "While crucial for public health and safety, these regulations and recommendations are likely to have contributed to increased rates of IPV" (Creoni et al., 2023). The regulations placed during the pandemic helped to contribute to the rise of intimate partner violence. According to Ceroni et al. (2023), interventions should include mental health resources. Lastly, the article explains how there was not enough awareness for women's shelters during the pandemic. Many shelters suffered due to regulations such as social distancing and not being able to provide help to as many women.

The Impact of Comorbid Diagnoses on the Course of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Symptoms in

Residents of Battered Women Shelters:

This article helps connect intimate violent partners, the diagnoses of post-traumatic stress disorder, and how it impacts a large ratio of women. "PTSD is highly prevalent in victims

of IPV, with prevalence rates varying from 31% to 84% worldwide” (Fedele et al., 2018). PTSD is often paired with other mental health disorders such as substance use disorder, major depression disorder, and borderline personality disorder. According to Fedele et al., in the United States, there is a 50% currency that women with PTSD or substance abuse disorder have experienced intimate partner violence. The current study in the article explains the comorbidity of these mental health conditions in women who live in shelters and have PTSD. The study utilized the PTSD scale and the 5-point Likert scale as many tools to provide evidence that other mental health disorders are comorbid with PTSD in women who have experienced intimate partner violence. According to Fedele et al. substance abuse disorder is more connected to PTSD and intimate partner violence in women in shelters.

Domestic violence is an action that occurs more than anyone truly can know. Current studies find that one in three women experience intimate partner violence throughout their lives (Agumaise et al., 2019). There are many key contributing factors that play into the likelihood of domestic violence to occur within intimate partner relationships. Some of these include socio-demographic factors, age, occupation, pregnancy status, duration of marriage, presence of traditional gender norms, equality within the marriage, and more (Agumaise et al., 2019). Vora et al. (2020) found that previous studies determined a direct correlation between the rise in reports of domestic violence and natural disasters or other extreme events. Homes that provide shelter, protection, food, and more require further education regarding PTSD and depression including how to manage/help the individual experiencing these comorbidities. However, staff education on these and other comorbidities in order to protect themselves and those that utilize the shelters. Several of the inhabitants would partake in survival sex and often would end up with diseases such as HIV (Fedele et al., 2018). According to Vora et al., (2020), effective

implementation of woman's rights with proper efficacious government funding and acknowledgement will aid in the abolition of intimate partner violence. Fedele et al. (2018), seeks to improve and educate these households and their tenants on mental and sexual health as the long-term implications vary. Each study shares commonalities in the fact that more needs to be done by the government and the surrounding society in order to enact change to provide support to women that are suffering through intimate partner violence.

Citations:

Ceroni, T. L., Ennis, C. R., & Franklin, C. L. (2023). The COVID-19 pandemic: Implications for intimate partner violence. *Couple and Family Psychology, 12*(2), 66–72.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/cfp0000208>

Fedele, K. M., Johnson, N. L., Caldwell, J. C., Shteynberg, Y. A., Sanders, S., Holmes, S. C., & Johnson, D. M. (2018). The impact of comorbid diagnoses on the course of posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms in residents of battered women's shelters. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 10*(6), 628–635.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000335>

Semahegn, A., Torpey, K., Manu, A., Assefa, N., Tesfaye, G., & Ankomah, A. (2019). Are interventions focused on gender-norms effective in preventing domestic violence against women in low and lower-middle income countries? A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Reproductive Health, 16*(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-019-0726-5>

Shaked, O., Dekel, R., Ben-Porat, A., & Itzhaky, H. (2021). Predicting changes in PTSD and depression among female intimate partner violence survivors during shelter residency: A longitudinal study. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 13*(3), 349–358. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000585>

Silver, K. E., Norton, M., King, K., González, A., Holmes, S. C., & Johnson, D. M. (2023). Survival sex among a diverse sample of women with histories of intimate partner violence: Results from a domestic violence shelter. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0001431>*

Vora, M., Malathesh, B. C., Das, S., & Chatterjee, S. S. (2020). COVID-19 and domestic violence against women. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, 53, 102227.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajp.2020.102227>