Domestic Violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evidences from Vietnamese Families

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Abstract

Domestic violence has increased since the COVID-19 pandemic's early 2020 in many countries, including Vietnam. The violence should be solved. We examine 300 sample units, including 150 men and 150 women with wife status in the urban Vietnamese community, using the convenience sample and the norm sample. Results showed that domestic abuse by men is 32% more common than by women (22%). When they were asked about their feelings after inflicting acts of domestic violence on their spouses, the majority of violent offenders 64.7% said they felt regret and guilt. According to the poll, 4.8% of victims are women who do not want to engage in social activities because they feel helpless. They also feel weak as a result of the violence they have experienced. Then, it was a great concern related to this domestic violence because of COVID-19 pandemic. More research needed to solve these challenges.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, COVID-19 Pandemic, Vietnamese Family.

1. Introduction

In April 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has a significant impact on global politics, education, culture, and society. Acute respiratory syndrome-causing coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) has significantly endangered both human health and life. The number of fatalities is rising daily, and even when the pandemic is under better control, the spread of infection continues unabated. Every nation made steps to respond to and quarantine when the outbreak started and spread; however, it is still difficult to escape the pandemic's effects. As a result of this blockade order, it has seriously affected the economy such as high unemployment rate. Although people know it's a good cause, it also increases stress and anxiety from being at home, away from friends, family, school, and work. Domestic violence reports have grown during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. Therefore, in Vincent-Lamarre (2020) words, “We are all in the same storm, but not in the same boat”.

Early reports have shown worrying rates of domestic violence growth throughout the world, with claims ranging from a 20%–25% rise in hotline calls in Spain, Cyprus, and the UK to a 40%–50% rise in calls in Brazil (Peterman, 2020; Bradbury-Jones and Isham, 2020). Others American cities continued to experience same pattern. Also, in Australia, family, domestic, and sexual violence can have a lifetime impact on both victims and perpetrators, and it is a significant health and welfare concern. Although it can impact people of different ages and socioeconomic classes, it primarily affects women and young children. Strong evidence of an increase in family violence is provided by studies by the Crime Statistics Agency, which show a 91% rise in presentations connected to home assault injuries (175 in May 2020) compared to May 2019 (118), proportional to the caseload at emergency departments (Rmandic et al., 2020). A report from UN Women (2021), since
the beginning of the pandemic, over 1 in 2 people have experienced violence directly or indirectly as verbal abuse 50% is the most frequent type, followed by sexual harassment 40% and physical abuse 36%, denial of basic requirements 35% and communication tools 30%. According to a survey, seven out of ten women think that violence against women is widespread in their neighborhood. Additionally, a lack of social support and an accumulation of stressful events have both been connected to alcohol misuse, a frequently cited risk factor for domestic violence (both likely occurring as a result of Covid-19) (Catala-Minan et al., 2017).

Tao et al. (2021) argued that the COVID-19 outbreak has stressed out many families and disrupted the daily lives of both parents and their kids. According to the UNICEF assessment, approximately half of the workers in Vietnam lost their employment or had their incomes decreased due to the pandemic. The United Nations report "The Social Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Vietnam and Strategic Policy Recommendations," which was released in August 2020, demonstrates how the COVID-19 outbreak has profoundly affected every facet of society. Family life includes everything from health care to spiritual support to work, money, and notably the circumstances of children, adolescents, and women who are at risk of exploitation and violence (Vu Tho, 2021, Nguyet & Daud, 2021).

The study reported in this paper examined factors influencing domestic violence behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic and analysis of the subjective and objective elements influencing domestic violence behavior.

2. Methods

In this study, we focused on several major domestic violence issues: 1) To find out how domestic violence is currently affecting young couples in the COVID-19 pandemic and to analyze the COVID-19 pandemic's influencing elements on domestic violence behavior. Also, we offered suggestions and ideas to assist families in reducing domestic violence based on the study findings from actual experience. Using the convenience sample and the norm sample, we studied 300 samples, including 150 men and 150 women in the urban Vietnamese population. To obtain the essential data from the young husbands and wives in the sample, we employed a questionnaire instrument. Overall, 50% of the participants (n=300) was identified as men, while the other 50% (n=300) was identified as women. With the same ratio, the subject wanted to have complete and objective information on both sexes.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. The Education Levels Based on Gender

The results of our survey on educational attainment are presented in the following Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior High School</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study reported in this paper examined factors influencing domestic violence behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic and analysis of the subjective and objective elements influencing domestic violence behavior.
The finding of this study indicated that only 13.3% of the subjects’ husbands had bachelor diploma. Two percent had education after bachelor degree, but this is still a very low percentage. Seven percent completed primary school; 23% had secondary school; and the biggest percentage (54.3%) completed high school. Among the consequence in education was related to mental health, such as anger and depression. The research of Hall and Becker (2002) showed that domestic violence has a wide-ranging impact on women, children, families, and communities. It has an impact on a variety of social, psychological, physical, economic, legal, and political aspects of human functioning.

3.2. Occupation

Our findings showed that there were 121 respondents who were workers (40.3%), 18.7%, office employees, 17.3% business, 3% teachers, and 1% students, with 18% of them were employed in various occupations, such as housewives, laborers, motorcycle taxi drivers. According to Stanhope and Lancaster (2004), daily inconveniences, particularly those involving money, exacerbate the already-stressed environment, which serves as a catalyst for violence when an unanticipated and challenging occurrence occurs. Unemployment and low income are recognized domestic violence risk factors and economic considerations make the victim financially dependent on the abuser in around one-third of domestic violence situations (Moore, 2020).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Occupation Based on Gender (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3. Situation of domestic violence of young couples during the COVID-19 pandemic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Domestic Violence Based on Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicated that husbands, who commit domestic violence 48.7% of the time.
Husbands are more likely than women to commit domestic violence, which is a general difference in the incidence of domestic violence between gender. According to a major Swedish registry study, all psychiatric illnesses examined (apart from autism) were linked to a higher probability of men committing domestic violence against women when compared to general population controls (Yu et al., 2019). In addition, according to Devries et al. (2013), nearly one in three women will experience physical or sexual abuse as a victim of domestic violence, also known as intimate partner violence, at some point in their lives.

3.4. The Impacts of Domestic Violence

Serious repercussions from domestic violence not only directly impact the victim but also the abuser and other family members. Here, the discussion is centered on examining how violence affects its victims, who are spouses and husbands. It is now evident that referral rates to mental health and psychological services have decreased as the COVID-19 pandemic has grown (Thomas, 2020).

When asked about their feelings after inflicting domestic violence on their spouses, 64.7% reported feeling regret and guilt. If they actively mediate and come up with solutions, the severity of the victims of violence will be lessened. On the other hand, some people refuse to control their conduct because they don't think it's improper, which causes numerous issues in the marriage between a husband and wife and makes getting along tough.

Home is typically the safest and most tranquil location. For victims of abuse, however, when the door is shut, the house is like a dark street; danger looms, yet it is challenging to speak up. Abuse makes it more difficult to flee. Additionally, it alters the victim-manipulating tactics used by the offender (Phan Duong, 2021).

3.5. Factors influencing young couples' domestic violence behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic

Feeling

The husband or wife is typically experiencing negative feelings during the act of domestic violence, which are connected to their view. They can reduce aggressive behavior when they can control their emotions in accordance with the circumstances and work in tandem with their cognitive processes. However, many people are greatly influenced by their angry emotions, lack self-control, and make poor decisions because they lack time to think clearly, making it simple for them to abuse their spouses. ".. she kept shouting and reprimanding me, so I was so upset that I smacked her once" (BB PVS 2). Particularly during the COVID-19 lockdown, many people are impacted by financial concerns, families, children, yet stress prevents them from expressing their negative emotions.

Family Factors

The survey's findings indicate that, family ties, cultural norms, and financial circumstances will largely determine whether or not families would engage in domestic violence.

According to the survey, the majority of people who frequently argue with their wives are both violent aggressors and violent targets. When questioned, “How is your relationship with your husband since the COVID-19 epidemic took place?” The majority of those polled will respond that it gets worse. “My wife and I fight occasionally and argue frequently” (BB PVS 1). Relationships with other family members have an impact on how the wife and husband behave in terms of domestic violence. People who don't get along with their biological parents or who have been the victims of domestic abuse as children are more prone to abuse their marriages. I strike me every time I drink (BB PVS 2).
Family's Financial Situation

The survey's findings indicate that one of the elements that has a significant impact on young couples' domestic violence behavior is their family's economic situation. When questioned, "Does your family's financial situation impact your marriage?" When the family's financial situation is difficult, the outcome is mostly impacted. "There is no money, therefore my wife complains and blames. If I make more money, the house is nicer, then my wife would probably moan less" (BB PVS 2).

Blockage and Distance

Couples often argue because of the distance restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic season. During the holidays, many couples reported feeling happier and closer to one another, but there were still many others who believed that when there were distance requirements; they must always limit themselves and their partners. There was no more private space or leisure activities, only social relationships. They experienced a loss of freedom as a result, which made them anxious and stressed out and encouraged them to commit the acts of domestic violence.

4. Conclusions

The findings of the research indicate that a husband and wife can both engage in domestic violence and become its victims. In addition, there are a wide range of personal, familial, and social factors that influence how wives and husbands behave in terms of domestic violence during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Recommendations

Husband and Wife's Benefit

In a marriage, the husband and wife must be open and honest about sharing, caring for, understanding, and helping one another. When there is a disagreement, a husband and wife might agree on a standard of conduct for their interactions. For instance, if a wife or husband thinks that a quarrel has reached an unacceptable level, they may resort to domestic violence, at which point one partner may decide to leave where the conflict is occurring in order to lessen the conflict's tension and prevent acts of domestic violence. To avoid misunderstandings that escalate the conflict, the couple should come to an understanding on this before the conflict arises.

For the Concerned Organizations and Management Agencies

In order to ensure that everyone has access to information, organizations working to help the resolution of domestic abuse issues must concentrate on the extent of information coverage through propaganda and training. Anyone in need of support, whether they are employees, instructors, office workers, or anyone else, can get in touch for the essential information and prompt assistance.

That concern encompasses worry about people's material and spiritual lives, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic undertaken through regular income surveys of the populace, discussions, and sharing of problems that individuals encounter in order to jointly come up with answers.

It is anticipated that the extensive institutional closures and shelter-in-place measures related to Covid-19 would endure for a considerable amount of time, with the possibility of stress and related risk factors. unemployment, low income, a lack of resources, and a lack of social support all contribute to domestic violence. Vietnam accepted a plan known as “living with COVID-19” in October 2021. The effects of COVID-19 on domestic violence
and any regional or demographic disparities also require further study. We need to take into account the physical and societal groups that have been disproportionately affected. For instance, it is generally known that racial, economic, and gender disparities exist in the distribution of risk variables for victimization.

References


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