

## ECONOMIC COSTS OF VIOLENCE ON WOMEN- SOME THEORETICAL ASSUMPTIONS

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### ABSTRACT

It is indeed quite disheartening to observe that violence against women is merely being viewed as a family problem for the individuals and with a deviation of society within cause in a patriarchal society. VAW is not only an infringement of human dignity and rights but it is also a major economic problem that hinders the development and expansion of communities. In this respect, the economic effects of violence against women are extensive, penetrating at individual and family levels, at the level of communities, and in the long run, nations as well. Such complexity exists from the outset when considering the economic burden which falls upon the victims of domestic violence and other gender-based violence. Economic costs of such violence are always positive in a sense that they demonstrate how it is infectious to every sphere of life and the extent to which it permeates into people's lives although the lessons of great significance for developing strategies for countering it apply.

**Key words:** Violence against women, international law, person's, interdependence, economic cost

### I. Introduction

Violence against women is an extreme abuse of human rights and a major economic problem that has a negative impact on the well-being and growth of any society. This complexity comes into focus when one considers the staggering economic repercussions of intimate partner violence (IPV) and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV). Historical evidence shows that these losses which include healthcare costs, loss productivity and even social services can be as high as 1-2 percent of a nation's GNP, as is the case of many countries ((Duvvury N et al.)). Additionally, the relationship between women's economic power and the violence inflicted on women can also be regarded as bi-directional; there are cases when being economically powerful women reduces their chances of being victimized but there are circumstances which can increase

the chances of women being victims of violence ((Jatfors A-K)). This can exacerbate the struggle to confront the manifold effects of violence and bring together in a comprehensive manner the governments, non-governmental organizations and the international community to develop holistic approaches that are aimed at reducing these costs and contributing to gender parity ((Bank AD)).

### A. Concept of violence against women (VAW), occurrence in different regions in the world

Women are subjected to violence in all its possible forms – physical, sexual, and psychological – this can be best described as violence against women (VAW) as its mainly male perpetrated violence against women. This is worse than a crime as it is regarded as a gross violation of human rights. Most common one is its occurrence in the form of domestic violence and abuse but this kind of treatment

can be inflicted not only by partners but also society and its members, resulting in a vast array of adverse effects over prolonged time, for example (Hunt, A. et al., 2019) reports that intimate partner violence (IPV) is a common form of gender-based violence VAW with detrimental impact on mental health causing significant healthcare economic burden, once again supporting the kinetic character of such violence. In alarmingly high estimations, HASF states that “One in Three Women” is a vicious phrase that signifies the chances and factors of violence that surrounds women all over the globe (HASF, 2015 as cited in Jatfors A K, 2019). Particularly distressing is this practice in particular among low income and middle class countries where the legal mechanisms implemented are weak and where societies make risks even more plausible so that gender based approaches become even harder to apply and fresh wounds add on to already existing scars weakening economic progress for many survivors (Vyas S, 2015). This leads to the logical reasoning that VAW is not a mere protective issue for women but a societal one that requires economical and societal reforms too.

### **B. Economic costs of VAW for individuals, families and the wider community**

Violence against women is characterized as VAW's economic ramifications that are the most pressing and extends from the individual and family level to the society. Indirect costs such as loss of employment often capture healthcare expenses and legal fees on survivors limiting them to an economically unstable life for their days ahead. Standing by the example of Jatfors A-K, which offers economically active women suffering from intimate partner violence around 60% reductions in their earnings from their non-abusive counterparts. They lose income and productivity themselves, and in most cases they cannot work at all due to emotional and physical trauma, which will slightly lower their domestic income and economy as a whole. On top of that, the expense contributions on the societal level are

huge; VAW violence in the community has been shown to reduce the annual GDP of nations by approximately 1-2%, as pointed out by Duvvury N et al. instead of increasing economic opportunities in the community and pulling people out of too much poverty. It is evident that this economic loss is caused not only by complicated issues of VAW as a gross violation of human rights, but also and most importantly as an economic concern worthy of policy responses.

### **C. Purpose and significance of analyzing the socio-economic costs linked to violence against women**

The comprehension of the socio-economic costs violence against women's lies to the greater extent with the opportunity of showcasing the seriousness of the problem as violence not only affects individuals but the society at large but also assists significantly in coming up with better strategies to prevent. Citing significant health care costs, loss of productivity and estimated costs of violence against women in different countries between 1 – 2% gross domestic product, Duvvury N et al have opined that this violence adversely affects economic growth and formation of human capital. A closer examination elucidates how efforts to eradicate this violence tackle poverty and inequality as both the perpetrator and victims belong to the same families and communities (Institute E for Equality G et al.). Such quantification of these costs provides a basis for developers to demand the needed resources and funding towards the intervention and prevention aspects by mainstreaming gender violence into wider socio-economic frameworks (Vyas S et al., p. 44-55). The analysis of such financial costs demonstrates that violence against women can indeed be prevented because not only is it a moral issue but an economic one as well.

### **II. Literature Review**

Violence against women (VAW) violence seems to overcross all geographical boundaries. Economic analysis on violence against women,

advocates are able to absorb the wide scope losses to the individual, the family, the community and the nation at large. In the following subdivisions, the authors examined various materials that performed similar functions and focused on how these subordinated economic aspects of VAW and the necessity to combat this menace.

#### Economic Costs of Violence against Women

Institute for Developmental Studies points out that the economic cost resulting from violence against women or domestic violence is always high and multidimensional. Alesina et al. (2016) stress the fact the violence against women has both short and long term health effects, which, in turn, leads to huge health costs and legal expenses. Such expenses have negative consequences on the countries' wealth creating capacities and slow down development. Victims of violence are not the only ones suffering from the consequences of violence, the authors chronicle that families and communities also feel the pinch, and thus, the economy of the whole society suffers (Alesina et al., 2016).

Still further, there seems to be a growing consent towards categorizing economic coercion as a subtype of domestic violence. In the article of Postmus et al. (2020), Economic coercion and its health and financial implications of the oppressed rarely receives any attention. Such type of violence often culminates into loss of women's and their families' earnings, loss of productivity, pessimism amongst investors with regards to future investment expansion and many more, thus, aggravating the economic costs of VAW (Postmus et al., 2020).

#### Health and Economic Security in the Parameters of Violence

Women undergo all sorts of damage as a consequence of the violent acts perpetrated against them. Their injuries include bodily, sexual, and psychological harm along with a rise in healthcare use (Ravindran & Shah, 2023).

This phenomenon, during the COVID-19 lockdown and the mitigating measures around it, has been particularly characterized as the 'Shadow Pandemic'. The term has been used to showcase the situation where the pandemic has caused, in equal measure, other non-medical losses including food security and medical access (Ravindran & Shah, 2023). These include loss of wealth and socio-economic costs that affect the affected individuals' community as pointed out by Fonseka et al. (2015).

Moreover, the relationship between independence from economic restraints and violence against women has been researched. Campo and Steinert (2020) noted that intimate partner violence (IPV) can be reduced through women's economic empowerment's effect on intimate partner violence (IPV). This finding further supports the call to include economic elements in strategies meant to respond to VAW and provides the way forward for further research.

#### Economic Impacts of Non-structural Violence against Women

Despite the fact that the amount of efforts over time is always increasing, the questions of the economic costs of violence against women still appear to be neglected. For instance, Wirtz et al. (2020) emphasize the necessity of conducting more such studies focusing on transgender persons. Furthermore, while the direct costs of VAW have been estimated quite extensively, there are relatively few studies examining the impact of violence on productivity loss, impact on children and family in the future which is worse than just the direct health care or legal costs (Modi et al, 2014).

**Future Research Directions** The conclusions of your essay should specify how the stated knowledge gaps identified in the previous sections will be filled. Among the focuses: 1. Economic impact on various populations: Seeking understanding economic cost of Australian's violence including sexual abuse, human trafficking, or contextual violence of



some marginalized groups e.g. transgender, women in slums etc. will be within the scope suggested. 2. Longitudinal studies: Research of such nature will be important in assessing the impact of violence against women on their health, productivity and wellbeing in the long term, including during and after other crises such as pandemics or natural catastrophes. 3. Cost effectiveness evaluations of interventions: Providing costs estimates of interfacing VAW intervention policies implementation such as provision of numbers of shelters will help policy makers understand the need to target funds for these intervention policies. 4. Interrelation of economic factors and violence: The studies will enable the researchers to explore and examine women economic empowerment means in relation to IPV and violence against women, in diverse cultural contexts creating models of best practices.

### III. Direct Economic Costs of Violence Against Women

Violence against women has its financial effects in every sphere affecting victims and the society as a whole. A large portion of these direct costs is related to the seeking of health care, considering that violent women need to be treated for different kinds of trauma, for reproductive health conditions and psychiatric disorders (Envall E et al.). Beyond healthcare, lost productivity emerges as another critical economic burden, with high prevalence rates of work underperformance and absenteeism reported among survivors of intimate partner violence (Vyas S et al, p. 44-55). Law enforcement and litigation undertaken against women's partners because of domestic violence are also additional indirect costs, including billions used to manage the consequences of the violence in the health care and the criminal justice systems (Bank AD). Therefore there is a need to tackle the mentioned direct economic costs in order to promote more balanced development and women's economic empowerment in a society.

#### A. Healthcare expenditures on physical injuries and mental illnesses triggered by violence

The monetary cost of healthcare services, specifically those directed towards the rehabilitation of physical and psychological harm caused by violence against women, is heavy and complex in nature. For example, expenditures on direct medical care such as visits to emergency rooms, stay in the hospitals, and out-patient treatment for physical injury and emotional distress are likely to be considerable since health care costs as estimated in (Jatfors A-K) can account for between 1.2 percent and 3.7 of a country's total gross domestic product (GDP) and losses are incurred in economic spheres which are not health-related. In addition, the future health costs are made worse by the higher prevalence of certain chronic illnesses amongst the women 'liberated' from violence, which further burdens health care in the long-term. The indicator symptoms of general depression, anxiety, and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) demand psychological attention and therapy that drags on for long, thus incurring other costs which are normally greater than the cost of physical injury treatment. Such expenditures have been shown in (Duvvury N et al.) not only to deplete the financial coffers of the victims but also reduce their productivity which eventually leads to economic losses for society at large.

#### B. Reduced productivity due to absenteeism and declining work output from the affected women.

The experience of violence in a relationship context has serious consequences that reach the workplace, where the affected persons often exhibit lost productivity in the form of absenteeism and lack of effective performance in relation to work. Women who are victims of intimate partner violence are likely to be injured, suffer trauma or need legal time off work and thus make economic sacrifices at self and in relation to their employers. Reports indicate that for instance in Papua New Guinea, women's

issues of violence are responsible for loss of approximately 11 workdays a year for every employee, indicating a direct relationship between violence and absenteeism in employment (Jatfors A-K). Even more worrying, the experience of violence has negative impacts on work performance as the victimized women are unable to concentrate or be productive at work due to emotional disturbances and safety concerns (Envall E et al.). But the concomitant consequences of these situations undermine women's career ambitions but also create significant costs to businesses, leading to the prospect of slumps in productivity across the whole economy (Duvvury N et al.).

### **C. Expenses in the Administration of Justice and the provision of support services to victims of crime**

The legal and social service systems incur a sizable cost outlay in terms of resources that need to be mobilized in order to offer protection or assist domestic violence victims. Such complexities often result in high additional legal costs such as legal representation, policing costs, and costs associated with litigation which are compounded by systemic inefficiencies and underreporting of the violence incidences, Bank AD, for instance, observes this. Apart from the actual out-of-pocket expenses, the victims may incur economic impacts from time lost due to being out of work causing further economic strains at individual and societal level (Institute E for Equality G et al.). So these effects are long term, and social services which are crucial to rehabilitation and empowerment of the sociological trauma, tend to have limited funds and cannot satisfy the high demand of shelters, legal aid and other services. Such insufficiencies highlight the requirement for active government measures or better funding arrangements to reduce these chronic costs that hamper not only victims' recovery efforts but also general societal welfare, as Vyas S et al (p. 44-55) points.

### **IV. Indirect Economic Costs of Violence Against Women**

The impact of this form of violence goes deeper than the immediate corporeal or emotional injury, resulting in even larger indirect economic costs that cut across several levels of society. A notable aspect that emerges from the findings is the disruption of productivity more especially in cases when such victims systematically go to work but take several off days due to psychosocial problems or health complications related to abuse and so do not contribute actively to earning or working on other productivity areas. For example, one study shows that domestic abuse makes such workers lose at least 11 workdays in a single year per person which in the end results in lost income for the companies and decreased production in large measure (Jatfors A-K). There are also the long standing effects of abuse like in the case of children who experience violence as bystanders that can entrench poverty and the systems of inequality which will epitomize development in the coming times (Olufunmilayo I Fawole, p. 167-177). The problem of these indirect costs is that given their nature they are almost always hidden and therefore there is a need for proper data gathering and awareness as policy tools to reduce the economic cost of gender-based violence (Vyas S et al., p. 44-55).

#### **A. Long-term effects on the earning ability and career advancement of women**

The intergenerational impact of violence against women can still be felt today, especially in relation to women's income and professional standing. Violence, both of the body and the pocket, may have wide-ranging mental consequences, causing loss of self-esteem and ability to work more efficiently for women at workplaces. For instance, Jatfors A-K paints a grim picture of the income of women victims of intimate partner violence, who are likely to be in low-paying jobs as their ability to earn may reduce by 60% (or more) compared to their non-affected counterparts. Given this issue is a

result of violence, it drifted to one-third of the workforce in Vietnam, with some women losing up to half of their income, representing an accumulation of billions lost in economies such as Tk 135 billion (NB: Who is N?) in Fiji, around 3 percent of their GDP (Institute E for Equality G et al.). Therefore, the cyclical relationship makes it difficult for women to advance professionally over the long term, making it impossible for them to pursue further education required for career clear advancement. Violence should be addressed comprehensively as such not only protects women's rights but creates conditions conducive for growth of the economy.

#### **B. Intergenerational effects of violence on children, including educational and economic outcomes**

Widespread violence against women is detrimental to the growth of children and sustains the cycle of poverty. Domestic violence does, however, have consequences on children's academic achievement, leading to poor performance and an increased number of school dropouts among these youths. Some studies that have focused more on children who are of school-age indicate that a significant proportion of them can name violence as one of the reasons why they do not go to school (Jatfors A-K). This, along with other factors, leaves them vulnerable as future abusers or victims of domestic violence all of which impacts the economic welfare of the family (Government of India). These children as they grow up without the assistance of professionals from violent homes, have low levels of achievement in their adulthood due to interruptions in their education caused by violence in the workplace (Institute E for Equality G et al.). Only the former throws a defining stranglehold on individual potentials and as such economic outputs as well. It is why addressing violence against women is not only socially responsible, but it makes good economic sense as well (Duvvury N et al.).

#### **C. Societal costs associated with the increase in the poverty level and economic dependency of women**

The Intertwined links between poverty, economic denial, and violence against women make it a vicious circle which aggravates societal costs while delaying any development. First, a variety of different forms of domestic and economic abuse towards women creates large costs for them, often resulting in lesser earnings and even greater risk of poverty. Studies indicate that in particular regions such as Asia and the Pacific, the economic costs of violence against women are estimated to be around 1.2% to 3.7% of the gross national product of a nation and thus shows the great economic burden such violence has on the economies of nations (Jatfors A-K). In addition, because of economic dependency, women in such abusive relationships are less likely to exit the same if they have no alternatives because of their lack of financial resources. It is noteworthy that violence is not only limited to physical abuse towards woman but it also concentrates on other aspects termed emotional abuse which demoralizes a woman and reduces productivity as well as impairing their ability to secure better education and jobs in the long run (Duvvury N et al.). Such factors do not only serve to maintain the high levels of poverty but they also serve to inhibit the economic development of the economy as a whole and thus are considered to be a huge societal cost which goes beyond the impacted women.

#### **V. Quota Economic Empowerment as a Tool for Ending Violence Against Women**

Women need financial assistance because in most societies, proper monetary conditions would discourage men from beating up their women, which is a common problem. Financial independence makes it easier for women to rely on themselves, which reduces their risks of experiencing violence from their intimate partners. For example, (Jatfors A-K) demonstrates that financial dependence



places women at risk because they are trapped in dangerous relationships. For women, economic empowerment is positively correlated with greater power and control over their lives, thereby reducing violence perpetration and victimization. However, being economically empowered can lower the violence by increasing self-esteem and control over the personal and social lives, however it can also result in a negative reaction in patriarchal and conservative societies as explained in (Institute E for Equality G et al). Hence, women's economic options should be implemented as part of the more comprehensive strategies aimed at ending violence because this will enhance women's rights and women's economic options should be viewed in the broader context of development where economic opportunities and resources will not increase violence.

#### **A. The Co-Relation Between Economic Empowerment and The Woman's Violence Risk**

Women's empowerment and the violence that accompanies it seems relatively complex particularly in the context of economics. On one hand, increased economic strengths afforded women can discourage the risk of domestic violence because they have more power and resources (Jatfors A-K). On the other hand, however, in highly patriarchal society, with the enhancement of women empowerment, men are likely to retaliate by increasing the violence as there is power restructuring (Duvvury N et al.). While women in business experience violence from their spouses, stress the importance of supportive approaches, which promote economic self-sufficiency and provide protection from violence (Bank AD). Thus, economic independence of women has positive effects on their lives, but there is need for more aggressive social change and strict legal enforcement in order to lower the potential odds of violence occurring (Institute E for Equality G et al.).

#### **B. Case studies providing evidence of effective approaches for combining economic empowerment and violence prevention**

Economics and the prevention of violence can be successfully combined in multiple ways in different contexts and this points towards a diverse strategy for addressing gender violence. For instance the RISE Beyond the Reef program in Fiji integrates micro-finance with educating about gender and domestic abuse aspects thereby decreasing household tensions and expanding women's autonomy (Bank AD). Similarly, the IMAGE program in South Africa reported that mixing microfinance with gender training led to a dramatic 55% drop in intimate partner violence, arguing that as women are economically empowered they will be in control, yet at the same time the risk of violence is reduced (Jatfors A-K). These examples further illustrate the insight that there is indeed targeted action that over time can transform the landscape for the better: reducing the short-term cost that violence poses on women's financial resources, ensures that in the long-run the community's health and economic productivity can be enhanced in which women's safety would be critical, something that policymaking needs to attention in addressing violence against women comprehensively (Duvvury N et al.).

#### **C. Recommendations for policies that assure women's financial autonomy and simultaneously work towards nullifying the Violence Against Women**

Various policy approaches are needed to comprehend the correlation between women's economic autonomy and the prevalence of violence against them. It is also important to undertake comprehensive economic empowerment initiatives; such programs would enhance women's access to financial resources and minimize violence against them. One such strategy has been the increased promotion of women to be self-reliant economically through such programs as microcredit lending to women entrepreneurs to reduce dependence

on abusive spouses (Institute E for Equality G et al). Such measures as legal reforms that establish equitable distribution of property rights as well as regulations that protect women in looking for work can also reduce the risk of economic abuse and enhance women's working conditions (Bank AD). Campaigning against discriminatory social practices through education and outreach can also help in these initiatives by challenging societal norms that sanction violence against women and restrict women from economic participation (Duvvury N et al.) These recommendations can create a protective network for the economic and social advancement of women and eradication of violence against them while enhancing their autonomy.

## VI. Conclusion

The quite common occurring violence against women is not only a great concern in the field of human rights but also has disturbing adverse impacts on the economy. It has been established in recent research studies that factors such as healthcare expenditure and deprived work input due to violence may constitute a great share of the GDP of the nation, hence the necessity of adequate approaches to address these issues ((Institute E for Equality G et al.)). Further, the entangled relationship between violence against women and the economic progress of women makes sustainable development efforts more challenging. Some programs may fuel violence because of resistance from the communities while other programs may enhance women's ability to become economically independent and make decisions on their own thus reducing possible violence ((Jatfors A-K)). In order to resolve this complex phenomenon, steps should be directed at addressing short term needs of the survivors of violence as well as long term measures to prevent violence and in the process achieve gender equity and economic growth. It would be enough to say that a holistic view of violence against women will bring about not only individual suffering relief but also the

economic power and progress for coming generations ((Duvvury N et al.)).

### A. Overview of the analytical points regarding costs incurred due to violence against women.

Violence against women as a social problem has far reaching consequences as it is a violation of human rights as well as incurs significant economic costs which cut across the societies. Evidence bears out that these costs present themselves in two broad forms, namely direct and indirect in the forms of health care spending, absenteeism, and reduced economic productivity over time. The estimates indicate that the increase of Intimate partner violence in proportion of GDP measure around 1-3.7% in various nations, with productivity downgrades bound to nonsubjective violence justifiable by (Institute E for Equality G et al.). Furthermore, while violence can be reduced through economic empowerment of women, Oxfam (Jatfors A-K) notes that this is often obstructed by economic violence and abuse, which acts as a barrier for women towards employment opportunities. There is a need for a collective and coordinated crosscutting intervention in which there is unabated advocacy for women's economic empowerment while at the same time addressing the socio-cultural belief systems that condone violence and, in turn, further the integration between gender equality and economic sustainability (Duvvury N et al.).

### B. The significance of retrieving and analyzing complete data which must also guide policy action

It is necessary to explain that this applies also for those who wish to understand the relationship between women violence as an economic issue which comes as a result of sufficient evidence base and research being provided. Such evidence has shown that constructive data goes a long way into policy formulation by elucidating the various cost factors related to violence such as health expenses and reduced labor output. These studies, however, have also established that such costs relate to 1-2 % of the GDP in various



jurisdictions (Duvvury N et al). Worse, some factors are missing because of a scarcity of data, and discrepancies in definitions result in underreported estimates that vary from country to country and mask the real economic cost to society (Vyas S et al., p. 44-55). However some insights from other diverse literature coupled with time might mitigate the unfounded assumptions, give rise to programmatic projects that withstand the problem and atleast get to the bottom of the relation between male violence, economic self sufficiency and the society health. Bank AD states it results in programs that correspond well with the needs of the particular community. Ultimately, it is government intervention which breaks through to the authors argument that advocates for improved research metrics in a bid to align resources with developmental outcomes that are durable and address the key socioeconomic burden of violence against women. Government of India.

### **C. Call to action for the stakeholders having an influence over the Economic aspects of Violence against Women (VAW) and for the advancement of Women.**

Something has to be done collectively, urgently for the social economic effects of violence against women (VAW) by leaders in different arms of government, corporations, community networks. While ADB stresses the fact that economic empowerment does work in minimizing VAW, they caution on the lack of enabling structures & laws or awareness to prevent further harm. Also VAW has economic burdens, pedriages of 1 to 2 % GDP in some countries, there is a justification for prevention funding. In gender transform practices, there is a need to integrate gender concerns in the shifting visions of national development strategies and sectoral plans to equal the economic deficiencies and create a space where women are free from violence. There is a need to ensure the stakeholders pay attention to effective strategies like data collection, creating awareness campaigns or even partnering to bring about continuous change

towards the elimination of gender parity in a society.

1. The structured outline ensures a detailed examination of the analysis of costs related to violence against women within the essay while giving the topic of discussion assurance of thorough exploration and clarity.

When it comes the comprehension of the social and economic costs associated with violence against women, it is imperative that the diverse and multifaceted nature of this scourge is engaged. The researchers can employ a systematic approach to measure various components, both direct and indirect, including health costs, wasted time due to absence from work, and delays in the growth of the potential future labor market. Adequate examples are given in the researches of (Envall E et al.) where it was found out that about 1- 2 % of GDP which is similar to government reserves on funding of other vital sectors such as education is lost as a result of intimate partner violence, a form of IPV. Vyas S et al. (p. 44-55) on the other hand have done further analysis only to indicate that there are methodological disparities that account for some of these lower estimates meaning that more emphasis should be put on uniformity in data obtaining procedures. As such, the way the economic impacts are outlined helps to promote understanding and advocates for better policies and responses to the violence against women which is critical in enhancing gender equality in economic contexts.

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