

The cause and impact of domestic abuse on vulnerable groups in the UK

Literature review

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Introduction

It is well known that domestic abuse has long been the subject of heated debate about its multitude and nature, risk factors, and their impact on different social and professional lives. Although most research agrees with the severity of the phenomenon, there are still many issues addressed in different ways, leading to various methodological approaches. However, even though the definition of domestic abuse may appear in multiple forms, all of them shared the same principle. According to the UK government, "Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviours, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality" can be defined as domestic violence. (gov.uk 2021)

Domestic abuse can occur from different causes, manifesting itself differently from case to case. However, it has been proven that domestic abuse can have significant consequences both physically and mentally in the lives of the abused, people becoming victims regardless of gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity, religion, etc. The role of this report is to identify the causes and impact of domestic abuse in the family and society based on a systematic literature review of 20 articles.

Background

Since ancient times, domestic abuse seems to be present both in family and civil society. That there were no laws to protect women and children leads to extreme domestic violence cases, the most eloquent example being "The Murder of Regilla: A Case of Domestic Violence in Antiquity" (Pomeroy, 2010). In the past, domestic abuse has been seen as a way husbands could legitimately "correct" their wives or children deemed unacceptable behavior. From the Middle Ages to the present, patriarchy has been the dominant form in the family and society, and in some countries, patriarchy still exists today. In some cultures, the husband has the right to life and death over the wife, her purpose in the family being only for procreation. (Pomeroy, 2010)

In the UK, looking at the perspective of domestic abuse around 1500, "the Golden Age of the Rod" is used against women, the only duty of women being to obey the man in any condition. He continued chronologically until the late 1800s; there are few laws to protect women from domestic abuse. The man may punish his wife for maintaining discipline in the family. Since the late 1800s, thanks to Queen Elizabeth, women have been given a mouthful of oxygen against domestic abuse because of new reforms that facilitate divorce following acts of abuse by the partner. The Matrimonial Laws of 1878 (Criminology, 2021) and the Law on Women's

Property also significantly reduce domestic abuse. Now women can have complete control over both their own lives and the property they own (McGrath, 2021).

With the significant increase in domestic abuse and awareness of society's lack of support towards women, a wave of political campaigns became popular, widely known as "the feminist movement." Even with the significant changes brought by the movement towards women's rights, such as reproductive rights, maternity leave, social, financial, and cultural inequalities, issues about sexual violence and harassment, women suffrage, and last but not least domestic abuse, there are still many concerns. There are still many questions to answer, problems to fix, and awareness to spread (Matters, themes, Movements and Europe, 2021).

Research question

What are the causes and the impacts of domestic abuse in different professional, social, and cultural settings in the United Kingdom?

Research aims

This topic aims to provide a comprehensive summary of the causes of domestic abuse and its impact on vulnerable groups.

Research objectives

The paper will explore and recognize factors underlying domestic abuse, identifying the causes and impact of domestic abuse in different scenarios, in the development of physical and mental disease, in civil society, on private and professional life.

Research method

For research will use secondary data analysis based on the Systematic Literature Review of 20 articles on domestic abuse. In addition, a search was carried out of the data sources of ProQuest, EBSCOHost, Journal of Nursing, NHS, Sage Journal, etc. Keywords included: domestic abuse, domestic violence, the substance of use, women, children, vulnerable groups, mental health: support, trauma, health policy, older people, young people.

Inclusion criteria: From 1990 to the present, articles find in UK literature of young people, women, migrants, black women, the elderly, and people with mental health issues who have been victims of domestic abuse.

Exclusion criteria: men's domestic abuse

Importance of Ethics in Research

During literary reviews, compliance with ethics will be the crucial point of the research. Several factors that define the link between the author and the research material emphasize ethical observance in research. The factors are based on principles that can affect the quality of research. Research must be truthful and not denigrate the work of others. Elements such as integrity, honesty, objectivity, confidentiality are just a few of the ethical principles. Ethical research practice can be defined as the barrier between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in research. (What Is Ethics in Research & Why Is It Important? - by David B. Resnik, JD, Ph.D., 2020)

Literature Review/Cause and impact of domestic abuse on vulnerable groups

Over time, a significant number of approaches have been developed to find out the causes or the roots of violent behaviours and, therefore, domestic abuse. It seems that one of the leading causes of domestic abuse is poverty. So far, the causes, especially of violence against women, tend towards alcoholism, gender inequality, patriarchal social norms, cultural beliefs, and poverty. When we talk about poverty, we automatically ask ourselves: how is poverty associated with domestic abuse? The article "Poverty and violence and domestic abuse(DVA) in the UK" by Eldin Fahmy and Emma Williamson can say with certainty that there is a significant link between poverty and domestic abuse in the UK. This affirmation is based on considerable secondary data resources (over 80 articles, books, reports).In low-income families, violence is more likely to occur, according to the report. There is also evidence that poverty attracts other domestic abuse risk factors. For example, in many families, the consumption of alcohol and banned substances are side effects of poverty (Fahmy and Williamson, 2018).

Research has shown that with domestic abuse, another risk factor is alcohol. Between 25% and 50% of domestic abuse cases involve alcohol. According to the British Crime Survey (now the Crime Survey for England and Wales), in 2010-2011, 47% of cases of domestic violence victims said the attacker was under the influence of alcohol (Foster, 2014). Furthermore, results showed that cases involving severe violence are twice as likely to happen if the offender is under the influence of alcohol (Brecklin, 2002).

Alcohol and domestic violence attributed to alcohol consumption in the UK is subject to controversy. Sara Galvan's research follows the question: Is alcohol a risk factor for family

abuse? To answer this question Ms. Galvani's primary research method is based on interviewing 20 women who have been victims of domestic abuse from a male partner. The research aimed to establish the link between alcohol and domestic violence. The research results lead to the conclusion that the women in the chosen sample did not blame the partner's alcohol consumption but the partner himself or domestic abuse. So the alcohol is a risk factor but not the main one (Galvani,2006).

Inequality (misogyny) is another major cause of domestic abuse, according to several articles. The fundamental cause that leads to gender inequality is the difference in expectations attributed to men and women in society. For example, masculinity is stereotyped with physical strength, rationality, aggressiveness, competitiveness, impassiveness. On the other hand, female roles are seen as submissive, irrational, physically weak (Veysel Bozkurt, 2015). With time, violence became a compensatory mechanism against personal insecurities, such as failure or fear of failure, lack of confidence, fear of not conforming to norms of society. In this way, the masculine equilibrium could be re-established.

The cause of domestic abuse is considered being social learning. Psychologist Albert Bandura, the originator of social learning theory, states that "Violence is learned, either directly or indirectly, and reinforced in childhood and continues into adulthood as coping response to stress or as a method of conflict resolution" (Bandura, 1973). Therefore, despite all the theories developed to justify violence against vulnerable people, either sociological, biological, psychological, criminological, none of them should excuse this behaviour.

When we talk about vulnerable groups, we address especially people with a lower capacity to respond in case of abuse of domestic violence. People with physical and mental disabilities, the elderly, low-income people, minorities of different cultures and ethnicities, children, women, and people with chronic illnesses can be considered vulnerable groups. (Shivayogi, 2013)

Substance use will always be associated with vulnerable groups. For example, it is well known that women who use substances are more prone to domestic abuse. Sometimes, victims use substances as an anaesthetic in order to endure physical torture from their partners. The question is: Do abused women who use substances get enough support from service and practitioners?

There are many studies that highlight the experiences of domestic abuse by women addicted to substances that live in continuous victimization by both life partners and society. However,

at the same time, studies show a lack of information related to support victimized women receive in connection with domestic abuse - substance use.

A study by Sarah Fox highlights the experiences of domestic abuse suffered by women addicted to substances. This study aims to identify issues related to the agency's intervention in domestic violence cases among women who use substances. For the case study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 women who have domestic abuse and substance use history. The interview result, its relive is a communication barrier between the subjects and the services trust to provide help. None of those women received help for domestic abuse and used substances together, and some did not receive any help related to domestic abuse. Even if several of them tried to reach for support, they faced gaps in professionals' understanding. Domestic abuse and substance use are two separate entities seen by professionals, and, in most cases, the support provided is not effective. This lead to the prioritization of support for substance abuse over domestic abuse, many women remaining stuck in toxic relationships (Fox, 2020)

At the same time, substance use associated with domestic abuse can emerge mental and emotional disorders. A study has been done on substance use conducted on a sample of 4,800 women who have experienced various forms of domestic abuse (sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional and discriminatory abuse) throughout their lives. The study results showed that women subjected to domestic violence have a high risk of developing depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder [PTSD], and substance use addiction (Hedtke et al., 2008).

Compared to the rest of the population, patients with mental illness may not have the ability to understand risk factors that can lead to violent abuse and sexual assault, making them vulnerable. Despite the efforts of mental health services, many cases of domestic abuse among people with mental illness remain undetected by mental health services. In literature, some articles reveal that women with mental illness are more vulnerable and may be more likely to be victims of repeated physical and sexual violence (Trevillion, Corker, Capron, and Oram, 2016).

In the "Domestic and sexual violence against patients with severe mental illness" article, three hundred and three randomly recruited psychiatric patients using the British crime survey on domestic/sexual violence have been interviewed for one year. The survey's results related to domestic violence have been compared with the results obtained on a sample of 22,600 people without mental illness. Compared to the results of both surveys, it was concluded that patients with illness. Compared to the results of both surveys, patients with severe mental issues are enduring much more domestic abuse both in the family and in society, all these

abuses having a severe impact on their well-being and health. The percentage of people with severe mental problems becoming victims of abuse is up to 8 times higher than in the general population. In addition, women with severe mental problems who have been victims of sexual abuse are more likely to commit suicide than women without mental conditions. (H. Khalifeh, 2015).

The fact that domestic abuse does not consider age or demographic regions is shown by Andrew Clarke in the article, "Violence exposure and young people's vulnerability, mental and physical health". Using the secondary data analysis of the survey conducted on a sample of 9626 children aged 13-14 in schools in the northwest of England, the article wants to determine the impact of domestic abuse on early adolescents. The study results show that students who have been the subject of domestic abuse or witnessed scenes of domestic violence have had poorer learning outcomes than those who grew up in a friendly environment. There is also a high risk that children subjected to domestic violence will not integrate into society, leading to self-isolation or bullying from the community. These conditions can conduct to self-injury or even suicide. (Andrew Clarke, 2020).

Research over time has shown that people who been abused in childhood can enlarge mental disorders in adulthood. Hoglund and Nicholas stated that life could touch a child raised in a violent environment, developing feelings of guilt, shame, anger, and aggression in adulthood (Collete L. Hoglund, 1995). Results from measurements of depression and low self-esteem using the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (CSR), and the Attribution Style Questionnaire (ASQ) show us the following. People who had been abused for a long time in childhood face learning problems and have difficulty adapting to society in adulthood (Gross A. B., 1992).

Despite the domestic violence that people face as children, some voices put emotional abuse at the forefront as the cause of adult life trauma. To determine the degree of emotional abuse to certain people who have been subjected in childhood to general abuse been developed over time methods designed to help measure it. Child abuse and trauma (CATS) measures the impact of domestic abuse and neglect suffered in childhood extended to adulthood (Sanders and Becker-Lausen, 1995). Following the research of Sanders and Becker-Lausen "ANGELA KENT in the article" THE IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE OF CHILDHOOD: AN EXTENSION OF CHILD ABUSE AND TRAUMA SCALE shows the ability of CATS to measure the intensity of emotional abuse experienced in childhood and the link between emotional abuse intensities and subsequent levels of anxiety and depression (Angela Kent, 1998).

Back in the UK, there has been a lack of information on child abuse nationwide. In 2000, the first extensive survey across the UK took place, which exploits the experiences of adolescents in childhoods maltreatment. The purpose of the "Child Maltreatment in the United Kingdom: a Study of the Prevalence of Abuse and Neglect" report is to highlight the involvement of adults (parents, relatives, neighbours, professionals) in the abuse experiences suffered by adolescents in childhood. The report explores several causes and risk factors within and outside the family associated with domestic abuse. The report has also proven that there is a close connection between physical and mental abuse.

In most cases, physical abuse (beatings, sexual assault, injuries of any kind) has significant psychological effects (anxiety, fear, suicidal tendencies, behavioural deviations) (May-Chahal and Cawson, 2005). At nine years after the publication of the first major study in the UK on child abuse,, a new study was conducted on interviewing 6,000 children, teenagers, young adults,, and parents. Unfortunately, the study results were not at all gratifying, the rate of domestic abuse still being unsatisfactory (Radford, L. et al. 2011).

The complexity of domestic abuse is well known, and the phenomenon seems to grow every year. In the UK, one of the most vulnerable categories of domestic abuse and violence is the elderly. In the UK, a large proportion of older people have experienced violent, sexual, or financial abuse from family or loved ones. Based on a literature review, "The impact of domestic abuse on older women" brings to the surface the impact of domestic abuse among older people. The article highlights that older women are much more at risk of being abused than men. Also, the impact of physical or emotional abuse is devastating among the elderly with mental illness, often its effects being irreversible (McGarry, Simpson and Hinchliff-Smith, 2010).

Regarding domestic abuse on human physiology, according to (Chandan et al., 2020) in the article "The association between exposure to domestic abuse in women and the development of syndromes showing central nervous system sensitization: a retrospective cohort study using primary care from the United Kingdom United Kingdom" a study conducted between 1995 and 2018 on a sample of 787 general practices in the United Kingdom found that women subjected to domestic abuse can develop chronic back pain, chronic headaches, irritable bowel syndrome, restless legs syndrome and various diseases of the reproductive system. The study also reveals that aggravated physical abuse can lead to mortality.

The United Kingdom is a multicultural country with a high percentage of ethnic and cultural minorities. The subject of "domestic abuse" has often been seen as a social stigma around the ethnic minority community, as there are distinct elements of culture, religion, and ethnicity.

Most of the time, women are inclined to remain in a toxic relationship, accepting domestic abuse as part of the cultural dogma. The main reason for not disclosing acts of violence and abuse is the fear of losing respect and causing shame for the family name due to a failed marriage (G. Gangoli, 2006).

In a study throughout 18 months, researchers focused on Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian communities in Newcastle, Sunderland, and South Tyneside with different marital statuses (married, divorced, and separated). From a sample of twenty-three women, four defined their marriage as forced, while sixteen defined their marriage as arranged.

Most women who experienced arranged marriage said they felt emotionally abused because they could not reject the decision, feeling betrayed by their parents. When a forced marriage has failed and divorce, the family and community marginalize most women in some cultures or ethnicities. This fact can lead as well to psychical and emotional turbulence. The study results also showed that, in all cases of forced marriage, the woman suffered or been witnessed domestic violence during childhood. Likewise, in seven out of sixteen cases of arranged marriage, women have suffered domestic violence after marriage, such as physical, verbal, and mental abuse (Dr. Geetanjali Gangoli, 2006).

The cultural and religious implications in modern society limit women's rights in some cultures and ethnicities, bringing them back to the Middle Ages. The concept of total submission of women to their partner's family is a fact. Most of the time, the fact that they are beaten, verbally, or emotionally assaulted remains a secret for fear to bring shame to the family and causing repulsion from the community. also, the fact that their right to education and social activities are denied (Vanda K. Wellock, 2010).

Key findings :

As a result of literature reviews on domestic abuse, been highlighted several key findings.:

- The social and economic environment plays a significant role in controlling and strengthening domestic abuse in the UK.
- Law and public policy together are not well understood by the general population. The services empowered to help are not sufficiently involved in society in order to reduce domestic abuse.
- Lack of information provided to ethnic and cultural minorities in the UK to report domestic abuse
- Domestic violence, most times, is not fully reported.

Key themes:

- We can say that civil society and services designed to help people in need face several problems.
- There is not enough support
- Impact of domestic abuse among vulnerable groups children, women, and people with physical and mental illness
- Developing a mechanism to acknowledge and report domestic abuse
- Social and cultural perception about the phenomenon of domestic abuse

Conclusion

This research has highlighted the causes and the impact of domestic abuse on vulnerable groups in the UK. Child maltreatment, domestic abuse, violence, Parental substance misuse, these terms are all widespread, and unfortunately, conduct to fundamental issues in the current civil society. Even if domestic abuse does not affect every person, the fight against it should be an everyday fight as, in time, it could influence the state of society. In the 21st century, women are forced to hide the abuses suffered by the fear of facing shame or future aggression, making us fail as a society. Also, children living in toxic environments may develop symptoms of aggression in adulthood and become the victim in the aggressor are actual problems in society. According to English literature, domestic abuse is widespread among the elderly and those with severe mental and emotional problems. Our role as a society is to protect our seniors. It is outrageous that domestic abuse among the elderly and people with disabilities cannot always be discovered in time and punished. In order to combat all these risk factors that lead to domestic abuse, it is necessary to get involved together. There is a need to better inform the population about the prevention and reporting of domestic abuse. Breaking the communication barrier between the abused and social services and involving government agencies through laws and public policy can be solutions in the fight against ill-treatment. The conclusion that can be drawn from all the research done for this paper is: as a society, we need to share compassion, understanding, and empathy with victims of domestic abuse. The first thing to combat domestic violence is to recognize that it is accurate, recognize the needs of victims of domestic abuse, and recognize that we need to be united to succeed.

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