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Anxiety disorder on women of domestic violence victims

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ABSTRACT

Having a harmonious, happy and loving family is everyone's dream. But few people can make it happen. There are still family members who feel uncomfortable when they are at home. They feel insecure, pressured, unappreciated, and neglected. Domestic violence can affect every family member, wife, husband, children, or other family members. However, the most frequent victims of domestic violence, with the highest number of cases each year, are women. Women who are victims experience various negative affects. Besides impacting the physical, it also impacts the psyche, one of which is anxiety. This paper aims to analyze various research results related to anxiety in women victims of domestic violence. This paper gives a theoretical overview of the research on anxiety in domestic violence victims. Searches in databases relevant to both clinical and consumer behavior literature, such as Scopus, EBSCO, Web of Science – Social Citations Index, Medline, PsycINFO, and Pubmed, were used to conduct a selective review of the literature. The paper examines current thinking on troublesome anxiety disorders in women who have been victims of domestic violence. The literature evaluation allows for the expansion of existing knowledge about domestic violence.



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Introduction

Domestic violence is a serious form of violence and abuse perpetrated by adults against their spouses. The majority of individuals consider physical abuse between spouses, such as hitting, slapping, and beating, to be domestic violence. Physical, emotional, sexual, social, and spiritual abuse are the five basic categories of abuse, according to the Americans Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center. Domestic violence exists in all ethnic and racial communities around the world, and women are disproportionately the victims of domestic abuse (Feroz, Jami, & Masood, 2015; Malik, Munir, Ghani, & Ahmad, 2021).

In any culture, women have a major role in the family, and their emotional, physical, and social well-being is intimately linked to society's general well-being. For a healthy society, health service providers around the world place a high value on women's physical, mental, and reproductive health. In most nations around the world, women are abused and are the primary victims of domestic violence, according to a WHO report on violence and health. It was also discovered that women who had been abused by their partners had higher rates of depression, anxiety, and phobias than women who had not been abused (Organization, 2005). Abused women's physical and emotional health can be severely harmed by domestic violence. It also jeopardizes the victimized women's social, economic, spiritual, and emotional well-being, and it has the potential to damage the entire society. It has long been thought to be a significant factor in women's bad health (Kaur & Garg, 2008).

According to a study conducted in the United States of America, 20% of women seeking treatment and assistance at family clinics had been victims of physical, emotional, or sexual assault by their intimate partners. Mental health professionals around the world are becoming concerned about the rising occurrence

of anxiety disorders among domestically abused women (Malik, et al., 2021). Domestic violence is one of the incidents that continues to rise year after year, with women constituting the majority of victims. According to Komnas Perempuan's 2020 Annual Report, the number of women who were victims of assault in 2019 totaled 431,471. This is up 6.2 percent over the previous year's record of 406,178 people. Similarly, during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, Komnas Perempuan reported a rise in domestic abuse against women (Perempuan, 2019).

Women who are victims of domestic abuse face a variety of unpleasant consequences, which can include both physical and psychological consequences. Anxiety is one of the psychological repercussions that can arise. Anxiety disorders are conditions in which you experience persistent anxiety that might worsen over time. Symptoms might make it difficult to do things like work, schoolwork, and maintain relationships. Anxiety can be a healthy reaction to stressful conditions, but it becomes a pathologic disorder when it becomes incapacitating and difficult to manage (Patel & Fancher, 2013). In this study, we'll talk about the anxiety that women who have been victims of domestic violence go through.

Method

The literature search was conducted using the following key data bases: Scopus, EBSCO, ABI Pro-Quest, Web of Science – Social Citations Index, Medline, PsycINFO, and Pubmed. The following key terms were used: “violence”, “women's health”, “domestic violence”, “mental health”, “effects of domestic violence”, “anxiety”, “physical violence”, “sexual violence”, “intimate relationships”, “anxiety disorders”, “intimate sexual victimization”, and “intimate partner violence”. The writers conducted an analysis of the papers based on the criteria stated in the title and objectives of the paper. The authors used this method to identify the current state of research in the topic, as well as epistemological assumptions and methodological approaches. This classification served as a basis for analyzing the literature.

Discussion

Domestic violence victims

Domestic violence, also known as intimate partner violence, happens when two people are in a close relationship (Abramsky et al., 2011). Emotional, sexual, and physical abuse, as well as threats of harm, are all examples of domestic violence (Katz, 2016; Lacey, McPherson, Samuel, Powell Sears, & Head, 2013). Power and control are always inequalities in abusive partnerships. To dominate his or her spouse, an abuser utilizes frightening, unpleasant words and acts. At first, recognizing domestic violence may be difficult. While some relationships are obviously violent from the start, violence frequently begins subtly and progresses over time. Domestic violence frequently escalates from threats and verbal assault (Myhill, 2017). While physical harm is the most evident hazard, domestic violence has serious emotional and psychological implications as well (Rivas et al., 2016). Relationships that are emotionally abusive can ruin your self-worth, cause anxiety and sadness, and make you feel helpless and alone. No one should have to go through this, and realizing that your relationship is violent is the first step toward breaking out.

Domestic violence is commonly associated with domestic abuse (Westmarland, McGlynn, & Humphreys, 2018). Domestic violence, on the other hand, is defined as any attempt by one spouse or intimate partner to control or dominate the other. Domestic violence and abuse have a single goal: to gain and keep total control over you. A thug isn't one to "follow the rules." An abuser uses fear, guilt, humiliation, and intimidation to keep you under their control. People of various ages and backgrounds are affected by domestic violence and abuse. People of various ages, ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic levels are affected. While women are more likely to be abused than males, both men and women are victims of violence, particularly verbal and emotional abuse. The bottom line is that abusive behavior is never appropriate, whether it is perpetrated by a man, a woman, a teenager, or an older adult. You have the right to a sense of self-worth, respect, and safety.

Physical violence isn't the only type of domestic violence. Any behavior aimed at gaining power and control over a spouse or close family member is considered domestic violence. Domestic violence refers to acts of violence committed in domestic settings between people who have or have had intimate connections (Mitchell, 2011). (Physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse are examples of these acts (Hulme, Morgan, & Boxall, 2019).

Domestic violence is induced by a variety of causes, including a society's ideology or worldview, which influences political, economic, social, cultural, and behavioral perspectives, including religious interpretation (not the religion itself). One of these is patriarchal ideology, which shapes people's perspectives and behaviors in their personal lives, homes, communities, and even the global order of things. Patriarchal ideology is a way of thinking that positions men at the center of life, putting them in a higher position than women because men are the only ones who are tall (Rofiah, 2017).

Husbands frequently conduct violence towards their wives when they are irritated that they are unable to perform something that should be their job. This happens to couples who aren't ready to marry (married young), whose men don't have a job or a consistent income to support their demands, and who have limited independence since they still live with their parents or in-laws. Because of these circumstances, husbands/men frequently seek escapism through negative activities (drunk, gambling, drugs, sex) and end up releasing their frustrations on their wives in numerous forms, including physical, psychological, sexual, and even neglect (Santoso, 2019).

Anxiety Disorder

Anxiety is a normal and healthy emotion (Hannesdottir & Ollendick, 2007; Jazaieri, Morrison, Goldin, & Gross, 2015). However, if a person has disproportionately high levels of worry on a regular basis, it could be a sign of a medical ailment. Anxiety is a mental state characterized by tense sensations, worried thoughts, and bodily changes such as high blood pressure (Lee, Sbarra, Mason, & Law, 2011). Recurrent intrusive thoughts or concerns are a hallmark of anxiety disorders. Because they are concerned, they may avoid particular situations. Sweating, trembling, dizziness, or a quick heartbeat are all possible physical symptoms. The American Psychological Association (APA) defines anxiety as "a feeling of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes including raised blood pressure" (Association, 2021). Anxiety disorders are a set of mental conditions marked by high levels of fear, trepidation, and worry. Physical symptoms, as well as changes in how a person absorbs emotions and behaves, are all indicators of these disorders. Mild anxiety can be perplexing and upsetting, whereas severe anxiety can have a considerable influence on one's everyday life.

When an individual is presented with potentially harmful or terrifying causes, anxiety is not only frequent, but also necessary for survival (Montag, Reuter, Weber, Markett, & Schoene-Bake, 2012). Since the birth of civilization, predators and imminent danger have triggered alarms in the body, allowing evasive action. Faster heartbeat, sweat, and increased sensitivity to the environment are all signs of these alarms. When the brain receives a rush of adrenalin, a hormone and chemical messenger, it triggers these neurological actions, which is known as the "fight-or-flight" response. This helps people prepare to face or flee potential threats to their safety (Northoff, 2020). For many people, running away from larger creatures and immediate danger is less of a concern than it was for early humans. Work, money, family life, health, and other critical matters that need a person's attention but do not necessitate the "fight-or-flight" response are now the focus of anxiety. The unpleasant feeling you get before a big event or when you're in a stressful situation is a natural echo of your body's original "fight-or-flight" response. It may, however, be vital for survival; for example, the dread of being hit by an automobile when crossing the street drives a person to look both ways in order to escape danger (Schein, 2002).

According to research, both hereditary and environmental variables appear to have a role in the development of anxiety disorders. Although the risk factors for each type of anxiety disorder are different, there are some common risk factors that apply to all anxiety disorders: 1) Shyness or behavioral inhibition as a temperamental feature in childhood; 2) Early childhood or adulthood exposure to stressful and unfavorable life or environmental events; 3) Biological relationships with a history of anxiety or other mental diseases; 4) Some physical health concerns, such as thyroid issues or cardiac arrhythmias (Carpenter, Sprechmann, Calderbank, Sapiro, & Egger, 2016; Dia & Bradshaw, 2008).

Anxiety may last for a longer period of time or be more severe than the original cause, or stressor. High blood pressure and nausea are examples of physical indications and symptoms. Anxiety develops into anxiety disorder as a result of these reactions. According to the American Psychological Association, an individual with anxiety disorder has "repeated intrusive thoughts or fears." Anxiety can make it difficult to function on a daily basis when it becomes a problem (Association, 2021).

Anxiety disorder on women of domestic violence victims

Domestic violence has been demonstrated in numerous studies to have negative and frequently long-term mental health consequences for victims. Depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other disorders, as well as self-medicating with substances and suicide, are all impacted (Howard, Trevillion, &

Agnew-Davies, 2010). The revelation of a link between domestic violence and mental illness raises serious concerns among care providers. To begin, health systems and practitioners must be aware of the negative mental health effects of domestic violence on victims in order to assist them, i.e., to address their psychological needs while simultaneously referring them to specialized services for their safety and other needs. Domestic abuse is the most prevalent kind of violence among women aged 25 to 40. Anxiety is a form of emotional reaction that occurs when a person feels threatened. Anxiety is a type of emotional reaction that women have when they are subjected to domestic violence (Alejo, 2014).

Rees et al. found that women who report gender-based violence (i.e. partner violence, rape, other forms of sexual assault, and stalking) are more likely to develop mental illness throughout the course of their lives, with the risk of mental illness increasing for women who have had the most exposure (Rees et al., 2011). Anxiety disorders were reported by 77% of the study participants, mood disorders by 52%, substance use disorders by 47%, post-traumatic stress disorder by 56%, and suicide attempts by 35% (Rees, et al., 2011). Anxiety disorders are the most common mental ailment suffered by women who are victims of abuse, according to the findings of this study.

Women who have experienced partner abuse are more likely to develop depression (Amanor-Boadu et al., 2011; Peltzer, Pengpid, McFarlane, & Banyini, 2013), post-traumatic stress and anxiety disorders (Bennice, Resick, Mechanic, & Astin, 2003; Dutton et al., 2006; Robertiello & Terry, 2007), and other stress-related syndromes, 62.6 percent of women who had suffered rape, physical abuse, or stalking by an intimate partner reported at least one symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder in a national survey on intimate relationship and sexual violence in the United States (Black et al., 2011). 16.4% of male victims had at least one symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Even after controlling for the level of physical violence, evidence suggests that women who are sexually assaulted by a spouse have worse mental health outcomes than those who are merely physically abused. Lower self-esteem and body image (Campbell, 1989); a higher number of mental health problems (Cole, Logan, & Shannon, 2005); depression and increased levels of depression; and more severe post-traumatic stress disorder (Bennice, et al., 2003; Campbell, 1989).

VicHealth (2004) showed that anxiety and depression accounted for the biggest share of the illness burden of intimate partner violence among women in Victoria in their examination of health outcomes contributing to the disease burden (27 percent and 35 percent respectively). Eating disorders accounted for 0.5 percent of the total disease burden. Access Economics (2004) linked approximately 18 percent of all female depression and 17 percent of female anxiety disorders in Australia to family violence in a seminal study on the cost of domestic violence. Based on the various research results above, we found that there were many cases of anxiety experienced by women victims of domestic violence, and they needed help to reduce this anxiety. We need further research to address this issue.

Conclusion

The formation of anxiety or anxiety disorders is one of the effects of domestic violence on women. Anxiety is a future-focused mood state connected with anticipating potential bad events. Anxiety is an emotional condition marked by physiological stimulation, an unpleasant feeling of tension, and a fear that something awful may occur. Anxiety can occur as a reaction to "threat" that is both real and non-existent (the consequence of the imagination alone), a condition known as "free floating anxiety" (anxiety that continues to grow without a known cause). More research is needed into the best treatment for anxiety management in women who have been victims of domestic abuse.

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