



Domestic Violence And Drug Addiction: Addressing Intricacy Through A Psychological Review

Sunita Devi¹& Dr. Sandeep Singh²

Ph.D. Research Scholar¹& Professor²

Department of Applied Psychology

Guru Jambheshwar University of Science and Technology, Hisar (Haryana)

Abstract

Drug use and domestic violence are major public health issues, with high rates of co-occurring issues reported in the literature. The National Family Health Survey shows that 3.1% of pregnant and married Indian women have experienced physical violence, while 29.3% have experienced domestic or sexual abuse. The pandemic has increased the number of female victims of domestic abuse. Substance abuse is linked to severe forms of violence, such as crimes against humanity. Factors such as the early beginning of illicit drug-related problems, male aggression, depressive disorders, and substance use symptoms are key to understanding the connection between drug abuse and domestic violence. Behavioral marital therapy and evaluating family violence and drug use are important factors affecting treatment involvement and outcome. Alcohol and drug abuse are linked to domestic violence, with males often having alcohol issues and heavy drinkers before violence. Addiction to drugs or alcohol by women can make them more vulnerable to abuse and limit their ability to defend themselves.

Keywords: Domestic violence, drug addiction, mental health.

Background

One of the biggest public health issues that courts and mental health organizations are dealing with is associated drug use and difficulties connected to domestic violence. High rates of co-occurring drug abuse and difficulties connected to domestic violence have been reported in the literature throughout the past five years. The National Family Health Survey (NFHS), 2019–2021, reports that 3.1% of pregnant women between the ages of 18 and 49 and married Indian women have experienced physical violence during their pregnancy, while 29.3% of married Indian women have experienced domestic or sexual abuse. That figure only represents the incidents that women have reported; many more often go unreported and unreported to the authorities. In 2021, 136,000 complaints were filed under Indian Penal Code Section 498A (cruelty by spouse or his family), whereas only 507 cases were reported nationwide under the provisions of the Protection of Women from Violence Against Women Act, 2005. 87% of married women who experience spousal abuse do not seek assistance, citing NFHS data. As reported by the National Commission for Women, during the pandemic, more women than ever before became victims of domestic abuse. This is evidenced by the 26,513 complaints the commission received from women in 2020–21, an increase of 25.09 percent over the 20,309 complaints filed in 2019–2020.

In a survey of substance abuse and domestic violence providers, Smith and Weisner(2000)discovered that 46% of men who used drugs were also attackers, 60% of women who abused substances were the targets of domestic assault, and 42% of women who were abused and receiving treatment for domestic violence were also drug abusers. This demonstrates the high prevalence of domestic violence and drug abuse co-occurring. The use of drugs and alcohol is linked to more severe forms of violence, such as the possibility of crimes against humanity.For instance, James and colleagues (2004) evaluated the batterer typology and discovered that the moderate-to-highly aggressive group of batterers had the greatest rates of alcohol and drug use. According to recent research, there is a need to investigate the connection between drug abuse and the likelihood of domestic murder. Substance abuse has been linked to a higher likelihood of violent fatalities in households, according to research by Stuart and colleagues(2008). Furthermore, they discovered that non-abusing people who lived in homes where other members misused drugs or alcohol had a higher chance of becoming murder victims.

Analysing the factors connected to domestic violence concerns has been attempted by several academics. Substance abuse is the most prevalent risk factor for domestic violence. Abdo and colleagues (2020) discovered that the early beginning of illicit drug- and drink-related problems is one of the correlates of domestic abuse. Furthermore, O'Farrell and Murphy (2004)) discovered a link between a higher likelihood of male aggression in the household and depressive disorders, personality disorders such as antisocial personality, and drug usage. According to Gadd and colleagues (2019) research, adult victims of household violence, a young age, physical or sexual abuse, and having a partner or spouse who consumes drugs are the main risk factors for women who abuse substances. Targeting the two problems together is crucial when evaluating the connection between drug abuse and domestic violence.

Alcohol and drug abuse, as well as familial violence, can have a number of negative effects, such as increased drug use, aggression, depression, trouble with the law, and other psychological, social, and mental health issues. Domestic violence-related problems among substance-using individuals are an indication of risk that has to be evaluated given these severe negative effects, which are frequently connected to worse treatment results.

In light of this, as well as the data indicating elevated rates of co-occurring substance abuse and issues linked to family violence, an initial investigation was conducted to evaluate the frequency and level of treatment participation among clients undergoing substance abuse therapy who have experienced domestic abuse in the past or not. To enhance diagnosis, treatment, and prognosis, an integrated approach to understanding, assessing, and treating this co-morbid issue is required. Previous studies have clearly demonstrated the link between substance abuse and domestic violence, and there is mounting proof that drug usage also has a correlation with this issue(Corvo&Carpenter, 2000). The strongest evidence points to alcohol's role as a contributing factor to crimes involving domestic violence. Males who attack their intimate partners usually had alcohol issues and were heavy drinkers before the violence, although the exact cause of the violence is unknown. While the association between domestic violence victimization and alcohol and drug use is multifaceted and potentially more complex than the relationship between substance uses and domestic violence offenders, there is evidence linking the two. Addiction to drugs or alcohol by women can make them more vulnerable to abuse by their domestic partner, exacerbate the effects of abuse, and limit their ability to defend themselves. To put it briefly, there are several ways in which drug and alcohol abuse are connected to domestic violence(Subodh et al., 2014).

In most countries and cultures, family violence has mostly affected women and children. The use of alcohol and narcotic substances is what exacerbates the violence. Domestic abuse incidents are noticeably greater among substance abusers than among non-abusers. It is just as common in nations where women enjoy great status. Economic class and educational attainment have little bearing on the prevalence of domestic violence. As a result, we need to investigate additional causes of domestic violence. It's time for societies, governments, and rational individuals to seriously consider ways to lessen domestic abuse and restore order to the community. Alcohol, drugs, and tobacco are quickly leading to the "road of destruction" and the disintegration of society (Bhatt, 1998).

Substance Abuse

Commonly regarded as substances of misuse in society include alcohol, tobacco, and narcotic drugs. The community's health has been significantly impacted by these chemicals. It has led to a rise in bloodshed on all fronts as well as the collapse of many nations' economies. It is regrettable that these habits are spreading around the world, but they are especially prevalent in poorer nations, and the future seems dire if action to stop substance misuse is not taken quickly. Domestic violence, including rape inside the family, is caused by male substance use. People who misuse substances typically have ill lives. There is an increased

likelihood of malnourishment and sexually transmitted infections. Subtle aggression against their unborn offspring, however, is a result of pregnant mothers abusing substances. If the expectant mother is a chain smoker, habitual drinker, or drug abuser, there are unquestionably risks to the fetus. Fetal deformities, fetal growth retardation, birth weight loss, premature labor, and increased perinatal death are possible outcomes (Najavits et al., 2004; Easton et al., 2007). Substance abuse may be the cause of or a contributing factor to family violence. According to some research, there is a correlation between recent cocaine and heroin use and physical aggressiveness (Gadd et al., 2019), and substance use symptoms are linked to higher proportions of violence (James et al., 2004). From the standpoint of substance use, the following factors can lead to alcohol and drug cravings and relapse in those who use drugs or alcohol: anger, aggression, low mood, and psychological stress (Farris & Fenaughty, 2002; Thomas & Bennett, 2009). This emphasizes how important it is to handle and manage both issues holistically.

Research on the psychological characteristics of men who use domestic violence reveals that these individuals have strong, domineering personalities, are unable to accept their partners' autonomy, have strict standards for marriage and sexual conduct, set unreasonable demands, and have a low stress threshold (Bennett & O'Brien, 2007). They have always been forceful and aggressive, and they frequently resort to violence to resolve conflicts in their daily lives. When faced with any excuse, substance abusers turn to violence, and their typical targets are logical family members such as spouses, kids, and elderly relatives. Since they are susceptible to the habit and witness their parents' abusing drugs, children of substance abusers are more likely to take up the same behavior. Children are shown to be beaten, not just by the stuff. It has been reported that abuse victims who also beat their children include women who abuse substances. These kids miss their parents' love and affection and frequently go without food. They also struggle with worry and sadness. Addicts who abuse drugs punish their dependent elderly parents mentally or physically. Sometimes these wounds are so bad that hospitalization is necessary. They are occasionally battered to death when high on drugs or alcohol.

Alcohol use

Worldwide, the consumption of alcoholic beverages is increasing. This is frequently tampered with by using methyl spirit, which can result in death or blindness. Drinking during pregnancy increases the risk of damage to the brain, stunting, and mental impairment with behavioral changes for the fetus. Abnormalities in the fetal alcohol syndrome can develop from alcohol use above 80 grams, which can impact fetal development. or spontaneous abortion are further consequences of excessive alcohol use. Alcohol makes a person more violent, and it can also be the cause of domestic violence (El-Bassel et al., 2005).

Drug abuse

It is becoming more common in many industrialized and developing nations for people to take narcotics, including the drugs hashish marijuana, cannabis, and opium. Sadly, teenagers and students are the victims. Some young people are coerced into engaging in this conduct by their peers in college and at school, and in an attempt to break the vicious pattern of substance misuse, these individuals additionally try to coerce others into adopting the practice. Worldwide, there are nearly 55 million drug users. In India, there are roughly 700,000 drug addicts, and the city of Bombay alone sees five drug-related fetal deaths each day. Currently, 34 million Americans between the ages of 15 and 44 misuse substances (Kyriacou et al., 2017). According to Vidushy and Sethi (2016), drug use in elder siblings' or parents' households is more common in younger children. It is more probable for children to use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco when they witness their parents doing so as adults, continuing the family's habit. Within the age range of 10 to 75 years, 16 crore individuals (14.6%) in India consume alcohol currently, with 5.2% of them suffering from alcohol dependence. Of the population, 3.1 crore people (2.8%) use cannabis, and 72 lakh people (0.66%) have cannabis-related issues. Of opioid users overall, 2.06% require treatment services, and roughly 0.55% (60 lakh) need health care. The current non-medical usage of sedatives is 1.18 crore (1.08%) of the population. Out of all adults, 0.58% use inhalants; children and adolescents use them at a rate of 1.7% (Parmar et al., 2024). Assistance with inhalant usage is needed for over 18 lakh kids. The number of individuals who inject drugs is believed to be around 8.5 lakh (also known as PWIDs). Addicts who abuse substances all have impulsive personalities and rebellious tendencies and will use violence for any excuse. These drugs are used by those who are depressed or distressed to block out the reality of life. They frequently lack money and must use violence in order to obtain money from strangers or family members. Among drug addicts, domestic violence is a common occurrence.

Domestic violence

Be it social or economic standing, education, religion, or any other barrier, domestic violence is a global issue. The majority of the casualties in the house are women, kids, and senior citizens. Domestic violence has different causes in different nations. In western culture, the companion-companion is often the one who commits the violence, with no additional family members. The nuclear family structure might be to blame for this. The most frequent causes in the West are adultery, extramarital relationships, failing marriages, or other family issues. While other factors also contribute to domestic assault in developing nations, adultery is one of them. It is frequently tied to gender, such as female infanticide or selective feticide, or it might have anything to do with the dowry system (Kyriacou et al., 2017). Under the dowry system, the bride's father must provide the bride's family with a sizable sum of money and other goods at the onset of the marriage. The desire for dowry might range from purchasing gold items to a vehicle, motorbike, or home. The bride's parents suffer greatly financially as a result of this. Even after being married, the bride must put up with physical and psychological abuse if the demands of the bridegroom are not met. Pouring kerosene and starting a fire might burn her alive. Bride-burning is the term for it. Occasionally, the bride kills herself. as a result of her desire to spare her parents from financial suffering. Many pregnant female babies are terminated following sex determination tests because they represent an economic strain on the parents. One method of committing infanticide is to suffocate a baby girl to death by immersing her face in a container of milk. In certain regions of India where the so-called dowry system is in place, this horrifying practice still takes place. The infant becomes intoxicated to death if it survives. This is done with oleander berries, a lethal toxin that grows in south India (Vidushy and Sethi, 2016).

Domestic violence does not just affect the female spouse; it may also affect the adult members of the household and the child who is a girl. The father, who is frequently drunk or drug dependent, enters the home in a frenzied condition and abuses the defenceless kids, usually the girls. Many times, the younger generation views the elderly residents of the residence as a financial and social liability. Because they rely on children for their financial support, they are frequently mistreated and physically abused, which can occasionally result in fractures of the bones. Mental trauma may also affect elderly and young people. Girls are frequently treated less favourably than their brothers and are not given access to a decent education or diet. While the boy attends school and plays, the female youngster is compelled to perform household duties. In most communities, this is frequently acknowledged as the "son preference.". In many Asian countries, gender prejudice persists from conception to death (Subodh et al., 2014).

Human rights breaches and legal issues are not the only issues with domestic abuse against women; there is a major health risk as well. Violence can have physical health effects as well, such as broken bones, unintended pregnancies, abortions, premature labor, intrauterine development delay, inflammatory diseases of the pelvis, STDs, AIDS, migraines, and asthma. Depression, dread, anxiousness, low self-confidence, or issues with sexuality are possible psychological effects (Kaur et al., 2014). Murder, suicide, and maternal and newborn deaths are among the deadly outcomes of violence. Women who have experienced abuse are twice as likely to miscarry and four times as likely to give birth to a child who is underweight (Stanley, 2012). Refusing a woman a healthy meal during her puberty and pregnancy might have an impact on her health. Resuming employment too soon after giving birth might potentially have negative health effects. Violence also includes repeated pregnancies against the woman's desire to have a male child. Research indicates that, while domestic violence is a global issue, drug abusers are more likely to experience it. Dutta and colleagues (2016) discovered that 93% of the individuals abusing their spouses were alcohol addicts. According to Wolfgang 17, 67% of the spouses who hit their wives in his research were also drinkers. There is no denying that alcoholics and their partners are more likely to experience domestic violence. Concerningly, an increasing number of girls and boys are abusing alcohol and other substances.

Causes of Domestic Violence

In every society, there are types of domestic assault that are considered socially unacceptable, whereas others are accepted or even promoted by accepted social mores. Geographical differences exist in the reasons behind domestic violence. The primary reasons are financial: adultery, disobedience to authority, obtaining more funds and luxuries from in-laws, and marital maladjustment. Domestic violence is most frequently caused by marital maladjustments and issues with dowries in India and many other developing nations. In order to find their children a good match, parents are crucial (Sarkar et al., 2016). As times change, kids choose to marry without telling their parents. With the assistance of the community or the police, orthodox parents would seize custody of their kids and torment their minds by keeping them in isolation for months. Children who marry into a different caste or religion are frequently physically abused

for this reason. Domestic violence is more frequently caused by marital maladjustment, which occurs when a woman disobeys her husband's orders in industrialized nations. The entire family is implicated in dowry-related fatalities and domestic abuse. The wife would endure emotional and physical abuse from the entire family in an attempt to coerce her into taking more money or other belongings from her parents' home. In industrialized nations, violence typically occurs inside relationships and within the family. If one spouse is abusing drugs, the violence will escalate. Men who are under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages tend to become more violent because they require money to purchase them. If they don't have any, they will beat the lady to obtain money or steal her jewellery. Due to the significant financial losses caused by drugs and alcohol, the majority of these guys are perpetually in debt (Bhattacharya et al., 2014).

Methods used for Violence

Domestic abuse is dealt with differently in each nation. Depending on what is available, different weapons are utilized to inflict harm. In all communities, using one's fists, pushing, striking, punching, and stomping are typical techniques. An early labor or uterine rupture may occur when an inebriated spouse strikes his pregnant wife violently in the belly. In addition to other weapons, shoes and sticks are frequently employed. Farm tools, such as the sickle, scythe, and spade, are frequently used to inflict violence in rural areas. These are extremely hazardous, sharp devices that have the potential to seriously injure the viscera or bones. Bows and arrows are used as weapons of mass destruction in some tribal regions (Stanley, 2012).

Since it's so accessible throughout the house, women are frequently hurt by kitchen knives. If pierced in the thoracic or stomach area, it can be deadly. In western countries, shooting with a gun is increasingly common. Another way to deform the victim is to throw acid bulbs in their face. The most horrific way to incite violence is to cover a body with kerosene and light it on fire, which can result in fatal burns. Fortunately, instances using the savage "sati" approach are quite uncommon (Bhatt, 1998).

As a result, alcohol, tobacco, and drug misuse may become ingrained in contemporary culture. Studying the causes behind young boys' and girls' inclination toward certain behaviors is crucial. If we could curtail our young boys' and girls' substance misuse, we could significantly lower domestic violence. The social fabric has been damaged, and normal human connections have been disrupted by this evil habit. Hopefully, we can effectively curtail domestic abuse.

Conclusion

Domestic violence is a very serious issue. Drug abuse and addiction are very common factors related to domestic violence. Cases related to both of these are seen daily in India too. Both women and men need to be aware. One can join training programs to learn how to live their lives peacefully. The skills of mindfulness and resilience can give the power to fight these problems. Ultimately, appropriate steps need to be taken to stop domestic violence.

References

- [1] Abdo, C., Miranda, E. P., Santos, C. S., de Bessa Júnior, J., & Bernardo, W. M. (2020). Domestic violence and substance abuse during COVID19: A systematic review. *Indian journal of psychiatry*, 62(Suppl 3), S337-S342 https://doi.org/10.4103/psychiatry.indianjpsychiatry_1049_20
- [2] Bennett, L., & O'Brien, P. (2007). Effects of coordinated services for drug-abusing women who are victims of intimate partner violence. *Violence against women*, 13(4), 395-411. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801207299189>
- [3] Bhatt, R. V. (1998). Domestic violence and substance abuse. *International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics*, 63, S25-S31. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0020-7292\(98\)00181-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0020-7292(98)00181-7)
- [4] Bhattacharya, A., Basu, M., Das, P., Sarker, A. P., Das, P. K., & Roy, B. (2014). Domestic violence: a hidden and deeply rooted health issue in India. *South East Asia Journal of Public Health*, 3(1), 17-23. <https://doi.org/10.3329/seajph.v3i1.17706>
- [5] Corvo, K., & Carpenter, E. H. (2000). Effects of parental substance abuse on current levels of domestic violence: A possible elaboration of intergenerational transmission processes. *Journal of family violence*, 15, 123-135 <https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1007557626788>
- [6] *Domestic violence and women's health in India: Insights from NFHS-4* (n.d.) or [orfonline.org](https://www.orfonline.org). retrieved 23 May, 2024 from <https://www.orfonline.org/research/domestic-violence-and-women-s-health-in-india-insights-from-nfhs-4>.
- [7] Dutta, N., Rishi, M., Roy, S., & Umashankar, V. (2016). Risk factors for domestic violence—an empirical analysis for Indian states. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 241-259. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jda.2016.0099>

- [8]Easton, C. J., Mandel, D. L., Hunkele, K. A., Nich, C., Rounsaville, B. J., & Carroll, K. M. (2007). A cognitive behavioral therapy for alcohol-dependent domestic violence offenders: an Integrated Substance Abuse–Domestic Violence Treatment Approach (SADV). *The American Journal on Addictions*, 16(1), 24-31 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10550490601077809>
- [9]El-Bassel, N., Gilbert, L., Wu, E., Go, H., & Hill, J. (2005). Relationship between drug abuse and intimate partner violence: a longitudinal study among women receiving methadone. *American journal of public health*, 95(3), 465-470. <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2003.023200>
- [10]Farris, C. A., & Fenaughty, A. M. (2002). Social isolation and domestic violence among female drug users. *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 28(2), 339-351 <https://doi.org/10.1081/ada-120002977>
- [11]Gadd, D., Henderson, J., Radcliffe, P., Stephens-Lewis, D., Johnson, A., & Gilchrist, G. (2019). The dynamics of domestic abuse and drug and alcohol dependency. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 59(5), 1035-1053 <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azz011>
- [12]James, S. E., Johnson, J., & Raghavan, C. (2004). "I couldn't go anywhere" contextualizing violence and drug abuse: A social network study. *Violence against women*, 10(9), 991-1014 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801204267377>
- [13]Kaur, S., Patidar, A. B., Meenakshi, Sharma, S., & Navneet. (2014). Domestic violence and its contributory factors among married women in selected slums of Ludhiana, Punjab. *Nursing & Midwifery Research Journal*, 10(1), 30-35. <https://doi.org/10.33698/nrf0169>
- [14]Kumar S. *India has widespread drug problem, report says*. *BMJ*. 2004 Jul 3;329(7456):14 <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.329.7456.14-h>
- [15]Kyriacou, D. N., Anglin, D., Taliaferro, E., Stone, S., Tubb, T., Linden, J. A., ... & Kraus, J. F. (2017). Risk factors for injury to women from domestic violence. In *Domestic Violence* (pp. 145-151). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315264905-10>
- [16]Najavits, L. M., Sonn, J., Walsh, M., & Weiss, R. D. (2004). Domestic violence in women with PTSD and substance abuse. *Addictive Behaviors*, 29(4), 707-715 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.addbeh.2004.01.003>
- [17]O'Farrell, T. J., & Murphy, C. M. (2004). Behavioral couples therapy for alcoholism and drug abuse: Encountering the problem of domestic violence. In *The violence and addiction equation* (pp. 291-301). Routledge <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203306895-22>
- [18]Parmar A, Narasimha VL, Nath S. National Drug Laws, Policies, and Programs in India: A Narrative Review. *Indian J Psychol Med*. 2024 Jan;46(1):5-13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02537176231170534>
- [19]Sarkar, S., Patra, B. N., & Kattimani, S. (2016). Substance use disorder and the family: An Indian perspective. *Medical Journal of Dr. DY Patil University*, 9(1), 7-14. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0975-2870.172413>
- [20]Smith, W. B., & Weisner, C. (2000). Women and alcohol problems: a critical analysis of the literature and unanswered questions. *ALCOHOLISM-NEW YORK THEN BALTIMORE-*, 24(8), 1320-1321 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1530-0277.2000.tb02098.x>
- [21]Standard, B. (2023b) *Nearly 30% of married Indian women face domestic violence, shows data*, *Business Standard*. Retrieved 23 May, 2024, from https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/nearly-30-of-married-indian-women-face-domestic-violence-shows-data-123051400486_1.html
- [22]Stanley, S. (2012). Intimate partner violence and domestic violence myths: A comparison of women with and without alcoholic husbands (A study from India). *Journal of comparative family studies*, 43(5), 647-672. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jcfs.43.5.647>
- [23]Stuart, G. L., Temple, J. R., Follansbee, K. W., Bucossi, M. M., Hellmuth, J. C., & Moore, T. M. (2008). The role of drug use in a conceptual model of intimate partner violence in men and women arrested for domestic violence. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 22(1), 12 <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-164x.22.1.12>
- [24]Subodh, N. B., Grover, S., Grewal, M., Grewal, S., Basu, D., & Mattoo, S. K. (2014). Interpersonal violence against wives by substance dependent men. *Drug and alcohol dependence*, 138, 124-129. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2014.02.017>
- [25]Thomas, M. D., & Bennett, L. (2009). The co-occurrence of substance abuse and domestic violence: A comparison of dual-problem men in substance abuse treatment and in a court-ordered batterer program. *Journal of Social Work Practice in the Addictions*, 9(3), 299-317 <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332560903084457>
- [26]Vidushy, V., & Sethi, G. (2016). Domestic violence in India-An analysis. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 2(8), 461-465. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199489954.003.0002>