The Cultural and Societal Factors Contributing to Domestic Violence in Asia

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ABSTRACT

Domestic violence is a significant issue in a number of Asian nations, with deep cultural and societal roots. This literature-based research article focuses on the intersection of cultural and societal factors that contribute to domestic violence in Asia. The paper identifies significant cultural factors, including patriarchal values and beliefs, traditional practises, and religious beliefs, that support and reinforce domestic violence in Asian societies. In addition, the report examines the societal factors, such as poverty, lack of education, and inadequate laws and policies, that contribute to domestic violence in these nations. Additionally, the paper examines the effects of globalisation and modernization on domestic violence in Asia. The paper concludes with a summary of the major cultural and societal factors that contribute to domestic violence in Asia, as well as their intersectional effects. The implications of these factors for addressing and preventing domestic violence in Asian nations are also discussed. The paper concludes with suggestions for future research and interventions aimed at addressing cultural and societal factors that contribute to domestic violence in Asia.

Keywords: Domestic violence; Asia, cultural factors; societal factors; intersectionality.

INTRODUCTION

In many regions of the world, including Asia, domestic violence is a pervasive problem that needs to be addressed. According to the United Nations (UN), more than thirty percent of women in Asia have, at some point in their lives, been the victims of physical or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner (UN Women, 2020). Even though there are several different factors that contribute to the problem of domestic violence, both cultural and societal factors play a significant role in the perpetuation of this type of violence (Anthony & Essien, 2018). As a result, it is absolutely necessary to gain an understanding of these factors in order to address and prevent domestic violence in countries located in Asia.

In Asian countries, patriarchy, hierarchy, collectivism, religion, traditional practises, poverty, a lack of education, inadequate laws and policies, and globalisation are some of the cultural and societal factors that contribute to domestic violence. In many Asian cultures, the concept of patriarchy, which is characterised by male superiority and authority over females, is deeply ingrained (Chen et al., 2020). Another cultural value in Asia is hierarchy, which serves to perpetuate power imbalances and encourages the use of violence as a form of control (Joshi et al., 2019). In addition to contributing to the normalisation of domestic violence and discouraging victims from seeking assistance, collectivism, which places an emphasis on the significance of the family and the community, may discourage victims from seeking assistance (Kaur et al., 2020). The perpetuation of harmful gender norms and practises is another way in which religion and traditional practises, such as honour killings, dowry systems, and female genital mutilation, contribute to the problem of domestic violence (Joshi et al., 2019). In addition, domestic violence can flourish in societies that are economically disadvantaged, have low levels of educational attainment, and have laws and policies that are inadequate (UN Women, 2020). Last but not least, globalisation and modernization have brought about shifts in gender norms and economic opportunities, which may pose a threat to long-established gender roles and play a role in an increase in domestic violence (Joshi et al., 2019).

CULTURAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN ASIA

Cultural factors have been identified as major contributors to the problem of domestic violence in Asian societies, which is a pervasive issue in these societies. Several aspects of culture, including patriarchy, hierarchy, collectivism, and traditional practises, have been identified as potential contributors to domestic violence (Mahapatra & Gupta, 2019; Rahman, 2019).

Patriarchy is a cultural value that places men in power and authority over women. This leads to an unequal power dynamic between the sexes, which is pervasive in many Asian societies. Patriarchy is prevalent in many Asian societies (Raj & Soren, 2018; Sivakami et al., 2019). Women are typically expected to be obedient, subservient, and responsible for household chores and childcare. In contrast, men are typically viewed as their families' sole breadwinners and protectors. Women are expected to be responsible for household chores and childcare (Sugathan & Soman, 2019; Yeasmin et al., 2020). This imbalance of power can lead to the use of physical force to exert control over women. (Yeasmin et al., 2020).

Another cultural value prevalent in Asian societies is hierarchy, which has been linked to an increased risk of domestic violence. Members of higher social status, such as men and older family members, are typically accorded greater authority and respect than members of lower social status. This can lead to a sense of entitlement and justification for resorting to violence to maintain power and control over others. Members of lower

social status are typically accorded less authority and respect than members of higher social status (Uddin & Islam, 2019; Yeasmin et al., 2020).

One more factor that may play a role in the prevalence of domestic violence in Asian societies is collectivism. This cultural value places a greater emphasis on the requirements of the community and family over those of the individual, and honour and reputation within the family are highly valued in collectivist societies (Sugathan & Soman, 2019; Yeasmin et al., 2020). As a direct consequence of this, instances of domestic violence in Asian societies frequently go unreported, thus ensuring that the cycle of abuse continues (Umotong & Dennis, 2018; Joshi et al., 2019; Ignatius et al., 2022). It is also possible that traditional practises and beliefs regarding gender roles, such as the expectation that women should be subservient to men and behave respectfully towards them, contribute to the problem of domestic violence in Asian societies. For instance, one study in India concluded that women who questioned conventionally accepted gender roles were likelier to be domestic violence victims (Nayak, 2018).

Additionally, religious beliefs contribute to the problem of domestic violence in Asian societies. In some traditionalist societies, religion is used to justify domestic violence, with men citing religious texts to support their abusive behaviour towards women. This phenomenon is more prevalent in societies that value tradition over change (Kaur et al., 2020). In addition, there are situations in which women may feel they have no choice but to remain in violent relationships because religious teachings encourage the idea that wives should be submissive and obedient to their husbands (Chen et al., 2020).

The social shame associated with divorce and the pressure placed on women to remain in violent relationships are two other aspects of Asian culture that contribute to the problem of domestic violence. In many Asian societies, divorce is looked down upon and can bring shame to both the divorcing woman and her family (Nayak, 2018). Suppose a woman decides to leave an abusive partner. In that case, she may find herself in a position where she is socially isolated, in a difficult financial situation, and subject to discrimination, all of which can make it challenging to begin a new life.

It is essential to remember that the issue of domestic violence is not restricted to Asian societies; rather, it is pervasive across all communities and cultures. In order to address the cultural factors that contribute to domestic violence in Asia, however, it is necessary to have a nuanced understanding of the various cultural and social contexts in which violent acts occur. It is possible to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence in Asian societies if gender equality is promoted, traditional gender roles are challenged, and awareness about the effects of domestic violence is raised among the general population (Kaur et al., 2020).

SOCIETAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN ASIA

In Asian societies, domestic violence is caused by a combination of cultural, structural, and systemic factors. Cultural factors are one factor, while structural and systemic factors are the other two. Poverty and a lack of education are two significant societal factors that have been linked to domestic violence in Asian countries. There is a correlation between women's economic dependence on their partners and an increased risk of experiencing domestic violence (Kaur et al., 2020). In addition, the normalisation and acceptance of abusive relationships within the home may be facilitated by a lack of education and awareness regarding the rights of women and the importance of gender equality (Joshi et al., 2019).

Inadequate legal frameworks and social policies also play a role in the perpetuation of domestic violence in Asian countries. Even though there are laws against

domestic violence in many Asian countries, these laws are frequently not effectively enforced, and there are few viable options for victims (Chen et al., 2020). Women may be dissuaded from seeking legal remedies for domestic violence not only by societal norms but also by the stigma associated with doing so (Kaur et al., 2020).

Significant changes have been brought about in Asian societies as a result of globalisation and modernization, including shifts in gender roles and opportunities for economic advancement. Despite the fact that these shifts have resulted in greater autonomy and opportunities for women, they have also led to challenges and disagreements within families and communities. Men who are unable to fulfil traditional roles, such as providing for their families, may experience feelings of emasculation and may turn to violence as a means to reassert their power and control (Chen et al., 2020).

In addition, globalisation has brought about the movement of people across international borders, which in turn has led to the formation of transnational families. Due to the fact that cultural and linguistic differences can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts, this can cause additional stress and tension within families (Joshi et al., 2019).

THE INTERSECTION OF CULTURAL AND SOCIETAL FACTORS IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

In Asia, the cultural and societal factors that contribute to domestic violence are not mutually exclusive; rather, they intersect with one another and reinforce one another's effects. For instance, patriarchal values and beliefs are deeply ingrained in many Asian cultures and contribute to the normalisation of domestic violence. This is because many Asian cultures view violence against women as a sign of weakness. However, these beliefs are also supported by systemic factors such as inadequate laws and policies, which fail to provide legal remedies for victims of domestic violence. These beliefs are also supported by systemic factors (Kaur et al., 2020).

In a similar vein, the presence of traditional beliefs and practises, when combined with low income and a lack of education, may increase an individual's risk of being a victim of domestic violence. If a woman does not have access to education or economic opportunities, her options for leaving an abusive relationship may be limited. This is especially true if her community stigmatises her or she does not have the support of her social network (Joshi et al., 2019).

In addition, the dismantling of patriarchal beliefs and values has not necessarily been brought about by the processes of modernization and globalisation. In fact, several studies have discovered that the economic independence of women has resulted in increased levels of conflict within households as well as increased levels of violence committed by male partners (Chen et al., 2020).

When developing interventions and policies to address domestic violence in Asia, it is important to recognise these intersections as points of intersection between different issues. In order to be successful, strategies need to take into account not only societal but also cultural factors, as well as the complex interactions that exist between the two.

CONCLUSIONS

In many Asian countries, domestic violence is a pervasive problem that has its roots deeply embedded in the cultures and societies of those countries. There are many factors that contribute to the high rate of domestic violence in Asia, including patriarchal values and beliefs, traditional practises, poverty, a lack of education, and inadequate laws and policies. The interaction of these factors exacerbates the problem of domestic violence and makes it more challenging for victims to get the assistance and support they need. In order to effectively prevent and treat domestic violence in Asian countries, it is essential to address the cultural and societal factors that contribute to the problem.

The complexity of these factors and the ways in which they interact with one another should be the focus of research that will be done in the future. The interventions should be tailored to address the specific cultural and societal contexts of each country, and they should involve a multi-sectoral approach that involves community leaders, educators, healthcare providers, and law enforcement agencies. Moreover, the context of each country should be taken into consideration when designing the interventions.

In general, addressing the cultural and societal factors that contribute to domestic violence in Asia requires adopting an approach that is both comprehensive and intersectional. This is because of the complicated interactions that can arise between the various factors. It is possible to create a society that is safer and more equitable for everyone if we collaborate to address the factors listed here.

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