Domestic Violence on Married Women in India: A Multidimensional Analysis

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Abstract

Present study explores the breadth and depth of domestic violence on married women in India in a multidimensional framework among different religious communities and social castes. It also analyses the factors responsible for multidimensional domestic violence on married women. It is based on the nationally representative NFHS unit level data of the latest two rounds. Alkire -Foster methodology is used to measure multidimensional domestic violence and an ordered logistic regression has been performed to analyse the factors influencing domestic violence. Multidimensional domestic violence as well as the degree of domestic violence on married women has reduced considerably irrespective of religion and social castes in India during 2005-06 to 2015-16. But still in 2015-16, 39.51 million women were found to be the victims of multidimensional domestic violence which is one-third of the married women. The victims mostly suffered from physical violence. The percentage share of victims was higher among Hindu community than that of Muslim community as well as among Scheduled Caste compared to other social castes. Women belonging to lower strata of social caste, lower wealth class and those experiencing higher marital control are more subjected to domestic violence. Increase in the education level of the couple can reduce domestic violence. Thus, the government should take initiative to enhance the economic status of the women to overcome the problem of domestic violence.

Keywords: married women, domestic violence, multidimensional violence, India

1. Introduction

The situation of domestic violence is alarming and that can be understood from the fact that one third of the women are victim of domestic violence (IIPS and ICF 2017). Unfortunately, the married women have been subject to these types of ill practices and inhumane acts by their partners since time immemorial. They have adapted themselves to these inhumane acts and hardly expresses it in front of others may be due to the reason that they are ashamed of sharing those humiliating acts or they don't have enough courage to express it due to their fear from their in-laws. The most disturbing thing is that their contribution to the society is not recognized. It is an unhidden fact that women without any expectation from the opposite side and even after facing so much of social obstacles, gives tremendous effort for the upliftment of the society as like taking care of the family members, doing all household chores and most importantly upbringing their siblings who are the real asset of the nation having the potential to change the world. But in spite of these efforts, truly speaking, most of them in return are humiliated, suppressed, avoided, discriminated and exploited in every walk of life and most importantly they are supposed to remain silent regarding such treatment

which they get. If we consider violence or crimes against women, it is the most deadly and distressing act not only for that victim woman but for the society as a whole because it generates dread of insecurity which creates mental agitation and further isolates women from the mainstream economy and society. Further, if we consider domestic violence in particular, it is the most horrific act and unfortunately is a universal phenomenon which hardly depends on whether a country is rich or poor. It becomes more noxious and serious because here the women are surrounded by the offenders whom they trust the most (i.e., their partner) and it happens in the place (i.e., home) which is considered as the safest environment.

Relating to the current scenario where COVID-19 pandemic emerged as a global health crisis, gender related issues have mounted and the most serious among them is domestic violence. In line to this, the National Commission of Women in India has reported that during the COVID-19 lockdown they received large number of complaints of domestic violence. However, activists strongly believed that these cases may only be the tip of the iceberg because the "women need to be at ease to make call for help" (Velankar, 2020). In this regard, Ghebreyesus (2020) has also pointed out the rise in the cases of domestic violence during COVID-19 lockdown and asked countries to include any service which will eliminate violence as an essential service which should continue during this phase. He further continues "there is never any excuse for violence". At this crisis period, women having no financial security and those who are dependent on their partners are found to be subject to more abuse and thus unwillingly stand in a platform where their voice is not heard. Women belonging to the low-income household are worse hit as their partners lack mental peace and are frustrated due to joblessness, lack of money, uncertainty, fear, forced quarantine etc. The situation gets worse as these women are confined to their home and fail to get in touch with the police or other service providers.

It has been realised that domestic violence not only violates the basic human rights but it leads to health burden, intergenerational effects and demographic consequences (United Nations, 1997; Heise et al., 1999; Jewkes, 2002; Campbell, 2002; Kishor and Johnson, 2004; 2006).Nearly 50 percent of the women have experienced any sort of violence in their married life and the situation is quite severe (Ahuja et al.,2000).Domestic violence is found to be inversely related to women's height, age and education whereas it is directly related to the total number of children.It was found to have a negative impact on physical and mental health and the symptoms of mental illness increases with the severity of the violence (Giuli et al. 2016; Riedl et.al., 2019).Further, even higher categories of job do not protect women in India from spousal violence rather standard of living and husband's comparatively better job are found to reduce it (Biswas, 2017).Domestic violencecurtails women's autonomy as the women avoid the pain and humiliation of being beaten (Eswaran and Malhotra, 2011).It is considered as an essential issue to assess women empowerment whereas education, employment, changes in social structure are the crucial factors to enhance women empowerment (Shettar, 2015; Panda, 2017; Lenze et al.,2016).It was revealed that although the incidence of domestic violence has decreased but its intensity has increased (Rolle et al., 2018).Kerala and West Bengal even after being socially and economically developed states reported rising incidence of domestic violence and Protection of Women from Domestic Violence and Act, 2005 (PWDVA)fails to curb this issue (Ghosh & Choudhuri, 2011).It was found that among the total crimes under Indian Penal Code(IPC) crimes against women in 2018, majority of them were registered under cruelty by husband or his relatives which constitute to be 31.9 per cent followed by assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty, kidnapping and abduction of women and rape (NCRB, 2018).All sorts of domestic violence are rooted from the exercise of patriarchal power and the significant aspect responsible for this is the domestic labour which is hard to be broken by laws as the judicial system can't break into the dominion of the patriarchal family (EPW Engage, 2020).

It's a fact that numerous measures and attempts are taken to empower women throughout the world.A good number of institutions from local level to state level, from national level to global level are working on this issue and no doubt there is an improvement in the status of women.The government of India has in fact passed an act to curb domestic violence named PWDVA which is a comprehensive legislation to protect women in India from all forms of domestic violence.Several other measures have also been taken in India to control domestic violence and empower the women (MoWCD, 2019). NGOs like Sakshi, Snehalaya, Azad Foundation, CREA, Vimochana, Janodaya, Women's Rights Initiatives, Human Rights Law Network, Lawyers Collectives are some of the organisations who are working in a full-fledged way to ensure the safety of the women victims of the domestic violence and abuse and also to empower them (Narwadkar, 2011).In spite of these measures taken by the government and non-government organisations, the miseries of the women still persist.The main reason behind this sluggish success is that we are failing to reach to the root of the problem. Domestic Violence is a multifaceted phenomenon where most of the women experience different types of violence like emotional, physical, and sexual violence in some part of their life. To identify the intensity and severity of the issue, it must be captured considering all the forms of violence simultaneously. But, to the best of our knowledge no studies were found which addressed this issue from a multidimensional point of view. Thus, the present study is innovative and first of its kind as it analyses the breadth and depth of domestic violence in India incorporating different aspects of it in a multidimensional framework. In addition, as domestic violence is a social evil therefore, we have also tried to figure out the variation in it due to change in social factors specifically religion and social castes. The present study makes a comparative assessment of domestic violence among different religious communities and social castes during 2004-05 to 2015-16 in India. It also analyses the factors which cause variation in the status of married women in terms of domestic violence in India. This analysis will definitely prove to be very helpful to get acquainted with the pathetic situation which the Indian women are facing till date of which some incidents came out in public during the recent times in India. It will also be helpful for the policy makers as well as the institutions dealing with the rights of the women.

The study follows the aforementioned sequence: Section 2 deals with the methodology required to fulfil the above-mentioned objectives. It is followed by section 3 where we have presented the results with discussions regarding the status of women in terms of multidimensional domestic violence. Finally, in Section 4 we have concluded the study by highlighting the most serious issues and pointed out the areas where policies are to be taken at the earliest to combat this deadly social evil.

2. Methodology

2.1 Data

To realise the above stated objectives, we have taken into consideration the unit level data of the latest Rounds of National Family Health Survey (NFHS) in India -3rd Round (2005-06) and 4th Round (2015-16) which is a nationally representative survey.The data was extracted from the Individual record sheet and we have used the national domesticweightage as the multiplier to estimate all India figure. After eliminating the outlier from the data relating to the married women of the age group 15-49, the sample sizes become 69,484 in 2005-06 and 66,013 in 2015-16 which is consideredto analyse the status of the victims of domestic violence.

2.2 Dimensions of Violence

Domestic violence is defined as the act of physical, sexual and emotional violence experienced by the women from her current or intimate partner irrespective of whether he is cohabiting or not (WHO, 2005).In order to address the status of women regarding domestic violence basically by spouse[16] based on considering the above definition, we have considered three broad dimensions namely, emotional violence, physical violence and sexual violence.These dimensions are discussed as follows:

Emotional violence: To measure emotional violence three sets of questions were used in NFHS. (Does/did) your (last) husband ever: a) Say or do something to humiliate you in front of others? b)Threaten to hurt or harm you or someone close to you? c)Insult you or make you feel bad about yourself?

Physical violence: To measure physical violence seven set of questions were used in NFHS. (Does/did) your (last) husband ever do any of the following things to you: a) Slap you? b) Twist your arm or pull your hair? c) Push you, shake you, or throw something at you? d) Punch you with his fist or with something that could hurt you? e) Kick you, drag you or beat you up? f) Try to choke you or burn you on purpose? g)Threaten or attack you with a knife, gun, or any other weapon?

Sexual Violence: To measure sexual violence which is the third dimension two set of questions were used in NFHS. (Does/did) your (last) husband ever do any of the following things to you: a) Physically force you to have sexual intercourse with him even when you did not want to? b) Force you to perform any sexual acts you did not want to?

2.3 Measurement of Multidimensional Domestic Violence

NFHS published data provides information on a particular form of domestic violence but it fails to identify whether a woman is experiencing all forms of violence or is experiencing only a single or two forms of violence at a time. Together with that it also fails to execute the intensity of the issue.In order to address this short comes; we have used the Alkire-Foster (2009) methodology which helps us to measure domestic violence on married women in India from a multidimensional perspective.This methodology involves the following steps:

Domestic violence matrix: We obtain a domestic violence matrix or deprivation matrix D^0 such that

$D^0_{ij} = 1$, when the woman has experienced any form of violence in each dimension

$= 0$, otherwise

for all i =1,.......n (number of women) and j= 1,2,3(number of dimension)

*Weights and deprivation score:*A vector $w_j = (w_1, w_2 \& w_3)$ of weights is used to indicate the relative importance of deprivation in each dimension. Equal weights were assigned to each dimension i.e., each dimension is assigned one-third weightage.

The deprivation value attached to dimension j is denoted by $w_j > 0$, where $\sum w_j = 100$.

To identify the victim of multidimensional domestic violence, the deprivation scores for each woman are summed to obtain the total deprivation, C.The deprivation score of i-th woman is given by

$$C_i = \sum_{j=1}^{3} w_j D^0_{ij}$$

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[16]83 per cent of the women experienced physical or sexual violence by their husband alone (MoHFW, 2015-16).

Higher the C_i, greater the deprivations of a woman and vice-versa.

*Deprivation cut-off and status of domestic violence:*A cut-off of 33.3 percent, which is the equivalent of one-third of the weighted deprivation score,is used to distinguish between the victims and non-victims of domestic violence.Women having deprivation score (C) 0 is being treated as *non-victim*,women having C greater than 0 but less than equal to 33.3is considered to be a *mild victim* of domestic violence.Women having C greater than 33.33 but less than equal to 66.66are considered as *moderate victim* of domestic violence whereas women with C greater than 66.66 but less than equal to 100 are considered as *severe victim* of domestic violence (these threshold levels were also used by a number of studies to classify the people in different categories of deprivations, e.g., Alkire & Seth, 2013; Wang et al., 2016; UNDP, 2019).

*Domestic violence ratio (DVR):*It is basically the proportion of women who are the victims of violence in at least one dimension.That is,

$$DVR = \frac{q}{n}$$

where 'q' is the number of women who are the victims of domestic violence (i.e., C > 0) and 'n' is the total women population.

*Intensity of domestic violence (I):*It is basically the average deprivation score of multidimensional victims of domestic violence.Here, the deprivation scores of the victims of multidimensional domestic violence (with $C_i \geq 33.33$ per cent) are summed and divided by their number.That is,

$$I = \frac{1}{q}\sum_{i=1}^{q} C_i(k)$$

where $C_i(k)$ is the total weighted deprivation experienced by the victims of domestic violence.

*Multidimensional domestic violence index (MDVI):*MDVI is the product of domestic violence ratio and intensity of domestic violence.That is

$$MDVI = DVR \times I$$

*Decomposition of MDVI:*The MDVI is decomposed by its component dimensions (j).At first, the censored domestic violence ratio of each dimensionis identified.A censored domestic violence ratio (CH) is defined as the ratio of number of multidimensionally deprived women (i.e., victims of domestic violence) in a given dimension to totalwomen.The contribution of deprivation of a particular dimension 'j' is computed as:

$$\text{Contribution of dimension j} = \frac{w_j * CH_j}{MDVI} \times 100$$

2.4 The Ordered Logit Model

The status of domestic violence on married women has been classified into four categories, viz. non-victim, mild victim, moderate victim and severe victim on the basis of multidimensional deprivation scores which are coded as 0, 1, 2, 3 respectively. The ordered logistic regression is being used to analyse the status of domestic violence because the dependent variable (here the status of domestic violence)is in ordered categories (Cameron and Trivedi, 2010).For individual *'i'*with time 't'the model is specified as follows:

$$y_{it} = x_{it}'\beta + u_{it}$$

Wherei = number of women (69,484 in 2005-06 and 66,013 in 2015-16), t = 2 (2005-06 and 2015-16), x is the matrix of regressors, β is the vector of coefficients and u is the vector of error.

The degree of domestic violence varies from one woman to another and the factors hypothesised for variations of domestic violence on married women are grouped into three categories specifically, cultural, social and economic factors.

Cultural Factor is specified as the level of education of the woman (WEDU) as well as of her partner (PEDU).With the attainment of educational qualification, the individual undergoes cultural development which helps them to be kind to people and hence leads to reduction in domestic violence.

Marital control by partner (MCP) is also considered as an important factor.It takes the value 1, if the woman is exposed to marital control by partner else 0.A woman experiences marital control by her partner if the partner is jealous when she talks with other men, accuses for her unfaithfulness, does not permit her to meet female friends and family members, insists on knowing where she is and doesn't trust her with money.If she experiences any of the marital control by her partner then she is highly expected to get exposed to domestic violence.

Social factorsare specified by caste and religion of the women.Caste is specified by three dummy variables as there are four categories i.e., SC, ST, OBC and Other.For SC, it is taking the value 1 if the woman belongs to SC and 0 if otherwise.For ST, it is taking the value 1 if the woman belongs to ST else 0.For OBC, it takes the value 1 if the woman belongs to OBC else 0.Women belonging to the lower strataof the caste (i.e., SC, ST and OBC) have least access to physical capital and different dynamics of development awareness leading to poor living conditions and unemployment and are thus highly expected to experience domestic violence.

Religion is specified by two dummy variables as we have categorised religions in three groups, Hindu, Muslim and others.For Hindu, it is taking the value 1, if the woman belongs to Hindu community otherwise 0.For Muslim, it is taking the value 1, if the woman belongs to Muslim community otherwise 0.Due to social orthodox not only Muslim women but also Hindu women are clutched in a number of restrictions and thus they are highly expected to experience domestic violence.

Economic Factoris specified by the wealth status[17] of the family which is specified by a dummy variable.A woman belonging to a lower wealth (LW) class family is taking the value 1 or else 0.Belonging to a lower wealth class leads a family to get exposed to financial crisis and may have to face social exclusion which in turn makes the male members violent and the woman exposed to domestic violence.

Finally, a time dummy is used because we have pooled the cross-section observations for two years which takes the value 0 for the year 2005-06 and value 1 for the year 2015-16.It helps us to observe whether there is any significant improvement in the status of domestic violence on married women.

The summary statistics of the variables that determined the status of multidimensional domestic violence on married women are presented in Table 1.

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[17]See the calculation of the wealth index from NFHS 3 (2005-06)Report (p.43) http://rchiips.org/NFHS/NFHS-3%20Data/VOL-1/India_volume_I_corrected_17oct08.pdf

Table 1 Notations, Specification and Descriptive Statistics of Variables used in the Ordered Logistic Regression Model

Notation	Specification	Year	Mean	SD
Dependent Variable				
DV	Degree of Multidimensional Domestic Violence (it takes the value '0' for non-victims, '1' for mild victims, '2' for moderate victims and '3' for severe victims)			
Independent Variables				
TD	Time Dummy, 1 for 2015-16, 0 for 2005-06	2005-06	0	0
		2015-16	1	0
WEDU	Years of education of the woman	2005-06	5.20	5.18
		2015-16	5.96	5.20
PEDU	Years of education of partner	2005-06	7.82	10.02
		2015-16	7.97	7.10
HINDU	Hindu Woman, Yes=1, No=0	2005-06	0.74	0.44
		2015-16	0.75	0.43
MUSLIM	Muslim Woman, Yes=1, No=0	2005-06	0.12	0.33
		2015-16	0.13	0.34
SC	Whether Woman belongs to SC category? Yes=1, No=0	2005-06	0.17	0.38
		2015-16	0.18	0.38
ST	Whether Woman belongs to ST category? Yes=1, No=0	2005-06	0.13	0.34
		2015-16	0.18	0.39
OBC	Whether Woman belongs to OBC category? Yes=1, No=0	2005-06	0.32	0.47
		2015-16	0.39	0.49
LW	Whether woman belong to Low Wealth class family? Yes=1, No=0	2005-06	0.30	0.46
		2015-16	0.41	0.49
MCP	Does husband impose marital control? Yes=1, No=0	2005-06	0.40	0.49
		2015-16	0.48	0.50

Source: Author's Calculation from Unit Level data of NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 (2015-16)

3. Results

3.1 Domestic Violence on Married Women in India

Present section addresses the different forms of domestic violence that is experienced by married women belonging to the 15 to 49 age groupby her spouse in India.It also explores the variation in domestic violence among two religions (Hindu and Muslim)[18]and across social castes (SC, ST, OBC and General)[19](Table 2).It helps us to realise more vulnerable religion and social caste in respect of domestic violence

In India, every third married woman since age 15 years is exposed to various forms of domestic violence (MOHFW, 2015-16).It can be observed from the analysis that among three forms of domestic violence, the victims of physical violence were the highest followed by emotional and sexual violence in both the years 2005-06 and 2015-16.The stunning fact is that the percentage of women who had ever experienced physical violence was as high as 29.8 percent in 2015-16 which accounts to be 38 million even after a reduction of5.4

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[18] These two religions constitute 94 per cent of the population of India.
[19]SC = Scheduled Castes; ST = Scheduled Tribes; OBC = Other Backward Castes and General includes 'others' in NFHS data.

percentage points over a decade.Together with that 13.8 per cent of the women were the victim of emotional violence which happened to be 17.6 million in 2015-16. Whereas 8.4million women in India which constitute to be 6.6 per cent of the married women experienced sexual violence in-spite of the activities of NGOs and Government organisations. Variation in the percentage share of victims of domestic violence in 2015-16 across religionsrevealedthat the victims of physical violence were relatively more in the Hindu community as compared to the Muslim community as the percentage was 30.5 per cent and 27.1 per cent respectively while a decade ago the reverse situation prevailed -35 percent of the Hindu women as compared to 38.3 percent of the Muslim women were the victimsof this form of violence.At the same time, the shares of victims of emotional and sexual violence were more or less same in both these religious communities.Over the decade, the reduction in the share of victim of sexual violence was highest in the Muslim community, i.e., by 7.1 percentage points as compared to 3.1 percentage points in the Hindu community.Thus, the victims of all forms of domestic violence were higher in the Hindu community in comparison to the Muslim community in 2015-16but a decade ago the share of victims in all forms of violence was higher in the Muslim community than in the Hindu community.

Variation in the share of victims of various forms ofviolence across social caste reveals the fact that a relatively lesser percentage share of women belonging to the General caste were the victims of all these three forms of violence.In contrast, among the women belonging to the SC,the percentage share of the victims was the maximum.For SC, 37.1 percent of women were the victims of physical violence in 2015-16whereas a decade ago the share was as high as 43.5percent in 2005-06.Over the decade, women belonging to the ST managed to reduce the percentage share of victims considerably but still the percentage share of victims remained higher than among OBC and General castein 2015-16.To elaborate, among the ST there was a reduction in the percentage share of victims of physical violence by 9.2 percentage points which finally stood at 32.7 percent in 2015-16.In case of emotional violence too, the highest reduction of 5.4 percentage points was observed in this caste while in other castes the reduction in the percentage share was by less than three percentage points only and the least reduction was observed in the OBC category.Thus, we can say that the victims of these forms of violence were higher in the lower strata of social caste.

Table 2Percentage Share of Victims of Domestic Violence by Religion and Social Caste in India, 2005-06 and 2015-16

	Emotional Violence		Physical Violence		Sexual Violence	
	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16
Religion						
Hindu	16.0	14.0	35.0	30.5	9.8	6.7
Muslim	15.9	14.1	38.3	27.1	13.5	6.4
Christian	13.9	14.0	30.3	28.8	5.8	6.0
Others	14.5	7.2	28.1	17.9	4.9	4.4
Social Caste						
SC	19.1	17.3	43.5	37.1	12.9	8.6
ST	21.0	15.6	41.9	32.7	11.5	8.8
OBC	15.8	14.1	36.1	30.8	8.7	6.4
General	12.7	10.3	27.1	21.8	9.1	4.9
India	*15.9*	*13.8*	*35.2*	*29.8*	*10.1*	*6.6*

Source: NFHS data of the 3rd (2005-06) and 4th (2015-16) rounds, http://rchiips.org/nfhs/

3.2 Multidimensional Domestic Violence on Married Women in India

Multidimensional domestic violence on women in terms of domestic violence ratio (DVR), intensity of domestic violence (I) and multidimensional domestic violence index (MDVI) across religions and social castes in India based on NFHS unit level data are presented in Table 3.Comparative analyses of the multidimensional domestic violence among social castes and religions over time are made which reveals that in India the DVR was 30.9 percent implying that 30.9 percent which accounts to be 39.51 million womenin India were the victims of domestic violence in at least one dimension having the intensity of domestic violence to be 50.3 per cent and the MDVI was 0.16 in 2015-16.While a decade ago the DVR was 39.8 per cent, intensity was 51.1 per cent whereas the MDVI was 0.2.

Across religion, the DVR was found to be higher in the Hindu community which stood at 32.2percent even after a reduction of 8 percentage points over the decade in 2015-16. At the same time, for Muslim community, the DVR stood at 27.9percentin 2015-16 which happened to be 43.1 per cent in 2005-06 leading toa reduction of 15 percentage points.The Muslim community has experienced a greater reductionin DVR in comparison to the Hindu community over the decade. The intensity of domestic violence was as high as 50.6 per cent in 2015-16 even after a reduction of 1.8 percentage points over the decade in case of Muslim community whereas in case of Hindu community the intensity was 50.6 per cent which reduced negligibly by 0.3 percentage points over the decade.Thus, showing that even though the intensity reduced at a higher pace in case of Muslim community than the Hindu community but the intensity still stood too high across both the religion which indicates the severity of the issue. Domestic violence being a negative concept demands lesser value of MDVI as it ensures better status of women in this regard.The index value, i.e., MDVI was 0.28 for Muslim women as compared to 0.20 for the Hindu women in 2005-06 whereas it reduced to 0.14and 0.16respectively in 2015-16 implying that women belonging to the Hindu community are comparatively the worst hit.

Women belonging to SCs had the highest DVR which was as high as 38.1 per cent while it was least in the General caste which stood at 22.4 percent in 2015-16.The situation was even worse in 2005-06 as 48.1 percent of the women belonging to SC whereas 31.9 percent of the women belonging to General caste were multidimensionally deprived.During this period, DVR reduced by 15 percentage points for ST women while at the same time, least reduction was observed in the OBC. Similarly, *I* and MDVI were comparatively less among the General caste which was 48.9 per cent and 0.1 respectively as compared toSC where the value was as high as 52 per cent and 0.2 respectively.Over the decade starting from 2005-06, reduction in the value of *I* and MDVI was observed among all the castes except the OBC where no change was observed.It was further observed that 39.5 million women in 2015-16 were the victim of multidimensional domestic violence and it is expected that 36.55 million women in India are still the victims of multidimensional domestic violence in 2020 (Table A1).That is a significant segment of women living in India are the victims of multidimensional domestic violence since long and are still persisting who are at high risk of deprivation.

Table 3 Status of Multidimensional Domestic Violence on Women in India by Religion and Social Caste, 2005-06 and 2015-16

	Domestic Violence Ratio (DVR)		Intensity of Domestic Violence (I)		MDVI	
	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16
Religion						
Hindu	39.8	32.2	50.9	50.4	0.20	0.16
Muslim	43.1	27.9	52.4	50.6	0.23	0.14
Christian	33.6	27.5	49.9	50.0	0.17	0.14
Others	30.7	19.7	51.6	50.0	0.16	0.10
Social Caste						
SC	48.1	38.1	52.4	52.0	0.25	0.20
ST	47.1	32.1	52.6	50.7	0.25	0.16
OBC	40.4	33.2	49.9	49.9	0.20	0.17
General	31.9	22.4	51.1	48.9	0.16	0.11
India	*39.8*	*30.9*	*51.1*	*50.3*	*0.20*	*0.16*

Source: Author's Calculation from Unit Level data of NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 (2015-16)

The contribution of each dimension to the MDVI, i.e., which dimension of domestic violence contributed the most or the least to the multidimensional deprivation of women which will basically infer in which form of violence the victims are the maximum across religions and castes are given in Table4.By decomposing the value of MDVI among dimensions of domestic violence, the fact which was unearthed was that in India the contribution of physical violence was the highest to the MDVI which was 58.5 per cent in 2015-16 and have increased since 2005-06 while the contribution of emotional violence to MDVI too has increased over the considered period.On the other side, the contribution of sexual violence to MDVI has reduced from 16.5 per cent in 2005-06 to 14.4 per cent in 2015-16.Across religion, the contribution of the physical violence was the highest to the MDVI which stood at 59.2percent and 55.5 per cent for Hindu and Muslim community respectively in 2015-16 followed by emotional and sexual violence. Over the decade, the contribution of physical and emotional violence has increased while that of sexual violence it has reduced in case of Hindu community.At the same time, by considering the Muslim community, it was observed that over the decade the contribution of physical and sexual violence to MDVI have reduced while the contribution of the emotional violence has increased substantially.Further, by decomposing the value of MDVI across castes revealed the fact that the contribution of physical violence to the MDVI was maximum followed by emotional and sexual violence in case of all the four-caste categories.This sequence of contribution was highest in the OBCs followed by General, SCs and STs implying that the women belonging to the OBC suffered comparatively more from physical violence in comparison to women belonging to other social castes.Over the decade, the contribution of each dimension to the MDVI has changed like for instance of domestic violence, in all social castes except ST, the contribution of physical and emotional violence to MDVI has increased but that of sexual violence has reduced and the reduction in the contribution of sexual violence was the highest in the General caste.

Table 4 Contribution of each Dimension to MDVI by Religion and Social Caste in India, 2005-06 and 2015-16

	Emotional Violence		Physical Violence		Sexual Violence		Total	
	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16
Religion								
Hindu	26.3	26.6	57.6	59.2	16.1	14.2	100	100
Muslim	23.5	30.4	56.6	55.5	19.9	14.1	100	100
Christian	27.71	28.2	60.19	55.3	12.10	16.5	100	100
Others	30.50	24.3	59.15	60.6	10.34	15.0	100	100
Social Caste								
SC	25.3	26.9	57.6	58.0	17.1	15.1	100	100
ST	28.3	27.2	56.3	57.6	15.4	15.2	100	100
OBC	26.0	26.4	59.6	59.7	14.4	13.9	100	100
General	26.0	27.1	55.4	59.4	18.6	13.5	100	100
India	*26.0*	*27.1*	*57.5*	*58.5*	*16.5*	*14.4*	*100*	*100*

Source: Author's Calculation from Unit Level data of NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 (2015-16)

3.3 Degree of Multidimensional Domestic Violence on Married Women in India
The present sub-section deals with the status of multidimensional domestic violence onmarried women which has been segregated into four broad categories, namely non-victim, mild victim, moderate victim and severe victim.There is a wide variation in the percentage share of victim women due to variation in their religious background as well as social castes which is given in Table 5.This exercise reveals the fact that 23.78 million women which accounts to be 18.6 per cent of the married women were mild victims of domestic violence which implies that they had ever experienced either form of violence committed by their husband in 2015-16 while a decade ago the percentage share of mild victims was 22.9 per cent.At the same time, 9 per cent of women were moderate victims where the figure stood at 11.38 million whereas 3.4 per cent of the women were severe victims of domestic violence, i.e., 4.35 million women ever experienced all the three forms of violence by their husband in 2015-16.
At the same time, 19.3 per cent of the Hindu women as compared to 16.7 per cent of the Muslim women were mild victims of domestic violence creating a difference of 2.6 percentage points among them.A decade ago (in 2005-06) these shares were 3.7 percentage points and 7 percentage points higher respectively.This clearly shows that the pace of revival, i.e., reduction in the victims of domestic violence was relatively higher in the Muslim community as compared to the Hindu community.Focusing on the moderate victims, we have found that the difference in the percentage of Hindu and Muslim victims is around one per cent and was higher in the former community than the latter.Further, we observed that 3.6 per cent of Hindu women whereas 3.2 per cent of Muslim women were the severe victims of domestic violence and negligible reduction were observed over a decade in case of all women and among Hindu women whereas in Muslim community reduction in the victims was observed by 2 percentage points.Thus, even though the percentage of victims in these three categories was higher among the Muslim community in 2005-06 but due to relatively higher reduction in the share of victims in this community, the percentage share of victims came to be much lesser than those in the Hindu community in 2015-16.

Table 5 Percentage Share of Victims with different degrees of Domestic Violence by Religion and Social Caste in India, 2005-06 and 2015-16

	Mild Victims		Moderate Victims		Severe Victims	
	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16	2005-06	2015-16
Religion						
Hindu	23.1	19.3	12.5	9.3	4.26	3.59
Muslim	23.7	16.7	14.2	8.1	5.24	3.19
Christian	19.9	16.4	10.7	8.4	3.0	2.7
Others	16.6	12.0	11.4	5.5	2.7	2.2
Social Caste						
SC	26.5	21.7	15.6	11.6	5.92	4.88
ST	25.5	19.0	16.0	9.5	5.58	3.63
OBC	24.3	20.3	12.2	9.3	3.94	3.56
General	18.3	14.1	10.2	6.2	3.37	2.10
India	*22.9*	*18.6*	*12.6*	*8.9*	*4.32*	*3.44*

Source: Author's Calculation from Unit Level data of NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 (2015-16)

By categorising the women population across castes, we came up with the fact that the percentage shares of mild, moderate and severe victims of domestic violence were higher among the women belonging to the SC followed by OBC, ST and General. In General caste, 14.1 per cent of the women were mild victims of domestic violence in 2015-16 where the percentage share stood at 18.3 per cent a decade ago. On the other extreme, 21.7 per cent of the SC women were mild victims of domestic violence where it was 26.5 per cent a decade ago. Focusing on the share of severe victims of domestic violence, it was found to be maximum in the SC (4.9 per cent) and was least in the General caste (2.1 per cent) in 2015-16. Analysing the change over the decade revealed the fact that the reduction in the percentage shares of mild, moderate and severe victims were the highest in the ST followed by General caste, SC and OBC.

Table 6 presents the estimated results of ordered logistic regression of the degree of multidimensional domestic violence experienced by married women in India. The degree of domestic violence on married women is significantly explained by their religion (HINDU and MUSLIM), social castes (SC, ST and OBC), couple's education (WEDU and PEDU), status of wealth (LW) and marital control (MCP). It is observed that for the higher level of education of a woman (WEDU) or her partner (PEDU), the woman is expected to be the lesser victim of domestic violence. On the other hand, the likelihood of domestic violence on married women was significantly higher in MUSLIM as well as HINDU community compared to other religions. Additionally, the domestic violence is found to be significantly higher in the lower strata of the social castes (i.e., SC, ST and OBC). In low wealth class (LW) families too, the domestic violence on women by her partner is higher. Together with that in families where marital control by partner (MCP) is high, the chance of being the victim of domestic violence is also higher. Apart from that there has been a significant reduction of victims of domestic violence over time (TD).

Table 6 Estimated Results of Ordered Logistic Regression of the Status of Domestic Violence experienced by Women in India

Number of observations = 135497				
Wald chi2(10) = 18105.47				
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000				
Log pseudolikelihood = -117887.93				
Pseudo R2 = 0.0772				
Independent Variables	Coefficient	Robust Std. Err.	z	P>z
Women's Education (WEDU)	-0.046	0.002	-27.8	0.00
Partner's Education (PEDU)	-0.033	0.002	-20.4	0.00
Low Wealth (LW)	0.236	0.014	16.5	0.00
Marital Control by Partner (MCP)	1.247	0.012	104.3	0.00
Hindu (HINDU)	0.140	0.021	6.5	0.00
Muslim (MUSLIM)	0.120	0.028	4.4	0.00
Scheduled Caste (SC)	0.389	0.019	20.6	0.00
Scheduled Tribe (ST)	0.104	0.022	4.8	0.00
Other Backward Caste (OBC)	0.239	0.016	15.2	0.00
Time (TD)	-0.297	0.012	-24.0	0.00
/cut1	1.060	0.027		
/cut2	2.364	0.028		
/cut3	3.892	0.030		

Source: Author's Estimation from Unit Level data of NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 (2015-16)

4. Conclusion

Multidimensional domestic violence as well as the degree of domestic violence on married women has reduced considerably irrespective of religions and social castes in India during 2005-06 to 2015-16. But stillin 2015-16, the discouraging fact is that one out of three women in India is a victim of multidimensional domestic violence and there is no exception during this current deadly pandemic too when the whole human civilisation is facing the severe threat of survival. Across religions, it was found that the victims of domestic violence were relatively more in the Hindu community as compared to the Muslim community and the reduction in the share of victim over the decade was at a higher pace in the latter community than the former one. Across social castes, relatively higher percentage of victims of domestic violence belonged to Schedule Castes while the reverse situation prevailed in the General caste but over the decade, higher reduction in this regard was observed amongthe women belonging to Scheduled Tribes. We further came up with the supposition that the frequent form of violence which the women of India experienced is the physical violence. It is also true across religious communities and social castes.

Apart from that, domestic violence on married women was found to be higher in the lower strata of social caste, in the low wealth class family as well as in those families where the husband imposes marital control on her wife. Further, in families where the couple or either of them was educated, domestic violence was found to be lesser.That is, education plays a crucial role for the reduction of domestic violence. But among the adult 16.5 per cent of men and 32 per cent of women were illiterate and only 31.2 per cent of men and 22.2 per cent of women had completed the secondary level of education (GoI, 2017). Public policy initiatives for educating people are inevitable in the context of reduction of domestic violence. Additionally, since women belonging to higher wealth class families are less exposed to violence therefore, we need to focus on improving the wealth status of families. By organising awareness programmes there is ample possibility that the women get acquainted with the services provided by the governmental and non-governmental organisations in this regard so that they can get the best use of it in order to protect themselves from the violent

behaviour of their partners. In India, around 39.5 million women in 2015-16 were the victims of multidimensional domestic violence and it is expected that in 2020 the number counts to be as high as 36.5 million who are at a high-risk of exploitation. Several measures have been taken by both the central and state governments of India to control the COVID-19 pandemic but there is no such policy that focuses on the problem of domestic violence. In fact, government of India had formulated the PWDVA in 2005 but even after a decade and half since its implementation, it failed to actualise the assurance given to the victims (Ghosh & Choudhuri, 2011).Therefore, to overcome the high risk of a significant portion of women in India who are victims of domestic violence there is the urgency of proper implementation of the existing policies and acts. Special attention must be laid on the lower strata of social caste as because they are already trashed and helpless from economic point of view which may be the main reason for higher risk of violence among them. Thus, in order to save the women belonging to those castes from this risk of violence, governments (both Central and State) must extend their support to improve their economic status as well. Last but not the least,the severity of the issue which is observed from the multidimensional perspective needs to be addressed seriously as this issue is not only confined to the victims alone rather it influences the society as well as the coming generation which will prove to be disastrous.

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Appendix Table

Table A1 Estimated Number of Women (in Million) who are victims of Multidimensional Domestic Violence in India

Year	Women (15-49 year)	Married Women	Total Victims Women	Mild Victims	Moderate Victims	Severe Victims
2015-16	341.86	127.85	39.51 (30.9)	23.78 (18.6)	11.38 (8.9)	4.35 (3.4)
2020	357.41	133.67	36.55 (27.34)[#]	--	--	--

Notes: 1. Figures in parentheses indicates the percentage share.

1. [#] Projected share of multidimensionally victims women (during 2005-06 to 2015-16 the share decreased by @ 0.89 percentage points per annum and in 2020 it comes to 27.34 per cent).

Source: Population Projections for India and States 2011 – 2036: Report of The Technical Group on Population Projections, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, November, 2019.