

AN AGONIZING TIME FOR WOMEN DURING COVID-19 IN KASHMIR: A SOCIOLOGICAL MESSAGE THROUGHOUT PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN

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ABSTRACT

The spread of man-made disaster Covid-19 has considerably distressed all aspects of life. With regard to the public health and the extensive hit had taken by diverse sectors of the financial system of the world like as industrial sector, agriculture sector, the unorganized sector, educational sector etc. If we talk about the problems faced and also facing by the educational sector particularly, during these pandemic days then we can know that the entire educational organization starting primary to elementary up to tertiary level has been warped in this year 2019 and not merely in India but across the world people, whether employed or non-employed, students or teachers are facing the intimidation and especially the women or girls who are more dependent are facing more serious issues and are becoming more marginalized not only because of the impulsive move of it from off-line to on-line but also because of the closing of educational institutions, some factories or industries etc, because of the intimidation of Covid-19 according to the recommendations of Country government by World Health Organization (WHO). These restrictions save the people to some extent but because of these restrictions, the countries around the world are facing a lot of economic failures or financial loss. This paper places the interest on the major impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown on different issues through which women are facing more difficult to survive in Kashmir. The study is based on reviewing secondary data sources like journal, articles, newspapers, social media etc.

Keywords: Challenges, Covid-19, Economy, Education, Health, Kashmir, Pandemic, Women.

Introduction

Covid-19 is an extremely infectious virus or infirmity caused by severe sensitive respiratory syndrome corona-virus-2 (SARS-CoV-2), originated in Wuhan city of China, has previously taken on the pandemic magnitude, distressing transversely all the continents (Remuzzi & Remuzzi: 2020), more often than not widen in the middle of individuals throughout close contact now ensuing in millions of deaths. Covid-19 has referred to as a pandemic due to its sternness and sternness also as the greatest global health crisis since after centuries in human civilization. At the beginning of the novel, corona-virus made everything from world economies to social rituals overwhelmed (Schulzen: 2020). From its early interlude, the International Labour Organization (ILO)¹ expected that 195 million jobs could be lost (UNDP: 2020). At the present time, lockdown is a familiar exhortation that has been given consideration to over by the people during the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, lockdown is a state of the tragedy protocol implemented by the knowledgeable authorities (in this case it is central and state governments) to hamper people from going away from their place of living resulting in mass quarantines and stay-at-home across the world since March 2020. The corona-virus prompt the opening phase nationwide lockdown in India which began on March 25, 2020, for 21 days and later repeated on April 15, 2020, for 19 days as the second stage; on May 04, 2020, for 14 days as the third stage; on May 18, 2020, for 14 days as the fourth stage

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¹ The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a United Nations agency whose mandate is to advance social and economic justice through setting international labour standards. Founded in 1919 under the League of Nations, it is the first and oldest specialized agency of the UN

and on June 01, 2020, only for restraint zones taking 16 days. To get control over Covid-19 pandemic is possible to a larger extent with people's uncontrolled fortitude of the strict deterrent procedures such as maintaining physical isolation by following medically instructed quarantine method (Khachfe:2020).

As a transmittable disease caused by a recently discovered corona-virus, the virus spreads mainly through droplets of saliva or emanation from the nose when a tainted person coughs or sneezes. People used to wear masks of different types and also use the sanitizer for making themselves free from the virus but nobody was aware it that this virus will not only imperil the human body but will also make a big loss in our economy, our education sector, our social relations, our development, our technology, industrial sector, agricultural sector, the organized sector as well as unorganized sector etc. Because of the threat of Covid-19 on the recommendations of the country government by the World Health Organization (WHO), the voyage bans and movement limitations imposed to limit the increase of the corona-virus have had unintentional consequences on all other characters and particularly all the phases are allied to women's sexual and reproductive care. The travel bans, lockdowns and movement restrictions multifaceted many of the dangers. The pandemic is deepening pre-existing dissimilarity, revealing vulnerabilities in social, opinionated and financial systems which are in turn magnifying the impacts of the pandemic, stated a United Nations policy brief published in April 2020. Women across the world earn a smaller amount, accumulate less, embrace less secure jobs, are more likely to be employed in the informal sector and especially during the days of Covid-19 pandemic lockdown they face a lot of economic loss. They contain less access to social fortification and are the majority of single-parent households especially in Kashmir which is known for '*LAND OF WIDOW'S*'. Their competence to soak up economic shocks is therefore less than that of men. A report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies found that mothers in the United Kingdom were 1.5 times more likely than fathers to have either renounce their job or lost it during the pandemic lockdown. An expected, 740 million women are working in the informal economy. In upward nations, such work constitutes more than two-thirds of female employment. But as countries all over the world are locked-down, these jobs swiftly departed. That can have catastrophic consequences. Economic disagreement during the upsurge deception is a sterns threat to young women's work and business activity and rendering them to enlarge the risk of mistreatment and exploitation. Girls and young women facing meticulous economic shocks are more likely to take on high-risk work for their economic endurance. The experience of women in distant countries in Liberia indicates that recuperating from a pandemic is a hard-hitting proposition. The enormous preponderance of market traders in the West African nation is female. During the 2013–16 Ebola outbreaks, they endured higher levels of joblessness than men and it consequently took noticeably longer for them to re-enter the workforce. The United Nations has cautioned that a lot of women who have fugitive tremendous poverty are at peril of diminishing back. They advise national governments to make cash transfers to the most susceptible groups. 'We enormously need to put money in women's hands', agrees Abdulla. 'But we have to be vigilant to make sure this is done in a way that does not dislocate the local markets.' Lockdowns and physical separation measures have also contributed to a distressing spike in reports of familial aggression, together with sexual brutality. Some 243 million women are thought to have experienced sexual or physical exploitation at the hands of an intimate partner at some point over the last 12 months. Numerous of these women have been fascinated with their abuser. Within 1 week of France instituting its lockdown, reports of familial brutality had surged by 30 percent. It was a comparable store in dozens of other countries. Staying home is not safe for many women and girls who may be trapped with an abuser. The World Health Organization reports that one in three women experience physical or sexual violence, mostly from an intimate partner. During the Covid-19 deadly disease, emerging data from around the world give you an idea about the familial aggression has been increased, according to United Nations Women. Even in standard times, accessing care for sexual brutality can be tremendously complicated due to stigma, apprehension of reprisal, and a lack of trust in the system, among other reasons. But now women and girls face even more hurdles. Merely emergency cases are being seen at many health centers and only by prior arrangement with doctors. Tensions can put up in restricted places, mainly with additional anxiety over health concerns, economic uncertainty, and fear for the future. Even as the need for sexual violence care is apparently growing, access to health services is more difficult. In countries outside India like Choloma, Honduras, it has been reported that gang brutality has declined during the lockdown, but familial brutality has gone up as it has in all places,' says Dr Jennifer Stella, MSF's¹ therapeutic consultant in Choloma. But when we talk about India (a developing country)

¹ Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) is an international, independent, medical humanitarian organization that delivers emergency aid to people affected by armed conflict, epidemics, pandemics, natural disasters and exclusion from healthcare. We offer assistance to people based on need and irrespective of race, religion, gender or political affiliation

has been bulged under the incurable reach of Covid-19 ever since the first case was discovered on January 30-2020, in Kerala. The meter presently stands at an overwhelming 3.3 million total cases, with deaths stirring approximately 60,000, making India the third most horrible pretentious country in the world after the USA and Brazil. But in the outline of this newer deadly disease appears an older, more unrelenting one that has been approximately for a year is rape. One would imagine that in a time when the whole country is under lockdown and streets are comparatively emptier; this meticulous gender-based misdeed in opposition to women would have exposed symbols of annihilation. Every new morning brings reports of fresh cases of mutilations, murders, and rapes of innocent women. There arise questions that if a woman is not safe from rape even amidst a life-threatening pandemic, will they ever be or when will they be then? It was recently reported in Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri that a 17-year old girl was ferociously raped and killed and subsequently of two such alike crimes from the district in a matter of a mere 10 days. The first one occurred on August 15, the day we commemorate the country's sovereignty, when a 13-year old, supposedly a Dalit¹, was raped and thrown in the fields with her eyes scratched and tongue slit. News of an added rape came from Utterpardash's (UP's) Sitapur area where three teenage boys were charged with raping a teen girl on August 17. These are just the reported cases. God knows how many more lie unreported because many of the parents don't want to register any complaint against the wicked person sometimes because of the threat of the brute's gang and sometimes because of the threat of society. Meanwhile, in its nearby state of Haryana, which according to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)² data had the third-highest rape count in 2018 at the back only Assam and Madhya Pradesh, brutality in opposition to women is proving to be a disease far deadlier than any other. The Tribune News reports that the state 'has recorded 66 rapes, 62 cases of kidnapping and 142 episodes of molestation in April this year.' Out of 66, as many as 17 have been gang-raped. This is just north India and the reports from other states are shameful and disgusting.

National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data showed that out of the 33,356 reported rapes in 2018, criminals were known to the victims in approximately 94 percent of cases. This distressing information is ringing truer than ever throughout the lockdown. Women whether married or unmarried are habitually contemptuously told to stay at home and not venture out onto the streets in the evening for fear of losing their lives or damaging the family's image. But what could be the danger of an unidentified street be measure up to their own unsafe houses? Women aren't safe from aggression even inside the sanctuary of their homes – could there be a larger indicator of the shortcoming that our masculinity is at? As many as five cases were reported between the months of March and May where fathers are proved to be brutal who had raped their daughters, together with one episode relating to a 75-day-old baby girl. These are rape cases and the information relating to familial brutality, sexual or else are telling an entirely different or another awfulness story. Complaints of domestic violence were reported to have reached a 10-year high throughout the lockdown. A study available by the US National Bureau of Economic Research in June, with help from NCW³ data, recorded that there was a monstrous 131 percent raise in the grievance of familial aggression in May 2020 in red zones. The intimidation of aggression in opposition to women is greater than ever in the centre of corona-virus lockdowns approximately the world. But one province that has lived all the way through a military tightens upon for almost a year – Indian-administered Kashmir – could have foretold the surge. Being shut-down by administration order is nothing new in Kashmir, nor is the consequential spike in gender-based aggression, women's advocate said. The region has seen decades of disagreement, violent crackdowns, protests and militarization. Kashmir has been on lockdown since August 4, 2019, when India scraps the region's semi-autonomous status, bringing the earlier state of Jammu and Kashmir under the direct command of the central government. Authorities imposed a communications obstruction and security forces tour of duty the streets, shut-down public transportation, and congested markets. Though some boundaries continued to ease in early 2020, the India-wide Covid-19 lockdown launch in March extended clampdown circumstances in a previously militarized region and kept survivors of familial aggression shut in with their abusers. Cases of familial aggression and general brutality in opposition to women surged tenfold to more than 3,000 a year during a preceding clampdown in 2016 and 2017, according to the information's

¹ Dalit (Sanskrit: दलित, romanized: dālit), meaning "broken/scattered" in Sanskrit and Hindi, is a name for people belonging to the lowest caste in India characterized as "untouchable".

² The National Crime Records Bureau, abbreviated to NCRB, is an Indian government agency responsible for collecting and analyzing crime data as defined by the Indian Penal Code and Special and Local Laws. NCRB is headquartered in New Delhi and is part of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India

³ The National Commission for Women (NCW) is the statutory body of the government of India, generally concerned with advising the government on all policy matters affecting women. It was established in 31 January 1992 under the provisions of the Indian constitution as defined in the 1990 National Commission for Women Act.

from the Jammu and Kashmir State Commission for Women. Today, Kashmir's women face both the military lockdown and the pandemic, but there's small help available for survivors of gender-based aggression. There are no familial aggression shelters in Kashmir. Blockades on mobile phone links are regularly re-imposed, while movement limitations hinder Non-Government Organizations from doing their work. And India disbanded the women's commission last year along with Jammu and Kashmir's statehood axing an administration body that advocated for survivors of gender-based aggression. From the time when the women's commission was shut-down, sufferers of familial aggression no longer have a devoted boulevard for reporting abuse.

The entire Kashmir valley had no more than one women's police station and male officers aren't educated to handle familial brutality cases. Another problem for male police officers is that if not a woman has ruthless injuries, most male police officers beg to be excused to take such reports, telling victims in its place that the battering is a family matter, said Shah Faisal, state director of the Human Rights Law Network, a community of Indian lawyers and activists who offer legal hold up to susceptible populations. Since nearly every one of the state machinery is engaged to fight alongside Covid-19, there are no swift interval for the women sufferers,' said Faisal. Women have no admittance to the evenhandedness system and are more defenseless than ever. With the women's commission no more, women have access to the justice or integrity system and are more susceptible than ever. Women who have been attacked also be deficient in access to medical facilities, because many out-patient departments in public and private hospitals have congested. In Jammu and Kashmir, The government's social welfare department reported 16 rape cases and 64 molestations during the first month of corona-virus lockdowns, 20 March to 29 April. But Pathak said that management data is approximately undoubtedly an undercount, as there has been bewilderment regarding how to report gender-based aggression during the full military lockdown that followed the region's August shutdown. The same department reported zero allegations over the six months before the pandemic. Nighat Shafi Pandit, a women's advocate and chairperson of the Srinagar-based Help Foundation, said that 'Covid-19 has impacted women badly'. Nighat, who runs a resource centre for familial brutality survivors, said she never feared venturing out to help during the military lockdown last year, but she has constrained herself to her home during the pandemic. 'One cannot get together the need in person and can't know their requirements nearly,' she said. 'Even if women protest, we cannot help or get in touch with them because there is no protection in the entire Kashmir valley where women can take refuge'.

Another challenge facing women and girls is the thicket of gossip and half-truths about the new corona-virus itself. Especially in places where there is previously a lack of trust in the system and in the security of health centers, trepidation can be a prevailing blockade to care. Unambiguous information and supervision from trusted sources are graves. Women in Kashmir are facing trouble with getting transportation. Many are probably delivering at home with traditional birth attendants who have had no official guidance, in an environment that may not be safe. Caluwaerts warns that there are not virtually adequate local clinics to meet the massive load and for the reason that many of the maternal and neonatal deaths caused by movement restrictions. Especially at the time of curfew in Kashmir many of the drivers were stopped and brutally beaten by police while driving woman in labour to health centers.

Education and Corona-Virus (Covid-19) Pandemic

Groups that are already destitute, such as adolescent girls, experience the greatest risks and impacts when their education is intervallic. Disease outbreaks increase girls and young women's duties of caring for old and unwell family members, as well as for siblings who are out of school. Girls, in Kashmir particularly those from marginalized communities and with disabilities, maybe predominantly exaggerated by the secondary impacts of the epidemic. Financially viable anxiety on families due to the outburst can put children and meticulous girls, at greater risk of investigation, child labour and gender-based aggression. Lockdown procedures and school closures have an effect on girls and women in a different way across the world and may have long-term unenthusiastic consequences. In March, UNESCO¹ expected that the pandemic was preventing 1.52 billion children from attending school. Some of them will by no means return. Out of education, girls face a sensitive risk of female genital disfigurement and early marriage. The lockdown and school closures denote that just as their entrée to paid work diminishes, women face an increase in their not paid labour.

¹ The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; French: Organization des Nations unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture is a specialized agency of the United Nations aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, the sciences, and culture.

The current pandemic is not only seen affecting the health of the citizens in the country but is also seen hindering various industries and shaking them to their roots like as educational sector is. The nationwide lockdown and the ascending health crisis were striking the education of the students as well, with their universities being close and their syllabi left high and dry until the industry determined to initiate a rebellion as an alternative. Reinventing their radicals and making a cognizant choice to grow even in the time of calamity, the universities determined to digitalize the sector. Ordering educational institutions to assume on-line erudition and introduce an implicit study culture, make it impossible for some parents to make available all the facilities to their children. On March 11-2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 as a pandemic. Covid-19 has affected more than 4.5 million peoples worldwide (WHO-news). Abridged service opening: Many entrance/examination tests, job recruitments got cancelled which created an off-putting impact with an enormous dispute in the life of a student or the learner of higher education. Many students may be unable to find their jobs in India. Also, the Indians who have been doing their jobs in any foreign country became distressed of their job extraction and in India, there is no conscription in the government sector and new graduates are facing the anxiety of fearing the departure of job offers from commercial sectors for the reason that of the pandemic situation. The pass out students may not get their job outside India due to various limitations caused by Covid-19. All these facts entail an increase in being without a job or the unemployment rate due to this pandemic. With the increase in joblessness situation, the interest and importance of education may steadily decline as people make great efforts for food rather than education (Pravat: 2020). Some of the studies related to these issues are explained in detail by some researcher's about the hard-hitting time for women during covid-19;

World Trade Organization (2020) '*The Economic Impact Of Covid-19 On Women In Vulnerable Sectors And Economies*' explained that the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is anticipated to be predominantly noteworthy for women in developing and least-developed economies for the cause that lesser number of women than men are employed in these economies in occupations which can be taken on distantly and a larger share of women is working in sectors highly exposed to international tour limitations. The effects of the pandemic are infuriating obtainable vulnerabilities. Many channels from beginning to end which covid-19 is having a larger impact on women are those at the heart of masculinity dissimilarities, such as subordinate wages for women, less enlightening opportunity, inadequate access to economics, improved dependence on informal service and social constraints. Inadequate access to digital technologies and subordinate rates of information technology (IT) skills further diminishes women's chance for e-commerce, teleworking and thus for adapting to the present calamity.

Kavitha Chalakkal (2020) in her study '*Increase in Domestic Violence against Women and Children during COVID-19*' acknowledged that familial brutality is a widespread apprehension in all societies and the negotiations on the subject of this practice is allied with the qualms and taboo. Domestic aggression refers to close relationships or flanked by partners and typically female are the victims in these instances. There are lots of women that in their close relations and instantaneous social setting experiences emotional and corporeal aggression that afterwards becomes serious health trouble for them. A prototype of the coercive move toward corporeal, emotional, sexual, financial, and psychological maltreatment that one person perpetrates in opposition to another close person with the aim to ascertain and uphold authority and control is familial brutality.

Lokanath Mishra et al (2020) '*Online Teaching-Learning in Higher Education during Lockdown Period of COVID-19 Pandemic*' avowed that the entire educational system from basic to tertiary level has been warped throughout the lockdown time of the novel corona-virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) not only in India but transversely the globe.

Pravat Kumar Jena (2020) in his study '*Impact of Covid-19 on Higher Education in India*' affirmed that the increase of virulent disease Covid-19 has considerably disrupted each portion of human being life together with education. It has produced an unparalleled trial on education. In numerous educational institutions around the world, campuses and hostels are closed and teaching-learning has stimulated online. Internationalization has narrowed down noticeably. In India, about 32cr learners stopped up to go to schools/colleges and all edifying actions brought to an end. Regardless of all these challenges, the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have reacted optimistically and administer to make sure the permanence of teaching-learning, investigate and examination to the society with some tools and techniques during the pandemic.

Conclusion

This study has outlined various impacts of Covid-19 on different aspects related to the life of women whether it is the health sector, educational sector or economic sector. Women are particularly

exposed to this crisis. Many channels from beginning to end with which Covid-19 are having a bigger collision on women are those at the heart of gender disproportion. Remuneration and educational gaps, as well as inadequate access to finance, a greater percentage of women, are in informal or unofficial service and social restrictions, all have a propensity to make women more helpless to economic recessions. From free time to hospitality to retail, entire industries in which women make up a bigger distribute of the workforce have been brought to a cut short. The pandemic has been working as a catalyst for the educational institutions to grow and opt for platforms and techniques, they haven't used before which is also creating a great trauma for some teachers as well as for students. Because of the threat spreading the Covid-19 pandemic the government around the world made restrictions on the movement of people. These restrictions save the people to some extent but because of these restrictions the countries around the world had faced and are facing a lot of economic failures especially the developing ones and especially the women who are the only bread earner for their family and who were working on dally-wager-basis in any factory or industry or any kind of domestic work outside. And not only this but familial responsibility, things like childcare, get ready the food for the extra youngsters who would usually be at school, and looking after unwell family members, these household tasks fall unreasonably on women', said Wenham. And when we talk about the education sector, then we will know that it has shaped an unparalleled assessment. As in India, all the student's, learners were stopped to move to schools, colleges or universities. In spite of all these challenges, the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) had tried to respond positively and managed to make certain the stability of teaching-learning or research and service to the society with some tools and techniques during the pandemic but again because of 2G network in our Kashmir territory all the students (both boys and girls) faced lots of problems to excess higher education.

The current pandemic is not only seen affecting the health of the citizens in the country but is also seen hindering various industries and shaking them to their roots. The national lockdown and the ascending health crisis were striking the education of the students as well. Along with failure in the economic sector as well as the educational sector women are facing a great threat of sexual as well as domestic violence in our country (India) in general and in Kashmir in particular. Women who have been attacked or injured through intimate partner violence also be deficient access to medical facilities, for the reason that many out-patient departments in public and private hospitals remain closed and have closed by force. Women have no access to the justice system and are more susceptible than ever before. Governments should have to take steps to make available the medication facilities for women and should also take steps to alleviate the effects of school closure on students especially on marginalized students like girls and their families by ensuring education continues. Schools should be supported to stay away from and have power over the spread of Covid-19, with awareness paid to shield students and staff from intolerance and disgrace linked with infection. The administration is obliged to make sure education response plans are gender and age approachable and reflect the lived realities of girls, children with disabilities and extra marginalized children throughout the life cycle of education. Management must comprise procedures to deal with gender-based aggression (GBV) and child security in Covid-19 retort and recuperation plans and make sure that plans are gender and age receptive and multi-sectored. Girl and youth-led groups should be protected and considerably involved in the advancement of strategy and strategy should assess and examine the risk and prevalence of brutality. National and local responses must assess and address those dangers together within quarantine situations and in communities facing boundaries on movement. The health and security of care workers, the greater part of the women must be a core part of the response to the epidemic. The Covid-19 pandemic must not be used as an alleged reason to limit or rollback girls and women's access to indispensable sexual and reproductive health rights, which must continue to be prioritized, funded and recognized as lifesaving.

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