

UNVEILING THE ECONOMIC BURDEN OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: A MULTI-YEAR ANALYSIS OF LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

Violence against women (VAW) is a serious issue that not only harms women individually but also weakens the economy as a whole. This study specifically looked at India and how VAW discourages women from participating in the workforce. The researchers used data from several years (2018, 2019, and 2020) and found a strong connection between violence and lower rates of women working or looking for work. This means that the more violence there is against women, the fewer women are likely to be a part of the labour force. The study explains that violence can make it difficult for women to work in a few ways. Physical injuries or mental health problems from violence can make it hard to show up to work or be productive. Women who are worried about violence may also be afraid to leave their homes to go to work, or they may not feel comfortable working certain hours or in certain locations. Overall, this study shows that violence against women is not just a social problem, it's also an economic one that holds India back from reaching its full potential.

Key Word: Violence against Women, Labour Force Participation Rate.

Introduction

Violence against women is a pervasive global issue with devastating social and moral consequences. However, its impact extends far beyond the immediate harm inflicted on victims. This study focuses on a critical, yet often overlooked aspect: the economic burden of violence against women in India. Women's labour force participation (LFPR) is a key driver of economic growth and development. Yet, violence acts as a significant barrier to women's economic participation. By hindering their ability to work, contribute to the workforce, and earn income, violence against women weakens the overall economic fabric of a nation. This study investigates the economic consequences of violence against women in India through the lens of female labour force participation rates (LFPR). We employ regression analysis to examine the relationship between the prevalence of violence and women's economic engagement.

López-Sánchez, Belso-Martínez, & Hervás-Oliver, 2019 Domestic violence against women, a pervasive issue often shrouded in secrecy, transcends the realm of a personal matter. Beyond the devastating personal consequences, this violence carries a significant economic burden, impacting individuals, families, and society as a whole. This review explores the economic costs associated with domestic violence and abuse against women. This review focuses on domestic violence perpetrated by male partners, a prevalent form of violence against women. The inherent

privacy of domestic spaces makes this violence difficult to measure, prevent, and prosecute, further exacerbating its economic impact.

Vyas, et al., 2021 The findings of this review emphasize the economic rationale for investing in VAWG prevention and response programs. By demonstrating the economic burden, this research can support policy and advocacy efforts aimed at securing resources and promoting gender equality.

Max, Rice, Finkelstein, Bardwell, & Leadbetter, 2004 This review underscores the fact that IPV is not just a social issue, but also a significant economic burden in the US. The billions of dollars lost highlight the potential economic benefits of investing in IPV prevention and response programs. Further research with more comprehensive data is necessary to fully understand the economic impact of IPV and guide policy decisions.

Ciaschini & Chelli, 2020 This review introduces a novel approach to understanding VAWG by integrating it into macroeconomic models. The paper sheds light on the potential economic gains associated with reducing VAWG and highlights the value of such frameworks for policy design and evaluation. Further research can explore ways to expand the model's scope and address data limitations to provide a more comprehensive picture of the economic impact of VAWG.

Raghavendra, et al., 2019 This review highlights a valuable study that utilizes a social accounting approach to quantify the economic burden of VAWG in Ghana. The significant economic cost and its long-term implications make a compelling case for prioritizing the prevention and reduction of VAWG. Further research can explore ways to capture the broader social costs and expand the study's scope to other countries.

Methodology

This study employed a regression analysis approach to investigate the economic impact of violence against women in India. The analysis utilized data from multiple years (potentially 2018, 2019, and 2020) to establish a relationship between violence and female labour force participation rates (LFPR).

Data Sources:

regression analysis.

Data Sources:

Violence Against Women: Data on the prevalence of violence against women will be obtained from the **Niti Aayog SDG Index Report** of India. The NITI Aayog publishes annual reports on different indicators in India, including data on crimes against women, disaggregated by various categories (e.g., physical assault, sexual assault). Specific data points used in the analysis to define clearly

Women's Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR): Data on female labour force participation is also sourced from NITI Aayog SDG Index, specifically). The participation rate provides detailed information on labour force characteristics, including participation rates for women across different age groups, educational backgrounds, and geographical locations.

Regression Analysis:

Regression analysis is a statistical technique that allows us to investigate the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables

Dependent Variable: Women's Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) obtained from the PLFS.

Independent Variable: Prevalence of violence against women.

Aayog, 2018-20

Data Analysis

Result of Regression Analysis:

The regression analyses from 2018, 2019, and 2020 paint a compelling narrative about the hindrance of economic growth due to violence against women. In 2018, the data reveals a stark reality: violence against women is not only a social and moral crisis but also a significant barrier to economic participation. The strong positive correlation (Multiple R of 0.8174) suggests that as violence increases, it directly impacts women's ability to contribute to the labour force, explaining a substantial 66.81% of the variance in labour force participation rates (LFPR). This indicates that violence against women is a major deterrent to their economic engagement, which in turn hinders overall economic growth. The trend continues in 2019, where the relationship remains robust, with a Multiple R of 0.7970 and 63.52% of the variance in LFPR being explained by violence. The higher coefficient of 0.5636 compared to the previous year highlights an even more pronounced impact: each increase in violence significantly reduces women's economic participation. This year also shows increased variability in the data, suggesting that while the impact of violence is undeniable, other fluctuating factors might also influence LFPR. By 2020, the analysis reveals a somewhat weakened but still significant relationship. The Multiple R drops to 0.4999, with 24.99% of the variance in LFPR being explained by violence against women. The smaller coefficient of 0.0092 indicates that while violence continues to affect economic participation, its direct impact might be mitigated by other emerging factors, possibly including policy interventions or changing social dynamics. Nevertheless, the consistent statistical significance across all years underscores that violence against women remains a critical barrier to economic growth. This storyline clearly shows that violence against women is a persistent and significant impediment to economic development. It not only directly reduces labour force participation but also reflects broader societal issues that discourage economic engagement. Addressing this violence is not just a moral imperative but also an economic necessity. By ensuring women's safety and fostering a more inclusive environment, economies can unlock greater potential and drive more sustainable growth. The data from these three years illustrates the urgent need for comprehensive policies and societal changes to combat violence against women, thereby enabling fuller economic participation and fostering overall economic health.

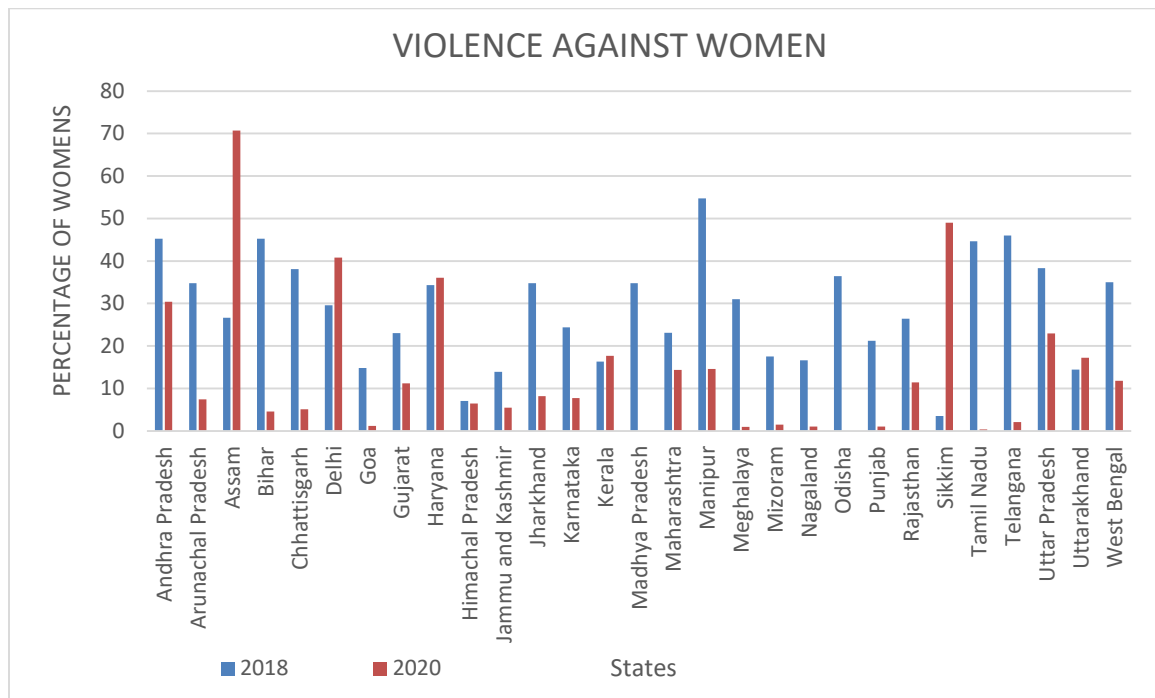


Figure .1. Violence Against women state wise

Impact on Economics:

Economic Disempowerment:

Violence against women leads to economic disempowerment by preventing women from participating in the labour force. This reduction in participation can result in lower household incomes and increased economic dependency on male counterparts or other family members. Women who face violence are more likely to suffer from physical and mental health issues, reducing their ability to work and be productive. This not only diminishes their current earnings but also affects their long-term economic potential.

Lost Productivity:

The health consequences of violence, including injuries, psychological trauma, and chronic health issues, directly reduce productivity. Women may need to take time off work, reduce their working hours, or withdraw from the labour market altogether. This lost productivity has broader economic costs, including lower output, reduced economic growth, and a diminished labour force.

Reduced Labour Force Participation:

The regression analyses show a clear relationship between violence against women and lower labour force participation rates (LFPR). With fewer women participating in the labour market, the overall supply of labour decreases, which can lead to lower economic output and slower economic growth. In economies like India, which are striving for rapid development and growth, the participation of women in the workforce is crucial. Women constitute a significant portion of the population, and their economic inactivity due to violence represents a substantial loss of potential economic contributions.

Impaired Economic Development:

The economic costs of violence against women extend beyond the immediate loss of productivity and income. The broader economic development is impaired due to lower female

labour force participation, resulting in reduced consumer spending and savings rates. Lower economic participation by women can also lead to reduced investment in human capital, as families facing economic strain may invest less in education and health, perpetuating cycles of poverty and underdevelopment.

Aligning with India's SDG 5

India's commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The goal encompasses various targets, including ending all forms of discrimination, eliminating violence against women, and ensuring women's full participation and equal opportunities in leadership and decision-making processes.

Ending Violence Against Women:

Addressing violence against women is central to achieving SDG 5. Reducing violence will directly contribute to increased labour force participation among women, enabling them to contribute more significantly to economic growth. Effective policies and interventions, such as legal reforms, public awareness campaigns, and support services for survivors, are essential to combating violence against women.

Economic Empowerment:

Empowering women economically is a key target of SDG 5. By ensuring women can participate in the labour force free from the threat of violence, India can enhance its economic growth and development. Initiatives like vocational training, access to credit, and creating safe work environments can help women become economically self-reliant and boost their participation in the economy.

Broader Development Strategies:

Integrating gender equality into broader economic development strategies is crucial. This includes ensuring that national economic policies and programs specifically address the barriers faced by women, including violence. Investing in education and health for women and girls, promoting gender-sensitive workplace policies, and fostering a culture of respect and equality are critical components of sustainable economic development.

Alignment with SDGs and Policy Recommendations

SDG 5 – Gender Equality: These findings highlight the importance of achieving SDG 5, particularly ending violence against women and ensuring their full economic participation.

Policy Interventions: Effective policies are crucial. These include legal reforms to deter violence, public awareness campaigns to change social attitudes, and support services for survivors to help them re-enter the workforce.

Economic Empowerment: Initiatives promoting economic empowerment, such as vocational training, access to credit, and safe work environments, can boost female participation in the economy.

Gender-Inclusive Development Strategies: Integrating gender equality into broader economic development plans is essential. National policies should address the barriers faced by women, including violence. Investments in girls' education and health, along with gender-sensitive workplace policies, are crucial for sustainable economic growth.

Conclusion

Violence against women (VAW) isn't just a horrific social injustice, it's also a significant drain on India's economic potential. This study provides compelling evidence, using data from multiple years (2018-2020), that VAW discourages women from joining the workforce. The analysis reveals a strong negative correlation: as violence against women increases, female labour force participation rates (LFPR) plummet. This translates to real economic consequences. When women are forced out of the workforce due to fear or physical limitations caused by violence, household incomes suffer. Businesses lose out on the talent and skills of a significant portion of the population, leading to decreased productivity and a weakened overall labour force. This ultimately hinders economic growth in India.

The importance of addressing VAW goes beyond the moral imperative. It's an economic necessity. Aligning with India's commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) of achieving gender equality, this study calls for a multi-pronged approach. Effective policy interventions, such as legal reforms that deter violence and improved support services for survivors, are crucial. Economic empowerment initiatives that provide vocational training, access to credit, and promote safe work environments can further incentivize women's participation in the workforce. Finally, integrating gender equality into broader development plans is essential. This means ensuring national economic policies address the barriers faced by women, including violence. Investing in girls' education and health, along with fostering gender-sensitive workplace practices, can create a culture that respects and values women's contributions. By tackling VAW and promoting women's economic participation, India can unlock its full economic potential and achieve sustainable growth.

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