

## Chapter 42

# Gender–Specific Burden of the Economic Cost of Victimization: A Global Analysis

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This chapter explores the impact of specific burden of the economic cost of victimization on gender. Gender-related victimization is disproportionately concentrated on women and girls. Forms include sexual assaults, intimate-partner violence, incest, genital mutilation, homicide, trafficking for sexual exploitation, and other sexual offences. Costs of violence against women are widespread throughout society. Every recognizable effect of violence has a cost whether it is direct or indirect. Direct costs come from the use of goods and services for which a monetary exchange is made. Direct costs exist for capital, labour, and material inputs. Indirect costs stem from effects of violence against women that have an imputed monetary exchange, such as lost income or reduced profit. Effects of violence against women also include intangible costs such as premature death and pain and suffering for which there is no imputed monetary value in the economy.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Gender-based violence is perceived as one of the most severe forms of gender inequality, and it remains one of the most pervasive human rights violations of modern time. It is an issue that affects women disproportionately as it is directly connected with the unequal distribution of power between women and men; thus, it has a profound effect on families, communities, and societies as a whole. Violence against women is an invasive phenomenon common in developing and developed countries alike. It manifests in multiple behaviours including rape, sexual coercion, incest, honour killings, female genital mutilation, acid burnings, stalking and trafficking.

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Violence against women has been recognised internationally as a major violation of a woman's human rights. This was formalized in 1993 with the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women developed at the World Conference on Women held in Nairobi, stated that violence against women is both a result of and an obstacle to the achievement of women's equality, affecting all women worldwide. World Health Organization (WHO) (2013) report estimates that one in three women across the globe has experienced physical and/or sexual assault at some point in their lifetime, indicating the epidemic scale of such violence.

In addition to health impacts, violence against women had, the report equally pointed out, economic costs in terms of expenditures on service provision, lost income for women and their families, decreased productivity, and negative impacts on future human capital formation. Smith, Chen, Basile et al. (2017) reported that in 2012, an estimated 26% of U.S. women and 10% of men reported their lives had been impacted (e.g., missed work or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms) by contact sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner. The report went further to quantify intimate partner violence (IPV) per-victim cost, which at a minimum includes victims' impaired health, lost productivity, and criminal justice costs. A 1995 National Violence Against Women analysis estimated the cost of IPV limited to acute and short-term follow-up medical costs and included only female victims (\$838 per rape, \$816 per physical assault, and \$294 per stalking victimization (1995 US\$); or \$1,210; \$1,178, and \$424 as 2014 US\$). In a study conducted by KPMG Human and Social Services in South Africa, the study reports that the economic impact of GBV is between at least R28.4 billion and R42.4 billion for the year 2012/2013, representing 0.9% and 1.3% of GDP respectively (KPMG Human and Social Services, 2014)

Studies in India indicate, for example, that women can lose an average of at least five paid workdays for each incident of intimate partner violence. This fact would mean the affected woman would get 25 percent less of her salary each time an incident of violence happens. In Uganda, about nine percent of violence incidents forced women to lose time from paid work, amounting to approximately 11 days a year, equivalent to half a month's salary, affecting not only the incumbent person but her family and dependents. (Staggs & Riger 2005)

## **Definition and Prevalence of Violence Against Women:**

Violence against women, recognised globally as a fundamental human rights violation, is widely prevalent across high, middle, and low income. UNIFEM (2006) described violence against women and girls as a problem of pandemic proportions. At least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime with the abuser usually someone known to her.

The Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, 2010) of the Council of Europe reveals that Violence Against Women (VAW) as "all acts of gender-based violence that results in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life". The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women 1993, states, "Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women" and "violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.

Violence against women can fit into several broad categories. These include violence carried out by individuals as well as states. Some of the forms of violence perpetrated by individuals are rape, domes-

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