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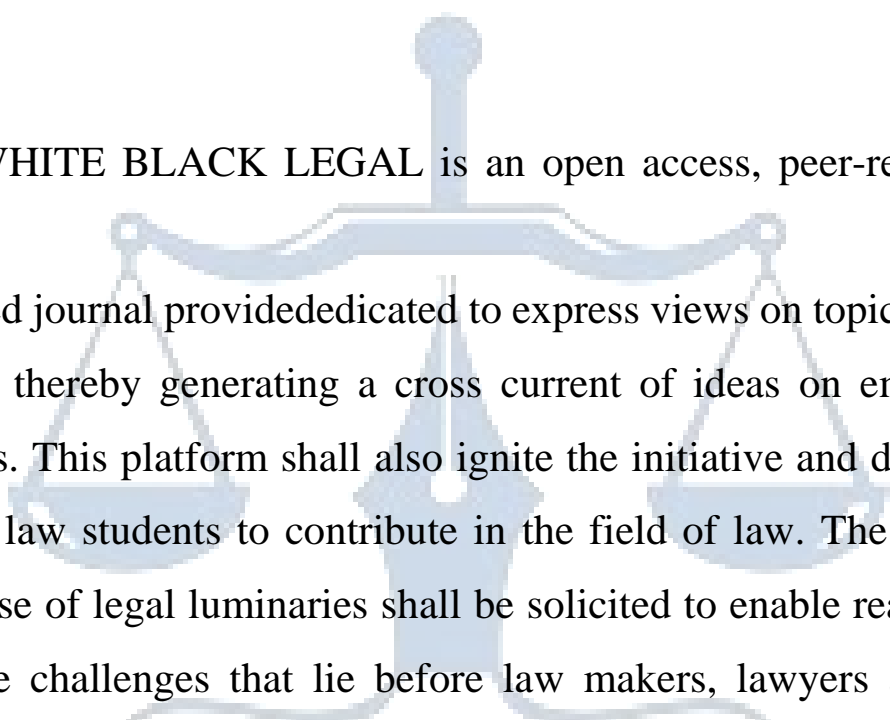


Subhrajit Chanda

BBA. LL.B. (Hons.) (Amity University, Rajasthan); LL. M. (UPES, Dehradun) (Nottingham Trent University, UK); Ph.D. Candidate (G.D. Goenka University)

Subhrajit did his LL.M. in Sports Law, from Nottingham Trent University of United Kingdoms, with international scholarship provided by university; he has also completed another LL.M. in Energy Law from University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, India. He did his B.B.A.LL.B. (Hons.) focussing on International Trade Law.

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WHITE BLACK LEGAL is an open access, peer-reviewed and refereed journal providededicated to express views on topical legal issues, thereby generating a cross current of ideas on emerging matters. This platform shall also ignite the initiative and desire of young law students to contribute in the field of law. The erudite response of legal luminaries shall be solicited to enable readers to explore challenges that lie before law makers, lawyers and the society at large, in the event of the ever changing social, economic and technological scenario.

With this thought, we hereby present to you

EXPLORING THE REASONS FOR MARITAL MENTAL TORTURE DURING THE SUBSISTENCE OF MARRIAGE IN BANGLADESH

AUTHORED BY - KAZI TASNIM JAHAN
Lecturer, Department of Law, Feni University

Abstract

The present work aims at being a part of the literature focusing on the extent and effects of marital mental torture in Bangladesh and the kind of psychological abuse women experience from their intimate partners. The prevalence of IPV especially psychological IPV is very high, studies showed that women experiencing IPV ranges from 15.5% to 82.7%. This study evidences physical/sexual assault consequences of mental aggression leading to significantly influenced women's psychological/emotional states. It is thus difficult to recover from mental harassment caused by cultural beliefs that allow violence against women. Additionally, patients justify that they had to use force since it is allowed by the culture of the society. In view of this, the study seeking to establish root causes, cultural and economic aspect of marital mental torture, and its effects on women's mental health and gender equality. Knowledge of these dynamics is important for solving it and for the purpose of protection from such abuse in Bangladeshi society.

Keywords: *Marital Mental Torture, Psychological Abuse, Domestic Violence, Gender Roles, Bangladesh*

1. Introduction

IPV is rife in Bangladesh where mental aggression closely associates with physical aggression towards women. IPV prevalence in the population is between 15.5 and 82.7 percent, and many women endure mental abuse. Proposed abuse of one's partner, which often includes psychological abuse in the form of manipulation or calculated domination is quite common. However, no matter how the countries passed laws against domestic violence acts, mental torture tends to increase. HIVC, PTSD, anxiety and depression and any other related mental health disorders are ailments common among IPV victims, including the children. culture and

tradition play a key role in the justification of IPV and therefore naming of mental abuse is not easy to be challenged. Despite this, research on the character of mental torture in marriage and with reference to Bangladeshi women and their mental health and gender issues, is scarce. Marital mental molestation in Bangladesh includes real behavior control strategies, psychological and verbal abuse and coercive control that lead to mental health disease. Therefore, this research seeks to identify causes of marital mental torture, the socio-culture promotion of this type of abuse, and interlinkage between gender, economic position, social justice on the issue. The research provides awareness and helps fight mental health problems, and this makes the study fulfil social needs in the Asian context. However, they include a small sample size meaning insignificant participants to draw conclusions from and response bias in results.

2. Literature Review

Marital conflict, abuse and mental torture have a number of theoretical perspectives implicated from psychological, sociological as well as cultural perspectives. These frameworks seek to explain the issues involved with intimate partner violence (IPV) and domestic violence and abuse (DVA) by acknowledging how the issues involve facets. It is important for the prevention and intervention, to have a good understanding about these theories. Additionally, the cultural understandings also crucial to address this problematic issue.

Cultural Norms: Cultural tolerance of male dominance and intimate partner aggression predisposes the pattern of marital conflict, especially in immigrant families.¹

Variability in Definitions: This has made it hard to define IPV, especially in different culture thus making it hard to handle marital conflict among different cultures.²The above frameworks are, however, useful in analyzing conflict and abuse in marriage, despite the fact that they may not analyzes all the factors fully. There are some negative aspects of such very theory-centered approach; critics with justified interruptions note that one can pay not enough attention to the distinction of subjects, especially minorities and multicultural populations.

¹ Ibid

² Anastasia, S., Burelomova., Marina, A., Gulina., Olga, A., Tikhomandritskaya. (2018). 1. Intimate Partner Violence: An Overview of the Existing Theories, Conceptual Frameworks, and Definitions. Psychology in Russia, doi: 10.11621/PIR.2018.0309

However, the explorations made on previous studies on Marital Mental Abuse especially of Bangladeshi women give deep accounts of the factors resulting in it and the resulting effects. Around the world, mental abuse is also a significant problem that many researchers identify different negative outcomes of women's mental health and wellbeing. The subsequent sections present literature review of the study as follows:

Sources of Marital Mental Abuse

Societal Norms: Beneath this category due to the traditional culture that supports male dominance over women, and lastly, societal acceptance of violence leads to cases of mental abuse in marriages.³

Economic Factors: The study established that the women's low educational level and low economic status are strong predictors of IPV.⁴

Family Dynamics: Again, family conflict, perceived disobedience with families, previous experience with violence in families increases the risk of mental abuse.⁵

Effects of Marital Mental Abuse

Mental Health Consequences: A study result shows that, female victims of mental abuse have higher depression, anxiety, and stress compared to other types of abuse.⁶

Physical Health Effects: Per the researched literature, IPV has negative physical health consequences that affect reproductive health and chronic diseases.⁷

Societal Implications: A study paper also shows that normalization of violence does impact children as well as the entire community especially given that it continues to produce cyclical victims of violence.⁸

Although the earlier investigations have strongly pointed to the detrimental consequences of marital mental abuse to women, the later studies have attempted to show that positive factors such as psychological resilience and social support may help to mediate these adverse effects

³ shirin, Tohin. (2013). 3. Prevalence, factors and psychology of spousal violence in Bangladesh: A comparative study on rural-urban traits. *International Journal of Innovative Knowledge Concepts*,

⁴ Jhantu, Bakchi., Satyajit, Kundu., Subarna, Ghosh., Sumaiya, Akter. (2020). 2. Intimate Partner Violence in Bangladesh: A Scoping Review. *Bangladesh Journal of Bioethics*, doi: 10.3329/BIOETHICS.V9I3.48913

⁵ Tania, Wahed., Abbas, Bhuiya. (2007). 4. Battered bodies & shattered minds: violence against women in Bangladesh.. *Indian Journal of Medical Research*,

⁶ María, Elena, Masih., Christopher, Wagstaff., Harjinder, Kaur-Aujla. (2024). 1. The global psychological and physical effects of domestic abuse and violence on South Asian women: a qualitative systematic review. *Frontiers in global women's health*, doi: 10.3389/fgwh.2024.1365883

⁷ Jhantu, Bakchi., Satyajit, Kundu., Subarna, Ghosh., Sumaiya, Akter. (2020). 2. Intimate Partner Violence in Bangladesh: A Scoping Review. *Bangladesh Journal of Bioethics*, doi: 10.3329/BIOETHICS.V9I3.48913

⁸ María, Elena, Masih., Christopher, Wagstaff., Harjinder, Kaur-Aujla. (2024). 1. The global psychological and physical effects of domestic abuse and violence on South Asian women: a qualitative systematic review. *Frontiers in global women's health*, doi: 10.3389/fgwh.2024.1365883

and that such women have the ability to overcome and even empower themselves.⁹

3. Methodology

This research focuses on identifying critical nuances of a given topic with the help of a comprehensive systematic thematic analysis of the reviewed scientific articles and documents. It outlines areas of future research and further discursive analysis by comparing and contrasting the decrees with data. Thematic analysis, on the hand is doing a systematic, rigorous process of identification and interpretation of patterns from data; it may include qualitative data analysis where coding and categorization takes place. Cross case analysis helps to find resemblance and dissimilarities in cases. Hypotheses are postulated, and a theoretical structure is developed which underlines the conduct of research and analysis. In this study, the focus is to try and provide policy and practice with relevant information to work with.

4. Results

The analysis of marital mental torture brings several new topics and trends that demonstrate the causes and experiences of the concept. These include the psychological effects of marital rape, processes of power and violence in families and general considerations of communication in affected families. Instead having many controversies with the term of marital rape the effects of the Marital Rape on Women are prevalence. Marital rape in India has high prevalence rates, which range from 2% 56; this affects the woman's mental health. Symptoms such as PTSD and clinical depression are common, and other aspects of psychological symptoms identified from qualitative studies surpass the digital data representation.¹⁰ Therefore, the study also shows the family's interaction patterns. The study shows that, they also continue family enmity that is, communication about previous violence affects cohesiveness or isolation of the family. This result implies that the effects of the narratives provided by the participants in families with a history of torture can cause confusion or build up closer connections. On the other hand, the cultural and social contexts also been critically analyzed in this study paper that, ritual abuse-torture in families tends to domesticating the violence and makes its victims' experiences and overall societal paradigm of marital mental torture.¹¹ Learned helplessness is seen in European

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Nandini, Agarwal., Salma, M, Abdalla., Gregory, Herschel, Cohen. (2022). 2. Marital rape and its impact on the mental health of women in India: A systematic review. PLOS global public health, doi: 10.1371/journal.pgph.0000601

¹¹ Jeanne, Sarson., Linda, MacDonald. (2008). 3. Ritual Abuse-Torture Within Families/Groups. Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, doi: 10.1080/10926770801926146

empowerment projects concerning women who seek refuge from domestic violence, stressing the role of support communication and community resources.¹² Still, these findings substantiate the extreme consequences of marital mental torture; however, it would be reasonable to consider that few marriages are characterized by these tendencies. This and other studies indicate that it is possible for couples to respond to challenging situations using positive strategies such as communications and support and therefore the possibility of a range of experiences within marital relationships. The study presented in this paper shows that marital mental torture is a crucial problem in Bangladesh and discusses the factors connected with it. The results present agreement with prior research in assessing the social-cultural factors that contribute to mental abuse in marriages. A study revealed that 4,622 women from 53 districts said they were experience mental harassment particularly with physical abuse and rape.¹³ Interpersonal conflict may be considered as a common companion of IPV; therefore, factors involving raising one's voice and ignoring children might be considered as leading to mental torture.¹⁴ The study also shows that women of less education and low economic standard are more vulnerable to IPV similar to trends revealed by other research.¹⁵ It is also seminal to note that rural women are more vulnerable as compared to the urban women; therefore, they should be especial focus areas.¹⁶ As Hasan and their colleagues mentioned, telepsychiatry has appeared to be an essential kind of support intervention option during bad events like COVID 19.¹⁷ The research evidence points to an increasing awareness of mental health services meaning a turn toward managing the psychological impact of marital abuse. On the other hand, despite the findings showing the increasing prevalence of the problems noted, there is evidence in some literature that awareness creation campaigns and educative programs are gradually tackling some of the problems thereby implying that, maybe slowly but surely, society is adopting a positive attitude towards marital mental torture.

¹² Michele, Lloyd., Shulamit, Ramon., Athina, Vakalopoulou., Petra, Videmšek., Caroline, Meffan., Joanna, Roszczynska-Michta., Luca, Rollè. (2017). 5. Women's Experiences of Domestic Violence and Mental Health: Findings from a European Empowerment Project. *Psychology of Violence*, doi: 10.1037/VIO0000111

¹³ Md., Kamrul, Hasan., Zaziratul, Zannat., Sheikh, Shoib. (2022). 4. Violence against women (VAW) in Bangladesh and its mental health repercussions. *Journal of affective disorders reports*, doi: 10.1016/j.jadr.2022.100369

¹⁴ M., W., Hossain., Faruq, Abdulla., Azizur, Rahman., Hafiz, T., A., Khan. (2022). 3. Prevalence and determinants of wife-beating in Bangladesh: evidence from a nationwide survey. *BMC Psychiatry*, doi: 10.1186/s12888-021-03652-x

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ M., W., Hossain., Faruq, Abdulla., Azizur, Rahman., Hafiz, T., A., Khan. (2022). 3. Prevalence and determinants of wife-beating in Bangladesh: evidence from a nationwide survey. *BMC Psychiatry*, doi: 10.1186/s12888-021-03652-x

5. Discussion

Altogether, the research finds high incidence of mental maltreatment of married women in Bangladesh echoing various models of IPV and psychological aggression. The findings conformed to the feministic theories by showing that cultural beliefs, roles and living standards were important determinant of mental torture. Culturally inflicted victim acceptance of abuse erodes the much needed synergy between law and the culture. Cohorts experiencing IPV are known to show symptoms of mental functioning disorders such as anxiety and depression. Economic or financial pressure as the socio-economic factors also play a role concerning this problem. The affected fail to seek legal formal procedures since they compromise of people with no cultural backing. The researcher also identifies social culture, gender and socio-effectiveness dimension as the core reasons behind marital mental torture in Bangladesh. Professional help is especially necessary for eliminating this type of sanctioned abuse and creating awareness programs to assist victims. More essential research has to be conducted to determine the impact of intervention programs and avert future generations of victims. The present study shows, the Causes of Marital Mental Torture. Marital Mental torture may bear relation with power differences, gender disparities, economic pressures, cultural expectations, and lack of understanding. These elements lead to creation of such environment that allows psychological abuse to develop and cause severe Mental Health problems for those people. To begin with the power imbalances that, unhealthy communication pattern between individuals involves authority of one partner over the other making the other to succumb to their demands emotionally.¹⁸This can in perform in several ways for example in financial angle or isolating the disabled from their network of friends and relatives thereby deepening feelings of hopelessness and rejection.¹⁹ Secondly, the gender inequality is also crucial factor contributes in marital mental torture. Another practice that is influential in maintaining tradition of gender disparity is obedience to cultural standards where the woman is often seen as inferior hence exposed to high risks of experiencing mental torture.²⁰This inequality may lead to poor prosecution of offenders and poor treatment of the victims because of cultural norms that can

¹⁸ China, Rani, Mittra., Ashees, Kumar, Saha., Fahmida, Khanam. (2023). 3. Spousal Abuse & Suicidal Ideation among Women. doi: 10.58806/ijirme.2023.v2i5n02

¹⁹ Ahmad, Nouri., Ozra, Etemadi., Rezvanossadat, Jazayeri., Maryam, Fatehizade. (2016). 4. Analysis of Psychological Spouse Abuse against Men in Iranian Couples: A Qualitative Study. Review of European Studies, doi: 10.5539/RES.V8N3P1

²⁰ Saba, Sultan., Muhammad, Yaseen., Shahzaman. (2017). 5. Causes of domestic violence against married women: a sociological study with reference to karachi city. The Journal of social sciences and humanities, doi: 10.46568/JSSH.V56I2.53

keep the victims silent at the face of the violence a partner subject them to.²¹ Furthermore, the economic hardships are likely to cause high levels of stress within a marriage thus raising the likelihood of the use of mental abuse given that partners may use aggression in response to anger and irritability evoked by their economic problems.²² In the study of Ndunge and Anastario, 2012, accentuate that economic foreland makes it hard to be separated from an abusive partnership as such dependency can ensnarl a person. Therefore, those cultural beliefs allow for the abrasiveness of abuse as a norm, and therefore, make it difficult for victims to identify their abuse statuses.²³ In certain societies, torture of the mind might not be taken seriously, or even if it is, it will be a cycle that continues.²⁴ Thus, lack of communication usually foments anger between the two people and a good recipe for emotional abuse.²⁵ Lack of communication in relationships leads to lack communication in relationship leads to feeling of neglect or emotional isolation which is likely to cause mental torture.²⁶

However, the present study evaluates the psychological effects on victims of mental torture, as well as any lasting impacts on families and children. The study shows that, the horrifying effects of mental abuse on the victims are severe hence lead to mental health problems like PTSD, anxiety, and depression. The above effects not only affect the survivor but also the family and children thus leading to a generation of tyranny. This knowledge is important in order to design relevant intervention strategies and appropriate support structures. The study reveals there are multifaceted effects of Bullying on Victims.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): PTSD is common among those who were tortured; such persons may experience flashback and severe anxiety, and they continuously think about the abuse they received.²⁷ **Cognitive Impairments:** Post-Traumatic stress disorder is manifested

²¹ (2023). 1. Causes of Intimate Partner Violence. Lecture Notes in Education Psychology and Public Media, doi: 10.4324/9780203387665-6

²² Saba, Sultan., Muhammad, Yaseen., Shahzaman. (2017). 5. Causes of domestic violence against married women: a sociological study with reference to karachi city. The Journal of social sciences and humanities, doi: 10.46568/JSSH.V56I2.53

²³ Elio, Della, Noce. (2023). 2. Causes of Intimate Partner Violence. doi: 10.54254/2753-7048/7/20220821

²⁴ China, Rani, Mitra., Ashees, Kumar, Saha., Fahmida, Khanam. (2023). 3. Spousal Abuse & Suicidal Ideation among Women. doi: 10.58806/ijirme.2023.v2i5n02

²⁵ Ahmad, Nouri., Ozra, Etemadi., Rezvanossadat, Jazayeri., Maryam, Fatehizade. (2016). 4. Analysis of Psychological Spouse Abuse against Men in Iranian Couples: A Qualitative Study. Review of European Studies, doi: 10.5539/RES.V8N3P1

²⁶ China, Rani, Mitra., Ashees, Kumar, Saha., Fahmida, Khanam. (2023). 3. Spousal Abuse & Suicidal Ideation among Women. doi: 10.58806/ijirme.2023.v2i5n02

²⁷ S.M., De, Ia, Rie., Jannetta, B., A., Bos., Jeroen, W., Knipscheer., Paul, A., Boelen. (2018). 1. The impact of torture on mental health in the narratives of two torture survivors. Torture: quarterly journal on rehabilitation of torture victims and prevention of torture, doi: 10.7146/TORTURE.V28I2.106810

by such cognitive symptoms as difficulty in memory and concentration that impairs ability to work.²⁸

Emotional Disturbances: Some of the symptoms are described as chronic pain, increased irritability, mood swings and withdrawal from social activities that are made worse by everyday stress such as poverty and uncertainty of asylum status.²⁹ The long terms consequences in families and children includes:

Intergenerational Trauma: PTSD affects the family life of torture survivors as such voracity causes emotional and behavior problems in children.³⁰

Family Functioning: Mental health problems affect the ability of survivors to effectively parent, thus might deny children the needed emotional support.³¹

Social Isolation: Families can risk discrimination and consequently exclusion, which added to the existing psychological impact affects both partners and offspring.³²

Although the empowerment of individual survivor is reported as the cornerstone of support, it is important to understand that the effects of mental torture are not only at individual level but also extend to family and thus there is a need for organizational intensive support system.

Furthermore, the present study assessed the role of family, community, and legal systems in either perpetuating or mitigating marital mental torture. Family, community, and legal support in particular either contribute to or hinder marital mental torture. These systems can offer basic needs to fulfill for victims at least or can perpetrate rather cycles of violence for victims. Evaluating their implications involves looking at high level and broad support and intervention measures.

Family Support Systems

Family relations define how the people within the family experience domestic violence. Actual research also shows that there is a relationship between the type of family structure and the level of abuse with long time marriages tenancy advising complex power relations leading to

²⁸ M., Başoğlu. (2001). 5. Torture and its Consequences, Psychology of. doi: 10.1016/B0-08-043076-7/01432-7

²⁹ Amanda, C, de, C, Williams., Jannie, van, der, Merwe. (2013). 3. The psychological impact of torture. British journal of pain, doi: 10.1177/2049463713483596

³⁰ Suzan, J., Song., Andrew, M., Subica., Charles, Kaplan., Wietse, A., Tol., Joop, T., V., M., de, Jong. (2017). 4. Predicting the mental health and functioning of torture survivors. Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, doi: 10.1097/NMD.0000000000000678

³¹ Amanda, C, de, C, Williams., Jannie, van, der, Merwe. (2013). 3. The psychological impact of torture. British journal of pain, doi: 10.1177/2049463713483596

³² M., Başoğlu. (2001). 5. Torture and its Consequences, Psychology of. doi: 10.1016/B0-08-043076-7/01432-7

violence.³³By defining family as only those individuals who have a close relationship within the LGBT network, Turell and Herrmann proved that these networks failed to meet the needs of victims of intimate partner violence and, accordingly, left them feeling isolated.³⁴

Community Support Systems

Fortunately, it is established that the community resources available are limited and not well accessed by the victim especially in the marginalized category. Turell and Herrmann (2008) indicate that more people do not access general community services and this has a negative implication to the process of coming to behaviour and recovery.³⁵Marital mental torture can be alleviated by means of support within the community specifically, through abuse of the possibility to apply to the Mental Health Court as it can help with the issues of family violence.³⁶

Legal Systems

This paper has shown that legal frameworks can either work for victims or against them depending on their success and access. Mental health courts can be identified as a proactive approach to addressing hardcore factors that cause family violence hence helping to break the cycle of repeat offenses and assisting in healing.³⁷The increased legal support from related structures may help victims, give them the right to protection and justice for continuing abuse.³⁸Despite the prominent role that supporters can perform in relation to marital mental torture prevention or reduction, it is greatly significant to understand that reliable support systems can cause a reinvention of abuse cycles if these support systems are either inefficient or unavailable.

³³ Shriji, Khemariya, ..., Kaumudi, Tripathi. (2024). 4. Study of Mental Health, Self Esteem and Domestic Violence in relation to type of Family and tenure of Marriage. *Mind and society*, doi: 10.56011/mind-mri-132-20241

³⁴ Susan, C., Turell., Molly, Herrmann. (2008). 2. "Family" Support for Family Violence: Exploring Community Support Systems for Lesbian and Bisexual Women Who Have Experienced Abuse. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, doi: 10.1080/10894160802161372

³⁵ Susan, C., Turell., Molly, Herrmann. (2008). 2. "Family" Support for Family Violence: Exploring Community Support Systems for Lesbian and Bisexual Women Who Have Experienced Abuse. *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, doi: 10.1080/10894160802161372

³⁶ Donald, M., Linhorst., David, C., Kondrat., Jacob, Eikenberry., P., Ann, Dirks-Linhorst. (2020). 3. The Role of Mental Health Courts in Mitigating Family Violence.. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, doi: 10.1177/0886260520951316

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Leili, Panaghi., Zohreh, Ahmadabadi., Somayeh, Mohammadi. (2012). 5. The Role of Social Support and Coping Mechanisms on Mental Health of Women Suffering Spouse Abuse.

6. Conclusion

The research establishing that marital mental torture in Bangladesh is informed by culture, gender and socio-economic factors. Others are cultural beliefs, power relations between men and women, financial vulnerability, issues to do with communication and societal expectations respectively. To address this problem, measures that have been proposed are creating awareness campaigns, enhancing resources to help, and lobbying for new legislation. More research should be directed toward the role of geography, methodological approaches concerning effects, the assessment of support structures, and integration of other categories. In that regards, future study can help to enhance the knowledge of marital mental torture and enhance fighting strategies and approaches to help the victims in Bangladesh. Future research should also focus on the psychological impact of mental torture on both the victim and their children, psychosocial and other existing support systems and how these differences characterize experiences of Marital mental torture and access to support services.

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