

## Unveiling Inequalities: The Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Roles in Bangladesh

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### Abstract

This composition stated that the COVID-19 extremity affects men and women in non-identical ways, measures to resolve it must take gender into account. For women and maids, susceptibility in the home, on the frontal lines of health care, and in the labour request must be managed. The current exigency is poised to deeply complicate a stubborn bone while it is eluded that men are more likely to succumb to COVID-19, the gregarious and profitable risk will be paid, disproportionately, by the world's maids and women. COVID-19 outburst of 2020, there is a strong potentiality that a part setback is taking position and changing prospects. Whatever the outgrowth may be from this time, the part setback being endured between women and men will at least give a new standpoint into the prospects of the non-identical pieces of the blood system and gregarious system. The COVID-19 epidemic has aggravated the formerly gender inequalities with physical counteraccusations against women. With the check of services and instructional institutions and the rising norm of work-from-home and online instruction, along with the lack of services of domestic workers, the want to achieve overdue assignments in management has swelled. Contemporaneously, the conditions of gregarious distancing and sanitization have created new overdue assignments. Owing to the sexual division of labour, unsexed places and gregarious morals of performing domestic and care work, the burden of overdue work falls disproportionately on women. This exploration paper is a hunt to detect the cases and changes women face during the epidemic situation of COVID-19.

**Keywords:** COVID-19 extremity, gender jolt, susceptibility, labour request, social and profitable risk, changing prospects, gender inequalities, work from home, online instruction, overdue assignments.

### Introduction:

The global extremity of COVID-19 is gradationally making visible the fact that the world's husbandry and the conservation of our diurnal lives depend on the overdue and unnoticeable labour of women and. women on normal do three moments further overdue care work than men, a number that is likely to go high as all ménage assignments have to be played at home and while further than 1.52 billion (87 %) children are at home rather of the academy (UN 2020a & UN 2020b). Women are taking on full-time childcare and homeschooling, while also serving as the caregivers for the sick and seniors in the house. Eventually, this overdue labour burden leaves women less time for paid work, instruction, and career enhancement, which energies being profitable and gregarious inequalities. The epidemic is making this case more visible and a bigger challenge for maids and women (McGinnity & Russell, 2008).

Loaded homes, substance scurrility, restricted access to services and downgraded peer brace are aggravating these conditions. The COVID-19 epidemic has extorted annihilation across the world and brought the world to a deadlock with unknown changes in our society and frugality. As has been the case, the new coronavirus broadcast with such celerity and vehemence across the world due to the interconnectedness of the globalized world that utmost nations assessed temporary shutdowns as a program to contain its spread. The impacts of the cinch-down have been disruptive and changed the expressway in which humans achieve their diurnal conditioning and go about their routine lives. Similar jolt has still not been the same across all gregarious groups, with the most liable and marginalized groups being affected due to the formerly gregarious inequalities. Especially, the lockdown has widened gender inequalities and limited the openings for women. One of how the epidemic has affected women more than men is through the swelled burden of overdue work (Grown & Sánchez-Páramo, 2020).

Owing to the sexual division of labour, unsexed places and gregarious morals of performing domestic and care work in a ménage, the burden of overdue work falls disproportionately on women. Similar tasks are time-consuming and physically tiring, and subject women to time penury, leaving little or no time for them to take over productive conditioning like instruction employment, or rest (OECD, n.d.). The epidemic has worked out to complicate the formerly unsexed nature of overdue work at home. With the check of services and instructional institutions and the contemporaneously arising norm of work-from-home and online instruction, along with the lack of services of domestic employees, they want to achieve overdue assignments like cuisine, cleaning, washing, child care among others by ménage ingredients has swelled.

For working out women, the lockdown has meant the collapse of the discrimination of their professional spaces and domestic life which has led to the contemporaneous interpretation of their department work and ménage liabilities. In this environment, the ideal of the paper is to study the jolt of COVID-19 on time spent on overdue work and gender differences for the same in the civic centres in Bangladesh.

### **Objectives of the Research:**

- i. Identify immediate impacts of COVID-19 on pre-existing structural social and economic vulnerabilities of women
- ii. Identify the challenges faced by women, in accessing information and health services, education, livelihoods, and protection from government which is increased due to COVID.
- iii. Identify the change in their roles and the inequality they are facing.

### **Research Questions:**

To understand the immediate impact of COVID-19 on women's lives, the challenges they face, changes in their pre-existing roles and how this situation contributes to increasing inequality, the following research questions are posed:

- i. What is the immediate impact of COVID-19 on the lives of women and girls?
- ii. What challenges are they facing during the pandemic?
- iii. What potential changes have come to their pre-existing roles?
- iv. How is this situation increasing inequality?

### **The rationale of the Research:**

The research aims to investigate how the COVID-19 crisis affects men and women differently. This acknowledgement suggests recognition of the gender-specific vulnerabilities and challenges that arise during the pandemic. The research highlights vulnerabilities faced by women and girls, particularly in the home, on the front lines of health care, and in the labour market. The rationale likely involves understanding these specific challenges to develop targeted measures for resolution. The article notes that while men might be more susceptible to succumbing to COVID-19, the social and economic toll will be disproportionately paid by women. The research seeks to explore and address these disparities. The mention of a potential role reversal between men and women during the pandemic suggests an interest in understanding how societal expectations and roles are shifting. This could be a key rationale for exploring changes in the family and social systems. The research is motivated by the observation that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing gender inequalities. The rationale involves investigating the extent of these exacerbations and proposing solutions to mitigate them. The research mentions the sexual division of labour and gendered roles contributing to the disproportionate burden on women. The research likely aims to delve deeper into these structural issues and recommend changes or interventions (Rathgeber, 1990). The research likely aims to explore the health and educational implications for women in this context. The rationale of the research is grounded in the need to comprehensively understand and address the gender-specific challenges and inequalities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on the experiences of women and girls in various aspects of life.

### **Methodology:**

The study is grounded on qualitative analysis. Data is collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is collected by direct interview and secondary data is collected through exploration reports, journals, papers, folders and websites. There is an in-depth analysis through case studies. The secondary is collected from colourful journals, books, review papers, forum papers and some information from browsing websites of affiliated matters those content analyses. The method is used as a group of the representative population from the whole population because the whole study population cannot be studied due to short time and coffers. There are several types of method systems. In my exploration, it is used as an intentional method system.

### **Literature Review:**

Prevailing gender inequalities are exacerbated, leading to gaps in access to health services. Women bear an increased burden in areas where health systems are overloaded or schools are closed, as care for children and sick family members largely falls on them. A survey in Bangladesh conducted that 24.61% of women reported being unable to seek medical care when needed, with only 1% covered by health insurance (UN, 2020a & 2020b). The survey also highlighted difficulties in accessing medical supplies, affecting both women and men. The impact extends to mental and emotional health, with 62% of women reporting adverse effects. Pregnant women and those with gynaecological issues face challenges accessing healthcare facilities due to transportation issues. Adolescent girls, already at risk due to early marriages, are further affected, jeopardizing their sexual and reproductive health rights. The gendered division of labour also exposes women, who constitute the majority of healthcare workers, to higher risks of COVID-19 infection due to a lack of

adequate personal protective equipment (PPE). The increased workload, long hours, and exposure to infection further compromise the safety and security of women in these roles. The COVID-19 pandemic has widened existing gender inequalities, particularly in the realm of unpaid work and access to essential services. Addressing these disparities is crucial to building a more equitable and resilient society in the post-pandemic era (Coffey et al., 2020).

### **Gender Roles in Bangladesh:**

Gender roles are the “social definition” of women and men. They vary among different societies and cultures, classes, ages and during different periods in history. Gender-specific roles and responsibilities are often conditioned by household structure, access to resources, specific impacts of the global economy, and other locally relevant factors such as ecological conditions (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Gender roles in Bangladesh, like in many societies, have been shaped by cultural, historical, and socio-economic factors. While there has been progress in challenging traditional gender norms, certain expectations and roles persist. Bangladesh has traditionally followed a division of labour where men are often associated with outdoor work, such as agriculture or formal employment, while women are expected to take care of household responsibilities (Quisumbing, 2003). Over the years, there has been a significant increase in women’s participation in the workforce, particularly in sectors like the garment industry and agriculture. However, women are still underrepresented in leadership roles in various industries. While there have been improvements in girls’ education, especially at the primary level, challenges remain in ensuring equal access and opportunities for education. In rural areas, girls may face barriers such as early marriage and societal expectations that prioritize boys’ education. The family is a central institution in Bangladeshi society. Traditional gender roles often dictate that women are responsible for caregiving and maintaining the household, while men are considered the primary breadwinners (Quisumbing, 2003). Arranged marriages are common in Bangladesh, and societal expectations often emphasize early marriage for women. However, there is a growing awareness of the negative impacts of early marriage on women’s health and well-being. Bangladesh has made legal advancements to protect women’s rights. The country has laws addressing issues such as domestic violence, dowry, and workplace discrimination. However, the effective implementation of these laws can be a challenge. Women’s participation in politics has seen improvements, with reserved seats for women in the national parliament. However, women’s political empowerment and representation at various levels of government remain areas of concern. Various organizations and initiatives in Bangladesh work towards women’s empowerment, providing education, healthcare, and economic opportunities (Oláh, & Gähler, 2014). These efforts aim to challenge traditional gender roles and improve the status of women in society. Despite legal measures, violence against women, including domestic violence and acid attacks, remains a serious issue in Bangladesh. Efforts are ongoing to raise awareness, provide support services, and improve legal mechanisms for addressing such violence. It is important to note that gender roles are dynamic and subject to change over time (Moser, 1993). While Bangladesh has made progress in challenging traditional norms, there is ongoing work to promote gender equality and empower women in various aspects of life according to societal expectations that prioritize boys’ education.

### **The Unveiling Inequalities in Bangladesh:**

In Bangladesh, like many other countries, various forms of inequality persist across different domains. These inequalities can be socio-economic, gender-based, educational, and more. There is a

significant gap between the rich and the poor in Bangladesh (Vijaya et al., 2013). Urban areas tend to have higher income levels compared to rural areas, contributing to disparities in living standards and access to basic services. Despite progress in recent years, gender inequality remains a challenge (Sayer, 2005). Women often face discrimination in education, employment, and healthcare. Issues such as early marriage, dowry, and violence against women are persistent challenges. While strides have been made in improving access to education, there are still disparities, particularly between urban and rural areas. Girls, in some cases, face barriers to education due to cultural norms and economic constraints. Access to healthcare services varies across different regions of Bangladesh. Rural areas often lack adequate healthcare infrastructure, leading to disparities in health outcomes. Women's healthcare, in particular, can be affected by cultural norms and limited access to services. There is a significant divide between rural and urban areas in terms of infrastructure, employment opportunities, and access to services. Urban areas, especially the capital city Dhaka, experience more development and economic growth compared to many rural regions. Landownership patterns can contribute to economic disparities.

Large portions of agricultural land are owned by a relatively small number of individuals, leading to challenges for landless farmers and agricultural labourers. Ethnic minorities and indigenous communities may face discrimination and marginalization, affecting their access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and this vulnerability can exacerbate existing inequalities. Low-lying coastal areas and riverine regions are particularly susceptible to flooding and other climate-related hazards, affecting the livelihoods of vulnerable populations. Despite some progress, political representation may not be evenly distributed across different groups in Bangladesh. Ensuring diverse representation in political offices remains a challenge. Access to information and communication technology is not uniform across the country. There is a digital divide, with urban areas having better access to the internet and technology compared to rural areas. Efforts are being made by the government, non-governmental organizations, and international partners to address these inequalities. However, achieving significant and sustainable progress requires a comprehensive and integrated approach that considers economic, social, and cultural factors (Sayer, 2005).

### **Findings and Discussion:**

**Unsexed Experiences of Overdue Work:** This exploration reveals that the epidemic and lockdown measures have boosted the need for social distancing, hygiene, and care, placing a heavier burden on women. With the emergence of work-from-home and online education models, coupled with the absence of domestic workers, women bear the mass of increased liabilities, both directly and laterally easing these requirements. The unsexed nature of overdue work becomes more pronounced, affecting women disproportionately.

**Online Work and Education:** The shift to remote work and education due to the pandemic has resulted in individuals spending more time at home performing the same conditioning. This transition places fresh demands on women, who now bear the responsibility of earning services that were preliminarily outsourced, leading to an increase in overdue work. Women partake in their gestures of managing ménage chores, online classes, and professional liabilities contemporaneously, pressing the strain on their time and energy.

**Sanitization and Hygiene: The cargo of New Conditioning:** Maintaining social distancing and hygiene has introduced new time-consuming conditioning, further aggravating the workload for



women. The need to sanitize everything from groceries to apparel adds to the diurnal chores. Women bandy the challenges of icing cleanliness in the ménage, with specific attention to the redundant sweats needed to boost impunity and incorporate herbal products. The epidemic has brought about an ineluctable increase in overdue ménage chores.

### **Unseen Struggles: The Impact of COVID-19 on Women's Places:**

- i. **Comprehensions and Gender Places:** An analysis of gender places during the epidemic reveals a nuanced perspective. Despite pollsters denying the belief that women are innately responsible for managing chores, an obsession with jobless women, particularly housekeepers, to bear a lesser burden is observed. The logic behind these centres on the supposition that these women have further time available, amplifying inequalities in managing liabilities (UN, 2020a & 2020b).
- ii. **Economic Impact on Women:** COVID-19's profound impact on global frugality disproportionately affects women. Women, earning lower and holding lower secure jobs, face advanced vulnerability to job losses. Layoffs, particularly in the services sector where women are overrepresented, hang to roll back earnings in womanish labour force participation, limiting their capability to support themselves and their families (World Bank, n.d.; World Bank, 2020).
- iii. **Health Impacts on Women:** Multiple inequalities, including socioeconomic status and geographic position, hamper women's access to quality healthcare services during health afflictions. As frontline health workers, women face advanced exposure to the contagion. Dislocations in sexual and reproductive health services contribute to increased motherly mortality, adolescent gravidity, and the spread of conditions (UN, 2020a & 2020b).
- iv. **Overdue Care Work on Women:** The COVID-19 extremity intensifies the demand for overdue care work, exposing the critical part women play. With academy closures and overwhelmed health services, women bear the burden of care paying. This exacerbates gender imbalances in overdue care work, limiting women's participation in formal husbandry and hindering their overall well-being.
- v. **Counteraccusations of Burden of Overdue Work on Women:** The disproportionate burden of overdue work on women raises enterprises about time poverty, limiting their engagement in productive conditioning and hindering career advancement. This burden, combined with lower labour force participation (World Bank, n.d.; World Bank, 2020), affects women's profitable status, fiscal independence, and decision-making within homes. The donkeywork of overdue work further limits openings for social and political participation, impacting women's commission and overall well-being. The rejection of overdue labour from public account systems and policy considerations adds a fresh subcaste of the challenge for women in the development process.

### **Unsexed Challenges amidst COVID-19: A Call to Action:**

- i. **Gender-Grounded Violence:** The COVID-19 epidemic has aggravated global violence against women and girls, with reports of a swell of over 25. Crowded homes, substance abuse, and reduced access to services consolidate the extremity.

Support services are overwhelmed and domestic violence harbors face check. Critical measures include integrating violence forestallment into COVID-19 response plans, designating harbours as essential services, and creating safe spaces for reporting abuse. Online services, mindfulness juggernauts, and targeted advocacy are pivotal in addressing this raising issue (Anwar et al., 2020).

- ii. **Impact of COVID-19 on Girls' Marriage:** The epidemic poses trouble to sweats combating child marriage, potentially leading to a fresh 13 million cases by 2030. School closures contribute to this by limiting openings and prospects for girls. The shift to online literacy creates challenges, particularly in remote communities. Critical conduct involves prioritizing access to education, especially for girls, to help an increase in child marriages (UNICEF, n.d.).
- iii. **Increased Violence Dropped Access to Support Services:** Violence against women has risen encyclopedically during the epidemic, coinciding with reduced support services. In Bangladesh, closures of legal support and extremity centres pose fresh challenges. Perpetrators exploit health installation limitations, inhibiting survivors from seeking medical support. This widening gender inequality requires immediate attention to ensure access to justice and support for survivors (Sifat, 2020).
- iv. **Lack of Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights:** In Bangladesh, youthful unattached individuals face obstacles in penetrating sexual and reproductive health services. The epidemic exacerbates challenges, with dearth and increased prices of contraceptives. Reduced access to safe revocation services may contribute to a rise in unintended gravidity. The lack of nutritional food for pregnant and lactating women further complicates the issue (Husaini, 2022).
- v. **Impacts in Humanitarian and Fragile Settings and on Human Rights:** Women and girls in conflict-affected regions face heightened pitfalls due to dislocations in health, philanthropic, and development programs. The shift to online converse and restrictions on movement endangers mortal rights and women's civil society associations. Critical measures include maintaining the women, peace, and security docket and addressing the adverse impact on communal space (Pratt & Frost, 2020).

### Potential Outcomes:

- i. **Gendered Struggles, unveiling the Impact of COVID-19 on Women's Roles,** this research aims to delineate the evolving roles of women during the COVID-19 pandemic, examining the shift from their pre-existing positions and the escalating gender inequalities they face. The pandemic, while affecting both sexes differently, particularly impacts women socially, economically, and mentally. By delving into these dynamics, the study seeks to illuminate the heightened vulnerabilities and increasing disparities that women grapple with during this crisis (Memar & Farajkhoda, 2023).
- ii. **Identification of Gender-Specific Challenges:** The research may reveal specific challenges faced by women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the areas of health care, the labour market, and domestic responsibilities (Anwar et al., 2020).
- iii. **Policy Recommendations:** Based on the identified challenges, the research could lead to the formulation of targeted policy recommendations. These policies might

- address gender disparities and vulnerabilities, providing a framework for governments and organizations to implement gender-sensitive measures.
- iv. **Changes in Societal Perceptions:** The exploration of role reversals and changing expectations between men and women may contribute to a shift in societal perceptions. This could lead to a more nuanced understanding of gender roles and expectations in the context of family and social systems (Jaim, 2021).
- v. **Long-Term Societal Changes:** The research may contribute to discussions about long-term societal changes, challenging traditional gender norms and promoting more equitable distribution of responsibilities within families and communities.
- vi. Ultimately, the potential outcomes of the research would contribute to fostering a more equitable and inclusive response to crises, with a focus on addressing the unique challenges faced by women and girls.

### Recommendations:

Tallying to the rulings and its conversations, it is eluded that the work-from-home morals and online instruction become more adjustable and lawsuits conditions of the workers. Likewise, similar inflexibility needs to be extended not only to women but also to men to grease their donation in the overdue domestic work. Still, caution should be exercised in tours of procedure timber as inflexibility in working out will not automatically restate into gender equivalency in overdue work and will have to be catalyzed through mindfulness, knowledge and openings. Eventually, the new morals of work and affiliated procedure, by both the government and the private players should concentrate on gender mainstreaming, where gender perspectives are integrated into the designing, perpetration monitoring and evaluation of programs, preferably addressing these enterprises in insulation. Any complaint outburst affects women and men, but one trend is harmonious- afflictions complicate the gender inequalities that women and maids face in their lives.

- i. Ensure equal participation of women and different groups in exigency reactions
- ii. Toughen mechanisms for collecting and reciting gender-disaggregated data.
- iii. Give access to information and services for women, especially in the informal region.
- iv. Spark trauma comforting centres and sanctum homes to ensure lasted services.
- v. Toughen brace services for survivors of violence.
- vi. Commence juggernauts to help gender-grounded violence and promote participated manage liabilities.
- vii. Spark community-grounded trolls and covering panels.
- viii. Apply special care and security measures for frontline employees.
- ix. Seat on prenatal and postnatal care services, and blood planning for women and adolescent maids.
- x. Conduct voluminous-scale exploration of non-identical gender confines during the epidemic.
- xi. Develop and introduce protocols for online brace services.
- xii. Fascinate men and sonnies in addressing and precluding violence against women and children. The scale that we are witnessing moment points towards nobody short of a debacle for women and maids far and wide, especially those who were formerly abiding in liable situations.



An epidemic can amplify the pre being worse situation and it can intensify all the being inequalities. The outgrowth eventually a shapes who is affected, the inflexibility of the situation, and its jolt and sweat demand to recover. This COVID-19 epidemic situation has created gregarious and profitable impacts turning into a global extremity in history it is a situation which requires an entire society reaction to match its complications. But the reaction should be holistic whether at the transnational or public position, or else it will be significantly weakened if it does not support the delicate ways of our thing in which inequalities have made all of us more liable to the impacts of the crisis (Alon et al., 2020).

However, inclusive and flexible associations, we are going to fail half of our generation, if we take to exclusively repeat one program and fail to exercise this moment to rebuild more equality. Every COVID-19 reaction plan and every reclamation package and budgeting of coffers needs to manipulate the gender impacts of this epidemic.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, the unseen battles of women during the epidemic emphasize the critical want for a complete and inclusive path to manipulate the multifaceted expostulations they face in colourful spheres of life. The deliberation sheds light on the multifaceted expostulations women face during the epidemic, featuring the disproportionate jolt on their places, liabilities, and altogether well-being. As the world grapples with the consequences of COVID-19, understanding and addressing the unsexed battles is essential for furthering adaptability and equivalency in post-pandemic associations. This paper highlights the jolt of COVID-19 on gender equivalency, especially on the burden of overdue work for women. The paper shows that women were formerly participating in an advanced burden of overdue work, and COVID-19 and the consequent cinch-down have worked out to complicate the gender inequalities and swelled their burden of overdue work more.

Among women, connubial status and employment status are the crucial determinants of women's burden of overdue work where time spent on overdue work has swelled the loftiest for wedded women and jobless women, who were formerly spending the loftiest time on similar work indeed before the lockdown. Specially, during the lockdown, roughly 22.5 of wedded women, as assimilated to zero men and unattached women, worked out for further than 70 hours/week.

Also, jobless women substantiation the loftiest boost of 30.5 chance points for those who spent further than 70h/ week on overdue work as assimilated to assumed women who show off the loftiest boost of 14.7 chance points for those spending 22 – 28h/ week and 29 – 49h/ week each. The rising morals of work-from-home and online instruction, and the new requirements of sanitization are responsible for the swelled burden. For jobless women, especially housewives and housekeepers, the inordinate burden is due to the perception that their share of responsibility for overdue work should be more due to not being enthralled in full-time employment and being more effective in performing these tasks. Similarly, jobless women have to achieve the overdue domestic work for all ingredients of the management. For assumed women, the collapse of the perfection of the professional and particular lives, both of which are now confined to the ménage, means that department commitments and domestic liabilities are to be answered contemporaneously. This has created time penury for utmost women who impact their openings for engaging in employment, professional interpretation, career enhancement, and rest, thereby affecting their well-being and commission. In the environment of comprehensions describing gender places for overdue work, while it was set up that individualities did not overtly buy inputting the burden on women by the grace of their gender, but accounted it with the time spent on full-time paid work( for jobless women) and their inefficiencies in performing similar

tasks. In extension, the effects on employment-related resolution- timber shows that gender places and liabilities, though overtly refused, remain settled in the gregarious morals of the society.

Still, there is a shaft of a stopgap in switching gender places in the ménage work during the epidemic as both men and women are appearing for gender equivalency in performing overdue work, especially when all ingredients of the ménage are enthralled in full-time employment.

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