

Violence as a Public Health Issue: A Narrative Review: Reg No: 297

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ABSTRACT

Background: Despite significant economic growth, India confronts an endemic crisis of violence. This paper argues for a paradigm shift, reframing violence from a purely criminal-legal issue to a multifaceted public health epidemic that requires a prevention-oriented approach. **Methods:** The analysis adopts a public health lens, employing the Four-Step Scientific Methodology and the Social-Ecological Model as foundational frameworks. It synthesizes and examines national data from key surveillance systems, including the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) and the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), to define the problem and identify its structural determinants. **Results:** The epidemiological findings reveal a crisis of staggering proportions. Nearly one-third of married women (29.3%) experience spousal violence (NFHS-5), and the nation's suicide rate reached an unprecedented high of 12.4 per 100,000 population in 2022 (NCRB). Deep-rooted determinants, including patriarchy, caste hierarchies, and socioeconomic deprivation, were identified as primary drivers. The appraisal of systemic responses revealed significant implementation gaps in progressive laws like the PWDVA (2005) and an underutilization of the healthcare system as a frontline for intervention. **Conclusion:** Violence in India is a preventable public health epidemic. A comprehensive, multi-pronged strategy is essential, operating across primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention levels. This includes sustained public awareness campaigns, strengthening the healthcare response, and providing integrated, long-term support for survivors to foster a safer and more just society.

KEYWORDS

Violence, Public Health, India, Structural Determinants, Prevention