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The Cost of Covid-19: Economic abuse throughout the pandemic

Dr Kathryn Royal, Research Officer
kathryn.royal@survivingeconomicabuse.org @_kathrynroyal

Our vision

Our vision is a world in which women and girls are economically equal and live their lives free of abuse and exploitation



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What is economic abuse?

Domestic Abuse Bill:

Economic abuse is defined as: any behaviour that has a substantial and adverse effect on B's ability to –

- a) acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or
- b) obtain goods or services

'Property' would cover items such as a mobile phone or car and 'goods and services' would cover, for example, utilities such as heating, or items such as food or clothing.



The Cost of Covid-19 research

- Survey looking at:

- Employment and education
- Housing or accommodation
- Finances
- Access to welfare benefits
- Child maintenance
- Access to economic resources and core necessities
- Accessing help and support

- Two rounds of semi-structured interviews



Who took part?

- 560 total participants – 300 victim-survivors and 260 frontline professionals
- 83% of victim-survivors were currently experiencing ongoing abuse and, of these, 89% were experiencing post-separation abuse
- 97% of victim-survivors were female and 98% of victim-survivors indicated the perpetrator was male
- 83% of victim-survivors described themselves as white/white British; 5% as Asian/Asian British; 4% as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British; 4% as mixed/multiple ethnic groups; 5% as other
- 82% of victim-survivors were from England; 7% from Wales; 7% from Scotland; 1% from Northern Ireland



Findings – Employment & Education

As a result of the perpetrator's actions during the outbreak:

- 45% of women said their employment or education situation had either significantly or slightly worsened
- 17% of women and 53% of professionals were concerned about victim-survivors losing their jobs

'During lockdown it meant that I was working from home and then he was also working from home... So I suppose that the main difference was kind of being there non-stop, and him being here when he would normally have gone out to work every day then come back.'
(Victim-survivor)



Findings – Employment & Education

- 33% of victim-survivors and 66% of professionals reported that balancing childcare and homeworking during lockdown was a concern due to the perpetrator's actions
- 47% of professionals noted safety concerns for victim-survivors working or studying at home during lockdown

'He just made it impossible for me to work really, really difficult just disrupted non-stop. Non-stop abuse really absolutely unending, sort of verbal abuse or physical abuse as well and he would also just, you know, demand that I look after him all the time and fly off the handle if I didn't.' (Victim-survivor)



How perpetrators interfered with work or study

- Sabotaging women's ability to work or study

'My old work contacted me to go back to work and he wouldn't let me.' (Victim-survivor)

'We've got a client who gets up very early in the morning because he sabotages her work by not looking after the kids. And she gets up really early to try and get her work done.' (Professional)

- Sabotaging women's access to economic resources needed to work or study



If you would like to learn more

Free series of webinars:

- Privately owned housing – 2nd December, 2pm-4pm
- Banking – 10th December, 10am-12pm
- Covid-19 – 11th December, 10am-11:15am
- Police – 15th December, 2pm-4pm
- Economic abuse and children – 16th December, 1pm-3pm

<https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/sea-webinars/>

- International network on economic abuse:

<https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/home/international-network/>



Raising awareness: resources for victim-survivors and professionals



<https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/resources>

