

EDITORIAL

Dear Colleagues,

Although the fact that the death rate of males due to coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) is twice that of women may seem like an advantage to women, there is another less lethal pandemic that continues to plague women. Gender inequality. The pandemic has added to women's burdens in both family and business life.

According to data provided by the Turkish Statistics Institute (TUIK), the labor force participation rate is 68.2% for men and 30.2% for women in Turkey. The service sector, where women are over-represented, has been particularly affected by the pandemic. Women are simultaneously at risk of losing their job and are exposed to greater disease risk.

The pandemic has put additional strain on health workers, and therefore women, due to challenging working conditions, exposure to illness/death, and the limitations pandemic restrictions have brought to social life. Compassion fatigue and exhaustion due to extraordinary circumstances are serious concerns. The physical and mental state of health workers is having significant effects all over the world.

Furthermore, the need to stay at home due to the pandemic has affected women more negatively than men. Women's responsibilities within the family have increased; their activities in the public sphere, and in many fields, their ability to work outside the home, have decreased; they have been subjected to even more violence; and their mental health has been more negatively affected with fewer opportunities to soothe it. Recent literature reports have shown that during the pandemic, women have been exposed to more environmental stressors and experienced more depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms.

COVID-19 was initially thought to affect everyone equally, however, it has become clear over time that it most affects the poor, the elderly, the disabled, women, and children, those who are the most disadvantaged and vulnerable. As always, psychiatric nurses must stand by all disadvantaged groups and support women. Women not only compose half of society, they often hold up half of society.

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