

# **"It's My Responsibility to Care for Him, My Household, and the Society": Gendered Roles and the COVID-19 Outbreak**

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## **Abstract**

**Although the COVID-19 pandemic, its ensuing lockdowns, and the accelerated rate of pandemic outbreaks in the last six (6) years have resulted in burdening household realities for all. There seems to be an increasing and bruising reality for the feminine role. Therefore, this article examined the extent of the increasing realities, vulnerabilities and burden on women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic globally. The radical feminist theorisation was found most suitable in analysing some of the experiences women and girls encountered during other epidemics and the COVID-19 pandemic. Using the systematic review of articles on the PubMed and ScienceDirect databases between 2014-2020; findings showed that the COVID-19 and other epidemics outbreaks have heightened the roles of women and girls within and outside households and have resulted in increased economic realities, increased vulnerabilities to infections, increased mortality rates due to conflicts, violence and displacements; the inability of the girl-child to focus on home-schooling via the e-learning platforms as a result of the increased burden of household activities amongst others. These gendered roles and stereotypes accrued to women and girls took another dimension during the COVID-19 outbreak, especially as the world experienced partial and total lockdown. Hence, this study recommended the dire need for community engagement and sensitisation to better educate women and men about possible risk factors and shared responsibility for preventive actions against future pandemics. Finally, data disaggregation on these gender demands and realities in the household is important to create platforms to generate further discussions.**