An Empirical Analysis On Effects And Causes Of Domestic Violence Against Women

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Abstract

Factors affecting domestic violence against women in Turkish cities having different socioeconomic structures, are analyzed in this study. These factors consist of social, cultural, economic and psychological factors. In contrast to what we expect based on earlier literature, the family income level has a positive relationship with violence. Logistic regression analysis also revealed that a university graduate and having a personal income decreases the prevalence of violence as expected. However, working women and women with children are more prone to domestic violence. Again, there is a strong association between the neighborhood where the family lives and the incidence of violence. The extent of male dominance, as measured by the question "How are the decisions taken in the family" is also associated with domestic violence: the woman is less likely to be abused in households where decisions are taken collectively. Likewise, families where women have to get permission from the husband to carry out certain activities, have increased incidence of suffering from husband's violence. Psychological factors, such as being abused or having witnessed violence as a child, are also significantly correlated with domestic violence.

Keywords: Affecting factors, Domestic violence, Prevalence.

INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is an important public health problem worldwide, regardless of geographical limits, economic development, and educational level and affects women of all ages. Domestic violence is often carried out by the spouse, with women typically being the recipients.1,2 Violence against women causes many problems, including physical injury, impaired mental health and quality of life, chronic pain, disability, suicide attempts, drug and alcohol use, depression, nightmares, and social isolation. Being a victim of domestic violence increases the rate of utilization of health services and affects the mental health of family members.3,4 While rates of violence against women are increasing in the 21st century, studies on the prevalence of factors affecting it in Turkey are minimal. It is expected that the results of the present study will contribute to enlarging the literature on domestic violence and promoting efforts to prevent violence against women. In addition, the findings of this study could confer specific goals to the Turkey National Plan for Violence against Women, which needs a stronger focus on the prevention of violence. For this reason, in the case of Turkey, it
is necessary to understand the different dimensions of violence thoroughly and analyze their different aspects. This is the first study conducted throughout the city of the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Kutahya, the forms of violence and risk factors. The results of this study are important for leading the way, as a data source, for efforts to prevent violence against women and future studies. This study is aimed at identifying the prevalence of domestic violence and the factors that influence domestic violence.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Domestic abuse, also called "domestic violence" or "intimate partner violence," can be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. These include any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. It can occur within a range of relationships including couples who are married, living together or dating. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels. Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith or class. Victims of domestic abuse may also include a child or other relative, or any other household member. Domestic abuse is typically manifested as a pattern of abusive behavior toward an intimate partner in a dating or family relationship, where the abuser exerts power and control over the victim.

Domestic abuse can be mental, physical, economic or sexual in nature. Incidents are rarely isolated, and often escalate in frequency and severity. Domestic abuse may culminate in serious physical injury or death. According to the United States Department of Justice office on Violence Against Women, the definition of domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain control over another intimate partner. Many types of abuse are included in the definition of domestic violence:

- **Physical abuse** can include hitting, biting, slapping, battering, shoving, punching, pulling hair, burning, cutting, pinching, etc. (any type of violent behavior inflicted on the victim). Physical abuse also includes denying someone medical treatment and forcing drug/alcohol use on someone.

- **Sexual abuse** occurs when the abuser coerces or attempts to coerce the victim into sexual contact or sexual behavior without the victim's consent. This often takes the form of marital rape, attacking sexual body parts, physical violence that is followed by forcing sex, sexually demeaning the victim, or even telling sexual jokes at the victim's expense.

- **Emotional abuse** involves invalidating or deflating the victim's sense of self-worth and/or self-esteem. Emotional abuse often takes the form of constant criticism, name-calling, injuring the victim's relationship with his/her children, or interfering with the victim's abilities.

- **Economic abuse** takes place when the abuser makes or tries to make the victim financially reliant. Economic abusers often seek to maintain total control over financial resources, withhold the victims access to funds, or prohibit the victim from going to school or work.
-**Psychological abuse** involves the abuser invoking fear through intimidation; threatening to physically hurt himself/herself, the victim, children, the victim's family or friends, or the pets; destruction of property; injuring the pets; isolating the victim from loved ones; and prohibiting the victim from going to school or work.

-**Threats** to hit, injure, or use a weapon are a form of psychological abuse.

-**Stalking** can include the following victim, spying, watching, harassing, showing up at the victim's home or work, sending gifts, collecting information, making phone calls, leaving written messages, or appearing at a person's home or workplace. These acts are individually legal, but any of these behaviors have been done continuously in results in a stalking crime.

-**Cyberstalking** refers to online action or repeated emailing that inflicts substantial emotional distress in the recipient.

**Gender and Domestic Violence**: Domestic abuse is a gendered crime which is deeply rooted in the societal inequality between men and women. It is a form of gender-based violence, violence "directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects disproportionately." (CEDAW, 1992).

Women are more likely to experience multiple incidents of abuse, different types of domestic abuse (intimate partner violence, sexual assault and stalking) and in particular sexual violence. Any woman can experience domestic abuse regardless of race, ethnic or religious group, sexuality, class, or disability, but some women experience other forms of oppression and discrimination may face further barriers to disclosing abuse and finding help.

Domestic abuse exists as part of violence against women and girls; Which also includes different forms of family violence such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so called "honour crimes" that are perpetrated primarily by family members, often with multiple perpetrators.

**CAUSES OR RISK FACTORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Although there is no specific cause for domestic violence, women are at the highest risk of being the victim of domestic violence including those with male partners who are abused or underemployed, afflicted by poverty, have not graduated from high school, and have been or have been in a romantic relationship with the victim. Unmarried individuals in heterosexual relationships tend to be at risk of becoming victims of intimate partner abuse. A mind-set that gives men power over women puts individuals at risk of becoming involved in an abusive relationship, either as a perpetrator or as a victim. Domestic violence against women tends to be reported more often by victims who are in a relationship with a man with more conservative religious views than their own, regardless of whether the couple is the same or different religions or denominations. Regular attendance at religious services is apparently associated with less reported intimate partner abuse. Research shows that those who grew up in a household in which domestic violence took place or in which a parent suffered from alcoholism are more likely to become perpetrators or victims of intimate partner violence as adults. Teenagers suffer from mental illness as well as risk being in an abusive relationship with young
adults. African-American and Hispanic teens have been found to be at higher risk of being victims of teen domestic violence, with some studies indicating independence of socioeconomic status. Another risk factor for teen dating/domestic violence includes lower grades.

THE EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON WOMEN

Violence has immediate effects on women's health, which in some cases, is fatal. Physical, mental and behavioural health (1) consequences can also persist long after the violence has stopped. Violence against women and girls occurs in every country and culture, and is rooted in social and cultural attitudes that privilege men over women and boys over girls. The abuse takes many forms, including:

* intimate partner violence (sometimes called domestic or family violence, or spousal abuse) which can be physical, sexual or emotional;
* dating violence;
* sexual violence (including rape) by strangers, acquaintances or partners;
* systematic rape during armed conflict;
* forced prostitution, trafficking or other forms of sexual exploitation;
* female genital mutilation (FGM) and other harmful traditional practices;
* dowry-related violence;
* forced marriage or cohabitation, including forced wife inheritance and 'wife kidnapping';
* femicide and the killing girls or women in the name of 'honor'; and
* female infanticide and deliberate neglect of girls.

While the prevalence and forms of violence against women in low-and middle income countries may differ from those in higher-income countries, the health consequences seem to be similar across all settings (Table 1). However, the nature or severity of the effects of violence can be influenced by context-specific factors such as: poverty; gender inequality; cultural or religious practices; access to health, legal and other support services; conflict or natural disaster; HIV/AIDS prevalence; and legal and policy environments.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON WOMEN IN TURKEY

A research found little in terms of research on domestic violence in Turkey. The earliest study was conducted by a market research firm, PIAR (1988), which found that 75 percent of women reported having been physically abused by their husbands. Yüksel (1990) interviewed 140 married women who had applied for counselling at the Istanbul University Medical Center and found that 57 percent reported histories of abuse by their husbands. Brunette (1991), who interviewed 116 couples in Istanbul, found that 54 percent of husbands admitted to having
battered their wives. A national survey of 1,181 women across 11 provinces nationwide, 22 percent of the married respondents reported having been physically abused by their husbands (PIAR, 1992). In another national survey, which covered 12 provinces in five geographical regions in Turkey, 30 percent of the 2,479 women interviewed indicated that they had been physically abused by their husbands, while 34 percent of the 1,147 men questioned admitted that they had been physically abused by their wives (Nielsen-Family Research Institute, 1994).

In recent years there have been other studies, which have has been added to the limited body of knowledge concerning domestic violence (e.g. Foundation for Women's Solidarity 1997; Purple Roof Foundation 1996, 1998, Ilkkaracan 1998). There is also limited knowledge of the health effects of domestic violence against women in Turkey. In one study, Highsel (1990) found that anxiety and depressive and somatic symptoms were more common among battered women. Although each study of the respondents consisted of the women who sought psychological counselling, and are thus not representative of women in the larger population, it is significant that every result replicates the numerous findings in other countries which indicate that domestic violence against women has psychological multiple and physical health effects.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SAFETY TIPS FOR WOMEN

*During an argument, or if you feel tension building, avoid areas in your home where weapons might be available – the kitchen, bathroom, bedroom or workshops.

*If there are weapons in your household such as firearms – lock them up!

*Know where there is a safe exit from your home – a window, elevator or stairwell.

*Discuss the situation with a trusted neighbor if you can. Ask them to call the police if they hear a disturbance. Find a code word to use with them if you need the police.

*Always keep a packed bag ready.

*Know where you would go to be safe if you have to leave, even if you don’t really think you need to.

CONCLUSION

The highest prevalence belongs to verbal violence followed by physical, emotional, economic, and sexual violence. Despite different questioning methods, it was determined that 22 risk factors were most commonly examined in the studies, and these risk factors were summed up under three categories separately: socio demographic characteristics, well-being characteristics related and marriage related characteristics. It is of further interest that the most commonly examined characteristics were socio demographic characteristics. The results of this study show that domestic violence is still a major problem in Turkey. Nearly half of the women had suffered domestic violence and most of them had been subjected to violence by their husbands. Low social status in Turkey was connected to the level of domestic violence. Efforts should be made to improve women's social status. Changing the country's patriarchal system, and educating women and their spouses can be useful in preventing domestic violence.
References


