

Views of Women about Domestic Violence against Women: Turkish Sample

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ABSTRACT The study was conducted for the purpose of determining views of women about domestic violence against woman. The research sample was composed of 1524 women. The samples were identified using the files of Number One Yenimahalle Mother-Child Health and Family Planning Center. The data were collected through the interviews with the subjects. According to the research, the most common type of violence stated by the participants is physical violence. Employment status of the subjects is found to have partial effects on their views. Regarding the reasons for domestic violence against women, the view of the participants is. "alcohol and/or substance abuse by husband". The participants mostly state that the necessary action to avoid violence against women is to educate both women and men.

INTRODUCTION

The term of "violence against women" refers to all types of violence based on gender which occurs either in public or in personal life and which results physical, sexual or psychological damage or pain in women or threats, pressure or limitations in freedom (T.C. Başbakanlık Kadın Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü 1995)

Violence against women is generally analyzed under three categories: physical, psychological and sexual (Avci 2007; Anonymous 2005). Violence can be further grouped into such categories as emotional violence, verbal violence, economical violence, sexual and physical violence (Güner 1996).

Risk groups for violence are stated as follows: all women from all age groups, women with children under 30 age, adolescent girls, girl childs, old people, homeless people, women carrying HIV (+) (Rosenberg et al. 1998).

Violence against women is generally resulted from male-dominant structure of society. Not only familial dynamics but also legal, economical, traditional, political and educational patterns of society which create discrimination against women (Ilkkaracan 1996a). Also dynamics among individuals are one of the factors influencing

domestic violence. Such dynamics include lower levels of marital satisfaction, aggressive behavior, ideological race and religion differences, lack of communication, dependency on marriage, all kinds of helplessness. Additionally cultural dimensions have also effects on the subject. Male dominated marriages are much more open to domestic violence, whereas inequality- based marriages domestic violence is less experienced (Aksoy et al. 2006).

Although definition of violence against women and the ways to avoid differ from one country to another, there is an international attempt to conceptualize it. The first international document that makes the countries responsible for violence against women is the CEDAW by the United Nations issued in 1979. The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women in 1993. In 1994, ICPO reemphasized the topic again in Cairo and first reporter to review the violence against women was assigned by the UN Human Rights Commission in the same year. The Organization of American States (OAS) passed the Agreement of Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women in 1994. Conference of International Data Base (IDB) was carried out in 1998. In the same year, the United Nations' UNIFEM realized campaigns to be reconsidered in the Fourth World Conference in Beijing in 1995. 49th eradicate the violence against women. In 1999 the UN Population Fund stated that violence against women is a priority public health problem (Anonymous 1999).

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Violence has both short and long-term effects on women. Some of them are as follows: learned helplessness, lack of evaluation of events with long-term and wide perspectives, intense feelings of desperateness, nightmares, insomnia, extreme eating, headache and stomachache, injuries, depression, desire to die, thinking of suicide, sense of guilty, shame, aggressiveness against the others, alcohol and substance abuse, unsuccessful school and work experience, pathological hope (belief that violence immediately finishes), death/murder, problems in interpersonal relationships, early marriage, problems in sexual life, isolation. (İlkkaracan 1996b).

Studies generally examine the types of violence experienced by women, its sources, prevalents, outcomes, agents of violence and target of violence. (and Ağridağ 2006; Güler and Tuncay 2005; Mayda and 2002; Gülçür 1999; Yildirim 1998; Tjaden and Thoennes 1998; Anonymous 1997; Mazza, Dennerstein and Ryan 1996, İlkkaracan 1996b; Kalaycioğlu and Tiliç 1995; Yüksel 1990). Although the current study also deals with these points, the views of women about violence in their life are also considered.

METHODOLOGY

The sample of the study includes a total of 1524 women. To collect data, two types of questionnaires were developed and a pilot test was performed on fifty women in Ankara. As a result of the pilot test, a number of changes were made to the questionnaires. Data of the study was obtained as applying the poll forms to the women between 12.04.2007 and 30.06.2007. The samples were identified using the files of Number One Yenimahalle Mother-Child Health and Family Planning Center. The data of the study were collected through the interviews with the participants. Data of the study was obtained as applying the poll forms to the women with face to face. The data gathered were analyzed using the SPSS (10.0). Chi-square analysis was used for statistical evaluation of the data.

RESULTS

The most dominant age group in the sample is that between 30-44 years old and 44 years old (45.8%). In terms of educational background those with primary education are common (67.2%). The majority of the women sampled do not work (90.0%).

Regarding the violence against women, the most common types of violence stated by the participants are as follows: physical violence (51.5%), psychological violence (14.4%), sexual violence (0.5%) and all types of violence (33.7%). It is found that with the older women, the most common type of violence is physical one ($p>0.05$). The other finding is that the participants with higher levels of education state less psychological violence ($p<0.05$).

Regarding the target groups of violence, the following findings are found: illiterate women (90.0%), those living in extended families (86.9%), those living in rural areas (83.6%), those who are unemployed (83.5%) and those in marriages with more than one woman (80.3%) (Fig. 1).

In this study it is found that regarding the views on the agents of violence against women, the age of the subject does not have effects. However, educational background of the subjects appears to influence on their views (women in urban areas, uneducated women, woman in rural areas, women in polygamous marriage, women in extended family) ($p<0.05$). Employment status of the subjects is found to have partial effects on their views (unemployed women and uneducated women) ($p<0.05$) (Table 1).

Regarding the agents of violence against women, 90.9% of the subjects state that spouses are the agents of violence. The other two agents of violence against women are "parents of the spouse" (8.7%) and men relative/relatives of women (4.2%). The age of the participants is found

Table 1: Views' of the subjects regarding the targets of domestic violence against women and p values about explanatory variables

Common targets of violence	p values		
	Age	Educa- tional back- ground	Empley- ment status
Employed women	0,684	0,105	0,092
Educated women	0,533	0,043	0,442
Women in urban areas	0,191	0,011*	0,087
Women in nuclears family		0,315	0,505
0,646			
Unemployed women	0,569	0,067	0,039*
Uneducated women	0,650	0,032*	0,023*
Women in rural areas	0,306	0,014*	0,161
Women in polygamous marriage	0,351	0,021*	0,128
Women in extended family	0,684	0,000*	0,770

* Significant

to affect the views on the agents of violence, namely “male relative/relatives of women” and “parents of husband” ($p < 0.05$) (Table 2).

Table 2: Views of the subjects on the agents of domestic violence against women and table of p values about explanatory variables

The agents of violence against women	p values		
	Age	Educational background	Employment status
Spouse	0.195	0.0129*	0.483
Male relative/relatives of women	0.013*	0.671	0.397
Boy/boys of women	0.221	0.415	0.018*
Women's parents	0.483	0.698	0.378
Spouse' relatives	0.044*	0.416	0.032*

* Significant

Regarding the reasons for domestic violence against women, the views of the participants are as follows: “alcohol and/or substance abuse by husband” (44.6%); “husband’s economical disadvantages such as unemployment, etc.” (38.0%); “gender inequality in society and family” (30.8%); “lower socioeconomic status of women and/or men” (29.1%) “man’s thinking of violence against women as a right” (19.9%). The age, educational background and employment status of the participants are found to have no effects

on their views about the reasons for domestic violence against women.

The participants mostly state that the necessary action to avoid violence against women is to educate both women and men (74.5%). The other necessary steps are to educate men (15.5%) and increase the number of shelters (4.1%). The rate of those who stress the education of only women is relatively less (1.9%).

The participants from all age groups mostly state the need to educate women and men. The views about necessary actions to avoid violence against women is affected by the age of the participants (15-29 76.8%, 30-44 73.1%, 45-59 75.9%, 60+ 72.7%) ($p < 0.05$) but it is not affected by the participants’ educational background and employment status ($p > 0.05$) (Fig. 2).

DISCUSSION

Regarding the violence against women, the most common types of violence stated by the participants are as follows: physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence and all types of violence. Participants with higher levels of education state less psychological violence ($p < 0.05$). It is an interesting finding in that the opposite is expected. Güler, Tel and Tuncay (2005) found that 40.7% of women are participant to physical violence. In another study it is

Physical violence
Sexual violence
Psychological violence
All types of violence

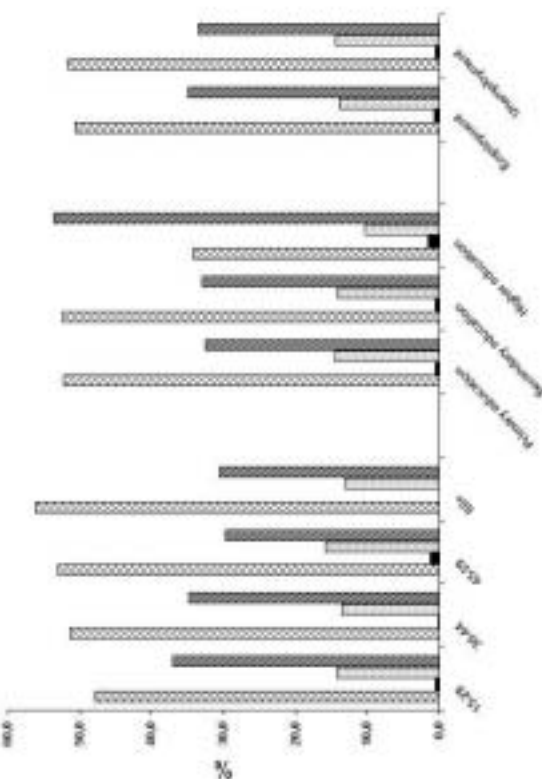


Figure 2: Distribution of the views of the subjects about violence perceptions

Psychological violence

İlkkaracan (1996b) found the same finding with the rate of 90.9%. In another study husbands are also found to be the agents of violence against women (97.5%; T.C. Başbakanlık Kadın Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü 1995).

Regarding the reasons for domestic violence against women, the views of the participants are as follows: “alcohol and/or substance abuse by husband”, “husband’s economical disadvantages such as unemployment, etc.”, “gender inequality in society and family”, “lower socio-economic status of women and/or men”, “man’s thinking of violence against women as a right”. Regarding the reasons for violence against women Yıldırım (1998) found two factors: “sexual desires of men” (67.6%) and “influence of the others” (58.0%). Reasons for violence found by Kalaycıoğlu and Tiliç (1995) are psychological disorder, personality weakness, unsatisfaction from life, lack of self-confidence, lack of self-respect, etc. Such economical reasons as unemployment, etc. are important factors of violence. The study carried out by T.C. Aile

Kurumu (2000) indicates economical problems as the major reason for violence (28.2%). Personality of husband is found to be another major reason for violence in the same study (23.4%). The study of T.C. Kadın Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü (1995) emphasizes the following major reasons for violence against women: desire of women to have education, desire of women to work, marriage with undesired person on the part of women, household work (76.0%, 76.0%, 75.0%, 74.0%, respectively).

CONCLUSION

It is possible to argue that the women sampled mostly regard violence as physical violence. However, violence is also perceived as all types of violence physical, psychological, sexual violence) in the sample. The participants state that the commonest targets of violence are unemployed women, those living in the extended family, those living in rural areas, uneducated women and those in polygamous marriages. The agent of violence is commonly expressed as husband. The mostly stated reasons for violence are “alcohol and substance abuse by husband”, economical disadvantages of husband, inequality between women and men in society and family follow it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the literature review and survey finding, a number of recommendations can be made in order to prevent violence against women. Necessary step to avoid violence against women is commonly regarded as educating women and men. The findings of the current study are consistent with those of the similar studies.

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