

Prevalence of Domestic Violence Against Married Women in Turkey and Associated Risk Factors

Türkiye’de Evli Kadınlara Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Prevalansı ve İlişkili Risk Faktörleri

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ABSTRACT Objective: This cross-sectional study was designed to determine the prevalence of domestic violence against married women and the associated risk factors. **Material and Methods:** We interviewed 1105 women in the study; the data were collected within November 2013-2014 by face to face interviews using a checklist was used, which was composed in accordance with the literature survey form. Ethical committee approval was obtained. Data evaluation was performed using the SPSS 19 statistical software. **Results:** According to the results, 38.2% of women were subject to some form of violence within the last one year. Approximately 32% of married women have been subject to emotional violence, whereas 18% have been subject to economic violence, 17% have been subject to sexual violence and 16% have been subject to physical violence. Women were subject to emotional violence most, and sexual and physical violence least. The determined risk factors related to violence were discontent in marriage, children abuse at home, not participating in decision-taking at home, living in the province of Kars and living in a large family. **Conclusion:** These results indicate that domestic violence continues to be a major problem, both in the eastern and the western parts of Turkey. Further studies could be designed to eliminate these factors. It could be recommended to utilize the results of this study in national and local action plans for elimination of domestic violence.

Keywords: Domestic violence; married women; risk factors; Turkey

ÖZET Amaç: Kesitsel türdeki bu araştırma, evli kadınlara yönelik şiddet prevalansını ve ilişkili risk faktörlerini saptamak amacıyla gerçekleştirildi. **Gereç ve Yöntemler:** Çalışmada 1105 kadınla görüşüldü, veriler Kasım 2013-2014 arasında, literatür doğrultusunda derlenen checklist ile yüz yüze görüşme yöntemiyle toplandı. Etik kuruldan izin alındı. Veriler SPSS 19 yazılımı ile değerlendirildi. **Bulgular:** Araştırma bulgularına göre kadınların %38,2’si son bir yılda şiddetin herhangi bir türüne maruz kalmıştır. Kadınların yaklaşık %32’sinin duygusal şiddete, %18’inin ekonomik şiddete, %17’sinin cinsel şiddete ve %16’sının fiziksel şiddete maruz kaldığı saptanmıştır. Kadınların en fazla duygusal şiddete, en az ise cinsel ve fiziksel şiddete maruz kaldıkları saptanmıştır. Sonuçlara göre evlilik hayatından memnun olmama, çocuklara şiddet uygulanan evde yaşama, evdeki kararlara katılmama, Kars’ta ve geniş ailede yaşama şiddet açısından risk faktörleri oluşturmuştur. **Sonuç:** Sonuçlara göre Türkiye’nin hem doğusunda hem de batısında aile içi şiddet en önemli bir problemdir. Bu araştırmanın sonuçlarının aile içi şiddeti elimine etmek için yerel ve ulusal şiddetle mücadele eylem planlarında kullanılması önerilebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aile içi şiddet; evli kadınlar; risk faktörleri; Türkiye

Violence against women is violation of human rights. It has impacts on women’s productivity, anatomy, life quality, physical and mental well-being. Despite national and international ameliorations, although prevalence and types vary, violence against women is still one of the most important issues that is yet to be addressed in the 21st century.¹⁻³

According to the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSTATS) data, the rates of women who have been subject to violence at least once in their lifetime between 1995-2006 were 8% in Canada, 11% in Switzerland, 14% in Italy, 15% in Japan, 20% in Denmark, 27% in Australia and 29% in Germany.⁴ In a survey on women who have been subject to physical and/or sexual abuse, which was conducted by partners of the World Health Organization (2005), this rate was observed to range from 15% in Japan to 71% in Ethiopia.⁵ Most of the studies 41% were conducted in North America, followed by 20% in Europe, 16% in Asia, 11% in Africa, and 5% in the Middle East.²¹ In Turkey, the prevalence of domestic violence has been determined to vary between 13% and 78%.⁶

Domestic violence against women had been a result of prevailing ignorance and feudal environment in Turkey in the past, while today, it is an out-of-control consequence of rapid urbanization.⁷ At the beginning of the 1980s, bringing violence against women into question in Turkey was only a dream.⁸ Turkey took its first step towards elimination of violence against women by signing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1985.¹ Women who were at certain positions and educational levels, competent and well-informed on worldwide strategies, thanks to acquisitions of the Republic, have taken important roles to expedite this process.^{8,9} Campaigns and street protests pioneered by women's movement raised the awareness for violence against women.³ The Law On Protection of Family, which was legislated in 1998 and modified in 2007, was an important milestone. Another important advance for Turkey was the Istanbul Treaty in 2011. Various multidisciplinary and inter-sectoral collaborative works and projects for elimination of domestic violence against women have been conducted in Turkey; two National Action Plans were prepared entailing periods between 2007-2010 and 2012-2015.⁴ The social awareness on domestic violence against women has increased with the help of prepared action plans. This condition bears a special significance for Turkey, especially when considering its

will to participate in the European Union. In today's Turkey, elimination of violence against women is the responsibility of the state.³

In today's Turkey, all legislations have gained a structure that gives zero tolerance to violence against women.¹ According to a study carried out in Turkey, 39.3% of women approved of violence. The same study reported that one in every five women stated that the cause of violence was cultural.¹⁰ It was determined that 48.5% of women did not share the physical and emotional violence they are exposed to with their environment, and 92% did not apply to any institution on.¹¹ It was reported that the underlying causes of why women remained silent after being exposed to violence included the economic and cultural dependence of women on their partner, interpretation of physical and emotional violence as a right of their partner, and a misconception that they have to be careful for their behaviors in order to reduce violent behavior.⁷ Unfortunately, it is still being argued even during educational programs, in order to raise the awareness and sensitivity towards privacy issues of these subjects that should be resolved within the family.⁸ It is significant in this concept that "Creating awareness and transformation of mentality" was one of the targets in the 2012-2015 Action Plan For Elimination of Violence Against Women in Turkey.¹ However, despite all these regulations, domestic violence in Turkey continues to constitute a problem with regards to social institutions like health, politics, education, religion, law, economics and family, and their participants.

Studies related to domestic violence against women in Turkey are inadequate considering the cities where these studies are carried out, and also for Turkey in general. It is thought that determination of the prevalence of domestic violence and their correlation with risk factors by local studies would provide significant contributions to planning for its elimination. In Turkey, studies related to elimination of violence against women are scarce, especially in Çanakkale and Kars cities where our study was conducted. It is thought that the results of this study is also important in providing contribution to local action plans on the

elimination of domestic violence that would be composed by collaborations between different disciplines and institutions.

The purpose of this study was to determine the prevalence of domestic violence within the last one year for women living in Çanakkale and Kars.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Study design and ethical approval: This study was cross-sectional. Written approval was obtained from the Ministry of Health of Turkey Public Health Institution Chairmanship (Date: 25.05.2014, Decision Nr:320) and Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Ethics Committee on Clinical Research (Date: 12.03.2014, Decision Nr: 0506). The purpose of the study and information about where and how the results would be utilized were explained to doctors and nurses in Family Health Institutions and the participating women verbally. Verbal consent was obtained from the participants in data collection stage.

Study data and study participant: The study was conducted in province centers of Çanakkale and Kars.

The study population consisted of a total of 60.345 women living in the province centers of Çanakkale (N=36.209) and Kars (N=24.136), who were 15 years of age or above and married. Selection of the sample from the population was performed using the “frequency formula for conditions in which population is known”, and the sample size was determined as 382 with an type I error margin of 0.05.

Formula was applied as follows; $n = \frac{N \cdot t^2 \cdot p \cdot q}{d^2 \cdot (N-1) + t^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$

n=Sample size,

N=Population (60.345)

p=Prevalence (0.5)

q=1-p, (0.5)

t=t value at significance level of 0.05

d=tolerance value.

$n = \frac{(60345 \times 1.962 \times 0.5 \times 0.5)}{(60344 + 1.962 \times 0.5 \times 0.5)} = 381.57$

The study was conducted on three times the calculated number of the sample size. Considering the rate of the populations in the cities, 60% of the sample were selected from Çanakkale (n=663) and 40% were selected from Kars (n=442); the study was conducted with a total of 1105 women. Purposive sampling, which is one of the non-probability sampling methods, was used during the data collection step. The sample of the study was selected among the women in Family Health Centers in both cities, who were married/had a partner, was speaking Turkish, and agreed to participate in the study. No other conditions were sought in the study, and all women who fulfilled these criteria were included in the study. 5 participants from Çanakkale and 3 participants from Kars were excluded from the study because they interrupted answering the questionnaire. The data were collected within a time span of approximately one year (November 2013-2014) by face to face interviews using a survey form prepared by the researchers. As a result of this study, 99.25% of the targeted sample in Çanakkale and 99.32% in Kars were reached. And we reached 1.8% of total population.¹²

In order to determine the prevalence of violence against women, a checklist was used, which was composed in accordance with the literature.^{11,13} The checklist involved four types of violence and subtitles. Any marking of the subtitles was evaluated as exposure to violence. The subtitles and their content have been described below.

For physical violence, women were asked whether they had ever: 1. Been beaten, 2. Their hair pulled, 3. Been injured, 4. Been burnt, 5. Been battered, 6. Been pushed, 7. Been thrown something, 8. Been slapped in the face, 9. Been kicked, 10. Been attempted to strangulate, 11. Get bitten, 12. Been tortured, 13. Been assaulted with a knife, 14. Been attempted to kill, 15. Been forced to live in unhealthy conditions, 16. Been prevented from getting health service.

For sexual violence, women were asked whether they had ever: 1. Been exposed to sexually explicit language, 2. Been exposed to molestation by hand, 3. Been forced to have sexual intercourse,

4. Been forced for prostitution, 5. Been forced to marry, 6. Verbal abuse, 7. Been exposed to sexually explicit words and behaviors, 8. Been exposed to implications, 9. Been pried continuously, 10. Excess jealousy, 11. Excess incredulity, 12. Ignorance of their sexual needs 13. Been forced to have sexual intercourse by emotional pressure, 14. Their sexual performance being belittled, 15. Been punished with sexual abstinence, 16. Been raped.

For emotional violence, women were asked whether they had ever: 1. Been exposed to offensive terms, 2. Their actions not been approved, 3. Not being shown interest, 4. Not been loved, 5. Been insulted, 6. Been subject to negative criticism, 7. Been despised, 8. Been ridiculed, 9. Been belittled, 10. Been verbally attacked, 11. Been threatened, 12. Been shouted at, 13. Been frightened, 14. Been warned with hand signs, 15. Been subject to suppression of their emotions and thoughts, 16. Been restricted with strict rules, 17. Been subject to hampering of occupational and social life, 18. Been subject to restriction of their interaction with their environment, 19. Not being talked to- being exposed to continuous frowning.

For economic violence, women were asked whether they had ever: 1. Not been permitted to work out of house, 2. Not being able to contribute to decisions about the family budget, 3. Not having the right to manage their own income, 4. Not having the right to manage their own properties, 5. Been criticized for their financial management.

Statistical analysis: The SPSS Version 19 was used for the statistical analyses. To determine the normal distribution, Skewness and Kurtosis values were used and all of statistical test was chosen this results. Percentage, arithmetic mean, Pearson Chi-square test, Independent t test, One Way ANOVA analysis and Pearson Correlation analysis were used for evaluation of the data. The statistically significant parameters were further analyzed with the Binary Logistic Regression analysis after constitution of a model. Risk factors regarding the types of violence were investigated via classic analysis (Pearson Chi-square test, Independent Samples t test, One Way ANOVA and Pearson Correlation

analysis) before Binary Logistic Regression analysis and significant risk factors were included in the Binary Logistic Regression model. Age and income out of these variables took place in the analysis as constant data and all of the other variables were examined categorically. In categorical data, the option without risk was coded with 0 and the risk options were coded with 1 and above. The categorical data prepared in this way which the education level, co-educational level, family type, satisfaction from marriage, taking decisions at home, violence against child, attitude toward violence against women, living province and psychological support also showed on the tables The statistical significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

DEMOGRAPHICAL AND FAMILIAL PROPERTIES OF WOMEN

The mean age of the participating women was 39.05 ± 12.60 , varying between 16 and 85 years. The mean marrying age was 21.23 ± 4.52 (12-58) years, the average monthly income was 2584.20 ± 1771.20 (100-10,000 TL) ($1\text{€} = 2.88\text{ TL}$ at the time of the study). 41.7% of the women were primary school graduates; similarly, 36.3% of their husbands were primary school graduates. 86.6% of the women were living in the elementary family. 87.3% had children. 59.2% did not have a job. 60% of the women lived in Çanakkale and 40% lived in Kars. 52.3% of the women had pre-arranged marriages. 55.3% were content in their marriage. 91.7% did had not received professional psychological support within the last one year. 85.5% of the women interpreted violence against women as “weakness of men”. Partners of 25.8% of the women were using violence against their children. 58.8% never drank alcohol (Table 1).

PREVALENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN ÇANAKKALE AND KARS

The prevalence of domestic violence against women within the last year was 29.4% in Çanakkale and 51.4% in Kars. The combined prevalence of domestic violence in two cities was 38.2%. According to the types of violence, the

TABLE 1: Demographic and familial properties of women.

Variables		Çanakkale		Kars		Total	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Age (years)		39.56	12.28	38.29	13.07	39.05	12.60
Marrying age (years)		21.56	4.54	20.71	4.441	21.23	4.52
Income (TL)		2744.10	1800.73	2381.43	1713.74	2584.20	1771.20
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Educational level (n=1103)	University and higher	181	27.3	90	20.4	271	24.6
	High school	144	21.7	60	13.6	204	18.5
	Primary school	288	43.4	172	38.9	460	41.7
	Literate	27	4.1	35	7.9	62	5.6
	Illiterate	21	3.2	85	19.2	106	9.6
Partner's education level (n=1090)	University and higher	211	31.8	117	26.5	328	30.1
	High school	183	27.6	101	22.9	284	26.1
	Primary school	230	34.7	166	37.6	396	36.3
	Literate	16	2.4	33	7.5	49	4.5
	Illiterate	8	1.2	25	5.7	33	3.0
Family type (n=1066)	Nuclear family	586	91.7	337	78.9	923	86.6
	Large family	53	8.3	90	21.1	143	13.4
Presence of children	Yes	579	87.3	286	87.3	965	87.3
	No	80	12.1	54	12.2	134	12.1
Occupational status	Has a job	308	46.5	143	32.4	451	40.8
	Not have a job	355	53.5	299	67.6	654	59.2
Province (n=1105)	Çanakkale	-	-	-	-	663	60.0
	Kars	-	-	-	-	442	40.0
Type of Marriage (n=1085)	Pearranged	378	57.0	189	42.8	567	52.3
	With her own will	262	39.5	227	51.4	489	45.1
	Others (Betrothed in the cradle, bride exchange, etc.)	10	1.5	19	4.3	29	2.7
Contentment in marriage (n=1074)	Very content	243	38	143	32.9	386	35.9
	Content	343	53.6	251	57.8	594	55.3
	Discontent	48	7.5	30	6.9	78	7.3
	Very discontent	6	0.9	10	2.3	16	1.5
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Contribution to family decisions (n=1089)	Yes	528	81.5	283	64.2	811	74.5
	Partially	102	15.7	112	25.4	214	19.7
	No	18	2.8	46	10.4	64	5.9
Received professional psychological support within the last year (n=773)	Yes	43	13.0	21	4.8	64	8.3
	No	288	87.0	421	95.2	709	91.7
Violence perception (n=989)	Weakness of men	529	90.0	317	79.1	846	85.5
	It is the men's right	26	3.9	56	14.0	82	8.3
	She must have deserved it	33	5.6	28	7.0	61	6.2
Partner using violence against children (n=978)	No	469	79.2	257	58.1	726	74.2
	Yes	123	20.8	129	29.2	252	25.8
Partner's alcohol intake (n=1079)	Not drinking	329	50.8	305	70.8	634	58.8
	Special occasions	159	24.5	76	17.6	235	21.8
	Once/twice a month	76	11.7	25	5.8	101	9.4
	Once/twice a week	61	9.4	16	3.7	77	7.1
	Everyday	23	3.5	9	2.1	32	3.0

prevalence of physical violence was 12.4% in Çanakkale and 20.6% in Kars; the prevalence of sexual violence was 12.4% in Çanakkale and 22.9% in Kars; the prevalence of emotional violence was 24.4% in Çanakkale and 43.7% in Kars, and the prevalence of economical violence was 11% in Çanakkale and 27.4% in Kars. The prevalences of violence according to cities and in total have been demonstrated in Figure 1.

SOME RISK FACTORS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Some variables that have effect on the prevalence of domestic violence have been presented in Table 2. All of these variables yielded statistically significant results in the initial classical tests (chi-square, variance, t-test etc.). We accepted those variables as a model in order to have more precise results and performed Binary Logistic Regression analysis on those variables. According to the results of the Binary Logistic Regression, physical violence against women was 2 times more prevalent in large families; it was 4.6 times more prevalent in women who were very discontent in their marriage compared as women who were content; it was 6.3-fold more prevalent in women who were very discontent in their marriage compared to women who are very

content; it was more prevalent in women who did not contribute to family decisions by 1.7-fold compared to women who partially contributed and by 2.6-fold compared to women who fully contributed; it was 2.9 times more prevalent in families in which violence was used against children ($p<0.05$).

Sexual violence, the second violence type investigated in the study, was 3 times more prevalent in women who were very discontent in their marriage compared as women who were content; it was 3.9 times more prevalent in women who did not participate in decision taking at home compared as those who fully contributed; it was 2 times more prevalent in families in which children were abused; it was 1.7 times more prevalent in women living in Kars ($p<0.05$).

Emotional violence, the third violence type investigated, was more prevalent in women who were very discontent in their marriage by 1.9-fold compared to women who were discontent, by 3.2-fold compared to women who were content and by 1.1-fold compared to women who were very content; it was more prevalent in women who did not contribute in decision taking at home by 1.6 fold compared to women who partially contributed and

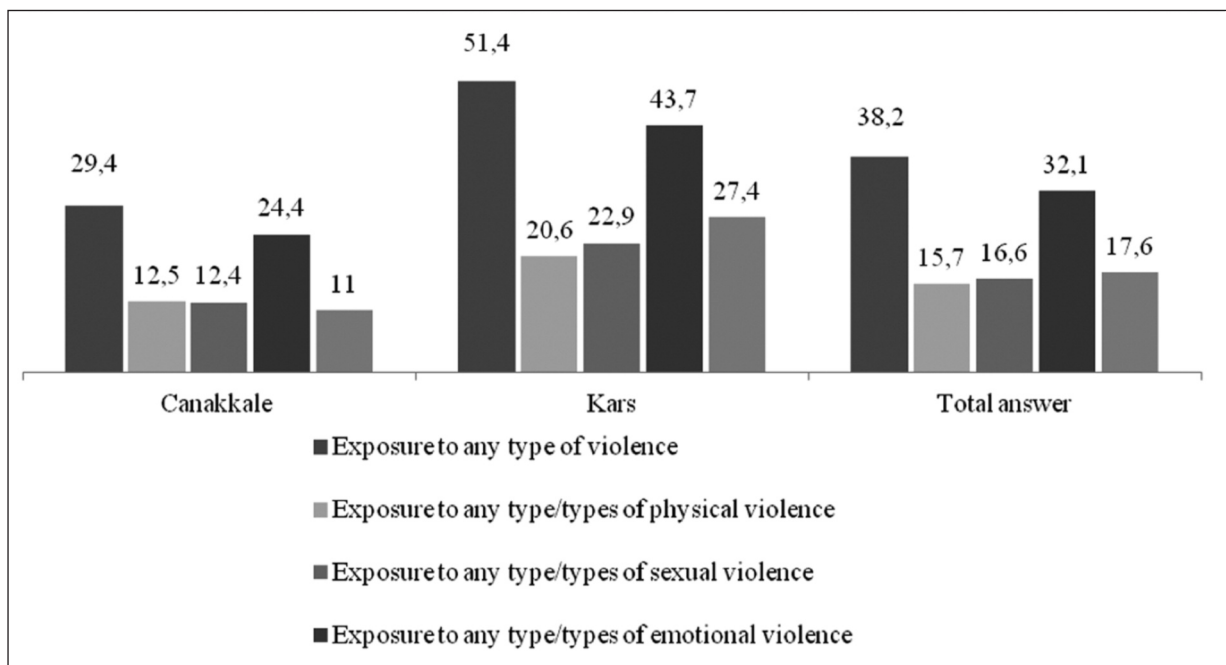


FIGURE 1: Prevalence of violence according to cities (%) (last one year).

TABLE 2: Risk factors related to domestic violence.

Variables	Physical Violence		Sexual Violence		Emotional Violence		Economic Violence		Any type of violence	
	Odd(s)	95% C.I.	Odd(s)	95% C.I.	Odd(s)	95% C.I.	Odd(s)	95% C.I.	Odd(s)	95% C.I.
Age**	-	-	0.981	0.979-0.998	-	-	-	-	0.992	0.966-0.997
Education State										
(0. Graduate and +)***	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-
(1) High school	1.329	0.459-3.842	2.046	0.743-4.554	1.187	0.576-2.354	1.961	0.254-2.965	1.827	0.655-2.489
(1) Primary school	0.608	0.199-1.863	1.878	0.565-4.099	0.915	0.466-2.134	1.703	0.280-3.214	1.989	0.621-2.690
(1) Literate	1.158	0.297-4.512	3.911	0.800-10.56	1.142	0.437-3.795	1.860	0.210-4.091	2.022	0.549-4.651
(1) Illiterate	0.544	0.544-0.144	1.594	0.363-4.432	0.482	0.541-0.199	1.817	0.122-2.131	2.228	0.317-2.312
Husband's Educational Status										
(0. Graduate and +)***	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-
(1) High school	2.654	1.083-6.502	1.129	0.541-2.444	1.130	0.635-2.078	2.664	1.00-7.100	2.108	0.702-2.181
(1) Primary school	3.389	1.270-9.039	1.505	0.675-3.552	0.952	0.480-1.809	1.962	0.689-5.584	1.917	0.726-2.181
(1) Literate	6.881	1.984-23.87	3.275	1.024-10.04	2.015	0.670-4.985	2.825	0.767-10.401	2.582	0.726-2.581
(1) Illiterate	3.750	0.848-16.58	1.018	0.197-4.594	3.590	1.048-11.16	2.480	0.556-11.059	2.682	1.123-8.557
Family Type (0. Nucleus family)***	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-
(1) Large Family	2.0*	1.111-3.582	1.169	0.604-2.003	1.332	0.774-2.127	1.030	0.549-1.934	1.055	0.802-2.180
Income (TL)**	1.000	1.000-1.000	1.000	1.000-1.000	1.000	1.000-1.000	1.000	1.000-1.000	1.000	1.000-1.000
Contentment in marriage										
(0. Women who were very discontent)**	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-
(1) Compared to women who were discontent	1.559	0.878-2.779	1.214	0.725-1.990	1.926*	1.312-2.936	1.710	0.936-3.125	1.629	0.773-1.822
(1) Compared to women who were content	4.6*	2.029-10.37	3.013*	1.270-5.920	3.243*	1.675-6.724	3.475*	1.371-8.080	3.526*	1.344-6.644
(1) Compared to women who were very content	6.3*	1.355-29.56	1.480	0.536-12.30	1.053*	0.334-6.822	3.599	0.675-19.179	4.164*	1.232-2.783
Contribution to decision taking at home										
(0. Women who did not contribute)**	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-
(1) Compared to women who partially contributed	1.7*	1.029-2.951	1.218	0.742-2.122	1.596*	1.081-2.571	1.394	0.800-2.429	1.823*	0.773-1.822
(1) Compared to women who contributed	2.6*	1.167-5.872	3.859*	1.641-7.706	2.996*	1.363-6.223	2.579	1.120-5.939	3.443*	1.344-6.644
Child Abuse										
(0. In women who said yes)**	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-
(1) In women who said no	2.9*	1.799-4.791	2.017*	1.186-3.170	2.239*	1.433-3.264	2.069*	1.210-3.538	1.786*	1.232-2.783
Interpretation of violence										
(0. Women who stated it was men's weakness)**	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-	1.000	-
(1) It is the men's right	1.091	0.438-1.837	0.723	0.416-1.815	0.882	0.570-1.910	0.683	0.892-3.480	0.891	0.597-1.998
(1) She must have deserved it	0.978	0.392-2.145	0.642	0.665-3.038	0.909	0.583-2.233	1.204	0.619-3.458	1.509	0.540-2.783

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According to the results of one study entailing Turkey in general, it was determined that 25% of the women had been subject to emotional violence, 9.9% had been subject to physical violence, 7.0% had been subject to sexual violence and 13.7% had been subject to physical/sexual violence within the last one year.¹¹ In another study entailing Turkey in general, it was found that 39% of women had been exposed to physical violence, 15% had been exposed to sexual violence, 44% had been exposed to emotional violence and 23% had been exposed to economic violence sometime throughout their life. The rate of domestic violence against women in Turkey was determined to be highest in the Northeastern Anatolia Region (53%) and lowest in the Western Marmara Region (25%).¹¹

Studies conducted in different regions and cities of Turkey showed that the most common type of domestic violence against women was psychological violence.^{10,14-20} The results of international studies are similar in this concept.²¹⁻²⁴ Furthermore, in our study, we found that women had been subject to psychological violence most, which is consistent with the results of other studies. On the other hand, according to the results of one study conducted in the Central Anatolia Region, it was determined that women had not been exposed to emotional and economic violence within the last one year.²⁵ Additionally, in another study conducted in Turkey, the women did not describe economic and sexual violence. While those results are in contrast with our findings, we do not think that those women have ever experienced violence. On the contrary, we think that they have been exposed to violence, but cannot express it due to cultural reasons.

Another striking fact for Turkey is that domestic violence is not only exerted by the husband, but also by the husband's parents.²⁰ In a study conducted in the Central Anatolia Region of Turkey, 22.7% of the women stated that they had been exposed to violence by their husband's relatives and 19.7% of women stated that they had been exposed to violence by their own relatives.²⁶

When we compared our results to results of studies conducted in other countries, we observed that during the last one year, 7% of women in Ukraine have been exposed to physical violence and 6% have been exposed to verbal violence; 14.1% of women in Māori and 9.3% of women in the Pacific have been exposed to physical and/or sexual violence; 25.3% of women in rural areas of Nepal have been exposed physical violence and 46.2% have been exposed to sexual violence; 23.4% of women in the rural areas of Western Bengal have been exposed to domestic violence; 43.3% of women in Erbil, Iraqi Kurdistan region have been exposed to emotional violence, 15.2% have been exposed to physical violence and 12.1% have been exposed to sexual violence; 35% of women at the slums in Bangladesh and 20% of women at the non-slum areas have been exposed to physical violence; 28.3% of women in Nepal have been exposed to violence; 21% of women in China have been exposed to physical violence and 12% have been exposed to sexual violence.^{24,27-33} According to the result of studies conducted in Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Japan, Namibia, Peru, Samoa, Serbia and Montenegro, Thailand, and the United Republic of Tanzania, women have been exposed to physical or sexual or both types of violence at varying rates between 4% and 54%.³⁴

Although similar to the results of some other studies, the rates of violence against women in our study are generally higher. In particular, the prevalence of domestic violence in Kars province within the last one year is higher than the results of all of the studies mentioned above. We think that some reasons behind this finding are the traditional lifestyle that is still observed in Kars, the male dominant family/society structure, economic state, illiteracy, and as a city, being below the Turkey average with regard to development. In one study conducted in Kars in 2012 by Daştan and Çapık, the traditional attitude towards violence against women was determined as 86 ± 13 points out of 95. This finding supports our interpretations. Furthermore, it was reported in that study that the traditional attitude tended to decrease as the educational status improved, which is another finding that supports our results.³⁵

RISK FACTORS RELATED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

According to our results, women who were discontent in their marriage and who lived in families in which children were abused were exposed to all kinds of violence to a higher extent; women who did not contribute to decision taking at home were exposed to physical, sexual, emotional and any kind of violence to a higher extent; women who lived in large families were exposed to physical violence to a higher extent; women who lived in Kars were exposed to sexual, economic, emotional and any kind of violence to a higher extent than women living in Çanakkale.

The determined risk factors in previous studies related to violence include the will of decision taking, contribution to decision taking, living in families where children are abused, regional and province differences, age, living in large families and being discontent in marriage.^{1,6,7,15,23,32,36} In another study, not serving the mother-in-law and being disobedient were included in the risk factors related to violence.³⁸ The study results mentioned above are in conformity with our results. We did not determine the women's age, marrying age, income, marriage type, women's and her husband's educational status, presence of children, violence perception, husband's alcohol intake, occupational status and receiving professional psychological support as risk factors related to violence ($p>0.05$). Similar to our results, the educational status and alcohol intake alone have not been determined as risk factors related to violence.^{23,38,39} However, the related different studies have determined these variables as risk factors.

Risk factors that have been determined in other studies include women being at younger age, low income, women's and husband's low educational status, presence of children, violence perception, husbands' alcohol intake, women's occupational status and getting married after the family decision.^{1,6,10,16,18,20,23,27,30,32,33,36-38,40-44,46,48,49}

Despite the lack of a similarity to the aforementioned results, same variables have been determined as risk factors related to domestic violence in

different ways (indirectly). These include results such as the lower prevalence of violence in illiterates, higher prevalence of violence in those with higher educational level, and increasing violence with higher income and presence of children.^{10,15,17}

In our study, these factors were not determined as risk factors; this is considered to be related to socio-cultural and demographic differences between women. We did not encounter any study that investigated the marrying age and receiving professional psychological support, which were determined to be risk factors according to our results. We think that the marrying age, in particular, is of significance. Marrying at younger ages causes women's education to halt before completion, prevent them from gaining their economic independence and prevent them from achieving a more mature status to defend themselves; thus, it increases the probability of being subject to violence indirectly. Its investigation in further studies may reveal this association.

The limitations of this study include use of the non-probability sampling method due to constraints in labor force, time and funds, and conducting the study only in province centers. Attention was paid for women to clearly express the violence they were exposed to but talking to others about violence may be disgraceful and dishonorable in Turkey. Therefore, due to the issue we studied, we could have obtained prevalence lower than the actual data. In addition, it should not be expected in this study for the sample to represent whole population based upon purposive sampling selection and readers should consider this matter while they are interpreting our results.

CONCLUSION

According to our results, 40 out of 100 women have been exposed to some kind of violence within the last one year. Approximately 32% of married women have been subject to emotional violence, whereas 18% have been subject to economic violence, 17% have been subject to sexual violence and 16% have been subject to physical violence. According to our results, being discontent in mar-

riage, living in a family in which children are abused, not contributing to decision making at home, living in a large family and living in Kars have been determined as risk factors related to domestic violence against women.

These results indicate that domestic violence continues to be a major problem, both in the eastern and the western parts of Turkey. The result of this study could be utilized in National and local action plans. Further studies could be designed to eliminate these factors.

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Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest between the authors and / or family members of the scientific and medical committee members or members of the potential conflicts of interest, counseling, expertise, working conditions, share holding and similar situations in any firm.

Authorship Contributions

Idea/Concept: Gülbu Tanrıverdi; **Design:** Gülbu Tanrıverdi, Cantürk Çapık; **Control/Supervision:** Gülbu Tanrıverdi, Cantürk Çapık, Melike Yalçın Gürsoy; **Data Collection and/or Processing:** Gülbu Tanrıverdi, Cantürk Çapık, Melike Yalçın Gürsoy; **Analysis and/or Interpretation:** Gülbu Tanrıverdi, Cantürk Çapık, Melike Yalçın Gürsoy; **Literature Review:** Gülbu Tanrıverdi, Cantürk Çapık, Melike Yalçın Gürsoy; **Writing the Article:** Gülbu Tanrıverdi, Cantürk Çapık, Melike Yalçın Gürsoy; **Critical Review:** Gülbu Tanrıverdi, Cantürk Çapık, Melike Yalçın Gürsoy; **Resources and Fund Providing:** Gülbu Tanrıverdi, Cantürk Çapık, Melike Yalçın Gürsoy.

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