Domestic Violence in Turkey

Abigail Palotas

palotas006

GANNON UNIVERSITY

Overview

Domestic violence against women remains prevalent in Turkey, largely due to a thriving patriarchal system in which many women do not work outside the home and find themselves married to and dependent upon much older men without family support.

Factors Contributing to Domestic Violence Worldwide

- Age at time of marriage
- Age difference between spouses
- Education
- Employment
- How the marriage came to be
- Support of both spouses' families
- Number of children
- Addictive behaviors

Age at Time of Marriage

Scholarly studies of Turkey report:

- 905 of the 1,481 women interviewed were married between the ages of 11 and 20 (61.1%) (Basar).
- 15% of women in Turkey are married before reaching age 18. Most of these marriages occur because the women's family is in need of money (Hudgins).

This data confirms a positive correlation between early marriage age and domestic violence.

Age Difference Between Spouses

- 70% of women reported that they were abused by a husband who was older than them.

Turkish society encourages women to marry older men who serve as authority figures and feel they have a right to punish their wives (Yaman).

Education

Low education levels of both spouses are associated with domestic violence.

- 49.5% of women (733 out of 1,481) attended elementary school.
- 17.8% of women (264 out of 1,481) went on to attend college.
- 31.3% of men (455 out of 1,481) attended primary school.
- 23.6% of men went on to attend college.

All statistics cited from Basar.

Employment

- 72% of the women interviewed (1,067 out of 1,481) were unemployed.
- 93.3% of men were employed.

All statistics cited from Basar.

Current Response

PA Images via Brown, Emily. UNILAD.

440 pairs of women's shoes were hung on a wall in Istanbul, Turkey to draw attention to Turkey's domestic violence problem. In some parts of Turkey, it is customary to leave someone's shoes on the wall outside their home after they pass away. This tradition was used as the basis for this artwork, as each pair of shoes represents a woman who was killed by her husband in Turkey in 2018.

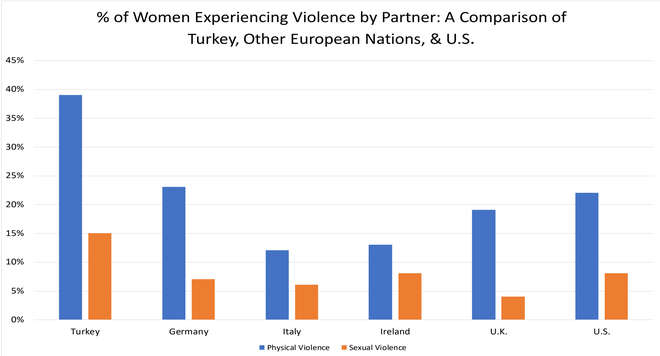
Turkish women protested in response to the brutal murder of Emine Bulut (shown on poster), whose killing by her ex-husband was captured on video and widely shared on social media. The sign reads, "We are not silent."

Adem Altan/AFP/Getty Images via npr.org.

From Hürriyet Daily News.

The Ukrainian activist/feminist group, FEMEN, held a nude protest in Turkey on National Women's Day, March 8, 2012.

The Human Rights Watch published a report in May 2011 titled, "He loves you, He beats you." This document includes information from a 2009 survey that recorded data on the physical or sexual abuse suffered by 42 percent of all women older than 15 in Turkey and 47 percent of women living in the country's rural areas at the hands of their partners. The report also describes legislative steps taken by Turkey to protect women, in particular, Law No.4320 on the Protection of the Family, which was adopted in 1998. However, the report describes the shortcomings of this law in combating domestic violence due to the lack of prevention of abuse in the first place, the perpetuation of discrimination, the hesitance of women in reporting abuse, and the lack of protection provided from abusers. Law No. 4320 also only offered protections to women who were officially married.
On March 8, 2012, Turkey passed Law No. 6284 on Prevention of Violence against Women and the Protection of the Family, which includes protections for all women, regardless of marital status. This law also prevents abusers from forcing victims to relocate, allows perpetrators to be removed from the home for one month, and provides assistance for victims such as new residence, financial, legal, and psychological help, and police protection. (Refworld)



Zaino, Jeanne. "How a Young Woman's Murder Has Become a Rallying Cry for Change Across Turkey." HuffPost, HuffPost, 7 Dec. 2017, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/how-a-young-womans-murder_b_6694104.

How the Marriage Came to Be

- 37% of the women questioned had an arranged marriage.
- 17% entered into the marriage to escape their own family environment.
- 10% ran from home and entered the marriage without the approval of their family.
- 17% married out of love for the man.
- Half of the women said they entered the marriage because they had to rather than because they wanted to.

Because marriages are not based in love, there is often a lack of communication between spouses that contributes to the emergence of domestic violence (Yaman).

Family Support

- 60% of women reported that their families insisted the marriage should continue no matter what happens.
- 47% of the women's families had no interest in the woman's life and no longer spoke to her.
- 57% of the women reported that their husband's family did not want them.
- 40% of women stated that the violent man was influenced by his family. Mother in law - bride conflicts are typical.

Overall, women lack the social support needed to escape domestic violence (Yaman).

Number of Children

Another scholarly study of Turkey found a correlation between the number of children a married couple had and domestic violence. The study found increased prevalence of domestic violence in families with many children. This may be because having more children is costly, and with only the man (the father and husband) working, this can lead to economic stress (Gokler).

Addictive Behaviors

Research has found that consumption of alcohol by the husband increases the prevalence of domestic violence. (World Health Organization)

This is because excessive consumption of alcohol:

- Promotes aggressive behaviors
- Influences physical and cognitive function, in turn reducing self-control and the ability to solve problems peacefully
- Brings about familial stress, regarding finances or infidelity, for instance.

Research has found that increased gambling by the husband is a risk factor for domestic violence as well. (Gokler)

Works Cited

Basar, Fatma, and Nurdan Demirci. "Domestic violence against women in Turkey." *Pakistan journal of medical sciences vol. 34.3 (2018): 660-665. doi: 10.12669/pjms.343.15139*

Brown, Emily. "440 Pairs Of Women's Shoes Hung On Istanbul Wall To Highlight Turkey's Domestic Violence Problem." UNILAD, UNILAD, 23 Sept. 2019, https://www.unilad.co.uk/news/440-pairs-of-womens-shoes-hung-on-istanbul-wall-to-highlight-turkeys-domestic-violence-problem/.

Gokler, Mehmet Enes, Didem Arslantas, and Alaettin Unsal. "Prevalence of domestic violence and associated factors among married women in a semi-rural area of western Turkey." *Pakistan journal of medical sciences 30.5 (2014): 1088.*

Hudgins, Sarabrynn. "A Chronic Problem: Violence Against Women In Turkey." *HuffPost, HuffPost, 16 Dec. 2017, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/a-chronic-problem-violenc_b_13649898?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ3Ym2ZpdC4mb3JlbSBqaWce_referrer_sig=AQAAAMzxyV_uUG7hCnCBc7kqe2wRMcfgVlenfrAsLoU7Dfn28WG2RNewI8KFsYOP_22GJuI8WQmotBqPqO_8vanIYga0w1UqzOpOg92Sk_T4QnaI5C8gC7NKyfh8HEvRSPOcejDMyrFSc52sXoAIsgT5qBoPLWOhdJdE7m7ILiR4yo.*

Hurriyetdailynews.com. "Domestic Violence in Turkey on the Rise, Data Reveals - Turkey News." Hürriyet Daily News, Hurriyetdailynews.com, 6 May 2012, http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/domestic-violence-in-turkey-on-the-rise-data-reveals-20006.

Kakissis, Joanna. "We Don't Want To Die': Women In Turkey Decry Rise In Violence And Killings." NPR, NPR, 15 Sept. 2019, https://www.npr.org/2019/09/15/760135010/we-dont-want-to-die-women-in-turkey-decry-rise-in-violence-and-killings.

"Turkey: Domestic Violence, Including Legislation, State Protection and Support Services." *Refworld*, Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 28 May 2012, www.refworld.org/docid/4fease0352.html.

World Health Organization. "Intimate partner violence and alcohol." Fact Sheet. World Health Organization. Geneva, Switzerland. 2006. Web. "Is this the correct citation format? (https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/factsheets/fs_intimate.pdf)

Yaman, Sengül, and Taskin, Lale. "Factors facilitating the emergence of domestic violence in Turkey." *Asian Biomedicine vol. 8, 6 (December 2014): 727-733. doi: 10.5372/1905-7415.0806.350*

Zaino, Jeanne. "How a Young Woman's Murder Has Become a Rallying Cry for Change Across Turkey." HuffPost, HuffPost, 7 Dec. 2017, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/how-a-young-womans-murder_b_6694104.