

Intimate Partner Violence Against Women: The Case of Hakkari

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Abstract:

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is an important public health problem in both developed and developing countries. Violence against women is an important problem all over the world. Violence against women basically takes four forms: physical, emotional, sexual, and economic violence. Exposure of women to this type of violence negatively affects their health both physically and psychologically. Some factors affect women's exposure to IPV, such as education level, economic status, social support. The aim of this study is to determine the factors affecting IPV against women. This research is descriptive. 100 women between the ages of 18-60 in Hakkari participated in the study. Hakkari province, located in the Southeast Anatolian region of Turkey, which is known to have a high representative ability in this regard, was chosen. In the findings; Factors such as low education level, lack of income, early marriage, having children at an early age and lack of support from social and public institutions have been identified as important reasons for IPV. Since these are the Continuity correction (Yates Square Test), the smallest theoretical value is $5 < \text{the smallest theoretical frequency is } < 25$ and the p-value is < 0.001 , the compared binary parameters are considered dependent. Fisher's Test for the analysis of the frequency values greater than 25 Freeman Halton Exact 99% confidence interval using the Monte Carlo simulation of the significant value of $0.001 (p < 0.000, 1)$ in comparison, because it has been recognized that the binary parameters are related to each other.

Key words: violence, violence against women, intimate partner violence (IPV)

1. Introduction

Violence is a worldwide problem. Women and children are the most vulnerable victims of violence. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is the most common form of violence against women worldwide. A woman's risk of experiencing IPV is not uniform, and one of the affecting factors is, the country she lives in, her social environment, her own characteristics and experiences and those of partners. (Coll et al., 2020, 1-9; Devries et al., 2013, 1527-28; Strive, 2011; Heise and Kotsadam, 2015, 332-40) Also there are other affecting factors at multiple levels of the social, ecological model that may converge to increase the individual risk of IPV under different circumstances (WHO, 2013; Moreira and Pinto da Costa, 2020).

Violence against women is the most basic human rights violation and form of discrimination. The problem of violence against women in Türkiye started to be a raised issue and discussed with the increasing events in Türkiye in the 1980's (Özgören and Taylan, 2021, 232-242). Researches show that one out of three women worldwide is beaten, raped or abused in different ways (WHO 2015). Violence against women is constantly increasing as is confirmed by the cultural structure characterized by the influence of the traditional sexist attitude dominating society and the desire of men to dominate and control women. The purpose of the violence is to control women's behaviour based on fear and dictation. It shows that women are most frequently attacked by their intimate partners (Polat, 2021, 63-68; IMDAT Violence Report, 2022). There are also counter-arguments which indicate that violence against

women is not only explained by the individual characteristics, attitudes and experiences of men, but that violence against women is related to male dominance (Yodanis,2004,655-65). Violence against women are mainly grouped as physical, sexual, economic, emotional and social. Recently, cases of cyber violence have also been frequently observed (Polat, 2022,93-118).

Physical violence is the use of brutal force as a means of intimidation, obstruction and punishment. It is seen that murder cases have increased to significant numbers in recent times (Polat, 2021, 63-68; IMDAT Violence Report, 2022). Physical violence is generally manifested in domestic violence by a spouse or ex-spouse (Wencheko and Mekonnen 2017,510-20; Yanik et al.,2015,104-11). Economic violence is the use of financial resources or money on women as a threat or a sanctioning tool. Girls are mostly deprived of education therefore they can not take an active part in the work-force (Fawole,2008,166-67; Gökkaya, 2011,101-12).

Psychological violence is any kind of pressure applied to isolate the individual from society in order to apply psychological pressure to emotionally intimidate or humiliate, to impose sanctions or punish her. Sexual violence is forcing a woman to do a sexual act against her will or imposing sanctions. The most common practices are forcing sexual intercourse with others, forcing the woman to give birth or preventing the birth without her consent, child marriages, harrasment and rape (Polat, 2021, 114-117).

Considering the effects of the violence against women, the most common pyschological symptoms are high levels of anxiety, depression, stress, insecurity, suicidal thoughts, alcohol use, sleep disorders, alertness, and psychological disorders due to trauma (Polat, 2022, 110-12; Dillon et al.,2013, 1-15).

During research on Violence Against Women in 2012, a survey was conducted on violence against women by interviewing 42,000 women from European United Member States (FRA) In the level of violence of all European Union member countries, it is seen that 33% of women experience sexual, psychological and/or physical violence by their husbands or intimate partners within the scope of the research (FRA,2014).

According to 2014 report of World Health Organization, %38 of female homicides in the world were committed by their spouses and 6% by their boyfriends or cohabitants. In addition, it was determined that the perpetrators of 20% of the women's deaths were unknown (WHO, 2014).

In the study conducted in the U.S.A., the levels of emotional, physical and sexual violence against women numbers can be listed respectively as 31%,19% and 7%. In a study conducted with women in 2009, financial status, childhood abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder and depression symptoms were found to be significantly effective (Montgomery et al.,2015, 2156-66).

According to the research titled Violence Against Women in Turkey, conducted by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in 2014; the rate of women who state that they have been subjected to physical violence at a certain time in their life is 36% in Turkey. Of women in Turkey, 36% state that they have been exposed to physical violence and 12% to sexual violence, while 38% of women are exposed to at least one of the two forms of violence and it shows that sexual violence is generally accompanied by physical violence (Turkish Grand National Assembly Research Commission, 2022a).

Considering the levels of emotional violence and abuse, it has been determined that 44% of married women in Turkey have been exposed to at least one of the forms of emotional violence and abuse at some point in their lifetime. (Yıldız, Bal and Binbir, 2015, 145)

Physical violence data shows that the cases of physical violence against women are increasing constantly (Turkish Grand National Assembly Research Commission,2022b).

According to studies conducted in Turkey, it has been revealed that physical punishment methods are applied especially in places where traditional family structures are observed. One of the main causes is the use of slapping, beating and hitting as a means of punishing methods in childhood. Individuals exposed to violence from their families inflict the violent acts on others and this cycle continues. Therefore, the phenomenon of violence has been determined as learned behaviour (Çalışkan and Çevik,2017, 218-33).

When it comes to domestic violence cases recorded by the police and gendarmerie in the last six years, it is observed that the published numbers have recorded a steady increase. While there were 162,100 cases recorded in 2016, this number increased to 268,817 in 2021 (Turkish Grand National Assembly Research Commission,2022a).

One of the most affecting factors for IPV is child marriage. Child marriage, defined by the United Nations as a marriage or informal union under the age of 18 years and a manifestation of gender inequality, results in lifelong negative consequences for the health, well-being and rights of millions of adolescent girls UNICEF (2021a). It is closely associated with high rates of early pregnancies, maternal and child mortality or morbidity, and IPV during adolescence also with intergenerational poverty, poor health, and disempowerment for married girls and their children over the longer term (Shapiro and Gebreselassie, 2014, 229-55).

Although child marriages occur across the globe, 90% of the burden is in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The highest prevalence is in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) at 37%, followed by South Asia at 30%, but South Asia is home to the largest number of child brides, a distinction that will soon belong to SSA with a growing population and slower declines in child marriage rates. UNICEF (2021b).

2. Instrument

Designed so that the questionnaire would be brief enough in order to be completed in a short period of time, but detailed enough to provide sufficient information regarding the violence history of the subjects.

After giving information about the informed consent form, the questions began with the demographic form. Information was collected on the characteristics of women and their partners. These questions were about age, degree of education, marriage age, the number of children they have, how old they were when they had their first child, marital status and occupational status.

At the end of the demographic form, they were asked questions about the violence they had experienced. Information on violence in the past was less detailed. However, detailed information was requested from the past about how old they were when they got married, at what age they had their first child, and how they got married.

An average of 20 to 30 minutes was spent interviewing consenting participants. A 22-item quantitative survey was developed by the researcher in consultation with the literature. The interview gathered information about demographic information, the types of violence they experienced and the level of violence notification rates.

The first four questions were asked in order to reveal the physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence they have experienced. They were relating to physical violence, sexual violence and molestation, economic violence and psychological violence. Women were asked, if in the last 12 months, they had experienced physical violence (one question with various examples of violence: from pushing or slapping to being stabbed or choked etc), sexual violence (defined as being obliged to submit to a sexual act), threats of being beaten up or killed, insults, other psychological violence (being controlled, scared, etc) and economic violence (forced labor, left short of money, dispossession, etc).

For current violence they were asked how frequently the violence occurred and for violence occurring in the past (earlier than 12 months before the interview) women were asked its duration.

For current violence, they were asked how frequently the violence occurred (none, rarely, a few times a month, a few times a week, almost every day) and for violence occurring in the past (earlier than 12 months before the interview) women were asked about its duration.

After this, women were asked questions that they could answer directly. The first question was about 'how they got married'. The answers are grouped under the following headings; marriage by knowing the partner before marriage and obtaining the consent of the families, arranged marriage, marriage without parental consent and marriage under pressure and coercion.

Another question was, 'What is your marital status?' The answers are grouped under the following headings; Imam marriage (Religious marriage) only, civil marriage only, both, none, other. A fourth option is also presented, considering that there may be different types of marriages due to the cultural and religious characteristics of the region. This option was called, 'Others'.

Also women were asked directly if they had attended the service for reasons linked to present or past violence. Two questions were asked about the notification to the formal institution and whether any result was obtained from this situation.

The first question was, 'Have you applied to any institution about having been subjected to violence before?'. The answers were collected as 'Never', 'Once' and 'More than once'. In the second question (open question), women who answered 'Once' and 'More than once' were asked which institution they applied to and what kind of feedback they received.

Physical, psychological, economic, and sexual violence was studied in the current analysis. To analyze the proportion of victims of violence among the users of the different services and the characteristics of these women, we constructed an indicator for women who experienced physical, psychological, economic and sexual violence in the last 12 months, for which information is more precise. We constructed this indicator according to the perpetrators of violence: partner or former partner (husband, lover, boyfriend, or ex-partner). Other known persons (friends, colleagues, acquaintances, etc.), another family member (parent, sibling, grandparent, etc.), strangers were not considered.

Throughout the interview, we evaluated women's reactions and the common characteristics of the women interviewed were determined. While answering the questions, the women showed an attitude of accepting the violence they experienced. Other observed reactions were; spontaneous, interested and willing to speak. It has been observed that, women show interest in the researchers but are reluctant to tell about the violence they have experienced due to the cultural structure of the region they live in.

3. Aims of This Study

We conducted a cross-sectional research on women's exposure to partner violence in a southeastern Turkish city. The study was cross-sectional, the aims of the study were to estimate the prevalence of present and past violence among the subjects and to evaluate the feasibility of asking all women about violence.

4. Methods and Materials

4.1. Sample and procedure:

The study was carried out in Hakkari, which has a population of 280,000 and is located in the east of Turkey neighboring the countries of Iraq and Iran. (TUIK, 2021)

It has the lowest rate of healthcare workers in Turkey due to factors such as geography, population, regional and socio-economic development. Child abuse, neglect, corporal punishment, and early marriage/sexual abuse are reasons for concern in Hakkâri. 9 out of 10 of the cities where child marriage is the highest are situated in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia regions. (TC. Kültür ve Turizm Hakkâri İl Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2023; İMDAT, 2020a; İMDAT 2020b)

Therefore, a study was conducted to evaluate the Hakkâri healthcare workers’ knowledge regarding child protection, their attitude towards child protection, along with sociodemographic factors and their experience in the field.

Considering the cultural structure of the region, it was thought that the application to public health facilities and family health centers (community-based services offering contraception, preventative gynecological care, plus social and psychological support in family matters) would be insufficient. For this reason, women in the region were reached through home visits.

4.2. Data collection:

During a six-month period, researchers conducted face-to-face, survey-based interviews with participants. Collection of data continued from September 2021 to January 2022.

All women over 18 years and between the age of 18-60 were included in the study. Women were considered non-eligible for an interview if they were judged by the interviewer to be too ill or confused to be asked to participate.

All eligible women were approached in a private available room in their house and asked to participate in a study on “measuring whether they have been exposed to partner violence”. Participation in the survey was made comfortable and safe because the researchers were experienced in crisis intervention and victim advocacy.

The final sample consisted of 100 women. 100 women were visited in their homes and all of these women participated voluntarily in the study. No woman refused to participate in the study during our visits. None of the women interrupted the interview once the theme of violence was introduced.

Informed consent was explained to the participants. Informed consent contains information about the purpose of the study, the duration of the study, the confidentiality of the participants and where they can apply in case of any negative impact. The interviewers explained that the questionnaires were anonymous and that women could refuse to participate. Those who accepted, went with the interviewer into a private space (an empty room in their houses where they could be alone and express themselves comfortably) to answer the questionnaire.

The questions about violence were introduced by explaining that violence concerns many women and that it can have consequences on health and therefore health services are concerned.

There were 2 female interviewers for the study: one forensic master student nurse and one translator. (An interpreter was needed because the women living in the region could not speak Turkish or could not express themselves easily in Turkish), 94 of them did not understand Turkish. The team received training for conducting the interviews, had the capabilities to be empathic with the women and were informed of local resources available to victims of violence. An agreement was made with these women through a translator.

Moreover, they were encouraged to listen and take notes of whatever the interviewed women may say besides answering the questions on the questionnaire. From their notes, we were able to reconstruct a more detailed history of the violence experienced by some of the women.

Furthermore, the questionnaires of the illiterate participants were filled out by the researchers with the consent of the participants. This project was supported by ASUMA (Crime and Violence Practice and Research Center of Acibadem Mehmet Ali Aydınlar University).

5. Result

Table 1. Demographic information of participants and their partners (n = 100).

Characteristic variables	Participants (%)	Participants' partners (%)
Age		
18-29	45	-
30-45	41	-
46-60	14	-
Race		
Turkish	94	100
Iraqi	6	0
Marriage	age	
Under 18	64	9
Over 18	36	91

The age range of 100 female participants; 45% were between 18-30 years old, 41% were 30-45 years old and 14% 45-60 years old. The sample had a younger population (45% were in the range of 18–30 years).

According to Table 1, 94% of the participants were born in Turkey and 6% were born in Iraq. According to Table 1, when the marriage ages of the participants and their partners are examined, 64 out of 100 women are married under the age of 18, while this rate is 9 for their partners.

Table 2. Literacy status and age at the birth of their first child. (n:100)

	Over 18 years old (%)	18 and under 18 years old (%)	Total (%)
Literate	17	31	48
Illiterate	38	14	52
Total	55	45	100

According to the Table 2, there is a dependent relationship between the literacy of female participants and the age at which they give birth to their first child. 64% of women were married under the age of 18. Of these women, 85.9% had their first child under the age of 18 and 59.3% of these women are illiterate.

The minimum theoretical value of the continuity correction (Yates Square Test) was measured as 21.60 (value value=12.822) and p=0.001. Since n<5 is the smallest theoretical frequency <25, it is dependent.

Table 3. Exposure to types of violence

(n:100)

	Physical (%)	Sexual (%)	Emotional (%)	Economic (%)
Never	5	19	0	0
Rare	23	43	2	1
Several times a month	14	18	6	4
Several times a week	35	18	19	10
Almost every day	23	2	73	85
Total	100	100	100	100

According to Table 3, 58% of women are exposed to chronic physical violence, 95% of women to chronic economic violence, 93% of women to chronic emotional violence, and 20% of women to chronic sexual violence. All of the women have experienced emotional and economic violence at least once during their marriage. 73% of women experienced emotional violence and 85% of women experienced economic violence almost every day. The rate of women who experience both physical and sexual violence together is 20%.

Table 4. Educational status of participants and partners (n = 100)

	Participants (%)	Participants' partners (%)
Educational status		
Illiterate	52	3
Primary school	12	12
Middle School	3	35
High school	13	21
University	20	29

Table 4 shows that 52% of the participants are illiterate. The literacy rate of their partners is 3%.

Table 5. Distribution of monthly income (n = 100)

Monthly Income	Participants (%)	Participants' partners (%)
No income	73	11
Minimum wage	7	19
Above minimum wage	20	70

Table 5 shows that 73% of the participants do not have a monthly income. While 7% of the participants receive a minimum salary, 20% receive a salary above the minimum level. Looking at the partners of the participants, the rate of men with no income is 11%, the rate of men with a minimum income is 9%, and the rate of men with a monthly income above the military level is 70%.

Table 6. Application status of women to institutions and the feedback they received (n:100)

	%
Have you applied to any institution about the violence?	
Never	1
Once	67
More than once	32
Total	100
Which institutions did you apply to?	
Person/people who did not seek help	1
Social service	6
Police	7
Hospital	17
Religious officials.	20
Family elders	49
Total	100
What kind of feedback did you receive from the institutions you applied to?	
Person/people who did not seek help	1
I got help	3
Insufficient help	56
Not helped	40
Total	100

As seen in the table, 99 people out of 100 applied to an institution for help. 67% of the participants applied for help at least once, and 32% more than once. Only 3% of the participants stated that they received adequate help. It is seen that people who stated that they received sufficient help applied to their family elders and religious officials. 56% of the participants stated that they did not receive enough help. It was observed that 40% of the participants did not receive any assistance. Most of the family elders were asked for help and less applications were made to state institutions. 50% of the women applied to state institutions and all of them stated that they did not receive adequate assistance.

Table 7. Marriage patterns of the participants. (n:100)

	Making friends (%)	Arranged marriage (%)	Not agreed with family (%)	Involuntary forced marriage (%)	Total (%)	
Literate	24	7	3	14	48	
Illiterate	1	1	2	48	52	52
Total	25	8	5	62	100	100

62% of the participants stated that they were involuntarily/forced to marry their spouses. 77.4% of them are illiterate.

Fisher's Decembers Halton Exact Test, using Monte Carlo's simulation in the 99% confidence interval, had a significant correlation between the literacy status of the participants and how they married their spouses, since the significance value was 0.001 (p<000.1).

6. Discussion

In this study, research on domestic violence was conducted in the Hakkari province in eastern Turkey. In this research, adult women's exposure to domestic violence and related factors were investigated. The prevalence and frequency of domestic violence and risk factors associated with violence were determined. Literacy, education levels, age at marriage and economic status were found to be important factors in women's exposure to domestic violence. This cross-sectional study provides data on the existence of different variables in domestic violence, as it was conducted in Hakkâri, which has a different profile from the general profile of Turkey.

The study was carried out in Hakkâri, which has a population of 280,000 and is located in the east of Turkey, neighboring the countries of Iraq and Iran. (TUIK, 2021)

It has the lowest rate of healthcare workers in Turkey due to factors such as geography, population, regional and socio-economic development. Child abuse, neglect, corporal punishment, and early marriage/sexual abuse are reasons for concern in Hakkâri. 9 out of 10 of the cities where child marriage is the highest are situated in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolian regions. (TC. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2023; İMDAT, 2020a; İMDAT 2020b) Despite the importance of such incidents in the area, current regional data is limited, as child abuse and neglect are kept hidden and is usually not reported. Since the region is geographically isolated, cases of abused and neglected children remain hidden. The reports are insufficient due to the lack of knowledge and skills within the healthcare workers that are making the first contact. Moreover, actions taken to provide enough healthcare workers, as well as increasing their awareness, are also rather limited.

According to the Research Report on Domestic Violence Against Women in Turkey, which was prepared by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies of the Republic of Turkey, the vast majority of women (89%) who have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence across the country have not applied to any institution or organization. When the applications with a very low rate are analyzed, it is seen that most of the notifications are made to the police. However, it was reported that 13% of the applications did not receive help and support. While 37% of women preferred to tell their families about the violence they experienced, only 19% of women wanted to help those women. (KSGM, 2014)

In the study conducted in Malatya city center, 55.9% of the participants stated that they were subjected to violence by their spouses. 80% of these women reported that they did not seek help. Those seeking help preferred to apply to relatives/family or police/gendarmerie institutions. (Mete et al. 2018, 297-304). In our study, the rate of reporting domestic violence was higher than that reported in the official national data. All of the reporting women (99%) stated that they could not receive adequate help and support. This information supports the literature; because 49% of the women in our study preferred to seek help from their relatives, while 50% applied to public institutions (social service, police, hospital, religious officials) for help. When women are abused, they do not possess the knowledge and skills to use legal tools to combat violence. This is a sign of a failure on the part of public authorities, institutions, and society to prevent violence, protect women, and guarantee their rights.

According to the 2021 global gender gap report of the World Economic Forum (WEF), Turkey ranks 140th among 156 countries in terms of women's participation in the workforce and recognition of opportunities. In the same report, it ranks 101st in women's access to educational opportunities. (World Economic Forum, 2021) Looking at TUIK reports, the labor force participation rate is 76.1% for men and only 36.2% for women. (TUIK, 2020) However, 73% of the participants in our study have no income. In addition, 52% of these women are illiterate. Looking at their partners, 11% of men without income are illiterate, while 3% of them are literate. It is thought that the education level of women is lower than the average of Turkey due to the cultural identity and patriarchal social structure of the region. Inability of women to be included in the labor market and inadequacy of access to education, reinforces the fact that women remain in the background in the patriarchal order. Women, who cannot benefit from the same opportunities as men, have a higher rate of encountering negative situations, such as poverty, than men. The woman, who is weakened and pressured to be in second place, becomes the number one victim of domestic violence and IPV, (Intimate Partner Violence).

The literature supports that, the educational level of women significantly affects domestic violence. It has been reported that illiterate women are 2.6 times more likely to experience violence than women with a university or higher education level. (Ergin et. al., 2006,35-51) According to our study, illiterate women were exposed to 6 times more chronic sexual violence, 4.8 times more chronic physical violence, 1.3 times more chronic emotional violence, and 1.2 times more economic violence than literate women.

It has been observed that the coexistence of physical and sexual violence types is a common situation. In the study of Hacettepe Center for Population Studies, physical violence was found at the level of 36% and sexual violence at the level of 12% throughout the country. 27% of women victims of violence have been exposed to both physical and sexual violence. (KSGM, 2014) Considering the regional distribution of violence, it is seen that women living in Central Anatolia, Marmara and Eastern Anatolian regions, are exposed to more physical and both physical and sexual violence than women living in other regions. (Büyükyılmaz, 2016, 443-435) 20% of the women in our study reported that they experienced both chronic sexual violence and chronic physical violence at the same time.

Research on Violence Against Women in Turkey, prepared by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, reports that married women are exposed to emotional violence at rates ranging from 35% to 54%. (KSGM, 2014) When national studies are examined, it is seen that from among the types of violence, women are most exposed to emotional violence. (Kolburan, 2022, 49-66; Hatunoğlu, Hatunoğlu and Avcı, 2014, 440-50; Büyükkayacı Duman et al. 2016, 154-59; Bilgin Şahin and Erbay Dündar, 2017, 203-210). Our study obtained findings that support the literature. Chronic physical violence and economic physical violence are in the first place with a rate of 95%, followed by chronic emotional violence with a rate of 92%.

It is observed that one out of three men inflicts economic and physical violence on their wives. Considering the factors of economic violence, there are different opinions in the literature about the education level of women. As the education level of women increases, they will have economic independence. It has been observed that this situation increases the probability of women being exposed to violence. (İnci,2020, 189-206; Çalışkan and Çevik, 2018, 218-33; Dönmez, Şimşek and Günay, et al. 2012, 151-159; Dindaş, 2008, 2-67; Hindin and Linda, 2002, 1385-99) Examining the findings that economic independence reduces violence; In terms of physical violence, it was seen that there was not a big difference, however in terms of sexual violence, it was determined that women with economic inadequacy were exposed to 4 times more violence. (Kocacık and Doğan, 2006; 742-49; Naved and Persson, 2005, 289-300; Yanık et al.,2015,104-11; Büyükyılmaz and Demir, 2016, 443-50) 73% of the women in our study have no income and 52% of them are illiterate. All illiterates reported that they experienced economic violence almost every day. The result of the study showed us that low education level is one of the factors that increase economic violence.

Looking at the world and Turkey, the rate of early marriages is decreasing, but it still continues to be serious. (UNFPA,2022; Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2019) According to the Family Structure Research conducted by TUIK, the rate of women who got married before the age of 18 is 28.2%, while it is 5.6% for men. (TUIK, 2016). In our study, the rate of marriage before the age of 18 was 64% for women and 9% for men. It is seen that early marriage is a situation that should not be ignored for men as well as women. However, it has been determined that it is 7.1 times more common in women than in men. Our research also shows that 62% of women are forced into marriage. Girls are married much earlier than boys. This situation creates more serious problems for girls. This reveals the need for early marriage studies to focus on girls.

According to data from WHO, 16 million adolescents between the ages of 15-19 and 2.5 million adolescents under the age of 15 give birth each year in developing regions. (WHO, 2021). In Turkey, 4% of women between the ages of 15-19 already have children or are pregnant with their first child. (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2018) As a result of the examination of the geographical regions of Turkey, it has been seen that there are serious differences in the Eastern Anatolia Regions in terms of the age of first birth of women. (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2018). In the study in Diyarbakir province in the Eastern Anatolian Region, the frequency of marriages under the age of 18 was found to be 71.30%. 54.3% of these women had their first child when they were under the age of 18. (Orhan and Kar, 2008) According to the data obtained from our study in Hakkari, the rate of marriage before the age of 18 is 64%. 55% of these women had their first child when they were under the age of 18. The data supports the literature. Girls who marry at an early age have children at an early age and undertake an important responsibility. Pregnancy at an early age brings with it a large number of pregnancies. This situation causes many medical and social problems. (Polat, 2022) Early marriage and having children at an early age also take away the girls' right to education.

When the dimensions of early marriage, having children and education level are examined together, it has been reported that adolescents under the age of 18 with less than 12 years of education give birth 6 times more than those with more education. According to the report of Population Health Research in Turkey, 20% of women who have completed primary school begin to give birth to children in adolescence, while 1% of women with high school or higher education begin to give birth in adolescence. (Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies, 2018) In our study, 64% of women got married when they were under the age of 18. 55% of these women had their first child when they were under the age of 18. 38% of these women are illiterate. Of the 45% of women who have their first child at the age of 18, 31% are literate. As a result, early marriages and the resulting early pregnancies prevent women from getting education, having a profession, and participating in working life. It is seen that these factors affect the social status and socioeconomic status of the adolescent.

As a result of our research; It has been revealed that women, housewives, unemployed women, illiterate women, and women who were forced into marriage are exposed to more violence. For this reason, these groups are especially at risk and preventive measures should be taken.

Despite the high rate of applications by the participants to public institutions, the help/support they received was deemed insufficient. In this context, public institutions to which applications are made should be trained and sensitized on violence against women.

Conclusion and recommendations:

his study concludes that violence against women is a serious form of human rights abuse especially in the rural areas as has been detected in the Hakkari region .

The women are obedient in most of the cases for traditional reasons. Divorce is not an encouraged event and the woman's family does not support them at divorce cases .

Violence against women is therefore a sustained case and a mixture of traditions, culture, patriarchy and the negative masculinity acts are persisting in East and South-East regions including Hakkari.

Socio-cultural forces dominate social norms and values guiding gender roles and socialization process in a society.

The silence to violence cases is a big obstacle for the prevention of those cases. A culture of silence still persists, because abused women do not want to be subject to violence again from their partners after reporting them.

The study also revealed that early marriages are the cultural practices that encourage violence against women in rural Türkiye. Early marriage prevents the development and preparation of girls to assume the role of wife and mother at a very early stage of their lives.

Early marriage makes the women more vulnerable, more exposed and subject to violent acts due to their age. The most important negative effect of early marriages are abuse of the education rights of the girls.

Also early marriage makes it difficult for the girls to know their rights and speak out when such rights are infringed upon by their older husbands.

The perception of what constitutes violence against women is affected by level of education of the rural woman and culture of the people.

The first step of the solution is in education. This means there is the need to increase girl-child education among the population in rural areas.

Girl-child education will help to preserve the dignity of women and socio-economic enlightenment among women in the society. The potentials of women as help-mates to men will be fully harnessed through qualitative education and skill acquisition.

Education should be made compulsory and free up to secondary level for both male and female members of the rural population. It takes education to empower women to be gainfully employed and economically self-reliant.

Education will help to give women a voice to reject and condemn violence against them. Education increases the perception of violence and reduces its tolerance and support by women in the community.

The culture of silence will be reduced when women victims of violence are encouraged to speak out and offenders reprimanded by the society.

Violence to women is a huge social-psychological problem that victims cannot solve alone in society. Family and friends of victims can provide a social and emotional support system for victims to speak out and get justice in the society without stigmatization and are very important steps to be taken immediately to provide a solution.

Also, the government should facilitate poverty reduction through soft agricultural loans and skill acquisition for both men and women to reduce early marriages.

Women's capacity for economic self-dependence and awareness of what constitutes domestic violence may be built with the education of girls.

Education liberates women into productive members of the society adding value to their lives and homes respectfully.

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