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A STUDY ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ABUSE IN ANKARA, TURKEY

by Leyla Gülçür (1999)

P R E F A C E

Violence against women has been one of the primary areas of activity for Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) ever since its inception in 1993 in Istanbul, Turkey. Joining the momentum created by close to two decades of activism on domestic violence by the women's movement in Turkey, WWHR has contributed in several ways to raising public consciousness and facilitating the extension of the momentum into the legal arena. WWHR has implemented a number of coordinated, simultaneous activities – encompassing action-research, documentation, dissemination, training, networking, advocacy and lobbying – which have enabled us to target multiple audiences, including the general public, women and women's groups and policy makers.

One of WWHR's first initiatives was a research and documentation project in 1993-1994 on domestic violence.* The outcomes of this project have been published in Turkish in The Myth of the Warm Home: Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse in the Family (Ilkcaracan, Gülçür & Arın, 1996). The book includes: a critical overview of the Turkish civil and criminal code from a feminist perspective; theoretical and prevention-oriented policy articles on domestic violence and child sexual abuse; excerpts from interviews with women subjected to domestic violence; and the findings of two field studies. One field study was conducted with immigrant women from Turkey living in Berlin, Germany; while the other was carried out in Ankara, the capital of Turkey.

Various components of the book have already been published in English for international dissemination. The overview of the Turkish civil and criminal code from a gender perspective was published under the title "The Legal Status of Women in Turkey" (Arın, 1996), and the research study in Berlin was published under the title "Domestic Violence and Family Life as Experienced by Turkish Immigrant Women in Germany" (Ilkcaracan, 1996). This report contains an adapted translation into English of another segment of the above-mentioned book, namely the field study on domestic violence and family life of women living in Ankara, which was conducted by Dr. Leyla Gülçür.

Since WWHR joined the movement to combat violence against women in the family, we have used our research and documentation resources to support efforts aimed at the enactment of new legislation on domestic violence in Turkey, namely "protection orders". The lobbying efforts were part of a national awareness raising campaign undertaken by women's groups throughout Turkey and in cooperation with

* This research was undertaken as part of an international research project by the Network of Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) entitled "Women and Law." WWHR undertook the country component of the Women and Law Research in Turkey.

the Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women. WWHR organized several advocacy and lobbying activities targeting members of the Justice Commission and parliamentarians. WWHR staff also acted as consultants to the Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women during the drafting of the legislation. Our publication compiling the findings of research on domestic violence was sent to the members of the Justice Commission, several parliamentarians and ministers, and was used extensively to lobby for such legal changes. Although there was initial resistance from parliament, the intensive lobbying efforts were finally successful in persuading the parliamentarians to pass the legislation.

In January 1998 a new law, entitled “The Law to Protect the Family,” was approved by the Turkish parliament, which mandated the establishment of protection orders for women subjected to domestic violence. Under the new law, any member of a family subjected to domestic violence can file a court case for what is known as a “protection order” against the perpetrator of the violence. Violation of the protection order can be used as grounds for arrest and a jail sentence.

The practical importance of this law lies in the fact that it provides women with an easy-to-implement legal recourse to fight domestic violence. Prior to the enactment of the law, the only legal procedure applicable in cases of domestic violence was the implementation of the Criminal Code, which required the victim of violence to file a criminal case against the perpetrator; and this required a series of complicated procedures involving the obtaining of an appropriate police report and state doctor’s report. If the case concluded in favor of the woman, the husband would be punished by a jail sentence. This had various discouraging implications for many women in that they would be left without any means of financial support and the stigma of having been responsible for their husbands – the fathers of their children – being sent to jail.

Under the new law, however, most of the discouraging aspects of the Criminal Code have been removed. The protection order law allows not only the woman herself but also any third party to apply to the court directly – without having to go through the police and the state doctor first – for the speedy implementation of a protection order against the perpetrator of the violence. Moreover, such a protection order also restricts the husband’s access to the home and the workplace of the wife, rather than imposing a more extreme punishment, such as a jail sentence. The law also foresees the issue of provisional maintenance payments to the spouse or children when necessary. The simplicity of this legal procedure is particularly important in a country like Turkey, where – as the findings of Gülçür’s study in Ankara indicate – women subject to domestic violence find it difficult to access the legal and institutional mechanisms for support. In February 1998, only a month after the draft law entered the statute book, it was applied for the first time in a domestic violence case in Ankara which received extensive media coverage.

Over the last two years, WWHR has undertaken several initiatives for the widespread dissemination of information about the new law both in Turkey and abroad. For dissemination in Turkey, we have revised our outreach materials on domestic violence to include information on legal procedures for the protection order in an easy-to-follow format for low-literacy women. Information about the new law is also disseminated through the WWHR Human Rights and Legal Literacy Training Program, which is currently being implemented in sixteen provinces in Turkey.

Internationally, WWHR has put details of the enactment of the protection order on the UNIFEM end-violence electronic discussion list on violence against

women. This led to WWHR making a statement at the Global Videoconference organized by UNIFEM on March 8th, 1999, at the UN General Assembly. The extensive number of inquiries that we subsequently received from women's groups and activists from around the world are an encouraging indication of the level of international concern and solidarity about violence against women. A translation of the new law and its justification are included in the Appendix to this report.

Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR)
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A STUDY OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND FAMILY LIFE IN ANKARA, TURKEY

by Dr. Leyla Gülçür

INTRODUCTION

This report details the findings of a field study undertaken as part of a larger project by Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR), which focused on theoretical, empirical and policy issues related to domestic violence in Turkey. The study, which was conducted in 1993-94 in Ankara, the capital of Turkey, sought to highlight three issues: 1) the family life of women in Ankara and the different types of domestic violence that they experience; 2) the strategies women use against domestic violence and the institutional recourses offered to them; and 3) the impact of domestic violence on women's psychological health. The participants in our field survey consisted of 155 women who were either living with a spouse or a partner at the time or had done so previously at some point in their lives.

The survey used a broad definition of domestic violence, covering physical, psychological, sexual and economic violence, in order to provide a comprehensive picture of what can be called "a cycle of violence." The findings of the study indicated different forms of domestic violence acting as a pervasive violation of women's human rights. All forms of violence reported by the respondents were found to carry a significant association with higher anxiety levels, a negative psychological health effect. A striking finding of the survey was the very low-level use of legal and institutional means in response to the violence to which women were subjected. This stands in sharp contrast to a parallel study of Turkish immigrant women living in Germany, where rates of use of formal mechanisms against domestic violence were reported to be much higher (Ilkcaracan, 1996). This finding by itself emphasized the urgent need for the installation of preventive, as well as protective, legal and institutional mechanisms to eliminate violence against women in Turkey.

BACKGROUND

Domestic Violence against Women: In a global context and in Turkey

Theoretically, in a conjugal situation, either spouse may be violent toward the other. Yet studies show that over 90 percent of the victims of spouse abuse are women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Gaquin, 1977-1978; Schwartz, 1987); which demonstrates that gender is the major factor determining who will be at most risk of violence in the family. This statistic strongly indicates that domestic violence – and more specifically spouse (wife) abuse – occurs within the context of a societal framework where public, family and individual relations are based on male authority and power.

Domestic violence against women is not an isolated phenomenon restricted to the behavior of a few disturbed individuals; it is prevalent in most cultures and occurs across different classes, ethnicities and socioeconomic levels in both developing and developed countries. In a study conducted in 90 societies worldwide, Levinson (1990) found domestic violence against women in 86 percent of them. A multitude of additional reports and studies from different countries – both in the North and the South – confirm this finding (United Nations, 1991a and 1991b; Demographic and

Health Survey, 1991; Raikes, 1990; the Papua New Guinea Law Reform Commission 1986).

Moreover, available data indicate that violence against women in the family constitutes a serious and costly social problem of global proportions. This issue has spawned thousands of studies in many countries around the world in an attempt to elucidate the health and social consequences of domestic violence against women, as well as the context in which such violence occurs.

For example, the psychological health consequences of violence have been extensively documented by studies in the United States and replicated in other countries. These studies show that women who are subjected to violence in their homes suffer from higher rates of anxiety, major depression, lowered self-esteem, suicide, alcoholism, nightmares, hypervigilance, dissociation, somatization and other similar psychological disturbances associated with post-traumatic stress (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1990; Houskamp & Foy, 1991; Kemp, Rawlings & Green, 1991; Levit, 1991; Stark, 1984; U.S. Attorney General, 1984; Walker, 1989; West, Fernandez, Hillard & Schoof, 1990). Studies and national crime statistics show that, ultimately, one of the inevitable consequences of continued domestic violence is murder of wives by their husbands (e.g. United States Department of Justice, 1991). Thus, although cultural differences may play a role in determining the *context* within which domestic violence occurs, the parallel nature of findings in different countries seems to indicate that domestic violence against women has similar consequences across cultures.

In addition, studies have also shown that violence against women in the family has negative physical health effects. For example, it is estimated that 20 to 35 percent of all female trauma victims in hospital emergency rooms in the United States are abused women (Ford Foundation, 1992). The battery of pregnant women increases both maternal and child mortality (Carillo, 1991); in addition, it results in an increased risk of children born with mental or physical disabilities and in an increased need for neonatal care services (Ford Foundation, 1992).

Domestic violence also has negative effects on women's sexual and reproductive health. For example, studies indicate that women who are subjected to domestic violence – or the threat of violence – are afraid to take any initiative in practicing adequate birth control due to the fear of reprisals from their husbands, who exercise unchallenged decision-making power within the family (e.g. Greenstreet, 1990; Heise, 1992). Safe-sex practices also suffer when sexual decision-making is determined by a husband who may refuse to use condoms, thereby increasing the risk of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (Carillo, 1991).

Although informally acknowledged to be widespread, domestic violence did not appear on the public agenda in Turkey until the 1980's. Previously, domestic violence against women, which was sanctioned in several ways through social norms and behavior, was not publicly acknowledged to be a social problem and was considered a taboo subject. However, with the emergence of an autonomous feminist movement in the 1980's, domestic violence became the primary issue addressed by the women's movement and often led to collaboration between polarized groups with widely varying political and ideological beliefs. The results of one 1987 court case in particular, in which the judge was quoted as saying "no woman should be without a child in her womb and a stick on her back," caused a widespread furore and demonstrations, leading to the implementation of a national campaign about violence against women in the family (Purple Roof Foundation, 1988). This campaign – which was characterized by panel discussions, media reports, lobbying and demonstrations –

played a major role in forcing municipalities to create shelters for battered women. In addition, two feminist women's groups, the Purple Roof Foundation in Istanbul and the Altındağ Women's Solidarity Foundation in Ankara, created a space where legal and psychological services were provided to battered women for the first time; and later opened the only two autonomous women's shelters in Turkey. Today, domestic violence still remains on the feminist political agenda, and both the printed and audio-visual media have proved to be unexpected allies in keeping the issue alive.

The campaign about violence against women in the family produced a number of positive results. First, the public was forced to acknowledge the social dimensions of the issue. Second, local and national government agencies began to accept that violence against women in the family was a serious problem that needed to be addressed; and they created local shelters for women (although not enough to address the need). Third, preliminary steps were taken to create community-based interventions and to implement new legislation to prevent domestic violence.

Research in Turkey

While preparing a literature review for this study, we found little in terms of research on domestic violence in Turkey. The earliest study was conducted by a market research firm, PIAR (1988), which found that 75 percent of women reported having been physically abused by their husbands. Yüksel (1990) interviewed 140 married women who had applied for counselling at the Istanbul University Medical Center and found that 57 percent reported histories of abuse by their husbands. Esmer (1991), who interviewed 116 couples in Istanbul, found that 54 percent of husbands admitted to having battered their wives. In a national survey of 1,181 women across 11 provinces nationwide, 22 percent of the married respondents reported having been physically abused by their husbands (PIAR, 1992). In yet another national survey, which covered 12 provinces in five geographical regions in Turkey, 30 percent of the 2,479 women interviewed indicated they had been physically abused by their husbands, while 34 percent of the 1,147 men questioned admitted that they had physically abused their wives (Nielsen-Family Research Institute, 1994). In recent years there have been other studies, which have added to the limited body of knowledge concerning domestic violence (e.g. Foundation for Women's Solidarity 1997; Purple Roof Foundation 1996, 1998, Ilkkaracan 1998).

There is also limited knowledge of the health effects of domestic violence against women in Turkey. In one study, Yüksel (1990) found that anxiety and depressive and somatic symptoms were more common among battered women. Although the respondents in her study consisted of women who sought psychological counselling, and are thus not representative of women in the larger population, it is significant that her results replicate the numerous findings in other countries which indicate that domestic violence against women has multiple psychological and physical health effects.

Aim and scope of the research study

Much of the research conducted to date has revealed a number of shortcomings, which have underlined the need for more comprehensive surveys in Turkey, namely: in the number of research studies conducted; and in the methodology and terminology used. As it was difficult to address all of these deficiencies in a single study, we decided to address only three of them in our research. First, we tried to eliminate the inadequate definitions of domestic violence resulting from limited,

mono-dimensional questions, such as “has your husband beaten you?” We used a multi-dimensional, feminist definition of violence against women, namely: "any act involving the use of force or coercion with an intent to perpetuate/promote hierarchical gender relations" (Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, 1990).

The study defined domestic violence against women as violence perpetrated by the husband against the wife in a heterosexual relationship, including psychological, physical, sexual and other (e.g. economic) violence. Such a definition involves a multi-dimensional definition of violence, which is not limited to physical violence (e.g. beating, slapping, stabbing) but includes other forms such as psychological (e.g. humiliating, insulting, isolating), sexual (e.g. rape) and economic violence (e.g. not allowing woman to work or taking away her money), which, in conjunction with physical violence, creates a “cycle of violence.” Within this context, we thought it is important to document: a) the reported rates of *different* dimensions of violence (e.g. psychological violence, physical violence and sexual violence); and b) the reported *frequency* of violent acts.

We used multiple items to assess violence. For example, we defined and assessed seven possible sub-categories of psychological violence against women, namely: shouting, insulting, throwing food on the floor, breaking household goods, mental cruelty, swearing, and humiliation. We anticipated that the use of a broader definition of domestic violence, combined with the assessment of multiple dimensions of violence, would provide a more comprehensive and detailed picture of the kinds of violence experienced by women in the family.

Second, we sought to assess the ways in which women responded to violence against them. Only two previous surveys – Esmer (1991) and the Nielsen-Family Research Institute (1994) – had tackled this subject directly.¹ According to the results obtained by Esmer, 45 percent of women subjected to violence find no means to react, while 24 percent try to defend themselves in some way and escape their husbands’ abuse. However, Esmer’s research did not include other strategies, such as recourse to official institutions or seeking assistance in the immediate environment, such as from friends, relatives or neighbors. The Nielsen-Family Research Institute (1994) survey did not include options such as applying to the police or going to a shelter. Since we believe that it is important to investigate the extent to which women believe that resorting to such personal or institutional assistance is an appropriate way of responding to violence, we wanted to assess whether or not they used other methods of resisting violence (such as asking for assistance from friends or neighbors, going to a shelter or applying to the police).

Third, we wanted to assess the impact of violence on psychological health. For this reason we decided to measure the levels of anxiety suffered by women who had experienced domestic violence. In the light of Yüksel’s findings (1990), we formulated the hypothesis that anxiety levels would be higher among women who had been subjected to domestic violence.

In order to place these three research questions in the context of the women’s social status and family life, we also included in the first section of our study a detailed demographic and family profile of the women and their partners. The demographic and family profile provides a picture of the personal and family life of

¹ Since our research was conducted out, others have also begun to assess women’s responses, coping strategies and resistance to violence (e.g. Foundation for Women’s Solidarity, 1997).

the women, including the gender distribution of household labor and decision-making power in the home.

METHODOLOGY

Data collection and sample

155 women living in Ankara responded to the survey during December 1993 and the months of May, June and November 1994. The samples were selected via convenience sampling from a range of neighborhoods and workplaces, where women working for pay could be reached. The only selection criterion was whether the woman had ever had a spouse or conjugal partner (this criterion allowed for the participation of women who were not legally married but who were living in a conjugal relationship). Women who were divorced, separated or widowed were asked to answer questions about their most recent marriage or conjugal relationship.

The questionnaire

In addition to determining the demographic characteristics of the women and their husbands, the questionnaire also measured the gender distribution of household labor, the distribution of decision-making power in the family, the types and frequency of violent acts against women by their husbands, the women's responses and strategies for coping with violence and, finally, their anxiety levels. With the exception of the questions on anxiety, all of the questions were prepared by the researchers themselves. To assess anxiety, we used a 20-question State-Trait Anxiety Inventory, adapted into Turkish by Öner and Le Compte (1985), which measured the women's levels of anxiety in daily life.

RESULTS

Respondents' and their husbands' demographic profile

The demographic profiles of the 155 women aged 18-67 living in Ankara who responded to the survey are as shown in Table 1. Most respondents were married (96.1 percent), with the remainder divorced, separated or widowed. The average reported age was 34.6. The average reported age of first marriage was 22.6. Most respondents (83 percent) had children. Almost all of the respondents (99 percent) reported that their and their husbands' religious background was Muslim.

Most of the married respondents (76 percent) reported having had both a registered civil marriage and a religious marriage performed by an *imam*.² Twenty-one percent had only undergone a civil marriage, while 2.7 percent had only undergone a religious (and legally invalid) marriage. Over half the married respondents (54.9 percent) had met and married independently of their families, while under half (41.2 percent) had undergone an arranged marriage. About four percent had met and married in some other way, such as being matched by friends. Of the respondents who had had arranged marriages, 39.7 percent had not seen their husbands before the marriage, 28.6 percent had not been asked whether they wanted to marry, and 28.6 percent had been married against their will.

² In Turkey, a civil/secular marriage is mandated by the state and is the only legally accepted form of marriage, although religious marriages are allowed once the civil ceremony has been performed.

TABLE 1: Demographic Profiles

Marital Demographics	Percentage (%)
Married	96.1
Divorced	0.6
Separated	1.3
Widowed	1.9
Other Demographics	Percentage (%)
Respondent's mean age	34.6
Husband's mean age	38.3
Respondent's mean age at marriage	22.6
Average number of children	2.0
How respondents got married	Percentage (%)
Met each other independently	54.9
Marriage arranged by the family	41.2
Met in some other way (e.g. introduced by friends)	3.9
Type of marriage	Percentage (%)
Both <i>civil</i> and <i>religious</i> marriage	76.0
Only <i>civil</i> marriage	21.3
Only <i>religious</i> marriage	2.7
Those who were married by an arranged marriage	Percentage (%)
Was not able to see husband before marriage	39.7
Was not asked whether she wanted to marry	28.6
Was married against her will	28.6

While most of the respondents interviewed (82 percent) reported they had nuclear families, consisting of husband, wife and if any, children, the remaining 18 percent indicated that they lived together with other family members, such as mothers-in-law and/or fathers-in-law. These extended families housed an average number of three household members in addition to the nuclear unit of wife, husband and children.

Although the birthplace most cited was Ankara (40 percent), the majority of the respondents (60 percent) had migrated to Ankara from 44 provinces throughout Turkey. One of the respondents was born in Bulgaria.

The educational background of the respondents in the sample can be seen in Table 2. Only 9.7 percent had not received any formal education, while 31 percent had completed elementary or middle school, 34.2 percent had finished high school or vocational high school and 25.1 percent had completed university or graduate training. The respondents' husbands came from similar, but slightly higher, educational backgrounds. Sixty-one percent of the respondents said that they worked for pay, as opposed to 92 percent of their husbands who worked for pay. The respondents' average reported earnings ranged between 10 - 15 million Turkish Lira per month (approximately U.S. \$300 - 500) (see Table 2).

TABLE 2: Education, employment and income

Type of education	Respondent	Husband
No formal education	9.7%	3.9%
Elementary or middle school	31.0%	25.8%
Vocational or high school	34.2%	29.0%
University or graduate school	25.1%	41.3%

Income
61% of the respondents (women) work for a wage
92% of the husbands work for a wage
Average monthly income of respondents who work: 10 - 15 million TL (300-500 USD in 1994)

Gender distribution of household labor

As can be seen in Table 3, apart from minor household repairs and the payment of bills, the majority of household tasks (e.g. cooking, cleaning and childcare) were generally carried out by women. The rates of women and men sharing tasks were higher for activities outside the home, such as the purchase of foodstuffs or the payment of bills, and for helping with children's homework.

TABLE 3: Distribution of household responsibilities

	Generally performed by the woman (%)	Generally performed by the man (%)	Shared equally (%)	Performed by someone else (%)
Purchasing food	36.6	22.8	37.3	3.3
Cooking food	83.4	1.3	10.0	5.3
Washing dishes	79.7	2.6	5.9	11.8
Household cleaning	73.7	0.7	5.9	19.7
Laundry	88.2	0.0	2.6	9.2
Caring for children	79.1	0.0	18.6	2.3
Helping with children's homework	55.1	14.6	25.8	4.5
Minor household repairs	7.4	58.1	20.3	14.2
Paying bills (telephone, electricity etc.)	22.2	51.6	21.6	4.6

Gender distribution of decision-making power and authority in the household

As shown in Table 4, more than half of the respondents in the sample (60.1 percent) reported that they had equal authority in the family. When asked about decision-making with respect to the management of the family budget, nearly half of the respondents (46.8 percent) reported that they had equal say with their husbands, while similar numbers of respondents said that they (22.1 percent) or their husbands (26.6 percent) had a greater say in managing the budget.

A survey of the distribution of authority in the decision-making processes on various issues related to family life showed that, when it came to individual issues related to women's own lives (e.g. how to dress or spending their own income), women tended to make their own decisions. More than half of the women reported that they had the final say on how much to spend on their own clothes and on how they should spend their own income (57.9 percent and 57.3 percent respectively), and more than three quarters had the final say on how they should dress (78.7 percent).

For other issues related to family life (e.g. the education of children, household expenditures, choice of family friends), the women and their husbands usually made joint decisions.

TABLE 4: Distribution of household decision-making power and authority

Who has greater authority in the home?	Percentage (%)			
Woman	15.7			
Man	21.6			
Woman and man together	60.1			
Someone else	2.6			

Who manages the family budget?	Percentage (%)			
Woman	22.1			
Man	26.6			
Woman and man together	46.8			
Someone else	4.5			

	Woman generally makes the decision (%)	Man generally makes the decision (%)	Both share equally in making the decision (%)	Someone else usually makes the decision (%)
Where the family will live	12.3	16.2	66.2	5.2
Which school female children will attend	17.0	7.4	55.3	20.2
Which school male children will attend	12.0	9.8	57.6	20.6
Expenditures on household goods	17.6	14.4	66.0	2.0
Expenditures on food	31.4	11.7	53.6	3.3
Which food will be prepared	75.5	3.3	17.2	4.0
Expenditure on the woman's clothes	57.9	5.9	35.5	0.7
What the woman wears	78.7	3.9	17.4	0.0
Which household goods to purchase	25.8	8.4	63.2	2.6
Birth control method	41.0	4.8	54.2	0.0
Choice of family friends	9.7	11.0	79.3	0.0
Choice of vacation destination	8.6	18.4	73.0	0.0
When to visit friends or relatives	17.6	11.1	71.3	0.0
Woman's expenditure of her own income	57.3	2.8	39.9	0.0

Reported rates of violence

When asked about how often they argue with their husbands, 21.7 percent of the respondents reported that they argued with their husbands very frequently, 69.1 percent reported that they argued rarely, while 9.2 percent reported that they never argued with their husbands, as can be seen from Table 5a. More than half of the women (56.9 percent) reported that they did not believe their husbands had the 'right' to use violence, 37.3 percent said their husbands had the 'right' to use violence some of the time, while 5.9 percent reported they believed their husbands usually or always had the 'right'.

TABLE 5a: Frequency of Arguments in the Family

Frequency of arguments	Percentage (%)
Never argue	9.2
Rarely argue	69.1
Frequently/virtually every day	21.7

TABLE 5b: Women’s Perception of the “Right” to Use Violence

Frequency with which the respondents believe that their husbands have the ‘right’ to use violence	Percentage (%)
Never	56.9
Sometimes	37.3
Usually/always	5.9

The reported rates of different types of violence to which the respondents had been subjected are given in Table 6. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents had been subjected to one or more forms of psychological violence, while 39 percent had experienced physical violence. A smaller but not insignificant percentage (15.7 percent) of respondents had been forced to have sex by their husbands. While 5.2 percent had been threatened with economic restrictions, 2.8 percent had been locked inside the home, 6.4 percent had been forced to remain at home due to threats involving the children, and 3.2 percent had been subjected to other categories of violence (e.g. battered by in-laws, set on fire).

TABLE 6: Type and Frequency of Domestic Violence

Type of violence	Rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	TOTAL (%)
PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE: 89% of respondents have been subjected to one or more of the following types of violence by their husbands at least once:				
Shouted at	28.4	45.2	14.2	87.8
Insulted	21.8	15.0	5.4	42.2
Husband threw food on the floor	10.0	6.0	0.7	16.7
Husband smashed something	17.1	10.5	0.7	28.3
Psychologically abused	16.6	11.3	5.3	33.2
Cursed at	11.9	17.2	7.3	36.4
Humiliated	12.0	8.7	4.7	25.4
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE: 39% of respondents have been subjected to one or more of the following types of violence by their husbands at least once:				
Pushed or shoved	15.9	11.9	4.0	31.8
Kicked	8.6	7.3	2.0	17.9
Slapped	13.8	11.2	3.9	28.9
Punched	6.7	8.7	2.7	18.1
Battered	9.9	7.9	4.0	21.8
Threatened with a knife or gun	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
Assaulted with a knife or gun	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Threatened with death	1.0	1.0	0.0	2.0
SEXUAL VIOLENCE				
Forced respondent to have sex	7.2	7.2	1.3	15.7
ECONOMIC VIOLENCE				
Threatened to restrict respondent's access to money	2.6	1.3	1.3	5.2

RESTRICTION OF MOBILITY				
Locked respondent inside the home	1.4	0.0	1.4	2.8
Threatened respondent by using the children against her (if she leaves the house)	5.0	0.0	1.4	6.4
OTHER				
Did something else	1.6	1.6	0.0	3.2

Responses and strategies used to cope with violence

Only half of the respondents subjected to violence took any counter measures. As can be seen from Table 7, of the respondents who did react in some manner, *not talking to the husband for some period of time* (27.7 percent) or *temporarily leaving home* (23 percent) were two of the most frequently reported measures. The third and fourth most frequent counter measures were *asking for help from friends, family or neighbors* (10.7 percent) and *leaving home permanently* (7.3 percent). Asking for help from social services and government agencies constituted the least-utilized type of response. Only 2.4 percent went to a doctor or hospital; 1.2 percent called the police; 1.2 percent applied to a social service worker or institution; 1.2 percent went to a women's shelter; while no one filed a legal complaint.

TABLE 7: Strategies against violence³

Did not talk to husband for a while (open-ended response)	27.7%
Left home temporarily	23.0%
Asked for help from neighbors, friends or family	10.7%
Left home permanently	7.3%
Went to a doctor or hospital	2.4%
Called the police	1.2%
Went to a social service agency	1.2%
Went to a women's shelter	1.2%
Filed a legal complaint	0.0%

Health consequences of violence: The relationship between anxiety and violence

In order to assess whether women subjected to violence had higher rates of anxiety, we conducted analysis of variance (ANOVA) comparing two groups; those who had been subjected to violence and those who had not. We used three of the major dimensions of violence (psychological, physical, sexual) as predictors and Öner and Le Compte's (1985) measure of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory as an outcome variable. The inventory consists of 20 questions that determine how frequently respondents experience certain feelings such as crying, feeling tired, feeling insecure, having obsessive thoughts, feeling anxious, feeling unhappy, etc. These questions were assessed on a four-point scale with 'almost never' = 1, 'sometimes' = 2, 'often' = 3, and 'almost always' = 4.

The results of these analyses are given in Table 8. As can be seen from the table, all three dimensions of violence (psychological, physical and sexual) were significantly and positively associated with increased levels of anxiety. Regression analysis controlled for demographic variables also showed that the level of anxiety increases when the level of violence experienced increases. These findings are in line with the results of the other international and national studies cited above on the psychological health effects of violence on women.

³ Nine different analyses were carried out so that each respondent could indicate use of more than one strategy.

TABLE 8: The relationship between anxiety and violence⁴

	Level of anxiety among respondents subjected to domestic violence	Level of anxiety among respondents not subjected to domestic violence	F and p values
Psychological violence	44.4	40.6	F = 4.2, p = .043
Physical violence	46.6	42.4	F = 13.9, p = .000
Sexual violence	48.6	43.2	F = 11.2, p = .001

DISCUSSION

We would have preferred to cover a larger sample of women and to have used random sampling methods. However, time and budgetary restrictions meant that we had to make the best possible use of the resources available. Consequently, we believe that the results of our study should be taken as preliminary findings. Nevertheless, the results of this study support those of other studies conducted in Turkey and around the world, which indicate domestic violence to be a common and pervasive violation of women's rights.

Assessing the different dimensions of violence in this study has enabled us to provide a more comprehensive picture of the types of violence to which women are subjected, and has further revealed the frequency with which women experience domestic violence. If we break down violence into its different forms, we find that some are more pervasive than others. For example, even though it is not commonly recognized as a form of violence, there were more reports of psychological violence in our sample (89 percent) than any other form of violence; and there was a significant association between being subjected to psychological violence and higher anxiety levels. There is a similar difficulty in addressing sexual violence. If a stranger forces a woman to have sex, it is generally agreed to be rape; yet social norms legitimize a husband's use of force to have sex with his wife. Nevertheless, forced sex – i.e. marital rape – was reported by a not insignificant number of women in our study (16 percent), and was also associated with higher anxiety. Reports of physical violence were also very high in our study, with 39 percent of our respondents being subjected to it at least once. Again, not surprisingly, this form of violence was also associated with significantly higher anxiety levels.

One of the more striking findings of our study was that very few of the women subjected to violence had recourse to municipal or other support agencies. In our survey, a very small percentage of women called the police or went to a doctor, a women's shelter or other social service institutions. None filed a legal complaint, which would have meant petitioning the judicial system. The women preferred to use informal support systems (e.g. friends, family and neighbors), or were able to protect themselves by leaving the home, either temporarily or permanently, or by not talking to their husbands; yet these are not the most effective means of halting or preventing the recurrence of violence. Half of the respondents indicated that they took absolutely no counter measures against the violence they experienced.

There are three factors which may play a role in limiting the range of women's responses: a) a lack of awareness on the woman's part that she has the right to apply to judicial, law enforcement and other social service institutions to stop the violence; b) a perception that applying to these institutions would not be of any help; and c) internalized social norms which sanction domestic violence and lead the woman to believe she "somehow deserved it" (i.e. a lack of awareness that domestic violence is

⁴ The average anxiety level for the total sample was 44.4.

a violation of a woman's human rights).

A comparison of these results with those from a parallel survey of immigrant women from Turkey living in Berlin may help to demonstrate the prevalence of the first two factors amongst women living in Ankara (i.e. a lack of awareness of the right to apply to legal and social services and a perception that applying would not be of any help). Amongst the women interviewed in Berlin, the use of institutional mechanisms against domestic violence was significantly higher than among the respondents in Ankara. In Berlin, 20.5 percent of the surveyed immigrant women from Turkey indicated that they called the police, while 15.1 percent filed a complaint, 16.4 percent went to a women's shelter, 11.0 percent applied to a social service agency and 9.5 percent went to a hospital or doctor (Ilkcaracan, 1996).

Limitations in the range and services of agencies dealing with domestic violence in Turkey could have been influential in the women's decision to do nothing or opt for informal support from neighbors, friends and family members. Indeed, the legal system and the social/health service institutions are hostile to battered women in several ways. First, there are very few shelters or services to which women have access. Second, the judicial and law enforcement agencies not only fail to provide abused women with the services they require, but, on the contrary, perpetuate the system of male domination and expose the women to a repetition of the violence. For example, police often encourage abused women to go back home and resolve this "private" problem within the family; there are even cases where they ask the abused women what they have done "to deserve it." There are other instances where the judicial system decides in favor of the batterer (i.e. the man). Third, health officials have not been trained or sensitized to the issue and therefore cannot easily recognize the symptoms of a battered woman; moreover, even if they do recognize the symptoms, they are often unable (due to lack of training) or unwilling (due to social attitudes which sanction the violence) to provide appropriate support.

There is also some support for the third factor (i.e. internalized social norms, which sanction domestic violence and lead the woman to believe she "somehow deserved it"). Indeed, a large percentage of the women who participated in our survey (43.5 percent) reported that they believed their husbands had the 'right' to use violence against them. This attitude can be seen as an internalization of patriarchal norms which strongly sanction violence against women. There are several local sayings which support this attitude, such as: "He's your husband after all; he can both love you and beat you"; "No woman should be without a child in her stomach and a stick on her back"; and, "He who does not beat his daughter will later beat his knee."

It is thus imperative that a meaningful strategy against domestic violence includes several inter-related measures which also encompass awareness-raising programs for both men and women in order to combat social norms on violence at the individual level. It is only in conjunction with an eradication of norms which sanction violence that effective measures can be implemented at the structural level; such as new legislation, more shelters for women, the appropriate implementation of laws, and training programs for lawyers, judges, police, health and other service personnel.

Moreover, a meaningful strategy should not be restricted to intervening with women who have already suffered domestic violence. Preventive programs to eradicate violence should also be designed and implemented. Ilkcaracan's chapter "Programs and Strategies to Prevent Domestic Violence" contains details of programs developed in other countries to prevent domestic violence against women and shows that these intervention programs can also be implemented in Turkey. These measures

can be divided into four main categories: 1) protection orders; 2) police training and special women's police centers; 3) coordinated community intervention against domestic violence; 4) national programs against domestic violence (Ilkcaracan, Gülçür & Arın, 1996).

As a culmination of almost two decades of activism led by the women's movement, the first of the four measures stated above – protection orders – was enacted on January 17, 1998, in the form of a new law titled “The Law to Protect the Family.” The new law allows any member of a family subjected to domestic violence to file a court case for what is known as a “protection order” against the perpetrator of the violence. Violation of the protection order can be used as grounds for arrest and a jail sentence. However, this is only the first step. What remains to be done is to raise awareness about this law and to continue working to implement the other components necessary for successful national intervention programs.

Despite conceptual and methodological limitations, we believe that this survey, and others of its kind, will be beneficial to the formulation of proposals at a policy level. Research on domestic violence constitutes an important preliminary step towards the preparation and implementation of measures to eradicate violence against women. The rates and different forms of violence – and the lack of existing alternatives to violence – make it clear that more research – in tandem with lobbying for legal and policy changes – should be undertaken in order to delineate this issue more clearly. Research results can be utilized to demonstrate the need for more women's shelters and to educate the public. They can also be utilized to exert pressure on both local governments and the state to convince them to take steps towards eradicating violence against women in the family; via legislative changes, proper law enforcement training and training for health and social service workers. Given the current trend of municipalities to close down operational shelters in Turkey, support for lobbying activities and research which demonstrates the widespread nature of domestic violence as well as the immense need for such services, is essential. Yet, because few studies have been conducted in this area, only recently has it been possible to back up arguments and demands for policy and legal change with supporting research results.

A movement to eradicate violence against women in the family has significant political implications. There is already a strong international women's movement, which draws on theory, policy and research from around the world and works to influence international bodies such as the United Nations and to make governments internationally responsible for taking steps to eradicate violence against women. It is important to define domestic violence against women as a global issue, which is not restricted to any one country, culture, ethnicity or class. Placing violence against women in the family within a global perspective enables us to search for global as well as local solutions to the problem.

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APPENDIX: "THE LAW ON THE PROTECTION OF THE FAMILY"
approved by the Parliament of Turkey in January 1998

**(Translated from Turkish into English by Women for Women's
Human Rights)**

Clause 1 - If a spouse or child or another member of the family living under the same roof is subject to abuse, and notification is made either by the victim or by the Public Prosecutor, in addition to the provisions of the Turkish Civil Code, taking into consideration the specific circumstances, a Justice of the Peace can pass one or more of the following rulings or take any other measures that are deemed appropriate.

The accused spouse can be ordered:

- a) Not to use violence or threatening behavior against the other spouse or children (or another member of the family living under the same roof);
- b) To leave the dwelling shared with the spouse or children if there are any and not to approach the dwelling occupied by the spouse and children or their place of work.;
- c) Not to damage the property of the spouse or children (or of others living under the same roof);
- d) Not to cause distress to the spouse or children (or others living under the same roof) using means of communication;
- e) To surrender a weapon or other similar instruments to the police;
- f) Not to arrive at the shared dwelling while under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicating substances nor use such substances in the shared dwelling.

The above-mentioned measures can be applied for a period not exceeding six months and, if the accused does not abide by the rulings, s/he shall be warned that s/he is liable to arrest and confinement.

The judge shall take into account the standard of living of the victim and rule on maintenance payments accordingly.

Under the first paragraph of the statute, no fee is charged for applications.

Clause 2 - A copy of the protection order is entrusted to the Public Prosecutor by the court. The Public Prosecutor monitors the application of the order through the police.

In the event of the order being implemented, the police, without the need for the victim to submit a written application, will themselves conduct an investigation and transfer the documents to the Public Prosecutor within the shortest possible time.

The Public Prosecutor can file a suit at the Magistrates Court against the spouse who does not abide by the order. The location of the case and the avoidance of loss of time in its expedition are governed by Law No. 3005 on the Criminal Courts.

The spouse who has not abided by the protection order can be sentenced to a prison sentence of three to six months.

Clause 3 - This law comes into effect from the date on which it is promulgated.

Clause 4 - The provisions of this law are implemented by the Council of Ministers.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE LAW ON THE PROTECTION OF THE FAMILY

According to Article 41 of the Constitution the family is the basis of society. It is the smallest unit through which individuals constitute membership of society, and with the establishment and perpetuation through mutual consent of a healthy family structure which has a direct impact on the formation of society and its future continuation in a sound form.

In our country rapid industrialisation and parallel urbanisation have produced a rapid shift away from the traditional extended family structure of grandmother, grandfather, mother, father and grandchildren to a narrower definition of a family structure as embodied in the nuclear family of mother, father and child. The prevailing difficult economic conditions, social and conceptual confusion, and the exhausting pace of city life result in members of the family suffering psychological and social distress.

Violence began with the appearance of the first people and, in a variety different forms and methods of application, has remained a problem ever since. Violence in family life or "violence in the family" between different family members, which can be defined as "physical verbal or emotional abuse by one member of a family of another" is more dangerous to society and the damage that violence within the family, which is the smallest unit in society, causes and may cause deeper and more indelible damage to the structure of society itself. Violence within the family not only damages society, it also has a dangerous effect on the individual. The application of violence within the family by a person who should be showing love, affection and compassion, leaves psychological scars on the victim which may prove difficult ever to erase. Research has shown that mothers and children are the most likely victims of violence in the family.

In recent years violence within the family has reached shocking dimensions in our society. It is possible to see examples of beatings, torture and killings in the family every day in the printed and visual media.

For this reason, taking into consideration the statement in Article 41 of the Constitution that "the state takes measures to protect the welfare and peace of the family and particularly to protect mothers and children and establishes an organisation to this end," legal measures need to be taken to protect women and children who are subject to violence within the family.

The "Draft Law on the Protection of the Family" was prepared with this aim in mind and, taking into account the practices in countries such as the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Ireland and Norway, includes in the Turkish legal system provisions ensuring the right of women who are exposed to the possibility of violence to apply to the court to secure protection orders.

COROLLARY TO THE CLAUSES OF THE LAW

Clause 1 - The first clause of the draft provides for a member of the family who suffers abuse within the family, notification of which is either made by the victim or the Public Prosecutor, to secure one or more protective rulings, in addition to the provisions of the Turkish Civil Code.

For example; if a husband arrives home under the influence of alcohol and abuses his wife and children the court can pass a ruling that he is "not to arrive home under the influence of alcohol" or, if the husband needs to be kept away from the home, it can issue more than one ruling, such as "not to approach the wife's house or workplace," "not to damage the wife's possessions," "to inform the accused spouse's superior at work or his employer" or "to forbid the accused spouse from coming to their shared home." In extraordinary circumstances the court can also pass other similar rulings in addition to those enumerated.

If the Magistrate's Court considers that there is a possibility of the victim again being subject to abuse, then it can pass an order immediately after the application without need for witnesses or hearing from the other side. Those who have suffered abuse are not responsible for proving to the court the possibility of being subjected to abuse. The court can issue rulings for a period of up to six months and if the accused does not abide by the court tidings s/he is warned that s/he is liable to arrest and confinement.

The presiding judge can make a maintenance order so as to prevent the victim from becoming impoverished. In order to set the amount of maintenance, an expert is required to conduct an investigation and to determine the standard of living of both the plaintiff and the defendant. In order for the victim not to incur any financial expense, no charge shall be made for applications to the Magistrates Court.

Clause 2 - According to the second clause of the draft, a copy of the protection order shall be forwarded to the Public Prosecutor by the Magistrates Court and the responsibility for ensuring that the order is complied with shall be delegated to the police. In the event of the protection order not being complied with, the police shall conduct its own investigation, without need for the victim to submit a formal application, and forward the documents to the Public Prosecutor in the shortest possible time. The Public Prosecutor shall open a case at the Magistrates Court in the name of the state against the spouse who is not complying with the protection order. The aforementioned case shall be conducted in the manner and with the speed foreseen by the law on Criminal Courts.

At the conclusion of the trial, if the spouse who has not complied with the provisions of the protection order is guilty of another crime then s/he is liable to a prison sentence of three to six months. The passing of the prison sentence foreseen in this clause is based upon the accused being previously warned by the court of the consequences of his/her failure to abide by the protection order and the persistent endangering of the unity of the family. The aim of the setting of a six month upper limit for the prison sentence is to act as a deterrent and to ensure that the sentence does not fall within the scope of the punishments foreseen in the 119th clause of the Turkish Criminal Code.

Clause 3 - The law will come into effect on its promulgation.

Clause 4 - The implementation of the law is the responsibility of the competent authority.