

## Does Marital Status Affect Violence Against Women? A Perusal on Turkey

### *Medeni Durum Kadına Yönelik Şiddet Türlerini Etkiler mi? Türkiye Üzerine Bir Okuma*

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#### Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between the marital status of women and violence against women in the family. This relationship is assessed using the data from Survey of Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey carried out by Turkish Statistical Institute in 2014. The survey employed a multistage sampling frame to obtain a national probability sample of women between the ages of 15 and 59. Women from 15072 households were interviewed with a standardized questionnaire. Among the findings of this study, the most remarkable one is that the relationship between marital status and violence in Turkey varies by the type of violence. Married women are more likely to be exposed to physical violence than single women. The rate of emotional violence committed against women by their family members were higher among divorced women compared to married women. Additionally, divorced or separated women are exposed to economic violence given that their access to economic resources were either limited or prevented by their husbands. When all types of violence were taken into account, it is observed that divorced or separated women have the highest representation among women who are exposed to violence.

**Keywords:** Violence, Marital Status, Women, Turkey, Logistic Regression

#### Öz

Tüm farkındalık çalışmaları ve yasal çabalara rağmen dünya genelinde ve Türkiye’de kadına yönelik şiddet toplumsal bir sorun olmaya devam etmektedir. Kadına yönelik şiddet gibi sosyal sorunları çözmek için öncelikle konunun sosyal bir sorun olduğunu kabul etmek ve daha sonra sorunun boyutlarını, kaynağını, nedenlerini ve sosyal bağlamını ortaya koyan çalışmalar gerçekleştirmek gerekmektedir. Kadına yönelik şiddetle yakından ilişkili değişkenlerden bir tanesi de medeni durumdur. Ancak medeni durum değişkeni, çoğu zaman çalışmalarda sadece “kontrol değişkeni” olarak dikkate alınmakta, etkisi üzerine yorumlamalar oldukça geri planda bırakılmaktadır. Buradan hareketle bildiride genel olarak medeni durum kadına yönelik şiddeti etkiler mi? Sorusuna cevap aranarak kadına yönelik şiddet türlerinin kadının medeni durumu ile ilişkisinin araştırılması amaçlanmaktadır. Çalışmada Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu (TÜİK) tarafından hazırlanan ve 15.072 hane ile görüşülen 2014 yılı “Türkiye’de Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması”nın” veri seti kullanılmıştır. Analiz birimi hane olan araştırmada, katılımcı hanelerde 15-59 yaşları arasındaki kadınlarla yüz yüze görüşmeler yapılarak fert veri tabanı oluşturulmuştur. Çalışmada bu veri seti kullanılarak uygulanan ikincil analizler üzerinden, Türkiye’de kadına yönelik şiddet türleri ile medeni durum ilişkisi değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırmanın lojistik regresyon analizi sonuçlarına göre Türkiye’de medeni durum ve şiddet arasındaki ilişki, şiddet türlerine göre farklılık göstermektedir. Boşanmış kadınların %80’i duygusal şiddete maruz kaldığını belirtirken, evli veya eşi ölmüş kadınlarda bu oran %42,2 - %44’tür. Kadınlar için şiddete maruz kalma durumu, en çok nikah akdinin gerçekleşmesi ve sonrasında ön plana çıkmaktadır. Başka bir ifade ile, herhangi bir dönemde evlenmiş kadınların erkekler tarafından maruz bırakıldıkları fiziksel şiddet oranları, evlilik içinde ya da evlilik sonrasında oldukça artış göstermektedir. Boşanmış ya da eşinden ayrı yaşayan kadınlar, şiddet mağdurları arasında en yoğun temsile sahip olduğu gibi, medeni duruma göre ekonomik şiddetin de en mağdur kesimini oluşturmaktadır. Böylece medeni duruma göre aile içinde şiddetin her türüne en fazla maruz kalan kadın grubu boşanmış ve eşinden ayrı yaşayan kadınlardır. Şiddet düzeyi, boşanma ve ayrı yaşama durumunu etkileyebilir ve boşanma nedeni olarak görülebilir ancak boşanma talebinin veya durumunun da, yine şiddete neden olduğu akılda tutulmalıdır. Sonuç olarak, medeni durum şiddetin görülme yaygınlığı üzerinde etkiye sahip önemli faktörlerden birisidir. Türkiye’yi temsil etme gücüne sahip bu çalışmanın bulgularına göre boşanmış ve eşinden ayrı yaşayan kadınların şiddet sorununda daha kırılgan ve savunmasız kesimi oluşturdukları, kadına yönelik şiddetin önlenmesini amaçlayan politikalarda özellikle dikkat edilmesi gereken en mağdur kesimi temsil ettikleri görülmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kadın, Şiddet, Türkiye, Medeni Durum

## Introduction

Despite all efforts, violence against women continues to be a social problem worldwide<sup>1</sup>. When studies on violence against women are examined, it is seen that violence is generally perpetrated to women in the family and by other family members<sup>2</sup>. In the context of gender, in contrast to men who are exposed to violence in the public sphere outside home and mostly by non-family members, women are exposed to violence in domestic private sphere due to being associated with this sphere.

Although there is a rich literature on domestic violence against women, a detailed study on the relationship between the marital status and the probability of being exposed to domestic violence and the type of violence women are exposed to could not be reached in Turkey. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between marital status and violence against women. Within this framework, the question of whether there is a relationship between the marital status and the type of violence against women is also focused on. In this context, firstly, violence against women and the types of violence will be examined and the current literature on the relationship between marital status and violence and violence against women will be introduced. Then, by using the dataset of the research called "Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey" conducted by the Turkish Statistical Institute in 2014 where 11.247 households were interviewed, necessary statistical analyzes are performed and the data is analyzed.

## Violence against Women and Types of Violence

As a common social problem, violence against women is universal and is observed in many societies by crossing cultural, geographical, religious, social and economic boundaries<sup>3</sup>. Violence against women, as a violation of human rights and freedom, causes women to be deprived of their right to take part in social and economic life in various ways and this may even be the reason for suffering from physical and mental health problems.

In parallel with the prevalence of violence against women worldwide, there is much academic interest in the issue. Both local and regional surveys are available about this subject area . One of the most important and comprehensive surveys was conducted by the European Union in 27 EU member countries and 42,000 women were interviewed<sup>4</sup>. Another comprehensive study is the "Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women" survey, completed in 2005 by WHO. In this study, involving 10 countries, the range of the lifetime prevalence of physical violence among women was found to be 6%-59% ,and the frequency of severe forms of violence such as "punching", "kicking", "dragging", "gun-threatening" by their spouses was 4-49%. In this study, the frequency of sexual violence was found to be between 6-59%<sup>5</sup>. Based on these data, the study draws attention to the fact that the risk of violence in women's intimate relationships is higher than anywhere else and thus the perception of home being a safe harbor for women is destroyed<sup>6</sup>. It is a fact that violence against women is mostly committed by the victim's father, spouse, siblings and other family members, that is to say violence in the private sphere of the family is hidden by the women in the public sphere and this makes criminals and victims almost inaccessible to many researchers<sup>7</sup>. Star (1980) emphasizes that there are three reasons why domestic violence is kept silent: *lack of awareness, rejection, and general acceptance*<sup>8</sup>. These three reasons may cause some violent behaviors not to be perceived as violence, but also contribute to the normalization of violence by some groups. Apart from these two comprehensive studies, there are many studies from various countries on violence against women<sup>9</sup>.

One of the extensive studies was conducted in 1995 by Turkish Republic the Prime Ministry of Family and Social Policies and it was concluded that 52.47% of women were exposed to verbal violence while 29.59% of women were beaten. Since the rise of the women's movement in 1990's in Turkey, there has

<sup>1</sup> Smith et al., 2018; Kalokhe et al., 2018; Sanz-Barbero, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Simmons, 2003; KAMER, 2015; AITAŞ, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Garcia-Moreno et al., 2006; Johnson & Ferraro, 2000; Lewinson, 1990.

<sup>4</sup> Violence against Women: an EU-wide Survey: Main Results, 2015: 3.

<sup>5</sup> WHO, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> WHO, 2005: 4.

<sup>7</sup> Gelles, 1985: 348.

<sup>8</sup> Star, 1980: 348.

<sup>9</sup> Johnson, 1995; Williamson & Silverman, 2001; Eng, Mulrow & Fischer, 2010; Kury, Obergfell-Fuchs & Woessner, 2004.

been a noteworthy increase in the amount of research about the violence against women. In another study conducted by the Family Research Institute (1998) with 6480 participants in 18 provinces, it was observed that 71.9% of women were exposed to “low”, and 25.9% of women were exposed to “high” levels of violence. The survey points out that 4 out of 10 women were exposed to physical violence by their spouses or partners. Altınay and Arat (2008) prepared a research using both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. In this research, approximately 50 women organizations from 27 provinces and about 150 women were interviewed. In a field survey conducted with 1800 married women from 56 provinces, it was found that one out of every three women was beaten by her spouse<sup>10</sup>.

The dataset used in this study will be of Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey (2014)<sup>11</sup>, supported by the EU in 2008 and it was the first research carried out in Turkey. According to the data obtained from Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey (2008)<sup>12</sup> 39% of married women across Turkey were exposed to physical violence, 15% were exposed to sexual violence, 42% were exposed to physical or sexual violence, 44% were exposed to emotional violence / abuse by their spouse or partner/s at a period in their lives.

Apart from these extensive researches in Turkey, a large number of research studies have been done on violence against women at provincial level, primarily in İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir<sup>13</sup>. The results show that women are exposed to all forms of violence in the family.

Although violence against women is highly prevalent in the world and in Turkey, it does not seem easy to define it and its boundaries. The difference in cultural values and norms make it difficult to determine which behavior is violent and which does not involve violence. In the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993, violence against women is defined as “any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life<sup>14</sup>.”

The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, signed in Istanbul in 2011, also referred as the Istanbul Convention, defines domestic violence as “all acts of physical, sexual, psychological and economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim. The remarkable point in this definition is that the violence is directed against women or affects women disproportionately only because she is a woman. In other words, it is the violence she is being exposed to solely because of her sex. In this study, stalking is also considered as a form of violence and it is defined as “Any behavior that are on purpose, threatening and repeated in a manner that makes the individuals fear for their own safety by spouse/intimate partners; person(s) who are in the same family, from the same household or who are considered as a family member whether they live in the same household or not; individual(s) from school, neighborhood or work or strangers<sup>15</sup>.”

Although the limits, scope, prevalence and definition of violence against women in the family differ in many ways, it is a universal problem, and violence against women is closely related to women’s marital status -single, married, separated, divorced, widowed or extra-marital- as it is related to other variables such as education, income, religion, etc.

### **Marital Status and Violence against Women**

In this study, the answer to the question whether the status of women’s relationship with individuals they are intimate with –that is to say, married, single, widowed or divorced- has an impact on their likelihood of being exposed to violence and the type of violence they are exposed to is sought. When

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<sup>10</sup> Altınay & Arat, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> İçli, 1994; Kocacık, 2009; Tokdemir et al., 2003; Erkan & Bozgöz, 2004.

<sup>14</sup> UN, 1993.

<sup>15</sup> Prime Ministry Directorate General on the Status of Women, Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, 2015: 51.

the recent studies in Europe and America are examined, the status of intimate relationship rather than marital status is the subject of research<sup>16</sup>. So not only officially married or divorced individuals but also couples who live together without formal marriages participate in the analysis of violence between couples. Because the data related to geographies in these regions indicate a high rate of non-marital cohabitation<sup>17</sup>, it is considered to be essential to include non-marital cohabitation in the studies. Since it is not possible to access accurate data on non-marital cohabitation of individuals in Turkey, violence that cohabiting women are exposed to could not be included in this study.

Marriage and family institution is a socially important institution, and from a Durkheimian perspective, marriage is an important way of integrating into society. Therefore, it is claimed that married individuals are more integrated into society, whereas single, widowed and divorced individuals are more isolated from society. Especially in patriarchal traditional societies, the stigmatization and exclusion of divorced women can lead to women's isolation from the society, vulnerability to domestic violence, and even decrease in the possibility of getting help when exposed to violence. Studies<sup>18</sup> show that separated or divorced women have a higher risk of being killed, beaten, raped and harmed by their partners compared to married women. Using Britain's third National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles data, Gravningen et al (2017) found out that 16% of women and 4% of men refer to domestic violence as their reason for separation. Domestic violence was reported more than four times as often by women as by men (15.9% vs. 3.7%)<sup>19</sup>. It is remarkable that especially separated women experience violence from their ex-partners<sup>20</sup>. The relationship between separation, divorce and violence can be bilateral. That is to say, women may want to get divorced because they are exposed to violence by their spouses, or they may experience violence because they want to get divorced / split up<sup>21</sup>. The 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization survey conducted nationally in Canada shows that 40% of women continue to be subjected to violence after divorce. Ending the marriage does not mean that the violence is over<sup>22</sup>. In this study, the majority of those who experienced violence after separation stated that the attacks started or became more severe after separation. In 37% of cases, attacks did not increase; however, in 24% of the cases they became more serious and in 39,9% of cases, violence first started after separation<sup>23</sup>.

Patriarchy, which is one of the key concepts used in understanding domestic violence against women, plays an important role in violence both in the ongoing relations and in the relations that result in separation or divorce. In order to ensure the continuity of the existing patriarchal values and norms within the institution of marriage, men can use violence as a way of establishing superiority over their spouses and may resort to violence in order to ensure the continuity of the obedience, loyalty and commitment they expect from women in their relations after separation. Especially when the marriage is desired to be finished by women, men perceive this situation as a challenge to their patriarchal authorities and may resort to violence to recover their lost power and authority<sup>24</sup>.

The only source of power and authority of men within the family and marriage institution is not only the patriarchal values and norms, but also the resources they have in connection with patriarchy. Since men are accepted as the norm in society- men are invested more in education and men who benefit more from education and many other opportunities compared to women -they participate in employment in the public sphere and gain access to more resources through their social status, income and network and therefore they have power. Goode (1971) argues that men who do not have access to traditional resources can use violence as the "ultimate source" to keep their partners in line. In this context, Brownridge et al. (2008) argues that the more independent married women are the more likely they are to be the victims of violence. When men are married to women who are not dependent on them, they can use violence as a way to rule their spouses. Violence can also be used by men as a way to prevent women to act

<sup>16</sup> Stets & Straus, 1989.

<sup>17</sup> Nazio, 2008; Ekert-Jaffe & Solaz, 2001; Parker & Vassallo, 2009; Bumpass, Sweet & Cherlin, 1991.

<sup>18</sup> Logan, & Walker, 2004; Brownridge, 2008; DeKeseredy & Rennison, 2013.

<sup>19</sup> Gravningen et al., 2017: 6.

<sup>20</sup> Cardinali et al., 2018.

<sup>21</sup> Altınay & Arat, 2007: 81; Cardinali et al., 2018.

<sup>22</sup> Hotton, 2001: 1.

<sup>23</sup> Hotton, 2001: 1.

<sup>24</sup> Brownridge et al., 2008: 4-5.

independently and to prevent women from leaving their spouses or partners and finally, to gain domination over women who are educated, employed, strong and have more resources than men.

Since women's access to education and employment opportunities is not the same in all societies, the degree of independence and social status of women varies from society to society, and therefore it is possible to point out the inter-communal difference in male violence against women. Thus, women's dependency fulfills the function of keeping women in marriage. If women separated from their spouses are likely to have the resources to ensure their independence, this may be particularly a sign of a risk of violence for the post-separation period<sup>25</sup>. This is a vicious circle. In order to dominate independent women more, their spouses can use violence, but these women who are more resourceful, strong and independent, and have the courage to abandon and leave their spouses by challenging them. However, this time they have the risk of being subjected to violence because they challenge them. It can be inferred from the survey conducted in Turkey called "Violence against Women in Turkey" that 78% of divorced or separated women experienced violence and this result can be interpreted in two ways: either women who have been subjected to violence may have chosen to leave their spouses or get divorced, or it may be easier to share the experience of violence in a relationship that no longer exists than to share the experience of violence in an ongoing relationship<sup>26</sup>.

As a continuation of the power and authority of men over women whom they have a relationship with and their desire to rule them, there is a tendency to possess women as a sexual property like the patriarchal values dictate. This becomes more pronounced, especially with regard to the ownership of female sexuality. Men who treat their spouses as their own personal sexual property have clearly learned that such behavior is acceptable in the socialization process, and sexual property has been associated with marital violence. Even if individuals terminate and leave their relationship and terminate their physical or psychological relationship, men can resort to all forms of violence, including physical force, to take back their property after being separated from their sexual rights<sup>27</sup>. Violence can be related to the quasi ownership of sexuality or it may occur due to jealousy as jealousy may emerge as a form of violence itself.

When the relationship between types of violence and marital status is examined, Brownridge et al. (2008) generally indicate that: (a) separated women are at higher risk of both lethal and non-lethal violence compared to married women, and (b) the extent of the risk of non-lethal violence among divorced women is higher compared to separated women. As a result, whether women are single, married, divorced or separated affects their probability of being subjected to violence intersectively by variables such as patriarchal values and norms, education, ethnicity, work and income status. After all, all through the history violence against women, which is a means of maintaining the division of labor between men and women and establishing control over the female body in the reproduction process, is used to keep women within the family and marriage institutions by making them dependent on circle of love and oppression<sup>28</sup>.

### Methods

Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey in 2014, is the most up-to-date and highly extensive research conducted through the country in order to understand the risk factors that cause domestic violence. The scope of the survey includes households in all settlements within the boundaries of Turkey. Schools, dormitories, hotels, nursery schools, nursing homes, hospitals, prisons, barracks army residences and women's shelters are excluded in this study, as these places accommodate as institutional population.

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<sup>25</sup> Brownridge et al. 2008: 6.

<sup>26</sup> Altınay and Arat, 2007: 81.

<sup>27</sup> Brownridge et al., 2008: 7.

<sup>28</sup> Ertürk, 2015: 32-33.

A quantitative study has been conducted in Turkey with a sample of 15,072 households including 12 statistical regions<sup>29</sup> that are determined by Turkish Statistical Institute. Out of the number of households selected for the representative sample, the eligible households for interview was determined as 13,403. As a result, 11,247 households participated in the study and the household response rate was 83.9%<sup>30</sup>.

7462 women selected from these households – aged 15-59- were interviewed face-to-face. In this study the dataset obtained from these interviews was analyzed by using SPSS 13.0. Within this scope, logistic regression is used to examine the odds of victims of violence and multivariate effects of all the predictor variables (marital status, socio-demographic) are presented.

Most of the studies conducted in Turkey take the marital status as a control variable along with the other social variables such as income and education level. However, this research aims at contributing to the literature by focusing on the types of domestic violence that women are exposed to. ,

### Dependent Variable

The dependent variables of the modeling included in the findings of the study are determined as the types of violence. These types of violence are; emotional violence, economic violence, physical violence and sexual violence. While determining the exposure of the participants to violence, a series of yes-no questions specific to each type of violence were asked. The female participants who answered “yes” to at least one of these questions about the victimization of violence were evaluated as victims. Thus, in order to determine the exposure to violence, series of questions were gathered in a single variable and re-coded on dataset. In the re-coded variable, the exposure to violence was determined by using the codes “1-Yes, 0-No”.

In the research, the definitions of each type of violence were operationalized in the survey by using a set of direct and behavior-specific questions related to determine the type of violence. Many of the prior studies using this approach proved to encourage greater disclosure of violence compared to other approaches that require respondents to identify themselves as victimized. Therefore the definitions of the exposure to emotional violence, economic violence, physical violence and sexual violence by intimate partner(s) were already operationalized in the questionnaire by TUIK considering that the conceptual definitions of types of violence developed by WHO<sup>31</sup>. According to the specific behaviors summarized in Table 2, participants were considered to be exposed to various types of violence such as emotional, physical, economic, and sexual; if the participant gave a positive response to any of the questions, it means they were exposed to at least one of three behaviors that determine economic violence, four behaviors that determine emotional violence, six behaviors that determine physical violence, and three behaviors that determine sexual violence.

These questions, which were prepared to determine the exposure to violence, were directed to the participants with sentences beginning with the pattern of “your spouse or any of the people you are with...”. Therefore, collecting data on the violence the participants are exposed to by their partners whom they have a close relationship with is aimed at.

### Independent Variables

In modeling, all types of violence are analyzed using the same independent variables. These arguments are categorical and are as follows:

1. Participant’s Education Level: 0.No Education/Primary Incomplete (ref), 1.Primary School, 2. Secondary School, 3. High School, 4. University, 5. Master’s Degree, 6. Doctoral Degree.

<sup>29</sup> Defined in 2002 in agreement between Eurostat and the Turkish authorities, Turkey's NUTS ([Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics](#)) classifications are officially termed *statistical regions*, as Turkey is not a member of the EU and Eurostat only defines NUTS for member states.

<sup>30</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, 2014.

<sup>31</sup> World Health Organization, Multi-country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence against Women. WHO Press, 2005

2. Partner’s Education Level: 0.No Education/Primary Incomplete (ref), 1.Primary School, 2. Secondary School, 3. High School, 4. University, 5. Master’s Degree, 6. Doctoral Degree.
3. Marital Status: 0. Never Married (ref), 1. Currently Married, 2. Widowed, 3. Separated, 4. Divorced.
4. Have Personal Income: 1. Yes, 0. No(ref)

No multicollinearity has been found among the independent variables.

### Findings

The analysis was conducted in two stages. The first stage consisted of descriptive analysis in which socio-demographic data were examined. In the second stage, logistic regression analyses were used to evaluate the relationship between marital status and the type of violence.

### Distribution of socio-demographic characteristics and violence types based on marital status in Turkey

The majority of women participating in the study expressed that they are primary school graduates (44.2%). The education status of their partners was asked to the women participating in the research. Again, as with women, it was observed that the majority of partners were also primary school graduates (36.3%).

Among the participants, the number of currently married women ranks the highest by 78.1%. While women who have never been married constitute the second major group by 15.7%, divorced, widowed and separated women are represented by 2.8%, 2.7% and 0.7% respectively. In terms of income, 24.8% of women stated that they had a personal regular income. The age average of women participating this research is 37.68.

**Table 1.** Distribution of Socio-Demographic Characteristics by Marital Status

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	Marital Status					
	Percentage (%)	Never Married	Currently Married	Widowed	Separated	Divorced
<b>Education</b>						
Primary Incomplete	12.9	2.7	14.8	28.3	14.0	3.8
Primary School	44.2	11.3	50.5	56.6	34.0	44.5
Secondary School	11.5	13.2	11.1	7.1	22.0	14.7
High School	19.5	44.9	14.9	4.0	22.0	19.4
University	11.2	26.3	8.2	4.0	8.0	15.6
Master’s Degree	0.6	1.3	0.4	0	0	1.9
Doctoral degree	0.1	0.3	0.1	0	0	0
<b>Partner's Education Level</b>						
Primary Incomplete	11.8	57.8	3.2	8.2	0	1.0
Primary School	36.3	1.6	42.2	62.9	40.8	39.6
Secondary School	14.5	4.3	16.5	10.8	28.6	14.9
High School	22.5	17.6	23.8	13.4	22.4	22.8
University	14.3	18.2	13.6	4.1	8.2	21.3
Master’s Degree	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5	0	0.5
Doctoral degree	0.1	0.1	0.1	0	0	0
<b>Have Personal Income</b>						
Yes	24.8	24.4	20.6	63.1	40.0	63.0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	15.7	78.1	2.7	0.7	2.8

The prevalence of violence by marital status is presented in the next section, there are several issues regarding the relationship between marital status and types of violence. Firstly, the percentage of physical violence that the women have experienced by their intimate partners rises with divorce and separation.

## Prevalence of types of violence by Marital Status

Women are exposed to various types of violence such as emotional, physical, economic and sexual at different intensity levels and intervals. In this study, these four types of violence against women in Turkey, was examined through the TUIK(2014) dataset in ongoing titles. In the dataset, the situation of being exposed to these types of violence is determined by evaluating the participants' answers to the yes-no questions they were posed to.

The rate of physical violence that women are exposed to by men shows an increase due to marriage. 71.1% of divorced women stated that they were exposed to emotional violence, while this rate was 33.0% - 42.9% for married women or widows. Women who are divorced or separated from their spouses have the most intensive representation among the victims of violence and constitute the most vulnerable part in terms of economic violence according to their marital status.

**Table 2.** Prevalence of types of violence by Marital Status in Turkey

Prevalence of types of Violence (Lifetime)	Percentage (%)	LMP <sup>32</sup> (%)	Marital Status (%)				
			Never Married	Currently Married	Widowed	Separated	Divorced
<b>Economic Violence</b>	<b>27.2</b>		<b>13.9</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>64.0</b>	<b>69.2</b>
Prevented her from working or caused her to quit her job	23.5	97.2	11.3	21.6	22.2	40.0	41.2
Did not give financial support for household expenses	8.8	92.6	0.4	7.2	12.1	56.0	45.0
Deprived her of her income	5.2	90.2	0.6	3.6	5.6	42.0	31.3
<b>Emotional Violence</b>	<b>41.4</b>		<b>30.2</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>44.4</b>	<b>84.0</b>	<b>79.1</b>
Insulted her or swore at her	34.9	95.5	20.9	34.2	39.4	78.0	73.0
Belittled or humiliated her in front of other people	18.2	94.1	5.3	17.6	19.2	72.0	52.1
Scared or threatened her	19.0	93.9	15.4	17.4	19.2	66.0	60.2
Threatened to hurt her or someone that she cared about	5.3	87.0	3.3	4.1	4.5	42.0	35.1
<b>Physical Violence</b>	<b>32.8</b>		<b>2.8</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>42.9</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>71.1</b>
Slapped her or threw something at her	30.8	95.4	5.7	30.9	41.9	78.0	66.8
Pushed or shoved her	16.3	93.3	3.5	15.3	24.7	60.0	56.9
Hit her with fist	11.9	91.9	1.0	11.0	21.2	56.0	45.0
Kicked, dragged her or beat her up	9.7	90.7	0.8	8.5	17.2	58.0	44.1
Choked or burned her	5.0	87.2	1.2	4.1	6.6	40.0	30.3
Threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife or other weapons against her	2.9	84.4	0.4	2.0	4.0	32.0	24.2
<b>Sexual Violence</b>	<b>11.0</b>		<b>0.7</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>41.2</b>
Forced sexual intercourse	6.6	89.4	1.2	6.0	8.6	34.0	26.5
Had sexual intercourse when she did not want to	8.1	92.5	0.4	7.6	12.1	38.0	28.9
Forced her to do something sexual that she found degrading or humiliating	2.9	87.5	0.8	2.3	2.5	24.0	19.9

<sup>32</sup> In this abbreviation LMP stands for the last male partner such as husband, fiancé, betrothed, boyfriend etc..



**Economic violence** can be evaluated under three subtopics: preventing women from working, depriving women of household income or seizing women's income. The percentage of women exposed to economic violence at a particular period in their lives at least once in Turkey is 27.2%. In terms of economic violence, one fourth of the participants stated that they were prevented from working or made to quit their work life by their spouse or husband. Although this seems to be the most common problem women face (by 23.5%), other issues such as being refused to be given money for the household expenses even if the spouse or the partner had money for other expenses are reported with a percentage of 8.8%.

**Emotional violence** is one of the most invisible type of violence which is generally ignored. In Turkey, 41.4 % of women stated that they were exposed to emotional violence at a particular time in their lives at least once, and 26% of women were exposed to emotional violence in the last 12 months. 34.9% of the women were subjected to being insulted or sworn by their spouses; however, this percent decreases to 19% when women are asked if they were belittled or humiliated by their spouses in front of other people.

One of the most common types of violence is **physical violence**. 32.8% of women in Turkey expressed that they were exposed to this type of violence at a particular period in their lives at least once. The number of women being slapped or thrown something at that could hurt by their spouses or partners is 30.8% and 16.3% of women stated that they were pushed or shoved or their hair pulled by their spouses or partners.

**Sexual violence** is another type of violence, and in this research its existence is determined by questions in 3 separate subtitles. The proportion of women stating to be exposed to sexual violence at a particular period in their lives at least once in Turkey is 11%. The findings indicate that 6.9% of the participants were exposed to physical force when they refused to have a sexual intercourse with their spouse or partner.

Marital status is an important factor affecting violence and its type. Until now, different types of violence that women experience in the family have been studied descriptively in the context of women's marital status. However, in this study we started the analysis by separately cross-tabulating various socio-demographic variables and logistic regression was used to determine the relationship between violence and marital status. The findings of this study is concordant with the previous research in the field<sup>33</sup>.

In this section, subsequent multivariate analysis is used to determine whether the differences observed in bivariate analyzes are significant when taking into account the effects of other relevant variables<sup>34</sup>. By using logistic regression, the odds of becoming a victim of violence and multivariate effects of all the predictor variables (marital status, socio-demographic) are examined.

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<sup>33</sup> e.g., Dawson & Gartner, 1998; Sutton & Dawson, 2018: 10.

<sup>34</sup> Agresti and Finlay, 2009 as cited in Sutton & Dawson, 2018: 10.

**Table 3.** Logistic Regression Model of Violence Against Women

Independent Variables	Emotional Violence			Economic Violence			Physical Violence			Sexual Violence		
	β	Odds	Wald' s	β	Odds	Wald' s	β	Odds	Wald' s	β	Odds	Wald' s
<b>Education Level</b>			10,146			30,512			37,711			6,226
Primary Incomplete(ref)												
Primary School	,078	1,081	,939	,286	<b>1,331**</b>	9,727	-,082	,921	1,013	-,100	,905	,738
Secondary School	,240	<b>1,271*</b>	4,983	,437	<b>1,548***</b>	13,342	-,032	,968	,085	-,110	,896	,454
High School	,120	1,127	1,329	,474	<b>1,607***</b>	16,580	-,442	<b>,642***</b>	15,674	-,294	,745	3,070
University	-,040	,961	,093	,001	1,001	,000	-,708	<b>,493***</b>	22,062	-,539	<b>,584*</b>	4,978
Master's and Doctoral Degree	-,504	,604	1,769	-,336	,715	,479	-,863	<b>,422*</b>	3,629	-,396	,673	,362
<b>Partner's Education Level</b>			31,194			26,926			48,431			38,618
Primary Incomplete(ref)												
Primary School	-,003	,997	,000	,187	1,206	1,082	-,161	,852	1,110	-,341	,711	2,936
Secondary School	-,005	,995	,001	,209	1,233	1,208	-,292	,747	3,159	-,432	<b>,649*</b>	3,919
High School	-,140	,869	,770	,138	1,148	,539	-,515	<b>,598**</b>	10,027	-,848	<b>,428***</b>	14,745
University	-,454	<b>,635**</b>	6,930	-,306	,737	2,231	-,802	<b>,448***</b>	19,730	-1,232	<b>,292***</b>	22,112
Master's and Doctoral Degree	-,841	<b>,431**</b>	8,373	-,475	,622	1,895	-,871	<b>,419**</b>	7,413	-,682	,505	2,621
<b>Marital Status</b>			139,444			220,996			222,050			226,931
Never Married(ref)												
Currently Married	,319	<b>1,376**</b>	8,692	,851	<b>2,342***</b>	33,509	1,465	<b>4,328***</b>	61,009	1,453	<b>4,275***</b>	15,753
Widowed	,410	<b>1,506*</b>	4,987	1,088	<b>2,969***</b>	24,795	1,652	<b>5,216***</b>	47,428	1,755	<b>5,783***</b>	17,551
Divorced	2,083	<b>8,029***</b>	108,138	2,803	<b>16,486***</b>	179,298	3,215	<b>24,904***</b>	178,008	3,474	<b>32,277***</b>	79,566
Separated	2,314	<b>10,115***</b>	33,313	2,426	<b>11,311***</b>	53,810	3,590	<b>36,235***</b>	79,735	3,498	<b>33,047***</b>	57,097
<b>Have Personal Income</b>												
No(ref)												
Yes	,080	1,083	1,548	-,129	,879	3,128	,170	<b>1,185**</b>	5,988	,020	1,020	,036
	Cox & Snell: 0.038			Cox & Snell: 0.051			Cox & Snell: 0.082			Cox & Snell: 0.050		
	Nagelkerke: 0.051			Nagelkerke: 0.074			Nagelkerke: 0.115			Nagelkerke: 0.099		
	Predicted Probabilities: 60.8%			Predicted Probabilities: 72.8%			Predicted Probabilities: 69.0%			Predicted Probabilities: 89.0%		
<b>*p&lt;0.05</b>	<b>** p&lt;0,01</b>	<b>***p&lt;0,001</b>										

In Table 3, statistical data about women who have been subjected to physical, sexual, economic and emotional violence in relation with their marital status, educational status, and income status are presented through logistic regression analysis. Marital status is one of the most determining variables in exposure to any type of violence compared to other independent variables. It was seen that marital status was the most effective in the case of explaining the types of violence, most effective physical violence and least effective in emotional violence.

When the marital status that forms the focus of this study and violence against domestic women are examined in detail, it is seen that married women (OR: 1,376) are more likely to be the victims of emotional violence than women who have never been married. It has been determined that women who are divorced (OR: 8.029) and separated (OR:10.115) are exposed to emotional violence 8-10 times than women who have never been married.

One of the important types of violence against women is economic violence, compared to unmarried women, 2 times (OR: 2,342) of married women, 3 times of widows (OR: 2.969), 16 times of divorced women (OR: 16.486) and separated women appear to be the victims of economic violence about 11 times (OR: 11.311) more. As of April 2020<sup>35</sup>, only 29.2% of women in Turkey are participants of the labor force. Roughly two out of three women are economically dependent on their spouse or another person. For this reason, one of the most important problems faced by women who are divorced or live separately from their spouses, especially in the case that they have children, is economic problems. This situation may arise as a way for men with traditional patriarchal values to not pay alimony or restrain women from working they live separately or divorce, and leads to economic violence.

Marital status is considered to be the determined of physical violence. Currently married women stated that they have been subjected to violence 4 times more compared to women who have never been married (OR:4.328). Yet widowed women are 5 times (OR: 5.216), separated women 36 times (OR: 36.235) and divorced women 25 times (OR: 24.904) are likely to have experienced physical violence compared to women who have never been married at particular time in their lives.

Among all types of violence, marital status variable is the most important determinant of sexual violence . It has been identified that compared to unmarried women, married women are victims of sexual violence 4 times (OR: 4.275), widow women 5 times (OR: 5.783), separated women 33 times (OR: 33.047) and divorced women 32 times (OR: 32.277). The data show that, as Brownridge and his friends (2008: 7) emphasize, men resort to sexual violence as a way to show that their spouses do not give up their sexual property rights even if they live separately or divorced from their spouses.

### Discussion and Conclusion

In accordance with all analysis results, it can be said that sexual violence is less common among women who have never been married. This situation seems closely related to fact that sex before marriage is considered to be a taboo in traditional countries like Turkey and that having sexual experience before marriage is not the usual case. However, it is seen that there is a significant increase in the frequency of physical and sexual violence during marriage and after marriage. Sexual violence among separated and divorced women is considerably higher than that of single and married women. As highlighted in the studies of Brownridge et al. (2008: 7), men resort to all kinds of violence in order not to give up their sexual property rights that they think they have in the post-breakup period<sup>36</sup>.

In accordance with the data, it is revealed<sup>37</sup> that in societies where marriage commonly considered to be the norm, separated or divorced women are more likely to be exposed to violence. In line with the studies of Cardinali et al. (2018), it is quite noteworthy that the findings of this study also demonstrates that especially divorced women are exposed to violence by their ex-husbands<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute, Labour Force Statistics, 2020.

<sup>36</sup> Brownridge et al., 2008: 7.

<sup>37</sup> Logan, & Walker, 2004; Brownridge, 2008; DeKeseredy, 2013.

<sup>38</sup> Cardinali vd., 2018.

The data show that women who are divorced and separated from their husbands constitute the most fragile segment among the survivors of all types of violence. Particularly, the rate of exposure to sexual and physical violence is quite high among women who are divorced and live separately from their husbands. In short, although it is valid in all types of violence, marital status is an important variable especially in physical and sexual violence types. In societies where negative attitudes towards living separately and getting a divorce are common, almost all forms of violence against ex-spouses can be observed intensely. In the study conducted by Hotton (2001), in concordance with the data of this study, the majority of women who were exposed to violence stated that the attacks started or intensified after separation. Ending the marriage does not always result in ending the violence<sup>39</sup>. Especially women's demands for separation and divorce can cause masculinity crisis and violence can be seen as a proof of masculinity.

Brownridge et al. (2008: 4) argues that married women who are more independent may be more likely to be the victims of violence. Men married to women who are not dependent on them can use violence as a way to dominate their wives. Violence can also be used by men as a way to prevent women who are educated, have a job, are strong, and have more resources than men. The rationale behind it may be the idea that these women may act independently from their husbands, they may also challenge their husbands thus men use violence as a tool to prevent their wives from separating or abandoning their husbands and to dominate women. The results of this research reveal that widowed or divorced women who have their own income are more exposed to violence.

According to the results, having any kinds of partner that is associated with marriage in any period of life, significantly affects the odds of violence just like in the case of divorced or separated women. The odds of being victims for divorced or separated women is significantly greater than the impact of this variable on the odds of violence for never married women. Whether there is a relationship between marriage type and violence seems to be related to domestic violence. In the studies of Altınay and Arat, the rate of being exposed to physical violence at least once among women who get married willingly and with the consent of their families is 28%, whereas this rate increases to 49% for those who get married willingly but without the consent of the family<sup>40</sup>. These rates reveal how women become isolated about violence in marriages without the consent of family and social environment. For this reason, marriage type should also be taken into consideration in studies related to violence against women.

The power and authority established on women within the framework of patriarchal values, where equality between men and women is unacceptable, is of strategic importance in an attempt to understand the violence that occurs against women in heterosexual close relationships. Sutton & Dawson noted that men with low incomes and education are more likely to resort to violence as a means of establishing power and authority. However, post-structuralist feminists object to classifying men and women as dichotomic for in this classification defines men as strong and women without power so post-structuralist feminists emphasized that women can always resist and that they are not weak<sup>41</sup>. In addition, in any attempt to understand violence in close relationships, it seems that taking variables such as income and education level into account, and using an intersectional perspective have the potential to contribute more to the understanding of the subject.

When interpreting the results, several limitations that exist in this study are taken into consideration. Firstly, it cannot be determined whether these women chose to get a divorce because they were subjected to violence or they were subjected to violence because they decided to get divorced. However, the fact that women predominantly became a subject of violence by their LMP is given. Another limitation derives from that it may be easier for divorced women to share their experience about being subjected to violence because they no longer have to keep such family secrets in order to keep the honour of the family intact. For these reasons, the study could not make sense of divorce sufficiently through violence. Second, the TUIK data presented in this study were collected about 5 years ago which makes it out of

<sup>39</sup> Hotton, 2001:1

<sup>40</sup> Altınay and Arat, 2007: 81.

<sup>41</sup> Sutton & Dawson, 2018: 4.

date, however; this data is the most extensive and up-to-date data of all the current research done in Turkey.

Consequently, marital status is an important characteristic that has considerable impact on violence prevalence. According to the findings of this study, it is recommended to attach more importance to the situation of divorced or separated women in further studies as they seem to constitute the most vulnerable and aggravated group.

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