

Coping with Intimate Partner Violence: The Effect of Women's Resources on Their Response to Violence in Turkey

Yakın Partner Şiddetiyle Başa Çıkmak: Türkiye'de Kadınların Sahip Oldukları Kaynakların Şiddete Verdikleri Tepkilere Etkisi

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Highlights:

- This quantitative study is one of the few in Turkey to focus on women's individual and institutional responses to IPV. It also draws on findings from the most recent fieldwork of the 'Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey'.
- The findings of the study reveal that individual resources such as age, higher education, urban residence and regular employment with social security significantly increase the likelihood of women having at least one institutional or non-institutional response to IPV.
- Thus, the findings of the study suggest that promoting girls' and women's access to higher education and their participation in the labor market in qualified and socially secured employment conditions is invaluable in combating IPV.

Abstract: The aim of this study is to investigate the interaction between the personal and social resources of women who have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) and their responses to two specific types of violence, namely, physical, and sexual violence. The study utilizes survey data from the "2014 Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey Survey", a follow-up to the 2008 nationwide survey on violence against women, which includes a wide range of socio-demographic background questions as well as questions on IPV and various types of violence against women and girls. This quantitative research represents one of the rare studies focusing on women's individual and institutional responses to IPV and it is also based on findings from the most recent field study on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey. The sample design of the research is a multi-staged stratified cluster sampling and 11,247 households completed the survey from 12 statistical regions, urban and rural areas of Turkey. During the field visits, 13,310 women were identified as eligible for interviews, and 8,960 women were approached for face-to-face interviews. The response rate for the women interviews was recorded at 83.3 percent. Multinomial logit models were employed to elucidate the relationship between the responses of women who had been subjected to violence and their individual resources. The findings of the study reveal that individual resources such as age, higher

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education, urban residence, and being in regular employment with social security significantly increase the likelihood that women will engage in at least one institutional or non-institutional response to IPV.

Keywords: IPV (Intimate Partner Violence), Violence Against Women, Institutional Help-Seeking, Women's Resources, Women's Strategies to Fight Against Domestic Violence

Öne Çıkanlar

- Bu nicel araştırma, Türkiye'de kadınların IPV'ye verdikleri bireysel ve kurumsal tepkilere odaklanan az sayıdaki çalışmadan biridir. Ayrıca, bu konuda "Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması"nın en son yürütülen sahasından elde edilen bulgulara dayanmaktadır.
- Araştırmanın bulguları, yaş, yüksek öğrenim, kentte ikamet etme ve sosyal güvencesi olan düzenli bir işte çalışma gibi bireysel kaynakların, kadınların IPV'ye karşı en az bir kurumsal veya kurumsal olmayan tepki verme olasılığını önemli ölçüde artırdığını ortaya koymaktadır.
- Çalışmanın bulguları kız çocuklarının ve kadınların yüksek eğitime erişiminin, nitelikli ve sosyal güvenceli istihdam koşullarında iş yaşamının içinde yer almalarının teşvik edilmesinin, IPV ile mücadelede çok değerli olduğunu göstermektedir.

Öz: Bu çalışmanın amacı, eş/yakın partner şiddeti (IPV) yaşamış kadınların kişisel ve sosyal kaynakları ile iki spesifik şiddet türüne (fiziksel ve cinsel şiddet) verdikleri tepkiler arasındaki etkileşimi araştırmaktır. Çalışmada, 2008 yılında ülke çapında yapılan kadına yönelik şiddet araştırmasının devamı niteliğinde olan ve IPV ile kadınlara ve kız çocuklarına yönelik çeşitli şiddet türlerinin yanı sıra çok çeşitli sosyo-demografik arka plan sorularını da içeren "2014 Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması" anket verileri kullanılmıştır. Bu nicel araştırma, Türkiye'de kadınların IPV'ye verdikleri bireysel ve kurumsal tepkilere odaklanan nadir çalışmalardan birini temsil etmektedir ve aynı zamanda bu konuda "Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması"nın en son yürütülen sahasından elde edilen bulgulara dayanmaktadır. Araştırmanın örneklem tasarımı çok aşamalı tabakalı küme örneklemesidir ve Türkiye'nin 12 istatistikî bölgesinden, kentsel ve kırsal alanlarından 11.247 hane anketi tamamlamıştır. Saha ziyaretleri sırasında 13.310 kadının görüşme için uygun olduğu tespit edilmiş ve 8.960 kadınla yüz yüze görüşme yapılmıştır. Kadınlara yapılan görüşmelerde yanıt oranı yüzde 83,3'tür. Şiddete maruz kalmış kadınların yanıtları ile bireysel kaynakları arasındaki ilişkiyi açıklamak için multinomial logit modelleri gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmanın bulguları, yaş, yüksek öğrenim, kentte ikamet etme ve sosyal güvencesi olan düzenli bir işte çalışma gibi bireysel kaynakların, kadınların IPV'ye karşı en az bir kurumsal veya kurumsal olmayan tepki verme olasılığını önemli ölçüde artırdığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yakın Partner Şiddeti, Kadına Karşı Şiddet, Kurumsal Destek Alma, Kadınların Kaynakları, Şiddetle Mücadele Stratejileri

Genişletilmiş Özet

Kadına yönelik şiddet; kadınların yaşamlarını fiziksel, duygusal, ekonomik, sosyal ve cinsel boyutlarıyla doğrudan etkileyen önemli bir küresel sorundur. Yakın partner şiddeti (IPV), farklı ülkelerde, farklı bireysel, sosyal, yasal ve politik koşullarda değişkenlikler gösteren kadına yönelik şiddetin en yaygın biçimidir. Türkiye, IPV oranının yüksekliği yanında, IPV'ye ilişkin

yasal mevzuat ve siyasi söylem açısından da dikkate değer bir konumdadır. Dolayısıyla, IPV'nin ülkemizde sosyal bilimcilerin farklı yönleriyle ele alması gereken öncelikli konular arasında olduğuna inanıyoruz. Ancak biz, IPV'nin kadınlar üzerindeki olumsuz sonuçlarına odaklanmak yerine, kadınların IPV'ye karşı direncine odaklanan bir yaklaşımı benimsiyoruz. Bizim için, IPV'ye karşı direnişte yansıma bulan kadın failliği, özellikle kurumsal hizmet ve desteklerin çok sınırlı olduğu, siyasi söylem ve iklimin toplumsal cinsiyete duyarlı, eşitlikçi ve kadın dostu olmaktan uzak olduğu Türkiye bağlamında özel bir dikkat gerektirmektedir. Türkiye'nin "İstanbul Sözleşmesi"nden (Kadınlara Yönelik Şiddet ve Aile İçi Şiddetin Önlenmesi ve Bunlarla Mücadeleye İlişkin Avrupa Konseyi Sözleşmesi)" çekilmesinin Cumhurbaşkanlığı Kararnamesi ile gerçekleşmesi, kadına yönelik şiddetle mücadeleyle ilişkin yasal araçlara yönelik en ciddi saldırıdır.

Kadınları destekleyen yasal zemin daraltılırken IPV'nin kadınlar açısından oluşturduğu tehdit, Covid-19 salgınının etkisiyle derinleşmiştir. Bu dönemde hem kadına yönelik şiddetin (VAW) hem de IPV'nin arttığı anlaşılmaktadır. Sosyo-Politik Alan Araştırmaları Merkezi'nin yayınladığı araştırma raporu, Türkiye'de salgın döneminde kadına yönelik şiddetin yüzde 27,8 oranında arttığını yansıtmaktadır. Ayrıca araştırmalar, aynı dönemde diğer ülkelerde olduğu gibi Türkiye'de de IPV'nin arttığını ortaya koymaktadır (Akalin ve Ayhan, 2022, McNeil ve ark. 2023; Özlü, 2023). Pandemi sırasında kadınların yardım arama tepkisi yoluyla IPV'ye karşı direnci artmış olsa da (Sorenson, Sinko ve Berk, 2021), mevcut hizmetlere erişimleri azalmıştır (Vives-Cases ve ark. 2021). Pandemi sürecindeki kapanmalar nedeniyle kadınların sosyal, ekonomik ve bireysel kaynakları sınırlanırken, şiddete karşı savunmasızlıkları da artmıştır. Ayrıca, Pandemi sırasında iş ve gelir kaybı nedeniyle derinleşen ekonomik sorunların, özellikle kadınların kırılganlığını arttırdığı anlaşılmaktadır. Akalin ve Ayhan (2022), Türkiye'de Covid 19 Salgını sırasında IPV'ye odaklanan çalışmalarında, işsizliğin kadınların IPV'ye maruz kalma riskini önemli ölçüde artırdığını vurgulamaktadır.

Ülkemizde toplumsal bağlam yukarıda belirttiğimiz gibi şekillenirken çalışmamızın amacı, eş/yakın partner şiddeti (IPV) yaşamış kadınların kişisel ve sosyal kaynakları ile iki spesifik şiddet türüne (fiziksel ve cinsel şiddet) verdikleri tepkiler arasındaki etkileşimi araştırmaktır. Çalışmada, 2008 yılında ülke çapında yapılan kadına yönelik şiddet araştırmasının devamı niteliğinde olan ve IPV ile kadınlara ve kız çocuklarına yönelik çeşitli şiddet türlerinin yanı sıra çok çeşitli sosyo-demografik arka plan sorularını da içeren "2014 Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması" anket verileri kullanılmıştır. Bu nicel araştırma, Türkiye'de kadınların IPV'ye verdikleri bireysel ve kurumsal tepkilere odaklanan az sayıdaki çalışmadan biridir. Ayrıca, bu konuda "Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması"nın en son yürütülen sahasından

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Introduction

Violence against women is a substantial global problem affecting women's lives directly through physical, emotional, economic, social and sexual dimensions. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is the most widespread form of violence against women which operates in the intersection of individual, social, legal and political frameworks of different countries. Turkey represents a significant case in terms of the rate of IPV as well as legal legislations and political discourse on IPV. Instead of focusing on the negative consequences of IPV on women, we take an approach that focuses on women's resistance to IPV. Women's resistance to IPV has been studied by addressing "the nature of resistance, the conditions under which it occurs and what effects if any, it has on facilitating social change" (Rajah and Osborn, 2020:1). For us, women agency in the form of resistance to IPV requires a special attention particularly in Turkish context where the availability of institutional services and support is very limited, political discourse is far from being gender sensitive, egalitarian and women friendly. The ratification of "Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence)" of Turkey by Presidential Decree on 20 March 2021 is the most serious attack against the legal instruments to tackle violence against women.

The significance of this subject was raised during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is understood that both violence against women (VAW) and IPV increased during this period. The research report published by the Center for Socio-Political Field Research¹ reflects that violence against women increased by 27.8% in Turkey during the pandemic. Besides, research reveals that IPV also increased in Turkey, as in other countries, during the same period (Akalın and Ayhan, 2022, McNeil et al. 2023; Özlü, 2023). Although women's resistance to IPV through help seeking

¹ Socio Political Field Research Center. (2020). Türkiye research report on the impact of women from the COVID-19 quarantine and violence against women and children.. <https://sahamerkezi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/kad%C4%B1n-covid-ek.pdf>.

reaction increased during the pandemic (Sorenson, Sinko and Berk, 2021), access to the available services decreased (Vives-Cases et al. 2021). Due to pandemic closures, women's access to social, economic and personal resources has been disrupted, increasing their vulnerability to violence. Additionally, restrictions on women's movements due to closures negatively affected their access to quality services. While women with scarce resources and limited mobility could not access social networks that fight against IPV, it has also become harder for them to access women's solidarity groups and counseling services that recognize violence and provide support. In addition, the way of service delivery has also been transformed by being highly dependent on technological infrastructure and tools such as mobile phones, computers and the internet. Women who do not have access to these infrastructure and tools have become more isolated and vulnerable since then. Moreover, sharing the same space with the perpetrator for longer hours and close surveillance and monitoring of the perpetrator as well as other family members also negatively affected women's resistance to IPV.²

During the Pandemic deepening economic adversity due to job and income loss, increased vulnerability of especially women. In other words, a comparison between men and women based on having sufficient economic resources during the pandemic, reveals that women were in a more disadvantaged position. According to a research conducted in Turkey by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 50% of all women have experienced job loss by being laid off or being given unpaid leave. This ratio is 42.6% for men.³ Similarly, “Unemployment and Employment Outlook in April 2021 Report” of the Research Center of the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK-AR)⁴ states that during Covid-19 pandemic, with the increase in short-time working and unpaid leave practices, there has been a significant decline in the number of people at work. The number of women at work decreased by 21% in one year. Noting that male employment (28%) is higher than female employment (22%) in sectors suitable for remote work, Yeniçeri and Koç (2021) point out that, this situation made women more vulnerable during the pandemic. They also emphasize that as a result of the prevalence of informal work in women's employment, legal regulations that made layoffs more difficult during the pandemic period were insufficient to protect women. Akalın and Ayhan (2022), in their study focusing on IPV during the Covid 19 Pandemic in Turkey, emphasize that unemployment significantly increases women's risk of IPV exposure. This study aims to understand the relationship between the individual and social resources of women exposed to IPV and their

² <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/multimedia/2020/4/infographic-covid19-violence-against-women-and-girls>

³ <https://turkey.un.org/tr/89555-bm-raporu-covid-19-kadin-yoksullugunu-derinlestirecek>

⁴ <http://disk.org.tr/2021/06/unemployment-in-turkey-now-worse-than-the-first-months-of-pandemic/>

resistance to two forms of violence, namely physical and sexual violence. We used the second and most recent wave data of "National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey" conducted by Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies in 2014. We examined how the means of access to economic, social and cultural resources such as education, regular job, income, social benefit and security affect women's development of agency through resistance to IPV. Our main assumption in this study is that; the more resources women have, the more likely they will be to end a violence-involving relationship and develop strategies to seek individual, social, and institutional help. Although the data is collected before COVID-19 pandemic, the findings could contribute to understand the significance of the situation and to develop efficient preventive measures and policies to fight against IPV and to provide support for women subjected to IPV.

In the following sections, we will present a theoretical and conceptual framework addressing the studies on women's resistance to IPV, with a particular focus on the relationship between women's resources and their reaction to violence against women. Then we will present and discuss our findings, by taking the changing Turkish context into consideration. Finally, we will suggest policy recommendations to cope with IPV and support women who are subjected to IPV in the hard times of both COVID-19 pandemic and ratification of Istanbul Convention of Turkey.

Literature on Women's Reactions to IPV

In this part, we will work through the international and national literature that focuses on the relationship between violence against women and the resources women have. The basic themes in the relevant literature can be listed as; significance of the context, responses of women to IPV, the relationship between the resources women have and the help seeking responses they develop. In the discussion of these themes, our theoretical framework is based on ecological approach, normative-resource theory and model of barriers.

Significance of the Context

When women are exposed to violence, they make sense of, perceive and react to violence depending on the social environment they are in. Ecological approach is important for understanding the role of attitudes and resources in coping strategies applied by women exposed to violence. Ecological approach was firstly developed in the fields of psychology and sociology for explaining the relationship of a person's behaviors and environmental factors. In his pioneering work in the field, Bronfenbrenner (1979), addresses the importance of the ecological framework for understanding a person's behavior. According to Bronfenbrenner, a person's house, workplace, religious affiliation and associated environment, roles within the family and community,

governmental institutions and finally, institutional patterns of culture constitute the ecological framework. The researchers focusing on domestic violence find this theoretical framework explanatory and use it. Mitchell and Hodson (1986) state that the ecological approach is functional especially in understanding the coping repertoires developed against violence. They note that personal, environmental and situational factors are interrelated, and they discuss how personal and contextual factors influence women to develop patterns of seeking help and coping with challenges, and what kind of patterns they develop. The model that the researchers developed in their study of 60 women who had been exposed to violence by their husbands in San Francisco is quite enlightening. The first point to be highlighted in the model is the emphasis on the intertwining relationship of personal, social and institutional dimensions. At this point, exposure to violence in childhood determines the individual's (a) "attitude towards the social roles of woman" as well as (b) "access to personal resources and the quality of these resources". These two variables (a and b) both determine the quality of "social support" and "institutional approaches" received by the individual. All these factors shape women's coping responses to violence. Similarly, De Ridder (1997) emphasized the importance of context in shaping women's reactions to violence. Although the different social contexts in which women experience violence are interrelated, their experiences and the nature of each context lead them to develop different responses. In the "Model of Barriers", Grigsby and Hartman (1997) underline four layers that act as barriers for women subjected to IPV. According to the model, the four layers are; (1) barriers in the environment including information/misinformation, financial resources, justice system, attitude of personnel in the police station, approaches of religious counseling toward IPV, physical and cultural accessibility to shelters/services, discrimination, language barriers and cultural barriers; (2) barriers due to family, socialization and role expectations including values and beliefs about relationship, identity, values and beliefs about abuse, religious values and beliefs and family of origin; (3) barriers from the psychological consequences of violence including psychological consequences and isolation, physical and somatic results; (4) childhood abuse and neglect issues including early messages about abuse and safety, psychological consequences of childhood abuse/neglect. In this model, the authors take women's experience in a broader context with multiple layers interacting with each other.

Responses of Women to IPV

Researchers focus on the different types of responses women develop to cope with IPV, taking into account women's agency. Warner et al. (2005: 23) conceptualize resistance as "any action taken or tactic employed by women to prevent, avoid, reduce, or stop violence and/or abuse in intimate relationships." According to the authors, resistance may include "a variety of tactics

such as fighting back, calling the police, threatening to leave, or even seemingly passive behaviors like remaining silent in order to avoid an argument or physical injury.”

Goodkind, Sullivan and Bybee (2004), categorize five safety planning strategies women develop against IPV; (1) *placate* such as avoidance of the perpetrator, keeping kids quiet, not resisting, doing whatever the perpetrator wants, avoiding friends and/or family; (2) *active resistance* such as physically fighting back, using weapons or threatening; (3) *formal help-seeking* such as seeking help from a religious organization or health care provider, talking to someone about the services, talking to a counselor or therapist, contacting the police; (4) *informal help-seeking* such as talking to family and friends, staying with family or friends; and (5) *emergency escape planning* including hiding money or valuables, developing an escape plan with kids, developing a code with others, keeping important phone numbers to use, trying to keep address secret. They concluded that the type of strategy developed by the woman is directly related to the severity of the violence, the relationship with the aggressor, the accessibility of shelter residence, the woman’s well-being and her race. The most common tactics used included trying to talk to the perpetrator about the violence (94%), contacting the police (92%), avoiding the perpetrator at certain times (90%) and trying to end the relationship (89%).

Similarly, Kaukinen (2004) focused on women's responses to IPV and listed three different help-seeking responses: minimal or no help-seeking, primarily seeking help from family and friends, and substantial/comprehensive help-seeking, such as seeking police/institutional help. Kaukinen (2004) also found that a woman’s race had an effect on her help-seeking behavior, with white women being more likely to engage in increasing levels of help-seeking.

Waldrop and Resick (2004), in their study examining the coping strategies of women who have been subjected to violence, reviewed the studies conducted to date in this field and stated that, women's reactions to violence are primarily classified according to whether the reaction is active or not, in other words, whether it includes "an effort to change the given situation / to distance from the perpetrator in order to mitigate negative consequences" (Holahan & Moos, 1987; Mitchell & Hodson, 1983, 1986; Tobin et al, 1989; Moos, 1995). Behaviors such as "not accepting the violent experience" or "keeping their feelings to themselves" are considered as "avoidance/rejection" strategies. These reactions make it difficult for the target of violence to leave the relationship. On the other hand, "talking to a friend about the problem" or "making an action plan and implementing this plan" are behaviors that are shown as examples of efforts to change the given situation / to distance from the perpetrator of violence in order to alleviate the negative consequences.

Although there is a limited number of studies on women's responses to IPV, the study by Ergöçmen et al. (2015) is important in terms of discussing women's different responses in the Turkish context. Ergöçmen et al. (2015) revealed that 44% of the women have not disclosed the physical and/or sexual violence they were subjected to by their husbands/partners to any person or institution. Asking for help, physically responding to violence, leaving home, and applying to an official institution or organization were found to be other reactions women exhibited to cope with IPV (Ergöçmen et al., 2015). The findings in the research report shared by Mor Çatı Women's Shelter Foundation in 2021 are similar.⁵

Women's Resources and their Responses to IPV

The different types of resources women have are directly related to their responses to IPV. Normative resource theory contributes to understanding women's responses to IPV. Underlining the importance of social and cultural norms that influence the relationship, particularly patriarchal norms and the resources women possess (Dunbar, 2015), this theoretical framework offers a fruitful perspective for understanding the possibilities and limits of women's agency in the aftermath of violence.

Crosbie-Burnett and Giles-Sims (1991) see the wife's income, the wife's happiness with being single and home ownership as *resource bases of power*, whereas the age discrepancy between husband and wife are *normative bases of power* in an intimate relationship. These two interconnected dimensions are closely related to *relative power* between spouses in four domains, namely; money, child rearing, marital relation, and sexual relation. As Riger and Krieglstein (2000) note, women with fewer resources and higher economic dependence on their partners may be more likely to stay in a relationship with violence and abuse. The strategies women develop to cope with the challenges they face are shaped by the social context, and therefore by their resources and background (Beşpınar, 2010; Ben-Porat, 2020;). Similarly, responses for coping with violence are also directly related to individual and societal resources and constraints.

Addressing the strategies developed by women exposed to violence, Moss (1995) stated that, the existence, types and levels of social support, financial resources and other concrete assistance instruments, affect women's coping strategy. The literature shows that, women's high-income level (Rusbult & Martz, 1995), employment status and work experience (Strube & Barbour, 1983) increase the likelihood of women leaving and not returning to a relationship involving violence. Similarly, Sen (1999), in her study in Kolkata, found that women's level of education

⁵ Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı. (2021). "Kadına Yönelik Şiddet: Kadınların Deneyimleri, Kurumlar ve Mecralar" [Violence Against Women: Women's Experiences, Institutions and Media]. https://morcati.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/MorCati_Dissensus-6.pdf

and social support were the main determinants of their responses to IPV. Emphasizing that work may not directly contribute to women's control over their lives and empowerment, Sen points out that, low-paid jobs without social security do not support women in developing a strategy to end violence. On the other hand, Lazarus and Folkman (1984), who developed a similar analysis by focusing on constraints, pointed out that the coping strategy used by women is shaped by three "constraints": "environmental constraints", "personal constraints" and "threat of extreme violence". They argue that inadequate social and personal resources and the extent of violence also limit women's coping strategies.

When the relationship between personal characteristics and resources and exposure to IPV is examined in the literature in Turkey, studies revealing the importance of factors such as age, place of birth, living in rural or urban areas, education level, employment status, and economic welfare of the family draw attention (Altınay & Arat, 2009; Ergöçmen et al., 2015; Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu et al., 2012). Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu et al. (2012) found that, women between the ages of 15-24 are more likely to be subjected to violence by their husbands than other women. On the other hand, Altınay and Arat (2009) point out that the education level of women and their husbands is decisive. While 43% of illiterate women state that they were subjected to physical violence by their partners at least once, this rate is 12% among women with university degrees. The same research also focuses on men's level of education. While half of illiterate men state that they have inflicted physical violence on their wives, this rate is 18% among university graduates. Recent studies show that there is an inverse relationship between income level and domestic physical violence (Altınay and Arat, 2009; Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu et al., 2012; Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu et al., 2014). While 20% of low-income households experience domestic violence, this rate is 14% in middle-income households and 9% in high-income households (Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu et al., 2012). Baran, Kütük, and Maybek (2012) reported that unemployed women held men less responsible for IPV than employed women and were less likely to agree with the idea of punishing men who perpetrate violence. Women's economic dependency and low or no participation in decision-making processes increase the likelihood of being subjected to violence by their husbands (Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu et al., 2014).

Method

In our study, we focused on the relationship between the individual resources of ever-married women who have experienced violence and the strategies they follow to cope with the violence they experienced from their last intimate partners.

Description of the Data

We use the survey data from “2014 National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey”, which is a follow-up study of the 2008 nationwide research on violence against women. The research employed a multi-staged stratified cluster sampling approach to design the sample. The target sample consisted of 15,084 households, representing various urban and rural areas across Turkey's 12 statistical regions. Of the eligible households approached for interviews, 11,247 successfully completed the survey, resulting in a household response rate of 83.9 percent. The study primarily focused on women within the 15-59 age group. In cases where multiple eligible women within this age range resided in the same household, one woman was randomly selected for the interview using the Kish (1949) method. During the field visits, 13,310 eligible women were identified, and 8,960 of them were invited for face-to-face interviews, resulting in a women's interview response rate of 83.3 percent.

Survey data collection involved visiting households and utilizing the PAPI method. The study employed two distinct questionnaires: one for households and another for women. “WHO Multi-country Study on Women’s Health and Domestic Violence against Women Survey” was used as a core module of the woman questionnaire and new questions were added to measure the impact of legal framework and policy priorities on combating violence against women in Turkey (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005). Extensive data was gathered on various forms of violence experienced by women at the hands of their intimate partners, encompassing physical, sexual, emotional, and economic dimensions, both over their lifetimes and within the preceding 12 months. Additionally, the study examined coercive behaviors exhibited by male partners, instances of violence during pregnancy, incidents of stalking, socio-economic and socio-demographic attributes of the partners, as well as women's tendencies to seek help and their awareness levels regarding civil law and legal regulations pertaining to dealing with such violence.

The research adhered to ethical guidelines and safety protocols outlined by the World Health Organization (WHO) for surveys on violence against women. These measures included employing a secure safe name, refraining from disclosing research details to anyone other than the interviewee, obtaining consent prior to interviews conducted in private settings, limiting interviews to one woman per household, guaranteeing the confidentiality of responses, framing questions related to violence in a gender-sensitive manner, concluding interviews positively, offering information about organizations that assist individuals affected by violence, and providing support to field researchers (WHO, 2001).

Strengths and Limitations of the Data Source

When the history of feminist research is analyzed, especially with the second wave of feminism, violence against women is one of the main areas where empirical field studies have been conducted (Yarar, 2015). In addition to women's inability to report their experiences to official institutions, the fact that data on violence against women are not kept in a systematic, reliable and accurate manner leads to the inability to produce quantitative data from administrative records. For this reason, household sample surveys have emerged as the main research method for investigating violence against women, both to determine the prevalence of violence and to generate other supportive data that will form the basis for policies to be developed to combat violence (Brush, 1990; Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu, 2020; Leung et al., 2019; Walby and Towers, 2017). Although violence against women studies that produce country-representative and cross-country comparative data are not conducted with feminist research methodology as a guide, due to the specific ethical rules of the research, they have the effect of raising awareness and consciousness among the women interviewed and maintain their importance for ending violence against women (Kaptanoğlu, 2023; Walby & Towers, 2017). According to Walby, although the effort spent on quantitative research on violence against women usually focuses on the prevalence of such violence, many important theoretical questions about violence against women could be addressed more comprehensively if the data obtained through these studies were more sensitive, deeper and richer (Walby & Myhill, 2001).

In this context, the "National Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey", the "Turkey Domestic Violence against Women Survey", has been conducted twice so far, the first time in 2008 and the second time in 2014. In this research, it was aimed to measure different types of violence and to produce an international comparative data at the country level that takes into account ethical rules in universal standards. In this study, the methodology of the Multi-Country Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women Surveys conducted by the World Health Organization in 10 countries was taken as a reference (Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu, 2023). In 2015, when the research report was completed, the decision to collect the data of the Domestic Violence against Women Survey, the first of which was conducted in 2008, every 10 years was taken jointly by the Ministry of Family and Social Services General Directorate on the Status of Women and Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies. This decision is based on the idea of monitoring the prevalence rates of types of violence against women and the changes in attitudes towards both gender equality and violence in the fight against violence against women. However, the tender process for the Turkey Domestic Violence against Women Survey, for which fieldwork is planned for 2024, has been ongoing for the last year and has not yet been finalized. International

conventions such as the CEDAW Declaration and General Recommendations No. 19, 24 and 35, the Beijing Declaration and Action Plan and the Istanbul Convention emphasize that it is the responsibility of States Parties to produce reliable data on violence against women, especially on the level of different forms of violence, at regular intervals (Yüksel-Kaptanoğlu, 2023). For example, two of the indicators of the fifth United Nations Sustainable Development Goal "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls", namely "5.2.1. Proportion of women and girls aged 15 and over who have ever been in a relationship who have experienced physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former partner in the past 12 months, by type of violence and age" and "5.2.2. Proportion of women and girls aged 15 and over who have been subjected to sexual violence by someone other than their partner in the past 12 months, by age and place of occurrence" For the data on Turkey, the 2014 survey is still used, as it is the most recent data on this issue. Similarly, the only research referenced in the 2021-2025 National Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women is the "Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey" conducted by Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies in 2014.

In light of all this information, the quantitative data we used for this article is the most recent and comprehensive official country-level data on violence against women in Turkey, which is representative at the national level and based on the household sample survey conducted by TurkStat as part of the Official Statistics Program. Apart from this survey, there is no other quantitative survey data with the same level of representativeness at the country and NUTS 2 (region) level, including urban and rural settlements. The survey data was collected through fieldwork in 2014. On the other hand, while it is clear that this indicator data should be updated as soon as possible, refraining from conducting further analyses on the most recent and representative data and/or using this data on the grounds that it is outdated risks the risk of not engaging in scientific production with a data and evidence-based approach to this very important social problem. In both Turkey and the world, violence against women is one of the most prominent areas where the lack of gender data and statistics, and even gaps, are glaring. Due to data limitations in this field, studies based on the further analysis of data from existing studies whose data quality is trusted maintain their validity and importance. At the same time, however, it is important to advocate for data to address the gaps and gaps in gender data and statistics in this area and to draw attention to the importance of nationally representative household surveys to be conducted with government funding. Emphasizing that this article is based on the findings of one of the few studies based on the further analysis of quantitative household surveys conducted at the country level, the need for data advocacy comes to the fore by emphasizing its contribution to violence research,

especially in the methodology section, but also by noting its limitations due to the fact that the last data used is from 2014.

Operationalization of Violence against Women

In the survey, physical violence against women by husbands or intimate partners was measured using WHO definitions. For this, whether the husband(s) (1) “slapped the woman or threw something that could harm her”, (2) “pushed her or pulled her hair”, (3) “hit her with a fist or something else that could harm her”, (4) “whether he kicked her or dragged her or beat her”, (5) “whether he choked her or burned her”, (6) “whether he threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife or other weapon against her”, was questioned. Similarly, using the WHO definition, sexual violence against women was measured by asking whether (1) “the partner physically forced her to have sexual intercourse”, (2) “she had sexual intercourse when she did not want to because she was afraid of what partner might do”, (3) “the partner forced her to do something sexual that she found degrading or humiliating”.

Variables

Dependent variable

The dependent variable of our study is the reaction of ever-married women to being subjected to violence by their most recent husbands or intimate partners. We calculate the dependent variable using a series of questions about how women respond to violence in their relationships with their most recent partner. And we define three forms of response for coping with violence: (1) individual help-seeking, (2) institutional help-seeking and (3) no help-seeking.

We recoded the answers of women who answered 'yes' to the following items as “coping by seeking individual help”: 1) fighting back against physical violence for, 2) telling at least one person about the physical violence she was subjected to, 3) leaving home at least once due to violence, 4) not returning home after leaving home. Applying to an institution or organization is a second category of the variable and it is coded as “institutional help-seeking”. Lastly, third category indicates “no help-seeking” behaviour of women.

Independent variables

The independent variables of the study are the women’s individual resources such as; age group (‘15-34’, ‘35-44’, and ‘45-59’ years), native language as a proxy measure for ethnic identity (recoded as ‘Kurdish’, ‘Non-Kurdish’), place of residence (‘rural’, ‘urban’), educational level (‘no education/not completed first level of primary education’, ‘primary school’, ‘secondary school’,

and 'high school and above'), regular and secure employment status ('having a regular job', 'not having a regular job') and ('working with job security' or 'not working with job security').

Analytical Strategy

For data analysis, first, we run descriptive statistics to discuss the relationship between coping strategies and individual resources of women exposed to violence by their most recent intimate partners such as their husbands, fiancés or boyfriends. We checked Chi-squared test statistics for each bivariate association. Second, we run multinomial logistic regression models separately for each type of violence experienced (physical, sexual, physical and/or sexual violence) to describe the factors determining the women's coping strategies with IPV. Separate odds ratios (ORs) and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) were calculated for participants who reported coping with IPV with "individual help-seeking" or "institutional help-seeking strategies" compared to the "no help-seeking strategy" reference group. We take complex sample design into consideration in both descriptive and multivariate statistical analyses.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

In this section, first of all, we will discuss the results of the descriptive analysis showing the associations between individual resources of women⁶ and their individual and institutional coping strategies. The analysis of individual help-seeking strategies of women revealed that a significant proportion of them remained silent and did not tell anyone other than the interviewer about the violence they experienced (44%). On the other hand, 30% of women, with an experience of physical or sexual violence, adopted a more active strategy and left their home for at least one night. Finally, 3 out of 10 women subjected to physical violence stated that, they fought back in order to defend themselves.

When it comes to institutional help seeking strategies, we observed that, only 11% of the women have used an institutional help seeking strategy. In another words, just one out of every 10 women have made an application for getting support from an institution combating violence against women. Among institutional help seeking strategies, women most frequently apply to the police (personally or through other people) (7%). When the basic socio-demographic characteristics of these women are examined, it is seen that most of them live in city centers (90%) and work in a regular job with social security. We observed that women having secure and regular

⁶ In this section, "women" refers to ever married women who have been subjected to violence by their most recent intimate partner or husband.

jobs (60%) make personal applications to the police more than women having irregular jobs (40%). Contacting the police is an active response of women to violence, as such a practice can be seen as an attempt to change the experience of violence and distance from the perpetrator in order to mitigate the negative consequences of violence (Waldrop and Resick, 2004). Women with more resources may find it easier to respond to violence with more active strategies. In this respect, our findings are consistent with the literature. As can be seen in Sen's (1999) study in Kolkata, working in low-waged job without social security remains insufficient to determine an active strategy to resist violence. Women with irregular incomes and precarious working conditions are more likely to suffer the economic and social consequences of institutional help-seeking strategies. They may therefore refrain from using such strategies.

Women's Responses and Individual Resources

In this study, multinomial logit models were performed to explain the relationship between the responses of women who were exposed to violence and their individual resources. We ran separate models for women subjected to physical violence, sexual violence and physical and/or sexual violence by their most recent husbands or intimate partners. In our analysis, the third category of the dependent variable, 'no help-seeking', was taken as the reference category. Hence, the coefficients that are significant in the multinomial logit models can be interpreted as how much they increase or decrease the odds ratios in their category compared to the reference category which is 'no help-seeking'. The category of comparison for the independent variables was the last category and the interpretations were made accordingly.

Table 1a and Table 1b present the results of the final multinomial logit models with odds ratios and goodness-of-fit statistics, by controlling post estimations that we ran in IBM SPSS 24 complex sample module. Pearson Chi-square values showed that the multinomial logistic regression model with predictor variables provided a good fit to the data (Table 1b).

Women's Responses to Physical Violence

The results of the multinomial logit regression model comparing individual help-seeking and non-help-seeking groups (see Table 1a) showed that, for women who had experienced physical violence, living in urban areas increased the likelihood of using at least one non-institutional strategy to cope with violence by about one and a half times (OR=1.43). It is also found that, women aged between 15-34 and 35-44 who had experienced physical violence were almost two and a half times more likely to seek institutional help than those aged between 45-59 (OR=2.40 and OR=2.59, respectively). Analysis of the women's education level revealed that compared to the women with lower education levels (OR=2.98), high school graduates gave at least one

informal response to deal with the violence. When women's employment status was analyzed for women with and without at least one individual help-seeking strategy, women with a regular job were more likely to have at least one institutional and individual help-seeking response to physical violence (OR=4.53 and OR=1.70, respectively).

Women's Responses to Sexual Violence

Table 1b presents the findings of the multinomial logistic regression analysis for the category comparison of women who made at least one institutional help-seeking response and no help-seeking response. Among women who experienced sexual violence, those living in urban areas were almost four times more likely more give at least one institutional help-seeking and one individual response compared to those living in rural areas (OR=3.78 and OR=4.38, respectively). Findings on women's individual resources showed that having a low level of education (e.g. no education/not completed the first level of primary education, completed the first level of primary education, not completed the second level of primary education) significantly reduced the likelihood of at least one individual help-seeking response to sexual violence. Similarly, women with education levels below university and high school are less likely to seek institutional help.

Women's Responses to Physical and/or Sexual Violence

Among women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence, those living in urban areas are more likely to seek at least one individualized help to cope with this situation (OR=1.40). When women who gave at least one institutional and individual help-seeking response were compared to women who did not give any help-seeking response, it was observed that being in younger age groups such as 15-34 and 35-44 had an impact on the likelihood of giving at least one institutional response to violence (OR=2.43 and OR=2.48, respectively). Completing secondary school increases the likelihood of women participating in at least one individual help-seeking intervention to cope with violence by approximately three times compared to women with no education/no primary schooling or only primary schooling (OR=3.37). For women who have experienced physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lives, working in a regular job significantly increases the likelihood of seeking at least one institutional and individual help (OR=4.21 and OR=1.84, respectively). Women's having a job with social security increases the likelihood of seeking at least one individual help against physical and/or sexual violence (OR=1.52).

Table 1a. Multinomial logit analysis of women's response to violence (group=individual help-seeking)

Predictors (reference group)	physical violence					sexual violence					physical and/or sexual violence				
	Odds Ratio	p-value	St. Err.	95% CI		Odds Ratio	p-value	St. Err.	95% CI		Odds Ratio	p-value	St. Err.	95% CI	
Age group (ref=45-49 years old)															
15-34 years old	1.396	0.161	0.239	[0.875, 2.229]		1.623	0.435	0.621	[0.481, 5.476]		1.353	0.199	0.236	[0.853, 2.148]	
35-44 years old	0.864	0.516	0.225	[0.556, 1.343]		1.060	0.921	0.586	[0.336, 3.342]		0.836	0.418	0.236	[0.541, 1.290]	
Place of residence (ref=rural)															
urban	1.426	0.084*	0.206	[0.953, 2.134]		3.777	0.012**	0.532	[1.332, 10.708]		1.398	0.098*	0.203	[0.940, 2.080]	
Native language (ref= Kurdish)															
non-Kurdish	1.065	0.841	0.313	[0.576, 1.969]		0.970	0.970	0.797	[0.204, 4.627]		1.017	0.956	0.310	[0.554, 1.866]	
Education level (ref=higher school and above)															
no education/not completed first level of primary school	1.062	0.898	0.471	[0.422, 2.676]		2.546	0.000***	1.664	[1.756, 6.646]		1.093	0.850	0.469	[0.436, 2.741]	
primary school	1.250	0.582	0.405	[0.565, 2.765]		1.993	0.000***	1.572	[1.756, 4.341]		1.326	0.485	0.404	[0.601, 2.927]	
secondary school	2.983	0.037**	0.524	[1.069, 8.237]		9.659	0.000***	0.773	[2.122, 12.397]		3.373	0.019**	0.519	[1.221, 9.323]	
Working status (ref=having an irregular job)															
having a regular job	1.704	0.071*	0.295	[0.956, 3.036]		2.048	0.362	0.786	[0.439, 9.559]		1.841	0.037**	0.292	[1.038, 3.265]	
Job security (ref=working with social security)															
working without social security	1.430	0.157	0.252	[0.872, 2.345]		2.734	0.140	0.682	[0.718, 10.414]		1.522	0.093*	0.251	[0.932, 2.488]	
Constant***															

Note: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$, reference=no help-seeking

Table 1b. Multinomial logit analysis of women's response to violence (group=institutional application)

Predictors (reference group)	physical violence				sexual violence				physical and/or sexual violence			
	Odds Ratio	p-value	St. Err.	95% CI	Odds Ratio	p-value	St. Err.	95% CI	Odds Ratio	p-value	St. Err.	95% CI
Age group (ref=45-49 years old)												
15-34 years old	2.403	0.027***	0.397	[1.103, 5.237]	2.852	0.144	0.718	[0.698, 11.648]	2.431	0.022***	0.395	[1.122, 5.269]
35-44 years old	2.590	0.011**	0.374	[1.245, 5.389]	2.533	0.178	0.691	[0.654, 9.806]	2.485	0.014**	0.371	[1.200, 5.144]
Place of residence (ref=rural)												
urban	1.394	0.346	0.352	[0.699, 2.780]	4.381	0.022**	0.643	[1.243, 15.450]	1.387	0.348	0.349	[0.701, 2.747]
Native language (ref=non-Kurdish)												
Kurdish	2.032	0.251	0.618	[0.605, 6.825]	1.346	0.767	1.004	[0.188, 9.628]	1.974	0.271	0.618	[0.588, 6.629]
Education level (ref=higher school and above)												
no education/not completed first level of primary school	0.720	0.632	0.686	[0.188, 2.762]	1.274	0.000***	1.667	[0.486, 3.345]	0.706	0.613	0.687	[0.588, 6.629]
primary school	0.950	0.918	0.498	[0.358, 2.524]	1.543	0.000***	1.480	[0.848, 2.807]	0.949	0.917	0.499	[0.588, 6.629]
secondary school	1.842	0.345	0.647	[0.518, 6.546]	2.618	0.000***	0.878	[0.262, 3.358]	1.678	0.422	0.644	[0.588, 6.629]
Working status (ref=having an irregular job)												
having a regular job	4.531	0.001***	0.439	[1.918, 10.703]	3.959	0.109	0.858	[0.737, 21.262]	4.207	0.001***	0.431	[1.806, 9.799]
Job security (ref=working with social security)												
working without social security	1.810	0.150	0.413	[0.806, 4.065]	2.354	0.265	0.768	[0.523, 10.608]	1.705	0.185	0.402	[0.775, 3.750]
Constant***												
Degrees of freedom		150				110				154		
Chi-squared statistic		173.891				125.397				173.044		
Nagelkerke R ²		0.097				0.17				0.096		

Note: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$, reference=no help-seeking

Conclusion

Using survey data from the “2014 Research on Domestic Violence in Turkey”, this study examines the relationship between women's individual resources and their responses to different types of IPV. Individual resources are age group, education level, having a regular job, working with social security and native language. Responses were categorized as individual help-seeking, institutional help-seeking, and not seeking help. The dependent variable is coping with at least one institutional or individual help-seeking response, and the independent variables are the individual resources that women have. The main findings of this study based on descriptive and multinomial logistic regression analyses are summarized below.

The analysis of the relationship between the responses of women exposed to IPV and their individual resources revealed that age and education play an important role for women exposed to *physical violence* by their intimate partners. Being in the youngest age group of 15-34 years and having a high school diploma increases the likelihood of giving at least one individual help-seeking response, such as leaving home at least once to cope with violence. On the other hand, being in the 45-59 age group and not having a regular job with social security reduces the likelihood of seeking at least one institutional and individual help.

Among women exposed to *sexual violence*, the ones living in the city, having a higher level of education especially over high school level, and working in a job with social security are more likely to give at least one individual help-seeking response. However, having a low level of education, namely below high school level, and not working in a regular job decrease the likelihood of giving at least one institutional and individual help-seeking response. Among women who have been subjected to *physical and/or sexual violence*, being in the youngest age group (15-34) and having completed secondary school increase the likelihood of giving at least one individual help-seeking response, while being in the 45-59 age group and not having a regular job with social security decrease this likelihood.

In light of these findings, it can be said that women's age and having resources such as education and regular jobs with social security increase the likelihood of seeking at least one institutional and individual assistance against IPV. Supportive and encouraging socio-economic contexts that provide women survivors of violence with resources, such as education and regular employment with social security, facilitate their response to violence and improve their psychological and social well-being. Therefore, steps should be taken to regulate the socio-economic environment in which women live, taking into account their needs. In addition, raising awareness on this issue and facilitating their access to institutional services is also important in

terms of combating violence. As noted in the literature, increasing women's education levels and supporting them with regular employment and social security empowers them to find active solutions to IPV.

Recently, both women's resources and institutional mechanisms to combat IPV have been weakened, particularly due to failing of mechanisms protecting women from violence, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention. Therefore, it has become more difficult for women to develop and use individual and institutional help-seeking strategies, as many women have lost secure jobs and are isolated and excluded from social life and networks. Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention and political debates targeting gains and demands for gender equality are weakening the effectiveness and resources of organizations fighting IPV. These political and structural changes may influence women's perceptions about these institutions, they may see these institutions less efficient and reliable. Borrowing Grigsby and Hartman's model (1997), we would say that all these changes will lead to an increase in macro-level barriers for women, while increasing micro-level barriers, with rising unemployment and poverty. Therefore, it is crucial to approach the issue from a gender-egalitarian and holistic perspective, considering the links between socio-political, economic, social, familial and individual levels.

In the light of our research findings, we can list the actions that can be taken for women who hesitate to react to IPV or who do not apply to institutional support mechanisms;

a) Organizing “training and awareness raising” activities especially for vulnerable groups to clarify which behaviors of the partner constitute physical or sexual violence, b) Giving information about the types and content of the institutional support and services provided to women, c) Carrying out awareness-raising activities to ensure that receiving institutional support is seen in the context of citizenship rights and taken for granted. Additionally, regulations need to be urgently put in place to ensure that all women struggling with IPV, especially the ones from vulnerable groups, are supported in accessing the education, employment and social security they need to make it easier for them to rebuild their lives.

Finally, the pandemic showed us that women's individual resources and institutional support mechanisms are simultaneously weakened and disrupted in the fight against IPV under extraordinary situations. For this reason, it is necessary to increase both the number and quality of institutions that will meet the needs of women struggling with IPV in times of crisis such as disasters and epidemics.

Further studies are suggested to address the pros and cons of individual help-seeking strategies and priorities, demands and evaluations of women who apply for institutional support. The remaining questions can be listed as follows: What are the advantages and disadvantages of each specific strategy for empowering women facing IPV? How can women be supported to develop more empowering individual help-seeking strategies? What are ways to increase women's resources to better cope with IPV? What are women's expectations, priorities and evaluations of institutions providing institutional assistance? How can these institutions become more active in providing services and support to women struggling with IPV? What are the reasons behind a woman not developing any help-seeking strategy in the face of violence? Answering these questions requires a detailed examination of women's individual and institutional help-seeking strategies in the face of IPV. For this, it is clear that we need to develop a more comprehensive approach that adapts a feminist perspective and mixed methodologies to theory and research on IPV.

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