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## **Domestic Violence Against Women: Safeguarding Measures and Intervention Strategies within Family Structures**

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### **Abstract:**

Violence against women is a global phenomenon that permeates societies worldwide, albeit in various forms. Despite its widespread prevalence, this issue has only recently garnered sufficient attention. The global feminist movement has been instrumental in emphasizing the interconnectedness of women's rights and human rights, making violence against women a paramount concern for societies across the globe. Algerian women, in particular, have faced a significant escalation of gender-based violence since the beginning of the 21st century, prompting scholars, policymakers, and activists to address this critical issue.

This paper aims to shed light on the underlying causes, consequences, and theoretical frameworks that explain violence against women. It will also explore the mechanisms of protection and support that are essential, given the escalating prevalence of this issue in Algerian society.

**Keywords:** Violence, Violence against women.

### **Introduction**

Despite the remarkable advancements humanity has achieved across various fields and the advent of modernity and globalization, violence persists as a pervasive and enduring issue. Paradoxically, while human civilization has evolved significantly, remnants of primitive and barbaric behaviors continue to plague societies, revealing a deep-rooted human tendency towards aggression.

Violence is a prime example of this enduring phenomenon, posing a significant threat to the achievements of humanity. The situation becomes particularly grave when this violence is directed towards vulnerable groups within society, such as women.

Violence against women is a pervasive global issue that transcends cultural, societal, and geographical boundaries. According to the United Nations, an estimated 736 million women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. Girls are particularly vulnerable, with one in four adolescent girls experiencing violence at the hands of their intimate partners. Tragically, at least 51,100 women were killed by their intimate partners or family members in 2023 alone. This means that a woman is killed every 10 minutes (<https://www.un.org/ar/observances/ending-violence-against-women.2024>).

Gender-based violence is a worldwide phenomenon, varying only in its prevalence across different societies. Perpetrators, often intimate partners, fathers, or other male family members, commit a significant portion of this violence, making homes one of the most dangerous places for women. In some regions, violence against women is normalized and even condoned, particularly in cultures with entrenched patriarchal norms.

Beyond the home, women face various forms of violence perpetrated by unrelated men, driven by a sense of male superiority. This violence can range from verbal and psychological abuse to physical and sexual assault, including harassment, intimidation, and rape. In workplaces, women often endure bullying, blackmail, and ongoing harassment from superiors and colleagues.

The global attention given to violence against women has intensified since the United Nations highlighted its widespread prevalence across both developed and developing countries. This has led to a paradigm shift in addressing the issue, culminating in a series of international resolutions condemning violence against women and committing to its eradication.

Given these alarming statistics and the global recognition of this issue, several questions arise:

- What are the underlying causes of violence against women?
- What are the forms of violence against women?
- What are the major theoretical frameworks that explain violence against women?
- What are the consequences of violence against women?
- What protective measures and support systems can be implemented to address this pervasive issue?

**Firstly, defining the concepts:**

### **1. Defining Violence:**

**1.1 Linguistic Definition:** Ibn Manzur defines violence as "a breach of an order, a lack of compassion towards it. It is the opposite of compassion. One can be violent towards or against something, and violence is to be harsh or severe in one's actions." (Ibn Manzur, 1968, p. 903).

It becomes evident from this definition that violence, linguistically, is a behavior that is the antithesis of compassion, mercy, and kind treatment. The Arabs went to great lengths to discuss the issue of violence and violent behavior, to the extent of emphasizing compassion even in horseback riding. Ibn Manzoor states, "The violent person, who is unskilled in riding and lacks compassion in riding, is considered harsh." (Djamel Maatouk, p. 15).

The linguistic meaning of violence is always associated with harshness, severity, and cruelty. The Arabic connotation of violence is similar to its English and French counterparts. The English word "violence" signifies harshness and force, as well as the illegitimate use of physical force through various methods to harm individuals or damage property. This includes concepts such as punishment and the infringement on the freedoms of others (Manal Mohamed Abbas, 2011, pp. 19-23).

Some researchers argue that the concept of violence encompasses three sub-meanings: severity, harm, and physical force. Jarfar expands on this definition, stating: "Violence is any act carried out by an individual or a group against another individual or group through verbal or physical abuse. It is an act that embodies physical or symbolic power, which can be physical or symbolic" (Madiha Ahmed Abada, Khaled Kazem Abu Douh, 2008, p. 18).

Webster's dictionary provides seven definitions of violence, ranging from the relatively narrow meaning of using physical force to cause harm or damage, to the broader meaning associated with the deprivation of rights through the unjust use of power or force. This includes any act of aggression, the use of physical force, and the rejection of others in various ways.

It is evident from these linguistic definitions that violence, regardless of language (Arabic, French, or English), carries connotations of harm and damage. This universality of meaning, despite differences in time, place, and culture, is indicative of a global awareness of violence. As J. Ellul stated, "Today is not the age of violence, but the age of awareness of violence" (Boukra liesse, 2006, p. 10).

**1.2 Conceptual Definition:** Violence is defined as "a set of behaviors aimed at causing harm to oneself or others. It can take two forms: physical, such as hitting, fighting, or destroying property, and verbal, such as threats, intimidation, and hurtful remarks. Ultimately, both forms of violence can directly or indirectly lead to harm" (Belkacem Slatnia, Samia Hamidi, 2008, p. 8).

Dr. Sanaa Mohamed Suleiman defines violence as "physical or psychological pressure, individual or collective, inflicted by humans on other humans. It causes harm to individuals or property and involves the use of force to coerce others into adopting unwanted positions" (Sanaa Mohamed Suleiman, 2008, pp. 24-25).

Violence is also defined conceptually as "the use of physical or symbolic force to impose control over an individual or group, exceeding socially accepted norms. It is a behavioral pattern that causes psychological or physical harm. It is a behavior that eliminates an opponent or forces them to change their behavior or attitudes to avoid harm from the aggressor" (Djamel Maatouk, pp. 18-19).

**1.3 Violence Against Women:** Violence against women is defined as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical,<sup>1</sup>sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.

It can also be defined as "those actions and behaviors that are characterized by aggression from a husband towards a wife. Examples of these actions and behaviors include verbal abuse, neglect, and physical assault.

## **Secondly, Types and Forms of Violence Against Women:**

Violence against women can take various forms, differing across individuals and societies. The prevalence of such violence is contingent upon the social, cultural, and even geographical context. The diverse forms of violence can be categorized as follows (Al Hamada, n.d., pp. 11-13):

**1. Physical Violence:** This involves any act causing physical harm, including hitting, kicking, pulling hair, and mutilation using weapons or sharp objects. It is considered one of the most dangerous forms of violence as it can directly lead to death. Physical violence is a tangible, material attack that endangers a person's life, health, bodily integrity, or freedom (Djamel Maatouk, 2011, p. 61).

**2. Psychological Violence:** This encompasses any behavior causing emotional harm, such as intimidation, threats, contempt, and belittlement. It often involves forcing a woman to cut off contact with her family and friends, particularly if she is distant. Psychological violence is prevalent and may not always have visible manifestations, making it difficult to prove. However, its effects can be long-lasting and require extended periods of treatment.

**3. Verbal Violence:** This includes insults, mockery, and sarcasm aimed at diminishing a woman's worth. Perpetrators target a woman's vulnerabilities to emotionally manipulate her.

**4. Intellectual Violence:** This involves controlling a woman's thoughts and ideas, treating her as intellectually inferior and incapable of making decisions about family or community matters. This is particularly prevalent in patriarchal societies where men dominate decision-making. Women are often viewed as physically weak and intellectually limited, suitable only for domestic chores. In some societies, women are even denied the right to express opinions or make important decisions.

**5. Legal Violence:** This refers to laws and policies that discriminate against women.

**6. Sociocultural Violence:** This involves restricting women through societal customs, traditions, and values that devalue women and limit their freedom. However, some societies elevate women and grant them greater freedom.

**7. Economic Violence:** This includes controlling a person's financial resources, thereby subjugating and controlling them. Preventing women from obtaining an education or employment, as well as controlling their income, are forms of economic violence. Financial independence empowers women to make decisions and meet their needs.

Nonetheless, societal norms have evolved, leading to a decline in these practices. As a result, women have become active participants in the workforce, pursuing their careers and interests independently.

**8. Cyberviolence:** This involves the use of technology to harass or threaten women, such as through cyberbullying or unsolicited electronic messages.

**9. Sexual Violence:** This encompasses any non-consensual sexual act, including harassment, suggestive remarks, and unwanted sexual advances.

**10. Political Violence:** This involves the exclusion of women from political participation and decision-making. While some opportunities for women's political participation exist, societal pressures and family obligations often hinder their involvement.

In conclusion, violence against women encompasses a wide range of harmful behaviors perpetrated by men against women in various settings, including the home, workplace, and public spaces. The impacts of such violence can be devastating and have long-lasting consequences for women's lives.

### **Thirdly: Key Theories Explaining Violence Against Women**

#### **1. Biological Theory:**

Proponents of the biological perspective offer a distinct explanation for male violent behavior. They delve into biological factors within organisms, such as chromosomes, the central and peripheral nervous systems, hormones, sex genes, endocrine glands, biochemical influences, and brain electrical activities, which contribute to the emergence of aggressive behavior. Mark's studies in 1970 and Massier's in 1977 indicated that specific regions of the brain, namely the frontal lobe and limbic system, are responsible for the manifestation of aggressive behavior in humans. Based on these findings, surgeries have been conducted to remove certain connections in these brain regions to transform individuals from a state of violence to tranquility. Regarding the relationship between hormones and violence, it has become evident that men, by their biological nature, are more predisposed to violence than women. This inclination is attributed to elevated levels of the male hormone testosterone. Increased levels of this hormone are considered responsible for violent behavior in men. Consequently, Jacqueline (1971) pointed out that males, in general, are more aggressive than females due to the role played by the male hormone concerning violence. She also arrived at a significant finding that females can exhibit greater aggression than males through the modification of their testosterone levels during puberty. However, recent medical research conducted on violent men and their counterparts has demonstrated the absence of a clear correlation between elevated testosterone levels and violent behavior (Rihani al-Zahra, 2010, p. 56).

## **2. Psychoanalytic Theory:**

Freud, a pioneer of psychoanalysis, posited that violence is an inherent aspect of human nature. He argued that the drives of life and death coexist from birth and that all life phenomena result from their interplay. While the life drive is responsible for positive connections with others, the death drive is oriented towards destruction in all its forms, both self-directed and outward. Freud believed that various aggressive impulses against loved ones are predisposed to manifest externally, revealing their underlying aggressive nature. He considered the inclination towards aggression to be the fundamental, instinctual, and combative organization within humans. (Faisal Abbas, 2008, p. 53)

This biological inclination towards destruction can be directed either towards others or oneself. Freud suggested that masochism is essentially the product of the death drive, intertwined with the sexual drive. When this combination is directed inward, it manifests as masochism; when directed outward, it appears as sadism. He hypothesized that this fusion with the sexual drive protects individuals from the potentially destructive consequences of an unmitigated death drive. Thus, according to Freud, humans are faced with a choice: to destroy oneself or to destroy others if the destructive impulse is not integrated with sexuality. Sadism, at its core, is a general psychological state and an interpersonal dynamic characterized by dominance. It involves controlling and demeaning others to elevate oneself through violence. The

ultimate goal is to exert complete dominance over another person, reducing them to a submissive state and deriving pleasure from their suffering. (Faisal Abbas, 2008, p. 61)

The victimized woman, unable to defend herself, assumes the position of the oppressed individual who blames herself and diminishes her self-worth. She experiences feelings of helplessness and inferiority, believing herself unworthy of life. Women trapped in such circumstances often become dependent on those in power, submitting to their authority. They rarely assert themselves but rather acquiesce to the demands of their oppressors. They are often incapable of experiencing a sense of agency or self-determination. (Faisal Abbas, 2008, p. 64)

One manifestation of masochism in these women is a tendency towards self-harm and suffering. Some women engage in self-punishing rituals and obsessive thoughts. Additionally, there is a propensity towards physical illness. The oppressed individual, unable to protest or rebel, internalizes their suffering through their body, which serves as a mask for their existential anguish that cannot be directly expressed. By somatizing their distress, they project their problems outward and deny their underlying psychological pain.

### **3. Structural-Functionalism:**

This theory, rooted in organicist assumptions prevalent in early sociological theories, posits that society is a system of interconnected parts. The fundamental premise is that these parts are interdependent, and a change in one component will necessitate changes in others. Consequently, structural-functionalists view violence as a product of disruptions within the social order. They argue that violence can arise from a breakdown in social bonds, leading to a loss of social control and guidance. Alternatively, it may be a result of normative ambiguity or a lack of proper social regulation, leaving individuals susceptible to violent tendencies. Furthermore, individuals may resort to violence as a coping mechanism when they lack alternative means of navigating life's challenges. (Rihani al-Zahra, 2010, p. 64)

When analyzing family violence, structural-functionalists focus on smaller social units such as the family and immediate social networks. They emphasize the importance of interpersonal violence between spouses, parents, and children. To mitigate family violence, structural-functionalists propose strengthening social integration and fostering stronger ties to primary groups like the family, which can meet individuals' psychological and social needs and instill positive values.

### **4. Symbolic Interactionism:**

This perspective emerged and its premises were solidified between 1890 and 1910 in the writings of Charles Cooley and John Dewey. It has evolved within the fields of psychology and sociology and has been increasingly applied to the study of families, as evidenced by the works of Hill, Aldous, Straus, and others. The interactionist approach focuses on studying the family through interaction processes, which consist of role performance, status relationships, communication problems, decision-making, socialization, role modeling, reference groups, as well as dyadic and triadic relationships, and power dynamics within the family (Ijlal Ismail Hilmi, 1999: p. 28). Because this perspective concentrates on the internal processes of the family, the unit of analysis is the dynamic relationship between husband, wife, and children, based on the concepts of needs, behavior patterns, and adaptation processes. Therefore, the unit of analysis is dyadic relationships (interaction between two individuals) or triadic relationships (interaction between three individuals). Since this perspective views the family as a unit of interacting individuals, it focuses on negative relationships and manifestations of violence between spouses and children, as well as negative symbolic communication among family members. It also examines the impact of witnessing violence in the family of origin on the perpetration of violence in one's own family upon reaching adulthood ( Rihani al-Zahra, 2010: p. 64).

## **5. Frustration-Aggression Theory:**

Dollard and Miller posit that aggressive behavior is always a result of frustration and that frustration inevitably leads to aggression. In other words, aggression is a natural and inevitable consequence of frustration. Proponents of this theory argue that while aggression is an instinctual drive, it is not activated by an internal force as Freud suggested, but rather by external factors. Dollard, a pioneer in this field, asserts that aggressive behavior is a direct result of frustration. Miller has demonstrated that individuals respond to frustration in various ways. However, it is important to note that frustration does not always result in aggression, as the nature of the frustration plays a significant role. Philip Zimbardo argues that aggression or violence is a compensation for ongoing frustration and is intended to harm or injure another person. Furthermore, he suggests that the intensity of aggression is directly proportional to the level of frustration. (Khalil Mikhail Maawod, 1999, p. 371)

This theory suggests that when individuals are prevented from achieving their goals, they experience frustration. This frustration generates energy that may be directed towards the source of the frustration or, if that is not possible, towards a substitute target. Thus, frustration is seen as the primary motive underlying aggression, particularly family violence. For example, a man who experiences conflict at work and feels powerless against his colleagues or boss may displace his frustration onto his family members.

## **6. Social Exchange and Social Control Theory:**



Proponents of this theory are among the most prominent scholars who have studied the phenomenon of domestic violence. Researchers at the Family Violence Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire have conducted studies on the factors contributing to the use of violence within families. Their findings can be summarized as follows: "Family members resort to violence because they can." In other words, the family atmosphere, the nature of interpersonal relationships, and the degree of social control exercised within the family all contribute to the occurrence of violence. These researchers have also explored the impact of marital satisfaction, family stability, the consequences of violence, and the nature of interpersonal relationships on the perpetration of violence. They concluded that how conflicts are handled is closely tied to the quality of relationships. Conflicts within families are inevitable and can be more psychologically and socially damaging if ignored compared to conflicts between friends or colleagues. If individuals lack the necessary skills to resolve family conflicts, feelings of anger can escalate into violence, especially if the individual perceives that there will be no consequences for their actions or if the rewards of venting their anger outweigh the potential punishments. (Rihani al-Zahra, 2010, p. 62)

## 7. Psycho-Social Theory:

Proponents of this theory emphasize the significant role of stress in perpetrating violence. They link domestic violence against spouses and children to the frustration and injustice that individuals may experience in their workplaces, which can lead to difficulties in controlling their behavior and, consequently, the use of violence against family members.

Furthermore, they highlight the impact of unemployment, poverty, and lack of opportunities for a decent life in creating stress, which can increase the likelihood of violence. Some proponents of this theory distinguish between two types of stress:

**A. Stressful life events:** Negative life events, work-related stress, and role strain can act as triggers for aggressive behavior. Recent studies have demonstrated a link between traumatic life events and domestic violence, particularly when combined with genetic predispositions, past experiences, and individual perceptions of the situation.

**B. Environmental stress:** Factors such as noise, overcrowding, pollution, and invasion of personal space can contribute to increased violence by inducing psychological and behavioral changes. These environmental stressors can lead to increased arousal, frustration, and a reduced capacity for self-control (Rihani al-Zahra, 2010, pp. 60-61).

## **8. Economic Theory:**

Economic factors, such as poverty, inability to meet basic needs, and financial instability, can negatively impact family relationships. When a husband struggles to fulfill his financial obligations, it can create tension and strain within the family. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy and frustration, which may manifest as verbal or physical abuse.

Economic factors, including limited resources, job scarcity, unemployment, and poverty, are often cited as primary contributors to domestic violence. The increasing demands on the husband, coupled with his inability to fulfill his role as the family provider, can create significant stress, leading him to resort to violence as a means of expressing anger and resentment towards society (Khalfan bin Salem bin Khalfan al-Busaeedi, ELMJ, p. 6).

## **9. Socialization Theory:**

Socialization is a fundamental process through which families shape their members' personalities, values, and attitudes. It is through socialization that cultural and social heritage is transmitted across generations, and individuals are guided toward positive or negative behaviors (Mourad Zaimi, 2002, p. 10).

Proponents of this theory argue that violence is learned through the socialization process. Individuals may internalize discriminatory attitudes, such as those based on race or religion, which can contribute to violent behavior. Cultural and subcultural norms that glorify violence can also increase the likelihood of violent behavior. In patriarchal societies, where men are granted authority and power, they may be more likely to resort to violence to maintain control. Additionally, societal attitudes and beliefs, as reflected in proverbs, customs, and popular culture, can either promote or discourage violence.

Socialization plays a crucial role in shaping societal attitudes towards violence (Khalfan bin Salem bin Khalfan al-Busaeedi, ELMJ, p. 6).

In traditional societies that adhere to their cultural and social heritage, violent practices, including violence against women, are often employed as part of the socialization process. These practices serve to regulate individual behavior. In traditional families, women typically assume multiple roles (cooking, cleaning, tending to animals, farming) that may exceed their physical capabilities. However, they are often compelled to perform these tasks under the threat of violence. If they

complain, the violence may escalate, as it is perceived as a natural consequence of their prescribed roles. This belief reinforces the notion that women must endure various forms of violence.

#### **Fourthly, Social Representations of Violence Against Women:**

The earliest scientific approaches to social representation were linked to the attempts of the French sociologist Emile Durkheim who introduced the concept of "collective representation" when he tried to highlight the specificity of collective thinking compared to individual thinking, considering collective representation as one of the mechanisms that affirms the primacy of the social over the individual. Before that, Immanuel Kant, in his epistemological revolution related to the tools and conditions of knowledge, indicated that our ideas and knowledge are the product of mental frameworks and structures and that ultimate knowledge of reality is impossible. Therefore, "a representation of something or someone is not a copy of reality, or thought, or the subjective part of the object, or the objective part of the individual. It is a process of constructing the relationship between them. Thus, every representation is essentially the creation of a relationship with the world and things." In a broader sense, it refers to a practical social mode of thinking aimed at understanding the environment in all its dimensions and controlling it by classifying subjects into distinct groups based on shared characteristics, such as classifying actors according to physical indicators, social, economic, religious affiliations, or making collective judgments based on individual behaviors. This is what makes social representations have a kind of relative stability and do not change except with the change of the elements of reality and the individual's perception of these elements (contribute to reshaping the elements of social reality). Consequently, representations guide the individual's behavior and determine their responses to internal and external stimuli. Therefore, the social representation of violence by or against women is closely linked to a set of values acquired about the subject and intricately woven by all institutions of socialization operating within a specific culture to build a strong barrier resistant to change that is difficult to penetrate. Therefore, it is the representation that makes our behavior change from one social situation to another. The violence that women are subjected to is nothing but the external and visible form of a set of social representations held by the parties involved in the violent process. In other words, behind every overt behavior, there is a motivation and a collective orientation that led and pushed it to occur in the form in which it appeared to us. From here, any violent practice, regardless of its form (physical, psychological, sexual, socio-cultural, economic), is legitimized and justified by the perpetrator, whose violent behavior appeared as a translation of pre-formed collective tendencies and orientations about women, their social status, and the way and language of dealing with them. This behavior - violence - in many of its manifestations is accepted by the female victim of

violent behavior, considering her representation of herself, her body, her social status, and her assigned roles within the framework of the social division of labor and the nature of her relationship with the man, whether he is a father, brother, husband, son, or someone outside her family circle. Even if the woman does not accept this behavior, she will not accept a revolution against it, and this justifies the difficulties faced in studying the issue of violence against women from a statistical perspective, where the researcher is unable to measure the phenomenon with precision or even come close to accuracy. Consequently, the social representation of violence against women stands in the way of reducing the phenomenon to a measurable subject and directs us towards an approach to its forms, causes, and social representations (Brahma Nasira, 2011, p. 118).

### **Fifthly, Consequences and Impacts of Domestic Violence Against Women**

Domestic violence has severe physical, psychological, economic, and social consequences for women victims and children within families where violence occurs. The most important negative impacts of domestic violence on women's health in particular, and on the family and society in general, can be summarized as follows:

**1. Physical and Psychological Health Consequences:** Women who experience physical violence and abuse suffer from various injuries, including:

- Bruises, cuts, fractures, and tissue tears.
- Concussions, partial hearing or vision loss, and black eyes.
- Damage to vital internal organs such as the uterus, liver, and spleen (Hiba Ali Hussein, 2003, p.15).
- Miscarriage, and in cases of extreme violence, disability, or death.

In addition to physical injuries, most abused women suffer from psychological disorders and what is known as "Battered Woman Syndrome," which includes symptoms of depression, low self-esteem, and with repeated abuse, they develop what Seligman called "learned helplessness," where they feel depressed and unable to control their lives or predict what will happen to them, and they are unable to stop anyone from harming them (Hiba Ali Hussein, 2003, p. 18).

Other negative psychological consequences of violence against women include:

- Diminished personality and paralysis of the woman's ability to make any psychological decisions (Shakweh Nawabi, 2001: p. 183).
- Fear and loss of self-confidence, make them feel constantly helpless to change the course of their lives and avoid or stop the violence, believing that any attempt in this context will worsen the situation.

- Feeling guilty and blaming themselves for the problems and disturbances that arise in their marital life due to their inability to manage their household affairs.
- Feeling frustrated and self-loathing ,feeling constantly dependent and relatable on men(Ahmed Zayed, 2003: p. 250)..
- Anxiety and tension, Repeated exposure to cruelty makes them inclined to submission, subservience, oppression, and tolerance of abuse (Qudra Abdul Amir Al-Har, 2008: p. 44).

Without a doubt, the physical and psychological effects, or some combination of both, lead to various physical psychological, or psychosomatic disorders that negatively affect women's health. These disorders include loss of appetite, circulatory disorders, stomach and colon disorders, glandular disorders, diabetes, headaches, insomnia, temporary memory loss, sexual dysfunction, etc. Also, as a result of physical and psychological pain, feelings of frustration, low self-esteem, and increased symptoms of depression and despair, the abused woman may resort to an addiction to sedatives or engage in maladaptive behaviors to escape problems, which may lead to suicide attempts in some cases. Researchers indicate that severe beating of a woman is considered a "traumatic event" that the woman tries to avoid or protect herself from its effects, especially the physical ones, while the psychological effects also include depression, low self-esteem, stress, suicide attempts, and addiction to sedatives to escape problems. The experience of violence as a traumatic event goes through several stages: shock, psychological disturbance, withdrawal, fear of repeated violence, denial, and confusion.

## **2. Social and Economic Consequences:**

These are among the most severe consequences of violence on women in particular, and on the family and society in general. The UNIFEM report for the year 2006 states that violence undermines the talents and abilities of a large number of girls and results in high health, social, and economic costs. This result is confirmed by a study by Bouasker in Tunisia in 2003, which indicates that abused women are more likely to seek health services than the average woman, thus making violence costly for the woman, the family, and society (Al-Jazaia Al-Hamami, 2008: p. 7).

. These effects include:

- ✓ This imposes social isolation on women and prevents them from leaving the house for study, work, or even to visit family and relatives.
- ✓ Forcing women to do things against their will or ambitions, such as forcing a girl to drop out of school and forcing her to manage household chores and serve her male siblings even if they are older than her, and forcing her to marry someone she does not want, which creates feelings of anxiety and persecution in

her, which may lead to the emergence of different forms of behavioral, psychological, and physical disorders in her or even leaving her family home([www.ehconline.org](http://www.ehconline.org)).

- ✓ The breakdown of family ties and the loss of the sense of security within it may reach a point where there is a high probability that domestic violence will lead to divorce between the spouses, which leads, in the case of having children, to depriving them of the presence of both parents with them and thus the inability of the separated parents to raise and educate the children in a balanced psychological and social manner, and consequently the possibility of delinquency and deviation of the children([www.furat-alwehsla.gov](http://www.furat-alwehsla.gov)).
- ✓ Domestic violence threatens the foundation of the family and turns the lives of its members, especially the weakest, women and children, into an unbearable hell (Amal Al-Ahmad, 2001: p. 120).
- ✓ The amount of violence exercised against women and their children in the family leaves them with psychological, social, and economic suffering, reducing their opportunities for education and training to obtain better job opportunities that enable them to improve their living standards.
- ✓ Increasing the likelihood of children from violent families dropping out of school and being pushed into the labor market at an early age (boys and girls) and being subjected to social injustice and unfair treatment.
- ✓ Preventing women from working outside the home hinders women's integration into economic and productive life, which prevents them from improving their material conditions and contributing to the process of social and economic development.

### **Sixthly, Protective Measures and Care for Abused Women:**

Combating violence—as a humanitarian crisis and social phenomenon—requires a comprehensive approach that integrates legal frameworks, judicial protection, gender-sensitive social culture, economic development, and democratic political stability. State institutions and civil society organizations must collaborate to eradicate violence through innovative intellectual, educational, political, and economic initiatives. This necessitates developing a progressive, objective perspective on women's human and national status, working to ensure women's autonomy in their life roles, and fostering the development of the skills they acquire, particularly in education and training (Al-Jazaia Al-Hamami, citing [www.karamah.org](http://www.karamah.org)).

Furthermore, a comprehensive human development policy must be adopted to cultivate individuals who are conscious, productive, harmonious, and capable of continuous development. This is a national societal task that requires the creation of comprehensive programs and projects that address all development factors, regardless of their political, economic, or cultural manifestations. Any developmental progress

will contribute to overcoming the obstacles women face in their personal and national journeys.

Additionally, women's empowerment plays a crucial role in combating violence. Women must be aware of their human and national rights, and they must know how to defend them, refusing to tolerate or remain silent about their rights being violated. They must build a conscious and independent identity. Women's activists have a responsibility to create serious and purposeful civil society organizations to defend women and protect their existence and rights.

Moreover, enlightened religious, intellectual, and political elites play a decisive role in creating a society based on tolerance, security, and peace. Within this framework, it is essential to publicly denounce violence against women, listen to women, and support them in their pursuit of rights. It is also necessary to hold officials accountable if they fail to prevent violence against women, punish perpetrators, and provide justice for victims. Ideas and traditions that devalue women and undermine their humanity, role, and function must be rejected.

Furthermore, it is imperative to create the necessary infrastructure for women's growth and self-development, such as modern educational, cultural, and training institutions that can help explain and simplify topics, whether educational, health, social, or political, to ensure their rapid progress (Al-Jazaia Al-Hamami, citing [www.karamah.org](http://www.karamah.org)).

Women must actively participate in forming civil society organizations to preserve their human and national identity. These organizations must be based on collective work and rely on the results of scientific research and field studies. This will enable women's associations and organizations to engage effectively in civil society, safeguarding democracy and human rights.

The media has a significant role in shaping a progressive culture towards women as human beings with a mission and a national role. The media bears a double responsibility to cultivate a culture of compassion and mercy in both personal and public relationships. Various media outlets must adopt a constructive policy towards women and reject a culture of violence against them. For example, the stereotypical portrayal of women in the media as inferior, manipulative, or superficial should be avoided. Additionally, media programs that address human problems and family disputes through violence, cruelty, and force should be avoided. Instead, the focus should be on resolving conflicts within the human and family environment through

understanding, logic, and a high level of scientific and ethical conduct (Al-Jazaia Al-Hamami, citing [www.karamah.org](http://www.karamah.org)).

## Conclusion

Domestic violence against women is any intentional or unintentional act that causes suffering to a woman, whether it be psychological or physical. Studies and statistics indicate that the greatest threat to women comes from men they know in the family or community. These are often close family members such as brothers, husbands, etc. For many abused women, the family is not a haven but rather a place of terror. Domestic violence is the most prevalent form of violence against women and is most accepted by society, supported by culture, customs, and laws. Women are subjected to violence and abuse in various forms, including physical, psychological, sexual, social, economic, and political. This has negative consequences for their mental, physical, and reproductive health.

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