

# VIOLENCE AGAINST FEMALE CITIZENS AND FEMALE IMMIGRANTS IN SOME COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

**Oksana Koshulko**

Polish Academy of Sciences Warsaw, **Poland**

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## SUMMARY

This paper presents the results of studies on violence against women in many countries worldwide, including female citizens of the countries and female immigrants. The paper has been written using the results of research conducted by the World Health Organization, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the South African Medical Research Council; the fellowship project on female immigration, supported by the Scientific & Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK); and the Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, conducted by the Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in Ankara, Turkey. The paper has combined several studies on preventing violence against female citizens and female immigrants conducted in various countries throughout the world.

**Keywords:** Violence, Female Citizens, Female Immigrants, World Health Organization, Turkey, Worldwide

## INTRODUCTION

Violence against women, whether female citizens or female immigrants, in any country is an international and global social problem that exists all over the world.

The problem is that, while some countries have recognized this problem, some have not yet recognized that the problem exists.

This paper presents the results of studies on violence against women in many countries conducted by the World Health Organization, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the South African Medical Research Council, using the results of 185 studies from 86 countries representing all global regions and data from 155 studies in 81 countries.

At the same time, the research in Turkey included 15,072 households from 12 statistical regions of the country, including Istanbul, West Marmara, Aegean, East Marmara, West Anatolia, Mediterranean, West Black Sea, East Black Sea; Central, Northeast, Central East and Southeast Anatolia.

In addition, the fellowship project on female immigration in Turkey included over 400 female immigrants, from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Georgia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, who were living in Turkey. This project represented four statistical urban areas of the country, Istanbul, Ankara, Antalya, and Izmir.

The paper presents the results of research that shows that violence against women is an international and global social problem; occurring all over the world and that countries need to find ways to prevent this violence against female citizens and female immigrants.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDIES**

The research of the World Health Organization in association with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the South African Medical Research Council used a program Stata 12.1 that included a random effects meta-regression and large international data sets, such as the World Health Organization multi-country study on women's health; and domestic violence against women (10 countries), International Violence Against Women Survey (8 countries), and Gender, alcohol and culture: an international study (16 countries).

According to data of the University of Birmingham, 'stata is described as a complete, integrated statistical package that provides everything needed for data analysis, data management, and graphics' (Stata 12.1 - University of Birmingham, 2014).

For the data of the Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, the following methods of research were used: field studies, face-to-face interviews and the Kish Selection Method.

For data Survey Methods, 'the Kish selection method is a method for selecting people to interview for a survey' (Kish Selection Procedure – Survey Methods, 2013).

In the project on Female immigration, similar methods of field study were used and consisted of face-to-face interviews, surveys and direct observation among female immigrants.

## **REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL LAWS ON VIOLENCE**

International Domestic Violence Law comprises many International Acts in many countries worldwide and it continues to develop thanks to ongoing activity and the efforts of the United Nations.

Evolution of development law concerning domestic violence started in 1948 from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948).

In 1993, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) (Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, 1993) was adopted by the UN General Assembly. According to data of the project "The Advocates for Human Rights", this Declaration is "one of the most important resolutions on domestic violence. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, DEVAW establishes the most comprehensive set of standards in international law for the protection of women against sexual and gender-based violence. DEVAW recognizes violence against women as "an obstacle to the achievement of equality" and a "manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women," as well as a violation of fundamental freedoms including the prohibition against torture" (UN Resolutions on Domestic Violence, 2012).

In addition, in 2004 the Resolution 58/147 entitled "Elimination of domestic violence against women" was adopted by the UN General Assembly (Elimination of domestic violence against women, 2004).

Concerning Turkey, in 2012 the Parliament of Turkey accepted Law No. 6284 from 8 March 2012, "The Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence Against Women" which should protect Turkish and foreign women against violence in families (The Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence Against Women, 2012).

## **THE RESULTS OF RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

The Research on Violence against Women conducted by the World Health Organization, together with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the South African Medical Research Council, uses the results of the 185 studies from 86 countries representing all global regions and data from 155 studies in 81 countries.

For the study, large international data sets were used, such as 'the World Health Organization

multi-country study on women's health; and domestic violence against women (10 countries), International Violence against Women Survey (8 countries), and Gender, alcohol and culture: an international study (16 countries).'

According to the results of the report of the World Health Organization, 'overall, 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and / or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. While there are many other forms of violence that women may be exposed to, this already represents a large proportion of the world's women. Most of this violence is intimate partner violence. Worldwide, almost one third (30%) of all women who have been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner. In some regions, 38% of women have experienced intimate partner violence' (Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence, 2014).

## **THE RESULTS OF RESEARCH ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN TURKEY**

The Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, conducted by the Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in Ankara, was conducted throughout Turkey. The target sample of 15072 households, represented 12 statistical regions of urban and rural areas, which were Istanbul, West Marmara, Aegean, East Marmara, West Anatolia, Mediterranean, Central Anatolia, West Black Sea, East Black Sea, Northeast Anatolia, Central East Anatolia and Southeast Anatolia. It used face-to-face interviews with women aged 15-59. The results obtained from the quantitative study contain information about different forms of violence. These include denial of access to education or to paid employment outside the house and disruption of daily life by stalking, along with physical, sexual and emotional violence, all of which women have experienced at times from current or former partners, such as husbands, fiancs, betrothed and boyfriends' (Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, 2015).

In the research on Domestic Violence, of the 15072 households surveyed, 2231 women have been subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by their husbands or partners. According to the data, violence happened for many reasons, including; economic problems and difficulties (27.0%); bad habits of the man (11.9%); reasons relating to the man (28.3%); reasons relating to the woman (24.1%); problems with the man's family (33.0%); problems relating to the children (10.2%), no apparent reason (11.6%); pressures from other people (0.7%); problems with the woman's family (3.0%); gossip (0.1%); age difference (1.1%); and other reasons (6.7%).

According to the opinion of Pinar Sevinclidir, 'the situation with domestic violence is pessimistic in Turkey' (Sevinclidir, 2015). Her opinion is based on the Research on Domestic Violence: "Turkey made no progress in reducing domestic violence between 2008 and 2014 according to the Domestic Violence against Women Report 2014. The report said that almost 40% of women in Turkey had been physically abused at least once in their lifetime. It added that one in 10 had also been subjected to sexual violence from their partner" (Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, 2015).

## **THE RESULTS OF THE FELLOWSHIP PROJECT ON FEMALE IMMIGRATION**

During the fellowship project on female immigration in Turkey, thousands of female immigrants were invited to participate in the project and the target sample consisted of over 400 female immigrants, representing four statistical regions of urban areas, Istanbul, Ankara, Antalya, and Izmir. Field studies were conducted among these immigrants living in Istanbul, Ankara, Antalya, and Izmir. They were of different levels of education, culture and social status in Turkey and out of the female immigrants, 22% of them have confessed to experiencing violence towards them and for 13% the violence towards them was within their Turkish family (Koshulko, 2017-2018).

The results of the research have been presented at the Report for the Scientific & Technological Research Council of Turkey “The migration of women from Ukraine and former Soviet Union countries to Turkey: differences, similarities, and outcomes” (Koshulko, 2015), and in the book ‘Women from North move to South: Contemporary migration from the Former Soviet Union countries to Turkey’ (Koshulko, 2016).

According to the results of field studies, consisting of face-to-face interviews, surveys and direct observation among female immigrants, many of the female immigrants have confessed to experiencing discrimination or harassment in Turkish society and / or within their Turkish families. Out of the female immigrants from Armenia 7% felt discrimination or harassment in Turkish society and 14% of them felt discrimination or harassment within their Turkish families. Concerning Azerbaijani female immigrants, 20% of them felt discrimination or harassment in Turkish society. For Belarussian women - 20% of them felt discrimination or harassment in Turkish society and 8% of them felt discrimination or harassment within their Turkish families.

Concerning Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian female immigrants, 100% of Estonian, 75% of Latvian and 33% of Lithuanian female immigrants felt discrimination or harassment in Turkish society, and 50% of Estonian and 25% of Latvian immigrants felt discrimination or harassment within their Turkish families.

Concerning Georgian, Kazakhstani and Kyrgyz female immigrants, 22% of Georgian, 15% of Kazakhstani and 9% of Kyrgyz immigrants felt discrimination or harassment in Turkish society, and 8% of Kazakhstani immigrants felt discrimination or harassment within their Turkish families. Concerning Moldovan and Russian female immigrants, 40% of Moldovan and 19% of Russian immigrants felt discrimination or harassment in Turkish society, and 35% of Moldovan and 9% of Russian immigrants felt discrimination or harassment within their Turkish families.

Finally, concerning Turkmen, Ukrainian and Uzbek female immigrants, 9% of Turkmen, 21% of Ukrainian and 57% of Uzbek immigrants felt some discrimination or harassment in Turkish society. At the same time, 9% of Turkmen; 16% of Ukrainian, and 71% of Uzbek female immigrants felt discrimination or harassment within their Turkish families.

It is possible to conclude that domestic violence, discrimination and abuse against female immigrants in Turkey are not rare occurrences in families. This had happened for 14% of Armenian; 8% of Belarussian and Kazakhstani; 50% of Estonian and 25% of Latvian; 35% of Moldovan; 9% of Russian and Turkmen; 16% of Ukrainian and 71% of Uzbek female immigrants.

Are these figures completely true? Who knows? According to direct observation among female immigrants, the figures are much higher but the majority of the immigrants were scared or did not feel themselves safe in Turkey and so were not absolutely honest during the research and did not admit to the real level of violence towards them in Turkish families and in Turkish society.

Issues for female immigrants in Turkey may be manifested in different forms of discrimination within the society.

Nicola Piper and Amber French have suggested that female immigrants in host countries face dual discriminations because they are women and they are non-citizens: “Indeed, gender-based inequalities, injustice, discrimination and outright violence continue to permeate all societies to a certain extent, in some form or another. Such outcomes are often brought to the surface through, or are the result of, the migrant experience which, for women, typically means dual discrimination on the basis of being female and a non-citizen or absent citizen. Yet migration may allow women to turn these negative outcomes around by gaining greater control of their lives, whether through escape from traditional gender roles, improved knowledge and awareness about their rights, or newfound financial independence. Whether they migrate between two societies with opposing or comparable human development situations, women may find that they are liberated simply by having taken on a new role because of the move” (Piper, 2011).

With the aim of protecting the family and preventing violence against women, the Turkish Parliament adopted the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence (The Law to Protect Family and Prevent Violence against Women, Law No. 6284 from 8 March 2012. The Grand National Assembly of Turkey) on 8 March 2012.

## CONCLUSIONS

The paper presents the results of studies on violence against women in many countries worldwide, including female citizens of the countries and female immigrants.

The paper has been written using the results of the research conducted by the World Health Organization together with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the South African Medical Research Council; the fellowship project on Female immigration, supported by the Scientific & Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK); the Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, conducted by the Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in Ankara, Turkey.

According to the results of the report of the World Health Organization in association with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the South African Medical Research Council concerning violence against women worldwide, more than “35% of women worldwide” have faced violence in their lives and the majority of them more than once.

According to results of the Research on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey, from 15072 households, 2231 women have been subjected to physical and / or sexual violence by their husbands or partners.

For the third scientific project on female immigration in Turkey, the target sample consisted of over 400 female immigrants represented four statistical regions of urban areas of the country, Istanbul, Ankara, Antalya and Izmir. Field studies were conducted among the immigrants, who were of different levels of education, culture, and social status in Turkey. Of the immigrants, 22% of them have confessed to experiencing violence towards them in society, and 13% in their Turkish families. Therefore, violence against women is an international social problem that exists all over the world. If Turkey recognized that this problem exists within Turkish society and Turkish families, this would be a good start towards the healing of their society and reducing the problem of Domestic Violence in Turkey.

All of the studies on violence against women all over the world confirm the fact that violence exists in many countries and that the most important goal for governments should be legislation to prevent violence against females anywhere.

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