

Socio-Psychological, Legal and Cultural Causes and Consequences of Domestic Violence: Risk Factors, Victim Impact, and Prevention Strategies

Akhmadova Farangiz Akmal Kizi¹, Julia Doncheva^{2*} & Turdiev Bekhruz Sobirovich³

¹Master's Student, Department of Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of History and Law, Bukhara State University, 11 M. Iqbal Street, Bukhara City 200100, Republic of Uzbekistan. ²DSc, Professor, Angel Kanchev University of Ruse, Bulgaria. ³DSc, Professor, Department of Social and Political Sciences, Bukhara State University, Bukhara, Republic of Uzbekistan. Corresponding Author Email: jdoncheva@uni-ruse.bg*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.46759/iijsr/2026.10105>



Copyright © 2026 Akhmadova Farangiz Akmal Kizi et al. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Article Received: 16 November 2025

Article Accepted: 19 January 2026

Article Published: 27 January 2026

ABSTRACT

Domestic violence remains a serious social problem despite ongoing legal and democratic progress. This article examines domestic violence as a complex socio-psychological phenomenon arising from the interaction of social, economic, cultural, and personal factors. The main causes include economic hardship, substance abuse, gender stereotypes, exposure to violence during childhood, psychological instability, and low legal awareness. Domestic violence affects women, children, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups, and manifests in physical, psychological, sexual, and economic forms. Its consequences include trauma, mental and physical health disorders, social exclusion, and the intergenerational transmission of violent behavior. The study highlights the importance of strengthening legal protection, increasing public awareness, and implementing comprehensive prevention strategies.

Keywords: Domestic Violence; Family Violence; Gender-based Violence; Socio-psychological Factors; Risk Factors; Victim Trauma; Child Abuse; Intimate Partner Violence; Legal Protection Mechanisms; Prevention Strategies; Social Support Systems; Public Awareness.

Introduction

Despite the advancement of the modern social environment, the expansion of legal rights and freedoms, and the consolidation of democratic values, domestic violence remains one of the most pressing social problems. The family is the smallest yet most fundamental unit of society, where an individual's moral principles, psychological condition, behavioral patterns, and perceptions of future life are formed. Therefore, violence within the family not only harms the individual but also poses a serious threat to the social and moral stability of society as a whole.

Study Objectives

The present study is aimed at a comprehensive examination of domestic violence as a complex socio-psychological and legal phenomenon. The main objectives of the research are as follows:

- to analyze the multidimensional causes of domestic violence, including socio-economic, psychological, cultural, and behavioral factors.
- to identify the main forms and manifestations of domestic violence and the groups most vulnerable to victimization.
- to examine the short-term and long-term consequences of domestic violence for individuals, families, and society.
- to evaluate the role of legal norms and institutional protection mechanisms in preventing and addressing domestic violence.
- to assess the impact of domestic violence on mental health, social stability, and intergenerational behavior patterns.

- to formulate evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies aimed at reducing domestic violence and supporting victims.

The causes of domestic violence are diverse and multifaceted. They include the following factors:

- **social factors**, such as economic hardship and unemployment;
- **psychological factors**, including stress, depression, and uncontrolled anger;
- **cultural and traditional factors**, such as male dominance and rigid gender roles;
- **family environment and upbringing**, particularly exposure to violence during childhood;
- **substance abuse**, including alcohol and drug dependence;
- **jealousy and possessive behaviour**;
- **lack of mutual understanding and willingness to compromise between partners**;
- **revenge motives and unresolved interpersonal conflicts**;
- **disputes over property and material assets**;
- **low legal awareness and insufficient legal culture**;
- **exposure to media content that promotes violence and coercion**, along with other contributing influences.

Table 1. Groups Subject to Violence and Its Causes

Affected Group	Cause
Women	The normalization of discrimination against women within established societal and cultural norms
Children	Physical vulnerability and dependence on adults
Elderly people	Physical frailty and dependence on caregivers
Persons with disabilities	Limited capabilities and a high degree of dependency
Economically disadvantaged individuals	Limited economic opportunities negatively affecting their participation in social life
Migrants	Lack of citizenship or legal status
Members of religious or ethnic minorities	Differences in religious values, as well as social tensions, conflicts, and disputes

Domestic violence is a complex socio-psychological phenomenon that manifests not only through physical harm, but also through psychological intimidation, sexual coercion, economic pressure, and restrictions on personal freedom. Such violence often occurs in hidden or less visible forms; however, its negative consequences become deeply rooted and significantly disrupt the stability of the family environment. This phenomenon poses a serious threat to mental health, child development, and overall social stability. Domestic violence is not a random phenomenon; rather, it emerges from the interaction of multiple factors, imbalances in interpersonal relationships, and the influence of broader social and historical conditions [1].

Among the primary factors contributing to domestic violence are personal characteristics, socio-economic conditions, cultural influences, gender stereotypes, the effects of alcohol and psychoactive substances, and legal

and moral illiteracy. Personal factors are particularly significant, as the psychological traits of perpetrators often determine their propensity for aggressive behavior in family relationships. Individuals with low self-esteem who perceive themselves as humiliated or powerless may attempt to assert dominance through the use of force.

Aggressive personality traits, poor anger regulation, explosive temperament, and impulsivity may lead to violent behavior. Individuals who were exposed to violence within their families during childhood often internalize such behavior as a normative pattern of interaction and may reproduce it in adulthood. This process is commonly referred to as the “cycle of violence.” Socio-economic factors also intensify violent behavior. Unemployment, financial hardship, debt, unfavorable living conditions, and related life stresses increase tension and escalate interpersonal conflicts. Under such conditions, family members may resort to violence instead of seeking mutual understanding and compromise. Cultural norms and gender stereotypes also contribute to the persistence of domestic violence.

In some societies, patriarchal beliefs that regard male dominance as natural and female submissiveness as expected contribute to the normalization of violence as an implicit social norm. The marginalization of women’s social status, along with restrictions on access to education and employment, creates economic and psychological dependency, which increases vulnerability to abuse.

A tolerant or dismissive attitude toward domestic violence—expressed through statements such as “this is a private family matter” or “a good woman remains silent”—forces victims to conceal their experiences. Excessive alcohol and drug use further destabilize the family environment. Individuals under the influence of intoxicating substances often lose emotional and behavioral control, which increases the likelihood of aggressive actions. In many cases, substance abuse is used to justify violent behavior. Children raised in such environments face a high risk of developing serious psychological problems. Moral and legal illiteracy also contributes to the persistence of violence, as many individuals are unaware of their rights or lack knowledge of available protection mechanisms.

Acts of violence are frequently misinterpreted as ordinary family conflicts due to low psychological and legal awareness. Social indifference—including inaction by neighbors, relatives, or even institutions—further contributes to the continuation of abuse.

Domestic violence produces both short- and long-term physical, psychological, sexual, and reproductive health consequences, ranging from mild to severe. Children within violent households are also significantly affected, leading to broader social and economic costs for society. Severe outcomes include serious injury, trauma, suicide, and death. Studies report that 42 percent of women who disclosed abuse experienced physical injuries caused by their partners. Violence during pregnancy has been associated with miscarriage in 13 percent of cases and preterm birth in 41 percent of cases.

Beyond physical harm, domestic violence contributes to psychological disorders such as depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Survivors are also at increased risk of alcohol and substance dependence as maladaptive coping mechanisms [2]. Domestic violence may take multiple forms and arise from different causes. Whether a child is directly abused or witnesses violence within the household, the experience constitutes serious

trauma with lasting psychological and physical consequences. Witnessing violence—seeing or hearing abuse directed at another family member—can be as harmful as direct victimization.

Children exposed to domestic violence may learn destructive conflict-resolution patterns and begin to perceive violence as normal behavior. Disciplinary violence includes physical punishment such as hitting, pulling hair, pinching, or other harmful practices intended to control behavior. Effective support for affected families requires a clear understanding of the underlying causes of such violence. Research identifies at least four primary contributing factors:

- **First**, the use of physical punishment in child-rearing. Parents often replicate disciplinary methods they experienced themselves and may view physical punishment as acceptable. Awareness programs must emphasize that violence against children is unlawful and that non-violent parenting methods are more effective.
- **Second**, stress-related violence, which is the most common factor in milder cases. Young parents facing economic, social, and occupational pressures may lose emotional control, later experiencing guilt and distress. These families primarily need social and psychological support.
- **Third**, parental mental health problems or personality disorders. This group may include individuals with severe addictions, violent behavioral tendencies, or trauma from war, torture, or disasters. They represent a particularly high risk for severe abuse.
- **Fourth**, violence between parents, most often male-to-female partner abuse. This is one of the most severe forms of domestic violence. Children who witness parental violence experience serious psychological harm, and in approximately 60 percent of such cases they are also physically abused. Conversely, when child abuse is detected, maternal abuse is frequently present as well, and should always be assessed [3].

Experiencing violence results in both psychological and physical consequences for the individual. Victimization typically affects all areas of life. Although the impact varies from person to person, its effects are generally comprehensive and far-reaching. Violence significantly undermines an individual's well-being even when it does not leave visible physical injuries. The body may still exhibit physiological responses even when the abuse is non-physical in nature. In many cases, the consequences of violence resemble the effects of prolonged and severe stress [4]. Reported symptoms include recurrent pain, gastrointestinal disorders, numbness in the limbs, increased heart rate, and dizziness. Identifying these symptoms as consequences of violence is not always straightforward.

Even after leaving an abusive environment, such symptoms may persist. The longer the violence continues, the more severe and long-lasting its effects tend to be. Violence in intimate relationships is also characterized by escalation over time. Even when it occurs regularly, it does not lose its harmful impact. Living with an abusive individual undermines both physical and psychological health and, in severe cases, may threaten life itself. Individuals subjected to repeated violence often attempt to cope with or escape the situation through various strategies; however, the human psyche never fully adapts to ongoing abuse.

The psychological and emotional consequences of violence include:

- feelings of guilt, self-blame, shame, anger, and irritability;
- helplessness and hopelessness;
- depression, anxiety, panic, and fear;
- a perceived loss of control;
- social withdrawal and isolation;
- nightmares and intrusive memories of traumatic events;
- sudden and intense mood swings;
- chronic stress;
- suicidal thoughts.

The cognitive consequences of violence include memory impairment, feelings of detachment from reality, difficulty concentrating and making decisions, weakened recognition of personal boundaries, and changes in academic or work performance. Violence erodes self-confidence and the ability to trust others. It also damages overall self-worth and the fundamental sense of personal security. When individuals are treated as though their autonomy and emotions are insignificant, they may internalize a sense of worthlessness.

Violence also affects sexual well-being. Survivors may struggle with trust, feel reluctant to express their sexuality, or avoid forming new intimate relationships. As a result, their aspirations for partnership and family life may remain unfulfilled.

Trauma resulting from violence. Even a single severe incident may lead to long-term trauma. Common outcomes of severe exposure include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and dissociative disorders. Trauma develops when an individual experiences overwhelming events or lives in conditions of persistent insecurity and violence that exceed psychological coping capacity. Trauma is often latent, and its effects may not be externally visible. Although daily functioning may continue, the individual may feel emotionally detached and psychologically disoriented. The mind often employs defensive mechanisms to suppress traumatic experiences.

Pursuant to the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 829 of April 11, 2023, “*On Amendments and Additions to Certain Legislative Acts Related to Further Improving the System of Reliable Protection of the Rights, Freedoms, and Legitimate Interests of Women and Children,*” a new Article 126¹ addressing domestic (family) violence was introduced into the Criminal Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan [5].

Saida Mirziyoyeva has proposed recognizing domestic violence as a criminal offense, emphasizing that “domestic violence is not a private family matter; it is a problem that concerns society as a whole. A woman should not be left alone with her suffering.” She also stated that penalties for sexual relations involving minors should be strengthened [6].

For informational purposes, according to a resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 17, 1999, November 25 was declared the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against

Women. In 2014, the UN Secretary-General launched the “UNiTE” initiative aimed at eliminating violence against women. Each year, from November 25 to December 10, global activities are held under the campaign title “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.”

Conclusion

Domestic violence is a multifaceted and persistent social problem that affects individuals, families, and society as a whole. It arises from the interaction of personal, socio-economic, cultural, and psychological factors and manifests in physical, psychological, sexual, and economic forms. Its consequences are profound, resulting in long-term trauma, physical and mental health disorders, social disintegration, and the intergenerational transmission of violent behavior. Effective prevention requires not only legal regulation and institutional protection, but also higher levels of legal awareness, social responsibility, education, and accessible support systems for victims. Addressing domestic violence should therefore be recognized as a collective societal responsibility rather than a private family matter.

Future Suggestions

- Strengthen interdisciplinary research that integrates socio-psychological, legal, and cultural approaches in order to develop more precise risk assessment tools and early detection models for domestic violence.
- Expand long-term prevention programs focused on family education, non-violent communication skills, and emotional regulation training starting from school age.
- Improve coordination between legal institutions, social services, healthcare providers, and educational organizations to ensure faster identification of victims and more effective protection mechanisms.
- Increase community-based awareness campaigns aimed at changing harmful gender stereotypes and reducing social tolerance toward domestic violence.
- Develop accessible digital reporting and support platforms that allow victims to seek help safely and confidentially, especially in rural and marginalized communities.
- Promote continuous professional training for law enforcement officers, social workers, teachers, and medical staff to ensure trauma-informed and victim-centered responses.

Declarations

Source of Funding

This study did not receive any grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Competing Interests Statement

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Consent for publication

The authors declare that they consented to the publication of this study.

Authors' contributions

All the authors took part in literature review, analysis, and manuscript writing equally.

Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable for this study.

Informed Consent

Not applicable for this study.

References

- [1] Jo'rayeva, K. (2025). Oiladagi zo'ravonlik: Sabablari, oqibatlari va psixologik yondashuvlar. *Pedagogika, Psixologiya Fanlariga Ixtisoslashgan Ilmiy Jurnal*, 7: 325–326.
- [2] Nurullayeva, U. (2022). Xotin-qizlarga nisbatan oiladagi tazyiq va zo'ravonlik holatlari: Sabab va oqibatlar, yechim yo'llari. *Oila, Xotin-Qizlar va Ijtimoiy Hayot Elektron Ilmiy Jurnal*, 2: 27–28.
- [3] Backman, A., & Nyback, M. (2022). Det sårbara barnet – att växa upp med missbruk, våld och psykisk ohälsa. *Novia University Report Series*. <https://www.novia.fi/assets/publikationer/serie-r-rapporter/backman-nyback-det-sarbara-barnet-final-2022.pdf>.
- [4] Naisten Linja (2023). Väkiavallan seuraukset. <https://naistenlinja.fi/vakivallan-seuraukset/>.
- [5] Supreme Court of Uzbekistan (2023). Oilaviy (maishiy) zo'ravonlik jinoyatlarini sudlarda ko'rish amaliyoti. https://gbv_crime_uzb.pdf.
- [6] Mirziyoyeva, S. (2022). Oiladagi zo'ravonlikni jinoyat deb baholash vaqti keldi. *Gazeta.uz*. <https://www.gazeta.uz/oz/2022/12/06/domestic-violence/>.
- [7] Sobirovich, T.B. (2024). The national idea as a driving force behind ideospheric transformation in Uzbekistan: Exploring its implications and impact. *Asian Journal of Applied Science and Technology*, 8: 170–176.
- [8] Sobirovich, T.B. (2024). Socio-philosophical analysis of society's ideosphere. *Indonesian Journal of Social Development*, 2.
- [9] Turdiev, B. (2024). The priority of human interests in Uzbekistan's ideospheric development. *Теоретические аспекты становления педагогических наук*, 3: 120–123.