

Legitimization of Gender-Based Violence Through Media

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Abstract

Violence is a problematic phenomenon that has a global impact on both individuals and societies. From the reporting aspect of the news to the composition of television programs, violence has taken over the media. Considering the forms of violence in both social media and mainstream media, the use of language is observed to resemble a favor to the ones who commit these acts of violence, not the ones who are subject to it.

Accessibility of the events occurring at any given moment within or outside of the border of individuals and the changing realities is a necessity. All these changes in our daily lives cause paradigm shifts, change the way we live, act, or understand for better or for worse as we are exposed. Media and the news, the prominent mediums of this exposure to life, manifest our current way of thinking and also play a significant role in creating the mindset that is determined to have been socially down the line. In this study, femicide cases that have drawn attention, under the spotlight of mainstream media and social media journalism from 2009 to 2020, providing a platform for individuals to report real-life events amateurlly, and adopted the use of language by mainstream media and social media journalists, will be analyzed using content analysis method. Moreover, changes in the use of language adopted by mainstream media and the effects of these uses in the scope of the way we live, act, or understand will be argued.

Keywords: Violence, Media, Journalism, Social Media, Femicides, Use of Language.

Cinsiyet Odaklı Şiddetin Medya Aracılığıyla Meşrulaştırılması

Öz

Şiddet hem bireysel hem de toplumsal olarak büyük bir sorunsal olarak tüm dünyayı etkisi altına alan bir olgudur. Haberlerin veriliş şekline televizyon programlarının oluşumuna, şiddet günbegün artarak tüm medyayı etkisi altına almıştır. Gerek sosyal medyada gerek ise ana akım medyada şiddetin şekillenmiş halleri ele alındığında, şiddet görene değil de şiddet uygulayana hak verir şekilde oldukları gözlemlenmektedir. Yaşanılan sınırlar dâhilinde ve haricinde her an gerçekleşmekte olan olayların ve değişen gerçekliklerin insanlar tarafından ulaşılabilirliği bir gereksinimdir. Yakından takip edilen tüm gerçeklikler, maruz kaldıkları süre dahilinde paradigma değişikliklerine sebep olarak yaşayış, davranış ve anlayış biçimleri üzerinde değişiklikler yaratmakta ve insanlığı olumlu ya da olumsuz şekilde yönlendirebilmektedir. Toplumların bu durumları takip etmede kullandığı en yaygın iletişim biçimlerinden biri olan medya ve haberler, konu edindikleri içerikler ve bunları ele alış biçimleriyle anın düşünce yapısını yansıttığı gibi toplumsal bağlamda ulaşılması hedeflenen düşünce yapılarının yaratımında da büyük bir rol oynar. Bu çalışmada içerik analizi yöntemi kullanılarak, 2009'dan 2020'ye dek ana akım medyada yer edinebilen ve bunun yanı sıra bireysel paylaşımlar ile sosyal medya haberciliğinin yapıldığı sosyal medya platformlarında da bahsedilen büyük oranda dikkat çeken kadın cinayetleri ve bu cinayetlerin aktarımında tercih

edilen dil kullanımlarına yer verilecektir. Buna ek olarak, ana akım medya tarafından yapılan dil seçimlerinin yıllar içerisindeki değişimi ve söz konusu seçimlerin yaşayış, davranış ve anlayış biçimleri üzerinde yarattığı etkiler tartışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Şiddet, Medya, Habercilik, Sosyal Medya, Kadın Cinayetleri, Dil Kullanımı.

Universe & Sampling

The universe of this study is determined as the crimes committed against women by men in Turkey from the year 2009 to 2020 and that has been reported by the mainstream media within said timeframe. However, given the alarming increase observed in crime rates committed against women in Turkey in the last 20 years and difficulties in their representation in media due to excessive numbers, the sampling frame is deducted to femicide cases that happened in said time. Samples are chosen accordingly to the most outrageous cases that happened and reported by the mainstream media.

Limitations & Methodology

Timeframe for the study is estimated as 11 years, from 2009 to 2020. Due to excessive numbers of committed crimes against women within the estimated time interval, only the femicide cases have been chosen for the samples. Analyzing the femicides that happened in the last 11 years completely is a challenge due to high numbers, thus, eight femicide cases that caused outrage is chosen as the sample. In accordance with the aim of this study, which is the portrayal of the incorrect use of language adopted by the media in cases of crimes against women and especially in femicide cases, online news articles published by the mainstream media establishments in such cases were studied and the most problematic ones were chosen as a sample. Sample articles were studied in terms of the common reporting and phrasing choices that have been made among these articles. In analyzing the news articles, main themes, phrases, and allegations/accusations were stressed and analyzed by using the content analysis method.

1. Introduction

Media has a formative and transformer effect on society beyond reflecting and representing the society, and interpersonal relations one-sided today. While media builds representations, social events mentioned in media are rebuilt and acquire new identities with the representations on media. There is a spiral relationship between media and its representations affecting one another. In this regard, media owners and employees at all levels of the media must be aware of the consequences of the content they present to the public and the way they are presented and act responsibly.

Violence is one of the most important social problems not only in developing countries but in developed countries. Women are among the most important victims of the phenomenon of violence, which is a significant social problem. The acts of violence against women are common all around the world. These actions performed against women do not only contain physical violence. Violence against women may sometimes occur in verbal actions such as humiliation, disdain, and derision (Köse, 2010). As is known, patriarchal ideology is a system that makes women passive and submissive within the hierarchical structure in which men are prioritized and privileged, in other words, the roles attributed to men and women are determined by men. This system manifests itself in many fields including politics, economy, history, literature, law, education, and media. This power relation increases the victimization of woman and forms the basis of frequently discussed gender inequality in a plane where moral and ethical values are determined with social norms. Patriarchal structure gets its strength from sex differences. The social role and nature of woman are defined based on patriarchal norms in the patriarchal discourse.

Media, which has gradually become an essential part of people's daily life and their relationships established with the world since the late 19th century, consciously or unconsciously assumes a function of shaping the mindset about the perception of woman and women's rights positively or negatively. Media has become an extremely important tool as today's people use it to follow social, political and economic developments. The modern individual following the development outside her inner circle through media is subject to messages by the nature of mass communication. Media, which plays an important role in the formation of the ideas of individuals in modern society and in shaping their behavior patterns, has an institutional structure acting for profit in today's capitalist societies because of its nature. Media has such a power due to this structure and can sometimes use individuals' concerns about security to increase view, read, click, etc. rates. Although individuals living in

the society are not the direct victims of any crime, they indirectly suffer from the violence news published or broadcasted on media. Thus, the fact that media shows violence news in an intense manner containing high dose of violence for more views might cause negative impacts on the audience/readers. Mass media has been gaining more and more importance in people's lives. The individual, who tries to follow the development around through mass media, are affected by the language and tone used in the news presented through these tools. Studies examining how male and female genders are represented in mass media have revealed that the images in these tools contain sexist judgments. Gender discrimination contains stereotypes developed based on female and male genders and expresses discrimination against female sex.

Violence against women is a serious problem that needs to be worked on in different dimensions and permanent solutions should be produced in Turkish society as in all societies. How women are generally represented in mainstream media and social media, and especially how news about violence against women are covered in media are of great importance for this study. Mainstream media and new media were chosen as the media channels where the study was going to be carried out due to their power on setting the agenda and keeping records. This study was conducted to examine the language used in news about violence against women. Therefore, the ones that affected the society the most were selected among the news about violence against women that took place in Turkey between 2009 and 2020, and arouse the interest of the media, and the language of the news was reviewed using the news content analysis method.

The general definition of violence will be made in the first section of the study. Violence against women, the concept of violence, and the definitions of this concept included in news, and their use within the framework of language will be explained, and domestic violence and the forms of domestic violence reflected to the outside world will be examined. Furthermore, the way the cases of violence against women and domestic violence are addressed in new media and mainstream news, their scope and targets, underlying messages will be addressed briefly and recommendations about what must be done to prevent violence will be provided. This study will include femicides, addressed in mainstream media and mentioned in social media platforms where social media journalism is made with personal posts, since 2009 and the use of language preferred in the expression of these murders using the discourse analysis method. Additionally, the change in the selection of language used in mainstream media in time and the effects of such selections on living, behavior and understanding styles will be discussed.

1.1. Violence

Violence is a type of harmful behavior that can be inflicted to the other party in terms of seeing the existence of the other as a threat and for intimidation generally to protect the interests of the individual and sometimes the community except for defense or counter-defense to create authority in people living in a community (WHO, 2002). The concept of violence is used to express physical, sexual, psychological and verbal coercion and forcing directed to a person or a group in many areas. Violence can occur as offensive actions directed to a person by others as well as the actualization of these actions in a very wide spectrum from individual violence to state violence and even as self-violence used by the person against himself/herself. Therefore, it is difficult to define violence and determine its limits.

Violence is quite an intangible concept changing in time and based on power relations, and the results obtained mostly change based on the approach used as a base while making the definition. For instance, while the prevailing approach in studies conducted in the 1960s was that the definition of violence is only acts of physical attack by strangers to each other, physical, verbal, emotional or sexual violence offenses committed by family members to each other are now included in the definition of violence. In this regard, the power and control mechanism one has on another person is emphasized in the definition of violence in addition to applying physical force. For example, behaviors such as naming, humiliating, blaming, or forcing to do or not to do a profession, not providing information about the family budget, confiscation of income are also considered as violence in this regard (Heise, 1998:263).

Violence against women (most commonly as domestic violence against women) are one of the human rights violation, encountered in many places around the world and is yet to be resolved. Women face many forms of violence in many areas regardless of discriminations against being a child or adult, or working or not working. The most common form of violence women is subject to is domestic violence. This type of violence remained a completely invisible form of violence until very recently as a result of the accepting approach of both the state and the society to the issue, and the idea that the private sphere could not be intervened as one of the consequences of the distinction between private and public spheres. Therefore, it has been quite late in preventing domestic violence as well as violence against women in general.

Policies on the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence and the development of penalization mechanisms about these issues started to be adopted and various international regulations in this scope were made especially at the end of the 20th century. With these developments, several modifications have been made especially in the Constitution and basic laws such as the Turkish Civil Code and the Turkish Penal Code in Turkey. Since the Law on the Protection of the Family dated 1998 and numbered 4320, which is the first legal text on domestic violence, has become insufficient in the prevention of violence against women, the Law on the Protection of the Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women numbered 6284 was enacted in 2012 based on the Council of Europe Convention on Prevention and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (The Istanbul Convention). Despite these developments, violence against women and domestic violence continue to escalate rapidly in Turkey and many parts of the world and the need for the protection and direction of women subjected to violence is increasing (Tuskan, 2013).

1.2. Violence Against Women

The act of violence against women is usually classified in four main titles. These are physical violence, verbal, emotional or psychological violence, economic violence and sexual violence. Violence against women is a multidimensional, widespread social problem becoming more and more common every day in society as well as a significant public health problem that can lead to loss of labor force or even loss of life in women and requires health care. The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes that the acts of violence against women are not single incidents and that it is a form of behaviors violating the rights of women, limiting their participation in society, and damaging their health and welfare; thus, it must be investigated systematically. WHO also acknowledges that violence against women is a global public health problem that affects about a third of women globally.

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The concept of violence has been defined in a more comprehensive way and the idea that any act that is likely to cause harm or deprivation to a person, group, or community and that would cause a physical, verbal, psychological, or even political and economic disadvantage, should be regarded as violent regardless of whether it is on purpose in addition to physical harm has been adopted. In this regard, the concept of violence has evolved into a wide concept that will express all types of acts and intentions aiming to abuse a person, group or community by dominating over that person, group or community in a way to include the restriction of freedoms and rights. The concept of violence was defined for the first time in the Turkish law in Art. 2 of the Law on the Protection of the Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women numbered 6284 as “All types of physical, sexual, psychological, verbal or economic attitudes and behaviors including acts that result or are likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering, and threats and coercion, or arbitrary obstruction of freedom occurring in the social, public or private sphere.” Considering this modification, it can also be concluded that the concept of violence should be widely understood not only as applying physical force but also as mental, verbal, and economic violence. Based on these explanations, the concept of violence against women should also

be defined to include not only physical violence against women, but also any other actions that may constitute the abovementioned violence. Thus, the narrow-scoped consideration of violence against women and the limitation of the scope of the protection that will be provided to women will be prevented. Because women can be subjected to violence in all parts of life due to many reasons other than their sex, such as color, race, language, belief, and social status (Collins, 2008:71). Addresses from a broad perspective, violence against women can begin with birth or even before birth. Women who face many forms of violence like not welcoming the female child to be born within the family and close circle, not letting girls go to school, being exposed to sexual assault in or outside the family, forced marriages, humiliating for not giving birth to a boy, marital rape, the threat of rape in the family and social life, honor killings, preventing women to enter the business life, employing women with low wages, starting the business life at lower positions than men, disregarding their efforts in the house, and human trafficking, suffer especially under gender and male-dominant political preferences.

Violence against women is, above all, a violation of human rights. In contrast, it is not wrong to say that it occurs as a violation of human rights, that is the most common yet the most difficult to prevent, since international law usually deals with state-induced interventions on human rights while states avoid interfering in this area based on the principle of inviolability of the private sphere. The term “human rights violation of women and girls” has been propounded to address the deficiency in these human rights violations that women are subjected to, and to emphasize that these acts of violence are a violation of human rights. Violence against women is defined as a violation of human rights in the Turkish Law in Article 2 of the Law on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women numbered 6284 as “Any types of attitudes and behaviors that are applied to women just because they are women or that lead to a violation of women’s human rights with discrimination based on gender and is defined as violence in this law” (Uzun, 2016).

1.3. Domestic Violence Against Women

The concept, structure and function of the family is defined in many different forms as an institution that varies according to time and place, and the cultural structures of societies. If you want to make a broader definition, the concept of family can be defined as a social institution in which the human being is born and raised, the process of preparing for social life begins for the first time, where sexual roles are designated within certain patterns, is mostly economically autonomous and which mostly consists of people who have blood ties including mother, father and children. Society determines the values to be transferred to individuals, transfers its cultural structure to individuals, adapts individuals to society through this institution; thus, the transition to other social groups occurs starting from the family. The abovementioned definition of family, of which content has been adopted, agrees with the view that family is a community of individuals acting in love, trust, and harmony. The family is understood in a way that, regardless of culture, always referring to an ideal community that protects, nurtures, and supports its members based on these opinions. In contrast, there are also opinions that such classic definitions of family arise from cultural tradition and the purpose of maintaining it, and this covers up unpleasant facts that occur in the family in terms of domestic dynamics. Accordingly, the family is one of the main sources of abuse and is also the place where the person comes closest to being subjected to violence (Finley, 1993).

Domestic violence against women is closely related to gender discrimination based on gender policies and the idea of male superiority, which lead to male dominance over female. Domestic violence, harassment and rape are the most primitive end of the patriarchy, and the fact that such practices still exist today, where wives and children are considered the property of the husband, shows the continuity of the patriarchy. Violence against women is universally due to the existence of a patriarchal structure. In such a social structure and the families formed within this structure, the man is given control over the personality, property, and even thoughts of the woman, and he is assigned some duties such as being the head of the family, assuming economic responsibility, and protecting; thus, all activities regarding the public sphere are carried out via men. In such a structure, the woman is given a secondary and worthless role that can only be defined by the presence of a man and does not have a primary existence independent of a man. Therefore, woman is held responsible for raising healthy children and creating a sacred home, so the concept of a “home”, which is a physical and symbolic space, and the “private space” in which a woman is located, emerge in contrast to the public space that belongs to the man. In other words, the fact that behaviors associated with being male and female become conditioning is due to cultural norms, traditions and habits. Woman naturally accepts this secondary role assigned to her in the family, where cultural values begin to be transferred to the individual from birth, and she is trapped in a surrendering position and feels compelled to remain in this position. Because the institution of family also creates a model for the individual as a source of political power and provides a source of legitimacy for the secondary position of women and violence

against women. Precisely for this reason, domestic violence is clearly and often seen as an act committed by “man” against “woman”. Domestic violence cannot be assessed independently of the social structure and social strata of society. Accordingly, domestic violence is fundamentally based on the secondary and worthless position of woman dependent on man (Weisberg, 1993).

Why individuals who are subjected to domestic violence continue to live under these conditions and why they submit to violence can only be explained by social phenomena. Many women continue to live with those who commit violence for reasons such as having children, low self-esteem, economic imperatives, lack of income, religious belief, social oppression, emotional commitment, trivialization of violence, or threats from the perpetrator. Many women continue their relationships because of reasons such as lack of social support and shelter, and in particular because of the fear that they would continue to be subjected to violence, maybe more intensely, even if they leave the violent person. Legal regulations that mostly remain incapable of protecting women reinforce this actual requirement for women. The concept of domestic violence is defined in a wide variety of forms just like the concept of family (Bozkurt, 2010).

Although domestic violence is understood as attacks that cause physical damage in the narrow sense, domestic violence, as explained in the previous title, includes behaviors aimed at establishing superiority and fear within the family, economic subjugation, coercion and threats, isolation, confinement, and other forms of physical and psychological control as well as verbal attacks. Domestic violence is used to refer to violence inflicted on the women by any individual within the family (or former family member) in the most general sense, and expresses the violence committed by other people who live in the same house together (including partner abuse) within the union of marriage or regardless of the union of marriage. If a definition covering all these explanations is made, domestic violence against women is all kinds of gender-based actions including threats, coercion, control aiming to establish physical, sexual, economic, verbal, and psychological oppression and superiority over women (Htun, 2012:549).

1.4. Types of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a phenomenon that can be encountered in a wide range of forms. Even if it is performed with a simple and single act from time to time, it is often inflicted with more than one physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological act that cannot be separated from one another and each of these types of violence has various effects on the person in terms of other types of violence.

1.4.1. Physical Violence

Because physical violence causes pain to a person and often leaves visible damage on that person, it is the easiest to notice from the outside and therefore the most common type of violence. Physical violence is a type of violence that includes a wide range of acts such as kicking, slapping, punching, hitting with an object, injuring with cutting tools, injuring with a firearm, leaving people starved and dehydrated, and aims to scare, intimidate, hurt, neutralize, control the victim by causing pain with the use of brute force. Physical violence is also considered a crime under the Turkish Criminal Code, as it occurs in the form of attacks on physical integrity and health (Htun, 2012:551).

1.4.2. Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is a type of violence that women are often exposed to by their close partners and causes severe psychological and health problems, and it occurs in the form of forced sexual intercourse when the woman does not want and in a way she does not want in the narrow sense as well as physical contact that woman does not like, forced pregnancy or abortion, forced prostitution, degrading women in sexual life, and even early pregnancy and female genital mutilation. Sexual violence refers to the use of sexuality as a means of violence and threat. Sexual violence is a type of violence caused by the assumption that man has the right in any case to force him into sexual union without taking into account the feelings and thoughts of woman, and that he is in a privileged position in relation to sexuality compared to woman. Thus, the sexual identity of a woman is attacked by man, and the sexual control of woman is taken over by man. Sexual violence is a type of violence that is much more difficult to talk about due to both the moral structure of society and religious beliefs than other types of violence; thus, is often preferred to remain secret. Therefore, it severely affects the psychology and mental integrity of the victim in addition to the problems it creates on victims especially related to sexual health. It is a known fact that many victims of sexual violence experience difficulty in mixing with society, sociophobia, self-harm, and even suicidal tendencies. Many of the acts of sexual violence, that are considered crimes in terms of the Turkish Penal Code, remain hidden in Turkey. It was found that 49% of women who were exposed to physical and sexual violence

throughout the country did not tell anyone about the violence they were exposed to while 92% of women did not contact any institution or organization in relation to the violence they were exposed to. If the crimes are committed against the spouse especially against sexual immunity, the investigation is attributed to a complaint, and this is a very problematic regulation for women (Uygur, 2011).

1.4.3. Psychological Violence

Psychological violence is also called emotional violence. This type of violence usually involves a threat element and is defined as the suppression or abuse of emotions and emotional needs for purposes such as terrorization, intimidation, punishment, and control. Psychological violence is most performed most intensely in the form of threats, insults and curses that are also criminal. Additionally, acts such as locking the victim in a house or a room, which can constitute a crime of depriving a person of their freedom, are also considered psychological violence. However, psychological violence can also be inflicted with threats and acts of teasing, abusing, blaming, humiliation, constant criticism, infidelity, neglect, and social threats such as not allowing the victim to see their child and preventing the victim to enter life. Psychological violence is also a type of violence that causes the victim to lose respect for themselves and is often known to cause much more lasting damage than physical violence.

1.4.4. Economic Violence

Economic violence refers to the use of income-generating resources (occupation, goods, money) as a means of oppression and control over women. This type of violence occurs as a result of the inequality between men and women occurring on the axis of gender and the unequal power relations between men and women. The actions like preventing women to do a certain job or have a profession, forcing women to do a certain job or profession, preventing them from progressing in business life, bereaving the goods and money from them, preventing their right to purchase, not covering the expenses of the house, not giving enough money to women who have no income or not sufficient amount of income to meet their needs, controlling the expenses of women, and giving money in return for obtaining benefits from women are considered economic violence. The fact that the person who brings income to the family is usually a man causes women to be subjected to economic violence many times in Turkey. The fact that many women, who make effort for their families free of charge, have no source of income, revenue-generating properties and social insurance, in other words they are worked as if unpaid workers, increases the risk of women being subjected to economic violence by men (Altınay, 2008:22).

1.4.5. Verbal Violence

Language is the area where social culture is most intensely reflected, and language constantly feeds culture in a relationship of reciprocity. As a natural outcome of this, it is inevitable that language will also be shaped by patriarchy, the concepts will be made sense within patriarchy, and the language created in these conditions will also constantly feed and reproduce such a culture in a patriarchal society where the source of power is men. People living with such a culture and language also internalize the belief that the man is considered a primary, original, strong, logical creature who must be obeyed while woman is a weak, secondary, obeying, and irrational creature. The effort to establish dominance over the woman is legitimized by male discourse, which sees women as a potential danger to his own power and also as beings to be ruled as an inferior social layer. The frequent use of language, which has an important role in social practice, against women as a means of violence, increases the prevalence of verbal violence (Bourdieu, 2014: 45). Because verbal violence spreads easily to all segments and layers of society through language, which is the most indispensable and integral part of culture, and it constantly targets women with proverbs, idioms, curses that are often used in society.

Although the form and intensity of violence inflicted by targeting women through language vary depending on place and time, such violence is practiced by people such as father, brother, husband, lover, father-in-law and even often by mother, mother-in-law, sister-in-law. This situation, on the other hand, often leads to the victimization of another woman by women, who are common victims of the same power, as revenge for their own victimization and perhaps because of the feeling of having a part of the power in this way. Violence against women through language can also be inflicted by notable people in the society. These people include many well-known names like politicians, artists, academics and writers. This, on the other hand, causes the insulting language towards women to be constantly repeated and become more widespread and entrenched. Domestic verbal violence against women, as a type of violence, is one of the areas where the impact of the abovementioned patriarchal social structure on verbal culture is felt most intensely. In this regard, verbal violence takes its place among the types of violence as one of the methods of maintaining and sustaining the power provided to men by the social structure over the woman in the family (Altınay, 2008:24).

1.5. Violence Against Women in Turkey

We see a similar picture when we examine the extent of violence against women in Turkey. Factors such as patriarchal family structure, gender-based work division, and the upbringing of girls and boys in accordance with these values can be considered as indirect factors that cause the prevalence of violence against women. Violence against women has been addressed as a social problem and non-governmental organizations have carried out effective works on this issue in Turkey especially after the 1980s (Bufacchi, 2005:194). According to social value judgments, the belief that private life should be hidden as it requires secrecy and that it is wrong to interfere with private life prevents cases of domestic violence from being reflected in the public sphere and judicial authorities being a major obstacle before the research and studies that will be conducted in this field.

The most comprehensive research on violence against women and domestic violence in Turkey is the Domestic Violence against Women Research conducted by the General Directorate on the Status of Women (KSGM) in 2009. This research is the first research with the highest representation and broadest sampling across the country, and also provides data needed to understand the prevalence, forms of violence, causes and consequences, and risk factors of domestic violence experienced by women (KSGM, 2008). In this regard, the striking data obtained as a result of the research can be sorted as follows:

- 4 out of every 10 women are subjected to physical violence at any time in their lives. There is not much differentiation in the ratios in urban-rural areas.
- The rate of violence inflicted to married women by their spouses or people they live with is 39% while the rate of violence inflicted on them by people they do not have close relationships with is 18%.
- 15% of married women have been subjected to at least one sexual violence behavior.
- 42% of women are subjected to physical and sexual violence at the same time in many cases.
- The rate of married women who stated that they had been subjected to one of the forms of emotional violence at any time in their life is 44%.
- It is observed that about 4 out of 10 women including those who say that they do not want to work or not able to do so, are subjected to economic violence.
- One out of every 4 married women who have been subjected to physical or sexual violence has been injured as a result of the violence they have been exposed to.
- Women who are subjected to violence are at least twice as likely to experience health problems, consider or attempt suicide.
- The rate of women who have been subjected to physical or sexual violence at least once is 55.7% and the rate of those who have received high school and higher education is 27%.
- The rate of women who agree with the statement that ‘Men can beat their wives in some cases.’ is 14.2%.
- Not only women with low levels of education are subjected to violence. Even among women with higher levels of education, 3 out of every 10 women have been subjected to physical or sexual violence by their partner.
- Women rarely seek help from medical institutions, police or other support services.
- 49% of women who are exposed to physical or sexual violence by their partner or the person(s) they are with cannot tell anyone about the violence they are exposed to (Bozkurt: 2010).

Violence against women, which is based on gender inequality, can occur in all its forms in a wide range from men in women’s immediate surroundings to men they do not know and women in their family (KSGM: 2009). While the opposite behavior is expected during pregnancy, which is a risk factor, the results of the research say otherwise. The reasons why women are subjected to violence especially during pregnancy are determined as economic difficulties, disruptions in daily works, the husband’s psychological problems, not doing the house

works as perceived by the husband, unwanted pregnancy by the husband, and often becoming sick medically (Asan, 2010:70). According to the results of the research conducted across Turkey, one out of 10 women who got pregnant at least once were subjected to physical violence by their husbands or partners during pregnancy. The percentage of women who were subject to physical violence during any pregnancy is 18% in the Northeast Anatolia region while this rate is 5% among women living in the Western Marmara region (The Domestic Violence Against Women Research in Turkey, KSGM: 2009). One-fourth of married women across Turkey stated that they were exposed to violence by their husband or partner and got injured because of it. This rate does not differ greatly in rural or urban residential areas (The Domestic Violence Against Women Research in Turkey, 2009).

2. Case Study

2.1. The Case of Münevver Karabulut (2009)

Münevver Karabulut's body was found in a dumpster located in Etiler, Istanbul in March 2009. Right after identifying the teenager, the primary suspect 18-year-old Cem Garipoğlu had run away. After 197 days on the loose, on September 17th Garipoğlu turned himself in to the police. The media reported the event as "severed head murder", ignoring the identity of the girl and only focusing on the details. However, as time passed by various articles adopted various use of language in the portrayal process. *Hürriyet*, a major newspaper in Turkey, published one of the first reports on the Münevver's murder, titled with the infamous phrase 'severed head murder in Etiler' (*Hürriyet*, 2009). The choice of using this phrase would have an impact on society to such extent that even 12 years later from the vicious murder, the mere utterance of 'severed head murder' would still be reminiscent of the innocent girl. *Yeni Şafak* reported the murder under the "House of Terror" headline and identified the suspect while reporting the events in a literal manner without adding any unnecessary commentary or irrelevant information as we will see in our examples from the following years (Nergis, 2009). A well-known newspaper became one of the first media outlets that have established a relationship between the victim and the murderer, by establishing a narrative from the murderer's point of view (Habertürk, 2009).

The latter choice, which will be prominent in the further examples, symbolizes a relationship established between the parties and raised an inevitable question, an unavoidable interrogation that many women and people close to them will be subjected to in the future; "What did she do? Did he have a reason to get enraged? Did she cheat? Did she insult his masculinity?" The individualizing language used in the reports similar to Habertürk takes place as a distraction element which reduces the case from a young girl's unjust murder' to 'boyfriend kills his girlfriend'. Therefore, legitimizes a potential cause that should probably exist so that a man who loves a woman decides to murder his beloved girlfriend by assigning the relationship in the headline.

Further, it is observed that the narrative starts to change slowly but surely from the direct and factual context to idiomatic parable storytelling, referring to the murder as a fairytale that ended as a horror movie. (Vatan, 2009) Four months after the murder, while the murderer was still on the loose, the mainstream media outlets decided to make changes in their storytelling using sexist Turkish idioms in which one of the many important causes of gender inequality. The objectifying nature of these idioms, referring to the victim as a bird that should have been kept in a cage, a rose that should not have been withered, anything but a human further trivializes the case. Direct and factual reporting of the events, ultimately, should be adopted by the media and a relationship between the parties in case of a violent event could take place in the text if the allegations were confirmed by the ones closest to the victim. In Münevver Karabulut's case, there were many unconfirmed allegations for the cause of this murder which was the prominent result of the existence of a relationship between the parties and the choice made by media outlets about using the victim's and the murderer's photos from their time as a couple has caused a conquest for a legitimate reason for the murder.

2.2. The Case of Ayşe Paşalı (2010)

42-year-old Ayşe Paşalı was brutally murdered on the streets of Ankara in broad daylight. She was stabbed eleven times which resulted in her death. The media almost immediately picked on her story and revealed a dark or rather dreadful story behind the murder, a marriage filled with physical and psychological abuse with failed divorce attempts, sexual assault, assault, kidnapping. Paşalı applied to the court to benefit from Family Protection Law No 4320 and getting a restraining order against him but the court denied her request indicating that divorcees cannot benefit from this law. On December 7th, 2010, Ayşe Paşalı was murdered by İstikbal Yetkin. The presentation of the Ayşe Paşalı's case in the media was observed to be reliant on her identity as a wife and a mother, not an individual that existed before the marriage that has been ended prior to her murder or the mother figure she had become.

Emphasizing the maternal role of the victim further cultivates the social status gained by this mere fact, the necessity of life that is giving birth, reaching into an almost but not necessarily a higher place in society by fulfilling the assigned role (Dudu Karaman & Doğan, 2018). This role assertion paves the way for discrimination in society's perception of femicide cases by manifesting the importance of the murder of a mother while trivializing the ones who do not represent that group (Milliyet, 2010) (İstanbul Haber Ajansı, 2010). A news report (Habertürk, 2010) highlights the fact that Ayşe Paşalı had been physically abused when she was pregnant with her first daughter, quoting the daughter's words for the sake of a click on the article; for this example, Ayşe Paşalı's death is attributed to a different level of importance due to being assaulted during pregnancy. The marriage aspect, on the other hand, is one of the most common assertions used in the media to draw out a relationship that is private to its participants so that all judgments will be eliminated quickly. Emphasizing a marriage which is seen as a sacred establishment in the Turkish culture, further supports the tradition based on family matters to stay as a secret and no one can intervene with these matters.

Closeting the violence in a family setting could be observed in reports; a news article published in 2011, reports the event as a husband telling about how he murdered his wife however right after the headline, the reporter quickly acknowledges the fact that they are no longer married (Posta, 2011). Stigmatization of women as an ex-wife even though she is not related to that marriage at the moment further consolidates the idea that women are and will always be related to the men, considered and evaluated through that men and no matter what are the circumstances they could never be freed from that identity gained by a significant relationship. Another article published by the same newspaper almost 5 months after the murder withstand with their decision as referring to the murderer as the 'husband' and further adds a supposed 'love' and 'regret' emotions to the narrative and therefore forms an idea of a loving husband that lost himself for a moment and immediately regretted his decision (Posta, 2011). Although the context of both reports seems to consist of facts, the language used to attract attention harms the overall narrative by forming a presupposition; however, another report manages to succeed overall transmission of facts as well as draw attention without dehumanizing or deindividualizing the victim and pointing the finger of blame only to the murderer (Habertürk, 2011).

2.3. The Case of Özgecan Aslan (2015)

University student Özgecan Aslan was the last passenger on a minibus after returning to her home from a day spent with her friend. The minibus driver 26-year-old Ahmet Suphi Altındöken veered into an isolated road, allegedly attempting to kidnap her to sexually assault her, then the young girl becomes alerted. Further details on the timeline and the actions before Özgecan Aslan's murder is unclear, however, as seen in the many femicide cases that happened in Turkey in recent years, the murderer had accused the young girl of attacking her after getting into an isolated road, she was presumed dead on that spot. Altındöken, his father, and friends got involved in disposing of her body. Her family filed a missing person's report but attempts to find her were unsuccessful, later on, gendarmerie had suspected the minibus driver, Altındöken, that asked for directions and drove the opposite way. Their suspicions were confirmed after further investigation.

Media coverage of Aslan's murder was different than the other samples as means of the language choices made in the reporting process, as no relationships were attempted to be established. However, a great deal of the reports studied in the sampling process revealed that the reporters usually did not trivialize her murder, but they decided to use the most gruesome details of the murder and its aftermath in presenting. Sabah, four days after the murder, published a news article on the subject and used the statement given by Altındöken in which he accused the victim of making him angry (2015); the report's content majorly consist of the statement given by the murderer, however, parts added as a commentary by an anonymous reporter detailed irrelevant information such as 'Aslan got on the minibus when it was getting dark', 'Altındöken family was rich but they went bankrupt and that's why he was a driver', 'the murderer and his friends watch a Turkish tv series together '(Sabah, 2015); furthermore, Hürriyet and Milliyet newspapers followed a similar approach in their news reports in portraying the violent event in detail almost as fiction, and same with the former sample, both formed the report around the murderer's statement and giving out details about the disposing process (Milliyet, 2021) (Şen & Duman, 2015). Similarly, a commentary article published on a news website reported the event with the same details but in addition to the graphic content the commentary also incorporated sentimental and tragical elements to its narrative, formed a tragic spectacle for its audience (Adal, 2015).

Overall, it has been observed that the violence was reproduced and redistributed by the choice made by the reporters in using the in-depth details the murderer gave in his statement, the violent event that ended the 19-year-old girls' life was described to the extent that the murderer's consideration about eliminating the

possibility of DNA findings by dismembering, how did he struggle in murdering process, the gasoline he requested from his friend in order to burn the body and everything else. Özgecan Aslan's murder case was presented as a sensational horror/tragedy movie about an innocent girl and the narrative adopted the murderer's point of view, in-depth explanations given by the murderer in his statement was published by the media outlets and by that the case was turned into a spectacle for masses to consume. The choice of distributing details about a violent event caused stress among the overall audience and provokes outrage, a simple choice of not giving out explicit information would only benefit the masses by reducing the violence exposure as well as not showing directions for new ways to commit crimes.

2.4. The Case of Ülker Demirayak (2015)

Ülker Demirayak was murdered by 45-year-old Osman Türk in her house, right after the event Türk had run away from the crime scene. Demirayak's neighbors called an ambulance to the house however she died on that same day. Türk was captured by the police with the murder weapon, a shotgun, in his possession. Following the event, news reports about the murder were quickly published and many of which headlined the murder with details about her life as a divorcee, a mother of three, who had been in a relationship with a married man, and she was murdered because she had a relationship with another man. (Kuşdemir, 2015) In the course of research for the sampling, it has been observed that almost every other news outlet used the same tactics and choices in their narrative, revealing the private life of a victim who has no control over clarifying the allegations.

In a published news report the reason behind this murder is reported with the words of the murderer, alleging that the husband and father of 2 Türk had a relationship with Demirayak and on that night, after arriving at Demirayak's home, they started to argue over an alleged 'cheating', this argument resulted in her death. (Milliyet, 2015) Another report, staying persistent with the former report, further adds dramatic elements to the story, forming a narrative that suggests she had been the victim of her 'married lover'; romanticizing the event by including the acts performed by Türk, a guy who got angry upon finding his partner's betrayal, got drunk because of the damages in his manhood could not bring himself to bear with this disgrace so on and so forth. (Şok Gazetesi, 2015) Glorifying the acts of murder and resonating as a momentary slip, a crime of passion as well as jealousy is observed to be a common theme in the presentation of this case. (Habertürk, 2015). Considering the fact that the case's summary, information about the victim and murderer might and possibly is coming from the same source, and the majority of the reports are almost identical (T24, 2015); however the entirety of the samples included in this study and the vast majority of the reports accessible appears to agree upon the fact that Demirayak was married and divorced three years ago is important information to report, although her relationships prior to this murder do not hold an importance in the case (Karayol, 2015).

The narrative established and distributed through media plays a significant role in establishing relationships and turning these relationships into a sequence of events that obviously resulted in Demirayak's murder. The details about the marriage that has ended years ago, the victim having three kids, the murderer being already married and the alleged affair between the parties, and the alleged 'betrayal' of the victim establishes a victim-blaming discourse that focuses on the wrong choices made by Demirayak. Victim blaming discourse established by the media often results in victims being blamed for their murder with their choice of people to interact, of outfits, of time that they were outside, etc., and therefore dismisses the actual responsibility from the criminal by utilizing the restrictive cultural norms pushed upon the sexes. This kind of discourse although might be troublesome to detect the outcomes of supporting such discourse could be observed by the public's reactions.

2.5. The Case of Şule Çet (2018)

Şule Çet was murdered on the 29th of May 2018 in Ankara, she was pushed to death from the 20th floor of a plaza she had been working. Çağatay Aksu (34) and Berk Akand (33) called Çet to have an additional conversation about her being laid off from work by the new partner and they will find a solution. However, on the supposed meeting day, Çet was found dead right in front of the street of the said plaza; suspects Aksu and Akand claimed that they consumed alcoholic drinks that night and after getting drunk she committed suicide by jumping from the 20th floor. Further investigation, autopsy, and statements given revealed that she had been sexually assaulted, held against her will, and thrown out from the window.

The initial study of the reports revealed that the death of the young girl was portrayed as a possible suicide, although the event had occurred recently and the investigation was not completed, news reports deliberately distributed the suicide or accident narrative. Further, a news report published by Hürriyet (2018) includes the

statements given by Aksu and Akand by describing the events that resulted in her death such as ‘she was leaning from the window and told him that ‘she was going to jump’ and ‘he tried to stop her’. Although the reports published later did include the possibility of suspected murder and the existing ones were updated in accordance with the developments in the case, the portrayal of the victim in the reports and the details about her life such as Çet taking a year off from university due to losing her mother and later taking another year off due to her father disease, and finally being able to return to her school contributed to the ‘desperate young girl who needed her job to help with her school costs but got fired and is depressed’ narrative that has already been distributed to the masses. (Cumhuriyet, 2018) In addition, preliminary information that is present in reports distinguishes the social class difference between the victim and the suspects by including remarks such as ‘luxurious plaza’, ‘university student working part-time as the businessman’s assistant’(Haberler.com, 2018) (Sabah, 2018). Reports consisting of the murderer’s statements, and the conclusions derived from the fact that a CCTV screen capture of Çet entering the building with the two men, smiling were used as a sensationalizing aspect in the reports published by Milliyet (2019) and Hürriyet (2019); however, these reports were withdrawn or changed later.

The choices made in reporting are observed to have an assertion in the masses’ understanding of the case. Determined discourse plays a role in the awaking a reaction from the target conservative audience by establishing an ‘other’, an enemy, which moves the opposite way from the cultural expectations; disobedient woman which refuses all of the gender roles assigned to her presented in the media, and the anger targeted towards the victim and her life choices are the mere result of the narrative distributed by the media. Whether if the details about her meeting with the murderers at nighttime, or the alcohol consumption of the parties in that night, or the social status of the parties not being published would change the overall negative assumptions from the Turkish people is another question but it is clear that moving too far from the mere facts causes a distraction and establishes a victim-blaming narrative.

2.6. The Case of Emine Bulut (2019)

The violent event that resulted in Emine Bulut’s death was first introduced to the public with a video recording of her screaming in agony, covered in her blood, and her 10-year-old daughter right beside her. 43-year-old Fedai Varan who threatened, assaulted, and stalked Bulut for the last few years and lately harassing Bulut because of the custody of their mutual child was the murderer. On the 18th of August, after taking shelter in a police station and making a complaint about the harassing text messages she received from Varan, she was followed to the restaurant where she will be murdered and the video of her last moments will be taken. First reports on the subject were posted in a video form through social media and the uncensored video quickly become viral therefore immediate attention was obtained.

Initial response to the event other than the uncensored and the censored versions of the victim’s last moments going viral, published news reports were quick in identifying the victim and the murderer (Sol, 2019); aside from the identification of the parties, one of the first information about the parties was their marriage ended long ago and their alleged disagreement in their child’s custody, not the complaint Bulut made almost two hours ago about her murderer (Gazetekale, 2019). Captured and questioned quickly, Varan’s allegations given in his statement about the quasi reason for disagreement were disclosed to the media; already drawn relationship between the parties was elaborated in the further reports with quotes from the murderer such as they have planned to meet, talked awhile, claiming that he asked her if Bulut was going to marry and she said that she will then insulted him and they began to fight which resulted in a stabbing (Akyıldız, 2019).

Same with the previous cases presented in this study, almost every sample encountered and included had enforced the former relationship Bulut and Varan had (Habertürk, 2019), to the extent that a certain number of reports such as we see in the report published by Gözlem (2019) utilizes a similar approach in their narrative by headlining the case as a woman getting murdered by her husband but acknowledging the fact that they were divorced right after the headline. Dramatization being one of the most common themes adopted in news reporting and social media posts (@birtutamlavina, 2019) (@emrebeydemir, 2019), this case is observed to be rich in dramatic elements such as assigning an animosity to the murderer while mentioning the way Bulut was murdered and their daughter (Haberler.com, 2019) – or the blunt use of language when detailing the murder by demonizing Varan while blatantly using the word ‘slit’ in referring the wounds she took (Euronews, 2019).

In summary, the choices made in reporting of the case is observed to be consistent with the others in which reports were emphasizing the former relationship and forming their narrative around this relationship to the extent that interpretations such as divorce could cause a woman to get murdered if a woman argues with her ex-husband, she might get killed, or desire of moving on from ended relationships into new ones might result in death.

These choices in reporting further support the toxic discourse and around women's role in society and paves the way for new femicides while providing methods to kill or how to get reductions for committed crimes. Quotations or remarks from a murderer's statement in femicide cases are significantly similar in their accusations, and it has been common for murderers to accuse their victims with insult, betrayal, and refusing to show their child, etc. Therefore, a language and narrative choice that enables or legitimizes the violence is believed to be harmful for the prevention of femicides and should be avoided by mainstream media.

2.7. The Case of Pınar Gültekin (2020)

Pınar Gültekin's name was initially introduced to the media through social media platforms with efforts to find the young woman who has been missing. The hashtag 'PınarGulTekinNerede' (Eng. WhereIsPınarGulTekin) was a trending topic on Twitter until the day she was found dead. The police started to investigate the whereabouts of the 27-year-old university student Gültekin, upon finding CCTV footage about the last person she was seen, 32-year-old Cemal Metin Avcı was arrested. Initially, Avcı denied meeting with the young woman during the interrogation, however, when the footage was shown Avcı confessed to murdering Gültekin by beating, strangling, burning, burying, and covering with cement. Considering the fact that efforts to find Gültekin was prominent especially on Twitter and many individuals were already speculating about the dangers she might be in, young women's death immediately went viral.

News reports studied in this course showed that the reports did not hesitate to label Avcı as Gültekin's ex-boyfriend even before mentioning him as a murder suspect or giving out his name -then known as C.M.A.- upon his confession. Further, the statement given by Avcı addressing the cause of murder as a fight due to jealousy that ended in Gültekin's death was also reported (Habertürk, 2020). Jealous ex-boyfriend discourse established by the media observed to be polished with the new information about Avcı, a report published by Yeni Şafak (2020) included elements such as 'pub owner', 'married man' and 'has a daughter' into the narrative. Undoubtedly that the newly introduced elements signified the existence of the 'other' and portrayed Gültekin as a woman having an affair with a married man and deviated from the cultural norms; mere examples of such matter were showcased in various platforms resulted in outrage. Birgün (2020) published an article on the subject with forming their report around the murderer, reproducing the violence with report's narrative by detailing the murder with almost it's all aspects and including remarks made by Avcı such as blaming the victim that can no longer deny the accusations; and his justification for the murder by claiming to be 'in love, desperate, did not plan the murder beforehand and was regretting his decision' was also included in the report.

Congruently, an article published by Kafakalem suggested another allegation made by Avcı about accusing Gültekin threatening him with talking to his wife about their affair and blackmailing him; however, the report did not include any quotation marks or did not suggest the remarks as allegations and used the term 'confessing'. In addition, the article made further remarks on the parties did meet because Avcı wanted to talk about alleged blackmailing and Gültekin constantly threatened him (Kafakalem, 2020). Blackmailing allegations mentioned in various reports were somewhat cleared later, a report published by Hürriyet on the subject elaborated on the allegations by including the remarks made by police, questioning the threat messages sent by Gültekin to Avcı and him being unable to show messages, however, the report followed with the murderer's narrative (2020). The same blackmailing remarks were tweeted by an amateur news account, however, this example was observed to be the first to not emphasize the relationship (@bpthaber, 2020). Following the allegations/accusations theme, another report headlined similarly mentioned the murderer's statement on accusing Gültekin of drugging his drink, taking photos of him unconscious, him being sexually assaulted by another man, and her demanding money afterward without demonstrating solid evidence (Sözcü, 2020). Lastly, television channel Show TV broadcasted a new year's special which embodied a segment summarizing the year 2020 and included Gültekin's case in the segment by referring to the murderer as her 'boyfriend'; a remark that caused outrage was, however, the poor choice of music in the clip which could be bluntly explained as 'being set on fire' (@pushholder, 2021).

Media coverage of Pınar Gültekin's case is observed to embody a significant amount of allegations and false accusations to such extent that the established narrative made Gültekin the target of hate comments. Discourse set on concepts such as the crime of passion, blackmailing, affair, threat, boyfriend and to get back together, etc. is observed to be dangerously harmful in this case; justification and rationalization of the murder by emphasizing on such allegations directly as well as indirectly reproduced and redirected the blame to the victim, which is a common result observed in the sample cases and in itself is a reality of media. Efforts to marginalize a victim by stressing their life choices and promoting the murderer's point of view/allegations are observed to be resulted in this violent event to signify an individual problem, which had not been occurred if the victim did not

push the murderer to the edge and takes away from the reality that femicides and violence against women are a social problem in a global spectrum.

2.8. The Case of Aylin Sözer (2020)

Aylin Sözer was brutally murdered by 32-year-old Kemal Ayyıldız in her apartment; the police were called on the spot by her sister upon hearing from Sözer’s assistant about suspicious messages about a money transfer allegedly sent by Sözer, and the suspicious messages her sister received. The police knocked on her door to check on her, but no one answered, however, they quickly realized someone was inside and quickly kicked down the door. The smoke coming from the apartment alarmed everyone as soon as the door to her apartment was opened, and Aylin Sözer’s murderer Kemal Ayyıldız was quickly arrested.

News coverage of the violent event that ended Aylin Sözer’s life is observed to be composed of a media outlet’s ineffectiveness in publishing unverified information about the case. In the course of the research, it has been observed that false allegations about the alleged relationship with the victim as suggested by the murderer, to this day, are not corrected in a significant amount of reports (Posta, 2020). Considering that establishing a narrative from the murderer’s allegations is a common choice adopted by a significant amount of mainstream media outlets in order to garnish the report to seem appealing, an article published by Sputnik (2020) reported the ‘(ex)boyfriend’ allegations without including any terms that make references to allegations and redistributing the narrative as a fact. After the relationship allegations were denied by Sözer’s family members several times and mentioning that Sözer hired Ayyıldız to build a bookshelf when moving in that house and sometime later fired him after becoming suspicious of her credit card getting stolen. Another report, which is not the only report that alleged the same, argued that Ayyıldız took Sözer as a hostage for two days, yet the allegation was never confirmed by any authorities and the source is merely unknown (A Haber, 2020).

Epic storytelling observed in the reports, as demonstrated almost in the entirety of samples, principally focused on the mournful press statements given by the authorities, emphasizing Sözer’s identity, not as a human but as an academician; reducing the murder into a very respectful individual getting murdered by an uncivilized individual in such a manner that if Sözer did not been an academician her death would not have an impact (NTV, 2020). In addition to relationship allegations and dramatic narrative, another common choice made in the reporting was not revealing (Yeni Şafak, 2020) or falsely informing the public about the identity of the murderer -who is captured in Sözer’s house attempting to set her body on fire- using abbreviations instead of his full name, any information about his occupation; the uncertainty and instability surrounding the murderer’s surname reoccurred in many reports (A Haber, 2020) (Posta, 2020) (Milliyet, 2020). Allegations surrounding the relationship, the argument ended in murder, hostage situation or any kind of narrative getting denied repeatedly by the ones who are close to Sözer; and the authorities gathering the CCTV footage of Ayyıldız entering the apartment on the morning of murder with covering his face and wearing gloves; finding of the fact that Ayyıldız messaged people as Sözer to transfer money from her account and sending to an unknown location -which further proves the premeditated nature of this murder were all denied. However, an additional report published by Sputnik still formed their report around the murderer’s statement by including the entirety of his false narrative in their report (Sputnik Turkey, 2020). An article published by TRT decided to change the narrative to such extent that even though Ayyıldız was arrested right beside Sözer’s body, by headlining as ‘suspected murder of academician’ and disregarded the violent event, almost narrating the story as if Sözer was found dead as a coincidence (TRTWorld, 2020).

Notwithstanding the truth being revealed, mainstream media stayed persistent with their narrative to the full extent; all of the evidence pointed to the fact that Ayyıldız premeditated the murder, but reports made references such as he tried to cover up the murder as robbery. Nearly every single initiative taken by the media seems to be a failure of every principle and ethics a journalist can and should follow, by disregarding every verified information and further distributing false allegations, reproducing the violence Sözer had encountered and turned into a target which masses fancy to hate. Alienation or otherization discourse that is prominent in Turkish media with utilizing rather harmful gender-based notions -almost every allegation included in this study is eventually weaponized against the victims by society- by describing a diversion from traditions, conservatism, and expectations of religious systems from women and men. Negative outcomes of these choices adopted by the media could be easily observed in comment sections of referenced reports, distribution of these narratives for viewing/clicking sake take away from the serious nature of these femicide cases. A simple attitude change adopted by the media is believed to play a role as a progressive step towards gaining importance on the prevention of gender-based violence or simply how they are being perceived.

3. Conclusion

Violence against women and domestic violence against women is a social phenomenon that deeply affects many people in Turkey and around the world. On the other hand, it is a recent development that regulations on violence against women and domestic violence have begun to be included in national and international legal documents. The reasons for this are that women are mostly placed in the private space in the distinction of public space/private space, and this space is considered a space of privacy and that what has happened in this space over the years has not encountered any reaction; thus, it was considered usual by many people. Women have been considered as a secondary creature compared to men throughout history, and this has caused women, who have been tried to be kept under man's control and oppression, to remain vulnerable to attacks they are exposed in social life. This situation, which applies to many women from all parts of the world, has been replaced by both national laws and international legal documents since recently. Thus, violence against women and domestic violence have ceased to be the subject of the private sphere and began to be included in the regulation areas of states and supranational structures as the subject of the public sphere. The present study determined the content of the concept of violence against women with the help of the concept of violence and explained the meanings attributed to the concept of violence against women in international documents and within which scope the context is understood.

Physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, and economic violence, which are the types of domestic violence against women, were examined under separate headings. Furthermore, the relationship between language and verbal violence was mentioned as language is an important part as well as a source of culture. Considering international texts including the phenomena of violence against women and domestic violence, and the fight against these phenomena, it is seen that violence against women occurs as a result of the unequal power relation especially between women and men as a violation of human rights in essence. It should be noted that recognizing that violence against women and domestic violence are violations of human rights is a very important achievement in preventing cases of violence against women and domestic violence that have been disregarded for many years.

It is clear that a lot of steps have been taken on the national and international levels towards the prevention and complete elimination of violence against women and domestic violence in today's world. However, acts of violence, used as a means of constant oppression against women, unfortunately, continue in Turkey as in all parts of the world, and the perpetrators of these actions often go unpunished, which serves as a reinforcement for the repetition of these crimes. Considering the situation in Turkey, it is clear that institutional support for women victims of violence and policies developed to prevent violence and address inequalities are insufficient. Perhaps the most important of the steps that can be taken especially in Turkey to prevent violence against women and domestic violence against women, namely its most common form, and to completely eliminate it as a future goal is to change the pre-acceptance of violence against women both in society and in practice. A society in which women are constantly left in the background in all areas is a society with a male-dominated mentality. The main problem here is the problem of establishing power over women. There are many traditional, cultural, religious, and social underlying reasons behind this. The role that has been attributed to women beforehand is reinforced in many ways starting from family to primary school books, fairy tales, cartoons, from all educational and professional life in the following period to all kinds of publications through the media, to the approach of law practitioners referred to after the act of violence has been inflicted on the victim.

The most common form of these reinforcements is that the male character fiction is always strong and domineering in mainstream and new media series while the woman is always weak and in need, economically dependent on the man. Additionally, it is observed that men who commit violence against a woman or another man in the series are almost never punished. The messages they contain are always the same both in the language used in news and in the language structured in series and films in terms of strengthening gender roles. The way violence against women is structured and a masculine mindset is formed is a situation that needs to be re-addressed with all aspects in the media from cartoons to reality shows and needs to be carefully regulated both in new media and mainstream media.

This study showed that the language used in news about violence against women in mainstream and social media does not respect gender equality and is prepared in a sexist style violating the most basic human rights of women. Women who are subjected to all forms of violence are once again wronged because they are the subject of newspaper reports in a language that is also sexist and undermines their personal rights. It is necessary to carry out studies for media professionals, generalize courses on gender in faculties, conduct educational studies for

future media professionals, organize training to raise awareness in mainstream and new media, generalize media literacy, use rewarding mechanism, make regulations to make public broadcasting/publishing sensitive towards gender equality in order to remedy this injustice.

In this study, it is shown that media utilizing the sensationalizing elements in their narrative in order to draw the public's attention to the said articles manifested itself frequently in the form of sexist remarks; these remarks and the various sexist discourses they contribute to establishing primarily functioned as a crucial tool for victim-blaming. It is evident that the media should stop prioritizing the femicide cases in accordance with the victim's level of education, or the violence level of the event, whether if a victim was married, divorced, or consumed alcohol, or if the murder happened at night, or if there was any cheating/affair involved since these factors do not change the fact that this violence is targeted against women. The eminent products of this established victim-blaming and sexist narratives by the media could be observed in every part of the internet as well as social life since the patriarchally driven Turkish society successfully consumes, internalizes, and reflects these ideas to every extent of itself. Misogynistic discourses in which the women are marginalized to the extent that almost all basic human acts performed by them is acknowledged as a threat, or a move against men, and even though a woman isolated herself from a certain man she is still considered as a 'property' of him is present in the news articles; almost every act of murderer men studied above -including the violent acts they committed- is glorified and romanticized under the disguise of love, jealousy or masculinity, however, every attempt of women such as taking legal action towards their abusers, filing for a divorce, just going out or heading home at night, alcohol consumption or the outfits they chose to wear is weaponized against the victims.

It has been observed that the media alienated and marginalized the violence against women as well as femicide cases by drawing out relationships between the murderer/abuser and the victims and established probable causes for these violent events by including the murderer/abuser's remarks, allegations, and accusations in their reports, without providing solid evidence which should be avoided in order to prevent a victim-blaming discourse in the society. Murdered women were accused of cheating, committing suicide, having an affair, or any accusation the murderers could come up with and the articles studied in this work showed that the media did not hesitate in the distribution of these accusations while reproducing the violence by means of distribution false information. The sample media outlets did not show any respect towards the victims and their families and distributed every single aspect of the victim's lives in order to marginalize women in accordance with the patriarchally driven community of the Turkish society's expectations from women. It is evident that the subliminal messages or ideologically driven discourses presented through the mainstream media as well as the new media should be eliminated before publishing. Fundamentally, the Turkish Journalists' Association (TGC), Progressive Journalists Association (PJA) and Turkish Press Council share basic journalism principles among themselves in which if these principles were to be followed the crucial problem of violence legitimizing effect of the media would be eliminated, and the primary foundation of misogyny and patriarchal ideology in the society would be distressed, these are: (i) *Private lives of individuals will not be published except it is necessary*, (ii) *violent, humiliating, hateful language or content encouraging discrimination will not be published*, (iii) *unverified information, allegations or accusations will not be published and the truth will not be altered*, (iv) *ideological preferences should be stated or could not be masked behind an objectivity*. The application of these principles, however, remains as a matter of conscience since the ordinary individual -especially the victims and their families- do not have enough resources to take action towards these articles and the discourses they help to establish. Therefore, effective disincentives for targeting, blaming, shaming, or marginalizing the victims should be created in terms of legal bodies and professional associations. It is also crucial to acknowledge in order to move towards a more civilized society that not only by the media but also through the schools, from kindergarten to universities, and by every extent of society, the patriarchal state of mind which violates the most basic human rights of almost half of its population, namely women, should be changed. Considering the fact that the media is a mere starting point for the legitimization of violence, families and the social structure which is driven and shaped by ideologies should also change from their core to prevent such human rights violations.

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