

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

***Domestic Violence against Women:
The Case Study of Kolfe Keranyo Sub-City***

***By
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DEDICATION

I DEDICATE THIS WORK TO ALL WOMEN VICTIMS
OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CSA	Central Statistical Authority
EWLA	Ethiopia Women Lawyer Association
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
NCTPE	National Committee on Traditional Practices in Ethiopia
UN	United Nation
UNDP	United Nation Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nation Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

ABSTRACT

Domestic violence against women is one of the most pervasive human right violations, social and health problem. However, studies on the issues are recent phenomena, particularly in developing countries like Ethiopia; there is still lack of basic information on the magnitude, the understanding of its root causes and the factor that prevent it. Despite the limited research, there are some studies, police and media reports indicate that its prevalence and seriousness in the country.

The study was conducted with the objective of exploring and gaining insight into women's experiences of violence in their own words; therefore, the researcher primarily used qualitative methodology, based on feminist perspectives. It was conducted at Kolfe Keranyo sub-city between September and November of 2006, involving women victims of domestic violence who were clients of EWLA, married women, legal enforcers and coordinator of legal aid at EWLA. Three focus group discussion and 15 in-depth interviews were carried out with purposely selected subject. Moreover, as supplementary survey has been conducted in Kolfe Keranyo sub-city. The surveys utilized a questionnaire administered to 150 married women.

The result revealed those women's accounts of abuse is a complex phenomenon because it includes various forms, ranging from humiliation, threats and social isolation to forced sex and battering. Violence against women runs along a range, often escalating from milder forms to more serious acts. The finding indicates that men who are physically abusive are also psychologically, economically and sexually abusive.

In this study, poverty and transgressions of gender role were found to be as the main cause of domestic violence. Alcoholism, jealousy and masculinity linked to dominance were also mentioned as factors of violence. In fact all of the causes are interrelated and the manifestation of unequal power relationship between women and men. Domestic violence has profound consequences on women's overall well-being. The experience of

domestic violence puts women at greater risk of physical, social, mental and health problems, and lately transmission of HIV/AIDS.

With regard to response to domestic violence, the study shows that most abused women are not passive victims but rather adopt active strategies to maximize their and their children safety. It includes avoiding, enduring, and some fighting back while still others attempt to keep the peace by giving in to their husbands' demands. A women's response to abuse is often limited by the options available to them. Where women sought help, they primarily turned to informal sources of support, particularly family, friends, and neighbors rather than to formal sources. The findings revealed that they didn't mostly receive the kind of support or service they needed. Despite many obstacles, there were women decided permanently to leave the violent husbands. Divorce is one of the active coping strategies for abused women; however, after divorce they face a lot of social and economic problem.

In general, although domestic violence is serious problem, it is still largely considered as 'norm' and private matter. Thus, in Ethiopia by giving visibility to the experience of abused women this study aims to contribute for new and broader polices to prevent it.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

Violence is a wide spread and growing problem in practically all societies. It takes many forms and occurs in all setting: at work, in the home, in the street and the community at large. It affects both female and male of all ages. However, there are important differences between women and men in the forms, the nature and consequences of violence. Most violence is perpetrated by men against women, whatever the age of victim (Garcia, 1999).

Violence is often cycle of abuse that manifests it self in many forms throughout a women's life. At the beginning of her life, a girl may be target of sex selective abortion or female infanticide in culture where son preference is prevalent during childhood. Violence against girls may include enforced malnutrition lack of access to medical care, female genital mutilation, early marriage, forced prostitution... etc. Some go one to suffer throughout their adult lives - battery, rape and even murdered at the hands of an intimate partner (UNICEF, 2000).

Apart from random violence to which every one is susceptible, women face particular form violence in their marriage life or with in the family that is domestic violence. There is a profound difference between popular conception of what families are and the reality. For many, 'home' is where they face a regime of terror and violence at the hand of somebody close to them. Women and girls experience violence primarily at the hands of men they know and within the so called "safe heaven" of home (Sweetman, 1998). Feminist analysis also challenges the belief in the security and safety of 'the home' as myth. For example (Dobash and Dobash,1988) argue that marriage is a social structure that gives the husband the right to the domestic and sexual service of their wives, place wives under the control and direction of their husbands, and subjects women to the use of intimidation, coercion and violence as strategies for maintaining male rights and privileges.

Global awareness regarding domestic violence has undergone a profound transformation

in recent years. Once viewed as a private problem affecting only a few women, it is now considered as major social, health and human right issue. The growing awareness is largely the result of the reemergence of the women's issue and when there has been a strong feminist movement, enabling collective organization against its occurrence. The success of these efforts is evident in recent international document, such as the UN Declaration on the Elimination of all forms Violence against Women (1993), the declaration of platforms for action of the recent UN conference on human rights (Vienna ,1993), population and development (Cairo, 1994) and the Beijing Platform of Action of 1995 (WHO, 2005).

There is still no universal agreement on the definition of domestic violence. It varies considerably, partially because acts of abuse take many forms and involve women and men as a victim as well as perpetrator. Some researchers have argued that violence is equally a problem for both sexes. However, several international studies reported that this argument ignores the disproportionate rate of male violence against women and that most documented female violence is committed in self-defense. Women may also be the violent but their action account for a small percentage of violence (Heise *et.al*, 1999).

There is increasing international consensus that the abuse of women, regardless of where it occurs, should be conceptualized within the frame work of “gender based violence” as it is derives from women's subordinate status with regard to men in the society (Ellsberg, 2000). The official United Nation definition of gender based violence was first articulated in 1993 when general assembly passed the Declaration on the Elimination of all forms Violence against Women. According to the declaration the term “violence against women” means any act of gender based violence that result in, is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threat of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (UN, 1993).

This report also refers domestic violence as violence perpetrated by intimate partners and other family members, and manifest through physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse. Despite the fact that there are multiple forms of domestic violence, the

most devastating and dangerous forms of violence is wife abuse (Neena *et.al*, 1998). Women are more vulnerable risk of experiencing violence in intimate relationship (WHO, 2005). Violence by male intimate partners against female partner can be manifested in many forms. A fact sheet published by cornerstone presented the following sketch of continuum of domestic violence, which shows from the simplest to the most drastic forms.

Physical ----- Homicide

Pushing, slapping, kicking, choking, using weapon

Emotional ----- Suicides

Criticizing, ignoring, yelling, isolation, humiliation

Sexual ----- Rape

Unwanted touching, unfaithfulness, false accusation, forced sex.

(Cornerstone, 1998: 8)

Source: Hand book of understanding domestic violence

Domestic violence is gender based because violence against women in the family is rooted in the structural relationship of power domination and privilege existing between men and women in different societies. Thus, women being generally subordinated by patriarchal system which prevail in most parts of the world are rendered powerless and defenseless in the face of domestic violence (Oykanmi, 1997). There is increasing consensus that abuse of women is best understood within “gender” frame work because it evolves in part from women’s subordination status in the society. Women unequal status is pervasive in patriarchal societies such as Ethiopia.

Domestic violence occurs in all communities and transcends social, economic, religious and cultural group. Around the world at least one woman in every second has been beaten, coerced in to sex otherwise abused in her life time. Most often the abuser is a member of her own family. Studies also suggest that from one fifth to more than half all

women have been physically assaulted by a spouse or male intimate in their life time Heise *et.al*, 1999).

Despite the fact that domestic violence exists in all counties of the world, its severity varies from society to society and culture to culture. Many international researches indicate that while the root cause of such violence is inequality in gender relation, there are several factors such as economy, cultural and social norm that contribute to the severity and frequency of gender based violence.

In spite of the growing recognition of domestic violence against women and progress made in developing continents like Africa, there is still lack of basic information on the prevalence of the problem and the understanding of its root causes. The limitation of research work in Africa by no means implies the absence of the problem and the insignificant of its magnitude in the continent.

Recent research revealed that domestic violence against women is serious problem and rates in sub-saharan Africa rank high even relative to other developing regions of the world. For instance, 46% of Ugandan women, 60% of Tanzanian women, 42% of Kenyan women and 40% of Zambian women report regular physical abuse by their husbands (Collymore, 2000).

In Ethiopia like most of African countries violence with in the family has been recognized as major social problem recently. The main reason for the delay in its recognition as a social problem is that the responses to domestic violence are influenced by cultural and social value. In the country a nation wide study on the prevalence against has not conducted and documented well. However, as some studies, police and media reports indicate that its prevalent is extremely high and is on the rise. Due to the existing socio-economic position of women, cultural and religious barriers a large number of abused wives don't report the crime or the violence (Original, *et.al*, 2005).

Statement of the problem

In Ethiopia, the problem of violence women experience in their marriage life is severe and studies have shown the prevalence. Physical, sexual, economical and psychological assaults occur at alarming rate. With regard to the seriousness of domestic violence in the country, for example, WHO (2005) states that the highest prevalence of domestic violence is “beyond imagination” in the 21st century. Ethiopia is one of the countries with the highest prevalence of both physical and sexual violence, 71% of ever-partnered Ethiopian women experienced one or the other forms of violence, or both over their lifetime. In spite of its high prevalence rate in the country, domestic violence has been under reported and not well documented.

Despite Ethiopia being a signatory of Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which call for action to be taken against public and private gender based violence; violence by intimate partner has not been recognized by policy maker and society as a critical constraint to women advancement in the country.

In the country, it is believed that many women live constantly with the threat of domestic violence and there are interrelated factors that aggravated the problem. The root cause of domestic violence lie in the society's attitude towards and practice of gender discrimination, which place women in the subordination position in relation to men. The lacks of social and economic value perpetuate and reinforce the assumption that men have the right to beat their wives, have decision-making power and control over women. The gender perspective is very important when examining the existence and causes of domestic violence. Because one is able to explore different roles and privileges accorded to women and men and their impact on the existence of domestic violence.

Domestic violence against women affects all spheres of women’s lives: their autonomy, their productivity, and their quality of life. It is a risk for wide range of negative health outcomes and even death. It is important to note that, domestic violence reduces the range of choices open to women, and narrows their options in almost every sphere of life – public and private sphere. It limits their choices, directly influence their health, disrupting

their lives and ultimately, Violence hinders women's full participation in society (WHO, 2005).

Some studies reported that urban residence is identified as risk factors by interacting with other factors. For instance, in Addis Ababa, the study showed that domestic violence crime had increased over the last few years. This could be as indicated in the study, due to the fact that domestic violence crime has been increased or it could also be due to the fact that more and more people are coming forward to report such cases to the police. It is also possible that the combination of these factors have contributed to the increase crimes (Original *et.al*, 2005).

Moreover, Ethiopian Women Lawyer Association (EWLA) has handled many gender based violence cases from all sub cities of Addis Ababa among these the most prevalent cases are rape and domestic violence. Most of these crimes are also reported from Kolfe Keranyo sub city. This indicated that the problem of domestic violence is significant in this area.

In view of the afore mentioned problem, this particular research will answer the following basic and major research questions.

- Why does domestic violence against women occur?
- What are the consequences of domestic violence?
- How does domestic violence against women affect or deprive women's equality with men in the private spheres?
- How do women victim of domestic violence express their experience in their words?
- How do women, society and legal enforcers respond to domestic violence?

Objective of the study

The aim of this thesis is to provide a compressive understanding of domestic violence. The study defines domestic violence against women as violence perpetrated by the husbands against the wives in heterosexual relationship, including physical,

psychological, sexual and economical.

Despite the fact that domestic violence is a serious problem, this issue is little researched in Ethiopia especially the ‘why’ and ‘how’ it occurs from abused women experience in depth. The few studies that have been carried out in Ethiopia mainly focused on the magnitude of the problem. In fact, the surveys are helpful to show the burden of the issue, but it is believed that they don’t provide in depth and detail information to understand the occurrence of domestic violence. Thus, qualitative study was mainly under taken to understand and explore women’s experience, perception and response in relation to domestic violence.

Specifically, the study aims to gain insight into women’s experience of domestic violence, to asses the constraints that deprive women’s equality with men in the private spheres, to examine the main causes and consequences of domestic violence as well as to explore what coping mechanism women use and societal and legal enforcer response to domestic violence. In addition, by giving visibility to the experience of abused women this study aims to contribute and provide information for new and broader policies to address the problem.

Limitation of the study

The research study is delimited to some victims of domestic violence (clients at EWLA) and married women who are dwellers of Kolfe Keranyo sub-city. It is believed that the research setting was convenient to identifying the potential participants to address the research questions. Moreover, due to time and resource constraints the study was based on small samples and limited information. It would have been better, if different institutional players, men and women from different social status have been included.

Organization of the study

This thesis deals with introduction part and four chapters. The introduction part includes background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study and limitation of the study. The first chapter also comprises methodology and the review literature. The

methodology section incorporates method of data collection, sampling technique and data analysis as well as ethical considerations. With regard to review literature, it deals with the magnitude of domestic violence, ecological perspective and different explanation on men violence towards women, the multiple impact of violence as well as the response towards domestic violence.

Chapter two presents different forms of violence that women experienced in abusive relationship. It includes physical, sexual, economical and psychological violence. In chapter three the main factors including poverty, gender transgression, alcoholism, jealousy and others were discussed. The consequences of violence were also presented in this section. The fourth chapter also discussed how women cope with violence, the reason that led women to stay and leave the abusive relationship as well as the response of formal and informal groups to domestic violence. Finally, based on the findings conclusion was drawn.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

1.1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1.1. The magnitude of domestic violence against women

Domestic violence against women occurs in all communities regardless of race, class, faith, status and education. As a major social problem, accurate and comparable data on domestic violence are needed to strengthen advocacy effort, to help policy maker to understand the problem and guide the design of preventive intervention (WHO, 1997). However, studies on the issues are recent phenomena, particularly in developing countries; there is still lack of basic information on the magnitude, the understanding of its root causes and the factor that may protective.

Most of the information available through the police, women centers and other formal institutions is also believed to be unreliable because of underreporting. Debate regarding the magnitude of the problem is clouded by the fact that domestic violence is a crime that is under recorded and under reported (UNICEF, 2000). Abane (1997), in his study on domestic violence against women in Kenya, stated that when women file report and seek treatment they may have to contend with the police and health care officials who have not been trained to respond adequately or to keep consistent records. On the other hand, victims are often reluctant to report because they feel ashamed of being assaulted by their husbands, fear of the husband reaction, and the sense of family loyalty and, above all, economic and social dependence up on men who are abusing them prevent those women from reporting the violence they suffer. In Ethiopia also due to the existing socio economic position, cultural and religious barrier a large number of crimes of violence against women still go under reported (Original *et.al*, 2005). Globally, the few statistics available, however, reveal the severity of the problem.

Ellsberg (2000), in her analysis on the magnitude of domestic violence, stated that there are evidences from different parts of the world that domestic violence is a pervasive

phenomenon. A recent review of 50 population-based studies from 36 countries indicated that between 10% - 60% of women ever been married or in the union have experienced at least one incidence of physical violence from current and former intimate partners. Physical violence intimate relationship almost always is accompanied by psychological abuse in one third to over one half of cases by sexual abuse (Bagshaw, *et.al*, 2000). This was also found in this study most of the women living with physical violence reported that it was accompanied by psychological and sexual violence. Community based studies in Ethiopia also indicate 50-60% of women experienced domestic violence in their life time (Negussie, 1998, Tegbar *et.al*, 2004)

Worldwide studies identify a consistent list of events that are said to “trigger” violence these include: not obeying her husband, talking back, not having food ready on time, failing to care adequately for the children or home, refusing sex (Heise *et.al*, 1999). All of these constitute transgression of gender norms.

1.1.2. Causes of domestic violence against women

In order to prevent and address the social problem like domestic violence, it is necessary to understand its causes. Researchers from different parts of the world have attempted to come up with different theories to explain the causation of domestic violence. A variety of disciplines attempt to explain, including psychology, social work, sociology, criminal justice and public health. In turn, competing theories exist with different resolution ideologies. Many of them have focused on individual and socio-structural approach in describing the causes but they do not provide a complete explanation. They have tended to focus on single causal factors to explain the occurrence of violence.

1.1.2.1. Individual approach

For over two decades, researchers, policy makers and service providers have applied various model and conceptual frameworks to wife abuse. Most explanation of abuse has only focused on the attribute of abuser and victims, or the relationship between the two. Factors associated with perpetrators that have been looked at include stress, psychosis, and personality disorder, addiction to alcohol and drugs or gambling. Factors associated

with victims include physical disability, economic dependence and unemployment (Davis, 1994). In general, the causes are individual problem, which are biological, psychological or social origin, such as stress, poverty, unemployment or substance abuse. Some of individual approaches, which have focused on characteristics of individuals involve in the abuse on, are mentioned below.

Biological theory

Biological theories that explain family violence based on biological variables. This model suggests that male sexual jealousy, a characteristic common to male batterers, evolved to maximize their reproductive prowess (Burgess & Draper, 1989). Researchers also study effects of childhood attention deficit disorders, head injuries, and various biochemical factors such as testosterone and serotonin upon relationship aggression. The connection between head injury and violence, for example, may result from lowered impulse control due to damage to various parts of the brain. Biological models, however, do not factor in social factors and they reduce offender responsibility for their actions. Empirical evidence for these controversial ideas is not strong but most researchers would acknowledge that biological factors can play a role in some cases. In addition; attempts to predict family violence using biological variables will only be valid when hosts of other non-biological factors are added. Therefore, they have limited applicability (Cunningham, *et.al*, 1998).

Psychopathological theory

A psychopathological explanation also suggests that individuals who display violence toward women have a personality disorder or mental illness impeding inhibitions about using violence. Those committing violence are seen as sick individuals and different from others (Pagelow, 1984). Dutton (1987) compared wife assaulters with non-assault men and found that assault men have greater needs for power; one explanation suggests that men who feel powerless due to low self-esteem, or feel low control over others or the events in their lives have great needs for power.

Dutton (1994) found that abusive men have narcissistic personality styles; they are more anxious about abandonment than non-abusive men and aggressive men take a longer time to commit to a relationship and have greater feelings of dependency as compared to men who are not aggressive (Ryan, 1995). Criticism of this theory being used exclusively suggests that the importance of social structure is minimized, and it decreases the abuser's responsibility for his actions, which may lead to lessened consequences (Cunningham, *et.al*, 1998).

Social learning theory

Within the context of violence against women, social learning theory, termed also the intergenerational transmission of violence, believes that violence is learned during socialization within the family, which is the main agent of socialization (Straus *et.al.*, 1986). Specifically, those experiencing or witnessing violence in their family-of-origin learn that violence is a way of getting what they want when other methods have not worked. Dumas, Margolin, & John (1994) discovered that men exposed to violence in their family-of-origin were more likely to perpetrate domestic violence, and women who observed violence in their family-of-origin were more likely to be subjected to their partners' aggression. Straus *et.al* (1986) sense that each generation is conditioned to be violent by participating in a violent family. The family is the training ground for violence, highlighted by the idea that those who hit you are people who love you the most. Empirical evidences or support of this view comes from evaluation of cognitive behavioral program and researcher demonstrated high rates of family violence perpetrated by men exposed to violence their childhood.

However, social learning in isolation from other theories does not explain why the intergenerational transmission of violence is not universal and, conversely, why some batterers do not report histories of exposure to violence in their families' origin. Critics of social learning theory argue that the rate of intergenerational transmission of violence is only 30%, therefore, 70% of people who witness or experience violence do not perpetrate violence (Kaufman & Ziegler, 1987). Social learning theory advocates counter this reasoning by emphasizing that although their theory does not explain all violence,

individuals experiencing violence as children are at increased risk of engaging in violent behavior as adults (Straus, 1991).

Even though, domestic violence against women is associated with individual factors, Violence occurs in all socio economic, education, status, consequently, this explanation is not a complete. In recent years, a number of theorists and researchers have pointed out that these traditional explanations are inadequate because they fail to acknowledge the significance of gender and domestic violence occurs in all socio economic, racial and class groups.

1.1.2.2. Socio-structural approach

This approach postulates that the cause of domestic violence lies in the structure society. At the core of this approach is unequal balance of power between men and women that is institutionalized with in patriarchal family (Heise, 1998). Feminist perspective could be grouped under the socio-structural approach by criticizing patriarchy as a cause of violence against women (Sweetman, 1998).

The feminist model mainly focuses upon the male-dominated culture (patriarchy) and the cultural institutions, which support the structure of relationships in a patriarchal culture (Bograd, 1988). Major contributing factors to violence against women include the historically male-dominated social structure, socialization teaching males and female's gender-specific roles and women's limited access to resources. (Johnson, 1995). This perspective is supported by cross-cultural studies showing less violence in more egalitarian societies.

Feminism incorporates diversity in terms of it approach to domestic violence. Feminist theory is not homogenous. It represents a broad range of often-contradictory viewpoints and political affiliation is dynamic and pragmatic. However, feminism holds some central conviction about the position of men and women. The theories would accept that society is structured in patriarchy and unequal power relation or gender relation between women and men is the main source of violence against women (Cunningham, *et.al*, 1998).

In fact, patriarchy is a contested term among feminists. They have been spent considerable time trying to define and analyze but overall, the movement is united in its opposition to what it sees as patriarchy and women oppression by men. For instance, for Marxist feminist theory, patriarchy arises out of the structure of economic production. According to them, the economic exploitation of one class by another is the central feature of social structure and determines the nature of gender relation (Mitchell, 1980). Liberal feminism focused on legal system for the oppression of women. It asserts that patriarchal system denies the equal rights of women in every sphere of life and the existing attitudes of societies towards women sustain the inequality. For them patriarchy provides the system of control in which law and order are maintained to satisfy the existing cultural belief on gender relation. Radical feminists stressed on the human relations are arranged upon men's oppression or patriarchy (Walyby, 1990).

With in patriarchal social order men maintain a privileged position through their domination of women and their monopoly of social institution. Women are disadvantaged in social system that ensured and perpetuated their subordination by men and predominately-male institution. Domestic violence is seen in social context tolerating the subordination of women. It is explained as structural rather than isolated with in individual relationship because the violence is located in the framework of cultural, socio-economic and political power relations with factors in the family, community and state reinforcing social norms that allow domestic violence to occur (Schuler *et. al*, 1996).

Cultural values that in most societies are patriarchal value. They hold that men have the right to control their wives behavior, those women who challenge that right even by asking household money or by expressing the needs of the children may be punished. In different countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Tanzania and Zimbabwe studies find that violence is frequently viewed as physically chastisement, the husbands' right to correct an erring wife. Justification frequently evolves from gender norms about the proper role and responsibilities of women and men (Hesie *et.al* 1999).

In most traditional societies like Ethiopia wife beating is assumed something as natural and an expression of love or affection. Survey conducted show that in Ethiopia 37% of the respondents said they considered violence "normal" or "not serious" (WHO, 2005). On the other hand, the information gathered by Ethiopian CSA (2000) on women's attitude towards wife beating, indicates that considerable majority of women (85%) believe that husband is justified in beating his wife for at least one reason.

Cultural values emphasize that the autonomy of the family, making other loathe intervening in violent situation (Connors, 1992). Patriarchal value also supports women's inferiority with in intimate relationship; the men are usually the dominant family member holding the most decision making power (Heise, 1998). Women's low status is institutionalized with in the structure of the family and domestic violence is tolerated as male right to control those who are considered inferior. The fact that the family is accepted as an appropriate and typical structure while it is the center of such violence should lead to question regarding its suitability as a social institution. Yet, even with the extent of domestic violence finally becoming clearer, the family is still held as the model social reform (Kevin *et.al*, 1996).

The society reinforces family structure and women position with in it, tactically accepting domestic violence as typically behavior. It also supports the low status of women by either not valuing and under valuing their work. This keeps women vulnerable to violence by maintaining their social and economic dependence on men (Carrillo, 1992). Women's low economic position linked to their powerlessness in the state. This powerlessness allows the state to perpetuate family violence through omitting it an item its agenda. Since women do not have time and opportunity to participate political power, the state is able to ignore the issue it perceives as pertaining to women. The state also supports domestic violence by providing the legal basis for the family (Bewley *et.al*, 2000).

The feminist perspective also emphasizes that the overarching patriarchal dominance and the marital power asymmetry is the ultimate root of intimate violence against women (Yllo, 1993). In a society with strong patriarchal tradition or continued existence of

norms and social institutions that support the value of patriarchal ideology, husbands control their wives and use violence to maintain that control when necessary (Levinson 1989 cited in Richaters, 1994).

The maintenance of patriarchy and patriarchal institutions have contributed to wife abuse. Most men believe that patriarchy is their right that marriage gives them unrestricted control over their wives and that violence is an acceptable means of establishing this control (Dobash and Dobash 1988 cited in Elliot, 1996). Similarly, in societies like Ethiopia with strong patriarchal tradition or continued existence of norms and social institution that support the value of patriarchal ideology, husbands control their wives and use violence to maintain that control when necessary. Religions and legal enforcements, which are the main patriarchal institution, play paramount role to the occurrence of domestic violence.

In the country, religion violates and perpetuates violence against the equality of women. Particularly, Christianity and Islam marriages tend to escape criticism by claiming higher moral grounds. On top of that, many men who abuse women justify violent behavior on religious bases, and many cultural practices that abuse and violate women are justified in the name of religion (Alemmaya, 2002). Religions interpretation advances that belief that women are direct properties of their husbands.

Legal enforcements institutions are also the factors and conspire to perpetuate violence against women. In Ethiopia, unless the wife battery had resulted in serious injuries, there is a tendency among law enforcement officers not to look at the acts as an offence. Domestic violence, in the country, is ignored even officially (Original *et.al*, 2005). This can be seen from articles 589 of the constitution of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) which defines rape and its rigorous punishment up to ten years of imprisonment depending on the extent of injury. However, marital rape, that is rape by husband, is not included in the article.

More recently, cross-cultural research has focused on the structural and cultural underpinnings of violence, and particularly on the links between violence and patriarchal institution. A study by Levinson determined four cultural factors that are strong predictors of wife abuse, which support the structural explanation such as sexual and economic inequality, a pattern of physical violence for conflict resolution, male authority and decision making in the home and divorce restriction for women (Richaters , 1994) .

The cultural norms and values, which promote the system of patriarchy, are indoctrinated to every member of the society through socialization. The norm and socialization processes of society are major factors that contributed to the toleration and manifestation of domestic violence. Both men and women are raised in patriarchal society and learn, therefore, to behave in a gender appropriate ways that are further reinforced by other socialization agents and institution (Margaret, 1993). Women have been brought up to believe that they are inferior to men physically and sexually. There is a widely held belief that a good husband has to control his wife to keep the household in order.

Socialization takes place everywhere. However, many studies revealed that family comprises the first and basic socializing institute. The value and institutionalized norm learns in a family by both boys and girls are seen as forming the base for their future interaction with in the patriarchal institutions of society. Through socialization, individuals internalize or accept as correct the rules and definition of the socializing group. Masculine and feminine identities are a result of a process of socialization where the cultural femaleness and maleness are largely acquired from social rules, values and behavioral expectation (Walby, 1990).

Apart from family socialization, women also often learn to accept violence, particularly, domestic violence as normal due to unrelenting socialization, and in cultural institutions such as school, religion institution and law enforcement. However, the socialization process alone can not explain abuse of wives in the family context but other socialization institution plays an influential role in encouraging this particular behavior (Koss *et.al*, 1993).

A patriarchal approach towards the problem of violence against women's views differential socialization in to two gender and socialization of sex typed roles that which encourages the development of aggressiveness, dominant and authoritative male on one hand and passive dependent, self scarifying, women on the other hand (Hillar, *et.al*, 1989). The male constructed patriarchal societies existing all over the world have men owners of power and wealth that is used to dominate women. This culture becomes inherent in the manner in which the sexes are socialized from the beginning; women are thought to be passive and submissive while men are instructed to be active, dominant and aggressive. This makes men to develop masculine self-concept, devalue women and act aggressively against women (Russell, 1990).

While gender role refers to societies prescriptions for masculine or feminine qualities for males and females respectively, gender role identities refer to the degree to which an individual internalize those societal prescriptions (Hillar *et.al*, 1989). As children establish gender identity they begin to notice that some behaviors are encouraged and some are discourage for males or for females. Through the socialization processes known as sex typing, individuals acquire and develop some pattern and level of masculine or feminine characteristics and incorporate them in to their own sense of self (Russell, 1990). This aspect of individual identity of one's gender role identity.

Gender roles that are constructed by the society treat men and women differently. In general, they create an imbalance of power between men and women where by men are superior and they exercise power and control over women who are accorded a subordinate position. The socially constructed roles disadvantage women and perpetuate the oppressive relations (UNHCR, 2003).

In every part of the world, women's role and position in society are prescribed. One of the key aspects of every culture is the way it defines gender role. Almost without exception women are assigned to roles, which are subservient to those of women. Society's image of appropriate gender roles can lead directly to abuse (UN, 1993). Worldwide studies also reported that justifications of wife abuse frequently evolve from

gender norms about the proper roles and responsibilities of men and women (Hiese *et.al*, 1999).

Cross-cultural variation in gender roles and expectation are related to unequal power relationship between husbands and wives. Thus, there is strong research support regarding gender roles and vulnerability of domestic violence. Wife abuse often occurs with changing gender roles expectation. Many women have obligation to perform domestic activities as wives and mothers. It is clear those women who endorse the traditional gender roles in the society are more likely to be submissive, less likely to perceive domestic violence and more likely to tolerate abuse (Abrams, 2003 cited in Myunghan, 2004). Traditional gender roles assign power to husband and treat wife as essential the husband's property.

Traditional values regarding the role of marital partners and gender roles in society usually reflect a patriarchal approach towards conjugal power relation and justify male dominance. Men who believe their power and privileges are being threatened; they would use violence in order to restore their dominance (Myunghan, 2004).

Heise (1998) also pointed out that at the level of family, male dominance and male control of wealth appear to be important while at the macro level, it is notion of male entitlement, masculinity linked to aggression and dominance, rigid gender roles, acceptance of interpersonal violence as a means of resolving conflict. The National Research Council Review in the USA states that several studies support the fact that men raised in patriarchal family structure in which traditional gender roles are encouraged are more likely to become violent, to rape women acquaintance and batter their intimate partners (Garcia, 1999).

The study of violence against women in Bangladesh, reported that although most violence by men against women in the country occurs in the home, it does not originate or persist only with the home. Rather violence is one element in a system that subordinates women through social norms that guide their place and conduct (Schuler

et.al, 1996). The research asserts that violence is most frequent when women transgress or challenge the gender roles ascribed to them by the society.

In general, feminist ideology holds that gender determines women's role and status in society and shapes their social relationship; consequently, it is impossible to apply theory, practice or to explain social issue without taking gender in to consideration.

Feminist explanations are frequent in the domestic violence literature in Africa including Ethiopia. It is difficult to avoid interpreting domestic violence in the countries in terms of pervasive gender inequality. Almost every traditional Africa society is patriarchal and a women's place with this schema is subordinate. Unless the systematic inequality between men and women is addressed, the problem of violence will persist (Ofei-Abogaye, 1994).

Even though, there is much support for socio structural approach as the root of domestic violence, the causal factor focusing on individual characteristics in some extent cannot be ignored. Because every male in patriarchal society does not commit acts of violence against his intimate partners; the complete explanation of violence against women cannot be socio- structural (Counts, *et.al* 1992). Clearly, the adequate explanatory approach for the incidence of domestic violence is a multi-casual one.

1.1.2.3. Multi-casual approach

Comprehensive explanations of violence against women might include both social factors such as race, class, gender, and culture, and individual or relationship characteristics such as social support, relationship dynamics, alcohol/drug use, and personality characteristics. Anderson (1997) combines views of feminist and family violence perspectives to explain domestic violence. Gender theory is utilized by suggesting that males and females view violence differently and that violence is a way to construct masculinity. Aspects of the social system are thought to maintain a patriarchal system and thereby increase the risk of violence against women by influencing the power structure within intimate relationships and supporting relationships in which men possess a higher relative status than women.

Advocates of the ecological perspective also believe that abusive situations may result from interaction between personal, situational, social, political, and cultural factors. Several researchers have used an “ecological framework” to understand the interplay of Personal, situational, and socio cultural factors that combine to cause abuse Heise (1998). In this model, violence against women results from the interaction of factors at different levels of the social environment.

The model can best be visualized as four concentric circles. The innermost circle represents the biological and personal history that each individual brings to his or her behavior in relationships. Within personal history, (Heise, 1998) highlights three consistent risk factors to be assessed: witnessing marital violence as a child, experiencing child physical or sexual abuse, and lack of a consistent father figure. The second circle represents the immediate context in which abuse takes place, frequently the family or other intimate or acquaintance relationship. It involves situational factors surrounding the abuse such as, male dominance in decision-making and male economic control in the relationship, marital conflict, and alcohol use.

The third circle represents the institutions and social structures, both formal and informal, in which relationships are embedded neighborhood, workplace, social networks, and peer groups. This model examines factors within the formal and informal social structure and institutions, which influence the situation such as unemployment/low-socioeconomic status, social isolation, and “delinquent peer association” attachment to others who legitimize violence against women. Some authors found that women in the lowest income were nine times more likely to have experienced partner violence than those in the highest group. Poverty also exacerbates violence by hampering women’s ability to leave violent situation (Buehler, *et.al* 1998).

The fourth most circles represent socio-structural factors. It includes laws, social and economics polices and institutions as well as cultural norms. A wide range of studies agreed up on several factors at each of these levels that increase the likelihood that a man will abuse his partner. Heise (1998) defines the macro system as the “broad set of cultural

values and beliefs that permeate and inform the other three layers of the social ecology,” and involves a definition of manhood that includes dominance and aggression, “adherence to” traditional gender roles, “sense of male entitlement/ownership over women,” approval of “physical punishment of women,” and cultural support for use of violence to resolve interpersonal conflicts.

Advocates of the ecological perspective identified that key risk factors found in domestic violence literature and the interaction among factors is considered more valuable in explaining partner violence than any factor alone.

By combining individual-level risk factors with findings of cross-cultural studies, the ecological model contributes to understanding why some societies and some individuals are more violent than others and why women, especially wives, are so consistently the victims of abuse. Consequently, this study employs an ecological framework in examining individual, situational and socio structural risk markers for domestic violence in the study area.

1.1.3. Consequences of domestic violence against women

Domestic violence against women is a complex and multi dimensional problem. In addition, there are many ways in which violence perpetuates itself. Violence is sustained by inequality and in turn perpetuates inequality. For example, domestic violence is associated with poverty, but it also perpetuates poverty by, for example, reducing women’s opportunities for work outside home, their mobility and access to information. It influences women’s ability to care for themselves and their children and associated with self-destructive behavior such as alcohol and drug abuse. More over, violence determines women’s sense of self- worth, their sense of autonomy, their ability to feel and act as independent, capable women (Garcia, 1999).

Domestic violence has far-reaching short and long-term consequences. Among the devastating consequences of violence, complete separation of family breakage, disability and impairment of victims, death in extreme cases of violence. Physical and sexual

violence against women carries several negative consequences on women's health. These include unwanted pregnancy and risk of HIV infection, other sexually transmitted disease and complication of pregnancy (Watts, 2002).

Nearly 14 million women today are infected with HIV/AIDS and the rate of female infection is rising. A forthcoming study from WHO finds that the greatest risk of HIV infection for many women comes from a regular partner, and is heightened by unequal relationship that makes it difficult, if not possible, to negotiate safe sex. For these women, sex is not a matter of choice. (UNICEF, 2000).

Data from a wide range of countries also suggest that partner violence accounts for a significant number of deaths by murder among women. Studies from Australia, Canada, Israel, South Africa and USA show that between 40 and 70% of all female murder victims are killed by husbands or boyfriends frequently in the context of an ongoing abusive relationship (Bagshaw, *et.al*, 2000).

Domestic violence is a hidden obstacle to economic and social development. It saps women's energy, undermines their confidence, compromises their health, and deprives a society the full participation of women. Recently observed, women could not lend their labor or creative ideas fully if they are burdened with the physical and psychological scars of abuse (Carrillo, 1992).

Partner abuse has a significant economic impact on victims and families, as well as on society as a whole. This is due in part to its impact on the health care, mental health, and criminal justice systems. Data from the National Crime Victimization Survey between 1992 and 1996 in Canada, indicate that costs to women who are victims of nonfatal partner violence can be conservatively estimated to be \$150 million per year. These costs included medical expenses (40 percent), property losses (44 percent), and lost pay. In addition to victim impact, partner violence creates an enormous burden on and cost to the health care system Bagshaw, *et.al* (2000). Research also reported women victims of

domestic violence in Chile lost an estimated US \$56 billion earning in 1996 , approximately 2% of the countries GNP (UNICEF, 2000).

It has become clear that in Ethiopia pervious research showed that domestic violence has negative implication for the stability of marriage, the quality of family life and socialization of children. The woman is offered limited chance for progress and development, which in turn has a profound impact on the development of the society as a whole, as its female members are prevented from exercising their fundamental right and creative potential (WHO, 2005). Actual and threatened violence creates a pervasive atmosphere of fear that limits the lives of women, restricting their freedom of movement and their ability to participate in public decision making and affecting their standard of living.

1.2. METHODOLOGY

In the study the researcher mainly aimed to capture women's experiences of domestic violence in their own words and from their own standpoint, therefore, qualitative methodology was primarily used, informed by feminist perspectives. Reinharz (1992) pointed out that the feminist approach places emphasis on women's experiences, which are considered a significant indicator of reality.

Qualitative research methods are the most appropriate means of exploring women's views of their experiences and reality. Unlike quantitative studies that are concerned more with issues of frequency and distribution, qualitative research is rooted in the perspective of participants and their subjective meanings. Making sense of the data involves using inductive strategies that are sensitive to the social contexts in which behavior occurs. In according genuineness to women's experiences in their everyday lives, the research is mainly within a feminist tradition of giving voice to those whose views have historically been marginalized. The approach also would enable to explore and explained into the hidden and invisible issues of women from their stand point that address the principle of feminist research. Sarantakos (1997) stated that qualitative

research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analysis, words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural settings.

Accordingly, case study approach was employed as it would permit in depth exploration of the lives of abused wives. Merriam (1988) also states that such approach as preferable strategy when “how” and “why” questions are posed. She considered such approach as a best way to get in depth understanding of implementation situation and its meaning for those involved highly related to the purpose of this study. In addition, ecological framework was employed to analyze the question of ‘why’ domestic violence occurs. The framework was applied to examining individual, situational and socio structural risk markers for domestic violence in this study. Quantitative methodology was also employed as supplementary approach.

1.2.1. Sampling technique

In this study, non-probability sampling method was used to select the subjects of study and the study area. Initially, Ethiopia Women Lawyer Association (head office) was selected to get potential participants. Based on the information, which was obtained from the association, Kolfe Keranyo is the sub-city where the rate of reported crimes to domestic violence against women is the highest for this reason it was chosen. The sub-city consists of 10 kebeles and the population is also estimated to be about 120,000 inhabitants. After the selection of the research area; married women, women victims of domestic violence and key informants were selected.

The selection of the research participants was done by using purposive sampling method. The researcher was not sampling for representatives and generalizability but to explore and better understand the problem and the issue in-depth. Flick (2002) stated that qualitative research emphasized depth more than breadth, insight rather than generalization. The challenges for qualitative research are, therefore, to select participants who will be able to provide the most meaningful information on the topic. Merriam

(1988) also explained one needs to select a sample based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand and gain insight from which one can learn the most. Thus, the researcher selected those that provide fresh and rich information.

A total of 15 participants were purposely selected to conduct interview; 12 of them are victims of domestic violence and three are key informants. After the researcher have conducted interview with women victims of domestic violence, the information would enabled to carry out additional interview with key informants (one woman and one man police officers, one legal aid coordinator). In addition, a total of 18 participants were selected for three group discussion. Accordingly, the six participants of the first group discussion were women victims of domestic violence who were clients of EWLA and dweller of Kolfe Keranyo sub-city. Moreover, six married women participated in the second focus group discussion and another six married women were involved in the third focus group discussion.

To conduct small scale survey, two kebeles were randomly selected from the sub city. The primary sampling unit was kebele and the secondary unit was the household. From each selected kebele interviewees were identified purposely. A total of 150 married women respondents were taken as supplementary to qualitative information due to time and finance constraints.

1.2.2. Method of data collection

In-depth interview

Above all three pilot interviews were conducted using the preliminary guide with women victims of domestic violence at EWLA. The interviews covered different themes including their experience of violence, the cause and consequences of domestic violence, issues addressed, decision-making processes and contact with formal and informal supports and responses. The guide was then finalized into a frame that was used for the rest of interview with women victims of domestic violence. The interview guide was had unstructured and semi-structured format design to cover a wide range of topic in depth. The interviews were first initially written in English language translated into Amharic to

conduct the interview. The translated copies were first given to language expert for checking the translation. Subsequently, corrections were made with the discussion between the language expert and the researcher to ensure its consistency.

The instrument would enable to understand and explore phenomena that can not be observed such as feelings, thoughts, perceptions, experience and intention. Moreover, it would enable dig out women's real experience and life in their words which are considered a significant indicator.

To select potential informant victims the researcher has gained support from the legal aid service at EWLA. On the other hand, the researcher herself contacted the key informants who presumed to have useful additional information concerning the research topic, and male police and female police were selected from Kolfe Keranyo sub city while one key informant (legal aid coordinator) was selected from EWLA.

In conducting the interview, the researcher read a paragraph to each informant that explained the purpose of the study and kinds of question to be asked, assuring the anonymity of response and stating that participation in the study was purely voluntary and could be terminated whenever they chose. Informed consent was obtained verbally. The researcher made great efforts to assure privacy, allowing each informant to select the time and place most convenient for the interview, explaining the confidential nature of the interview and resulting data.

Since research concerning domestic violence against women is considered "sensitive topic", there were many challenges to conduct the interview. For instance, some of the women felt uncomfortable to discuss some issue related to their experience of violence. They perceived the issue too personal and private matter that is supposed to be a taboo to discuss with the researcher. Some of the women have also recalled frightening, humiliating and extremely painful experience when they were sharing their experience of violence. Efforts were made to ensure empathetic relationship in order for each woman to

feel safe and supported during the interview processes and the participants were also encouraged to speak about such sensitive issue.

The interview lasted from 30 minutes to one hour; most of the interviews were tape-recorded with each informant's consent. But some of the participants were unwilling to record on tape so the researcher had to take notes enduring interview. Then, the researcher transcribed the tape carefully in Amharic before the information translated in to English.

The interviews were made from September to the beginning of November. It was conducted with each participant at mutually convenient place and time. The interview, which was conducted with women victims of domestic violence, in the form of conversation that it allowed each women to redefine the question to suit her and generate meanings through an exploration of her own thoughts and feelings.

Focus Group Discussions

The focus group discussions were used with the aim of increasing the reliability of information gathered from in depth interviews. Based on the advantage and objective of the research, conducting focus group discussions was found to be necessary to explore unanticipated issue as the participant arose in the discussion. Sarantakos (1997) explained that making a discussion among individuals more than two may provoke individuals mind to generate more ideas and to make an exhaustive argumentation among each other. Therefore, in addition to the interview, a focus group discussion among small group has been considered as a good instrument to capture information that is versatile. This study used focus group discussion, since it helps to understand issues with consensus and variation among the participants of the discussion In addition, it is best suited for obtaining data on group attitudes and perception by initiating members for active discussion. In describing its advantage, Flick (2002) also stated that focus group discussion is the use of group interaction to produce data and insight that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group.

Hence, three focus group discussions were conducted with women victims of domestic violence and married women. The discussion was moderated by the researcher. All of the focus group discussions were carried out at convenient place to the participant on October, 2006 and it lasted from 1: 30 hours to 2: 00. The information, which was obtained from focus group discussion, was very fruitful in terms of richness and openness. In fact, there were only few individuals who were dominant, verbose, irrelevant, shy and confirming but appropriate measures were taken to correct the problems instantaneously.

Small Survey

Based on a field test conducted in EWLA questionnaires were prepared, and it was decided to design a similar questionnaire for 150 married women. It was believed that these questionnaires would provide a reasonable amount of quantitative data to supplement the study's qualitative data and to triangulate the information obtained from in depth interview and focus group discussion. Due to the limited time allotted for the study, it was decided to only interview married women, as the researcher believed that women's comments would prove more illuminating than men's. A total of 150 questioners were distributed with the help of 2 data collectors, out of 150 questions, 75 were filled by respondents residing in Kebele 01/05 and the other 75 were filled by respondents residing in Kebele 10/11.

Document review

Secondary data was obtained through consulting related and available published and unpublished materials such as, reports, documents and project document.

1.2.3. Method of data analysis

Qualitative data was analyzed by using case study approaches, which Gall *et.al* (1996) classified them in to three: interpretational, structural and reflective. He described interpretational analysis as a process examining case study data closely in order to find constructs, themes and patterns that can describe and explain the phenomena being studied. Thus, the researcher used interpretational analysis approach for this study. The

most critical step of interpretational data analysis is developing a set of categories that adequately encompass and summarize the data. Accordingly, the data generated from focus group discussion and in depth interview were divided in to different categories/themes. Quantitative data was analyzed by using simple statistic percentage.

1.2.4. Validity and reliability

It is obvious that no single method can grasp the subtle variations in on going human experience. As a result this study deploys different interconnected approaches and methods as all of the data collection techniques describe above have strengths and weaknesses. One way to emphasis the strength and minimize the weakness' is use more than one method in a study. By selecting complement methods researcher can cover the weakness of one method with the strength of another. Therefore, good research will often include multiple method of data collection technique, which is known as triangulation. Triangulation of the data permits the verification of data.

1.2.5. Ethical consideration

Since research on domestic violence is sensitive issue; it is important raise ethical issue. Considering this, the researcher applied ethical consideration following World Health Organization (WHO) guideline on ethical issue related to domestic violence research to ensure the safety of the respondents as well as data quality.

Above all first consent was asked and the purpose of the study was explained to the participants. Further, they were told that the study offers benefit to them and for all married women. Privacy was promoted and respondents were informed that what ever information they provide would be kept confidential. Tape recording is carried out taking into consideration the willingness of each participant. Thus, if requested not to be recorded, their wishes were well respected. Pseudonyms (codes) are used for all participants' protection and respecting their privacy.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

2.1. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC OF THE RESPONDENTS

This chapter deals with background characteristics of the respondents. A total of 33 individuals were involved to conduct in-depth interview and focus group discussion. While the median age of the study participants was 36, the age of participants ranged from 20 to 52. Educational status of the participants varied from illiterate to degree holders. There were groups of women victims of domestic violence, law enforcers and married women.

Regarding the survey study, the total numbers of respondents selected to fill out questionnaire was 150 married women. The economic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents such as age, occupation, education, religion, and other characteristics of the respondents and their husbands were presented as follows.

Table 2.1 Percentage of married women by age group.

Age group	Frequency	Percent
20-26	18	12.0
26-32	40	26.6
33-39	30	20.0
40-46	35	23.3
46-52	27	18.0
Total	150	100

Source: survey data.

Table 2.1 depicts that most of the respondents are in the age group 26-32 years, which constituted 26.6 percent of the respondents. The second major age group is 40 to 46 years in which 20.0% of the respondents are included. The lowest percentage is observed in the age group 20 to 26 years that constitutes 12 % of the respondents.

Concerning education, respondents were asked about their educational level. Accordingly, Table 2.2 shows that 41.3% of the respondents have finished primary education and 20% of the respondents have completed secondary education. A significant proportion of respondents, that is, 32.2% have no formal education. On the other hand, among the respondents' husbands as indicated in Table, 44.6% of them have above secondary educational level. Husbands that have no formal education constitute 13.3%. It confirms the gap of education between men and women in Ethiopia. Literature also indicates low educational status has its own impact in the occurrence of domestic violence against women.

Table 2.2 Percentages of Respondents' and their husband by Educational Level

Educational status	Wife's educational level		Husband's educational level	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
No formal education	49	32.6	20	13.3
Primary level	62	41.3	45	30.0
Secondary level	30	20	67	44.6
Above secondary	9	6	19	12.6
Total	150	100	150	100

Source: survey data.

Women employment situation has its own contribution to domestic violence against women. As table 2.3 shows more than half of the respondents, (59.4%) is unemployed while the respondent husbands who don't have job only comprise (10.7%). However, women are burdened with domestic responsibility and work more and longer each day than men, it was unpaid and considered as valueless. Consequently, most women are economically dependant on their husband, which has a significant contribution in clarifying the occurrence of domestic violence.

Table 2.3 Percentages of Respondents' and their husband by employment status

Employment status	Wives		Husbands	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
non workers	89	59.4	16	10.7
Workers	61	40.6	134	89.3
Total	150	100	150	100

Source: survey data.

In order to understand the type of work, respondents were asked the type of work they do. As table 2.4 shows 39.4% of respondents reported that they were engaged in daily laborers, which are followed by petty trade 27.8%. Regarding respondent's husbands work status, 28.5% of them work on daily laborers, which are followed by 31.3%, which constituted professionals. The least proportion is petty traders, which is 4.4%. The table indicates that more women are engaged in informal activities because of their low educational and social status.

Table 2.4 Respondent and their husbands by Type of Occupation

Types of work	Wives		Husbands	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Professionals	10	16.3	37	27.6
Daily Laborers	24	39.4	38	28.5
Petty trade	17	27.8	6	4.4
Technical	7	11.4	36	26.8
Others	3	4.9	17	12.7
Total	61	100	134	100

Source: survey data.

As table 2.5 depict the majority of respondents are Orthodox Christians (56.6%), which is followed by Muslim (31.4%) and Protestants constitute 12.0%. No respondents report having no religion because it is mostly very important aspect in Ethiopia social and cultural life. Women are kept at subordinate position using religion and culture as an excuse and they have also their own contribution in tolerance and response of domestic violence, as the subordinate

Table 2.5 Percentage of Respondents by Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percent
Orthodox	85	56.6
Protestant	18	12.0
Muslim	47	31.4
Catholic	–	-
Total	150	100

Source: survey data.

2.2. EXPERIENCING OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The experience of victims of violence was mainly drawn from in-depth interview and focus group discussion with participants. Discussion was made that depicts the severity and frequency of violence by pinpointing women's experience of physical, economical, psychological and sexual violence by their husbands. As already explained each participant is given a pseudonym for ethical reason. Survey result was also combined to the discussion in order strengthen the analysis of this phenomena.

Physical violence

When describing physical violence the participants mentioned serious incident from slap to the use of weapons resulting death. Most of them bore visible scare, bruise and cuts on their bodies. The findings showed that the women were shaken, strangled, pushed, kicked, dragged by the hair, pinned to the wall and they were threatened with weapons. Alemtshay, 31-years old, states the following situation:

My husband always used to punch me hard. I don't have any idea why he would beat me. I remember one time when he physically abused me even harder. He was very drunk. He began beating me very hard. I was bleeding then; he took me by my hair, dragged me out of the house and left me there. My neighbors helped me.¹

Meseret, age 32, also reveals her experience of physical violence as follows:

I have been abused after I gave birth to our first child. I have been repeatedly abused for the last 11 years. I had been severely and frequently beaten by my husband, he broke my tooth. He used scissors, knives etc and many times he threw me knives. My husband drank a lot. But even when he was not drunk he was still aggressive.²

¹Interviewed by the researcher on 12/9/06.

²Interviewed by the researcher on 08/9/06.

The above scenarios tell us how women are severely abused and injured by their husbands; however, they would stay for a long period of time. This shows women's ability to escape from their relationship is limited, even when they are subjected to severe and frequent physical violence. In relation to this, Ellsberg (2000), in her study in Nicaragua, pointed out that most married women experienced severe physical abuse but they didn't leave the abusive relationship due to different barriers.

Some participants gave justification for their physical violence experience. In focus group discussion with married women, some legitimize violence by prescribing it to an erring wife, which is the result of perceiving men as corrector and women error prone. They said that wife beating was acceptable because conflicts were expected in marriage and a man could beat his wife when he is angry. A married woman, age 38, reveals:

Nobody wants to beat his wife. Man's patience has limits, and few women understand that. Even when the husband does something wrong and he knows that it is wrong. If the wife keeps accusing him again and again, he may kick her.. My husband beat me sometimes because of this. I accepted it because it was my fault.³

The response of the woman tells us domestic violence is a norm accepted by the women as well. Sometimes they believed that disobedient wife deserves chastisement by her husband. The demographic and health survey of Ethiopia indicated that the majority of women said a husband is justified in beating his wife at least for one reason (CSA, 2001). Justification of wife abuse is a reflection of gender power relation with most societies. Even women internalized they are subordinate to men and the duties of a wife are first and foremost to please and obey their husbands.

Women were also harshly beaten when they were pregnant. It shows physical violence

³ Focus group discussion with married women on 27/10/06.

may not stop even when women become pregnant. For example, Sintayehu, age 49 reveals how she was beaten during her pregnancy.

When I was six -months pregnant, my husband severely and frequently kicked me in the stomach. Consequently, I suffered a miscarriage and had serious stomach pain⁴

In supporting this, Hiese *et.al* (1999) states that although studies are inconclusive as to whether violence is likely to begin or escalate during pregnancy, research has demonstrated that violence does not necessarily stop when a woman becomes pregnant. Worldwide, as many as one in every four women are physically or sexually abused during pregnancy, usually by their partners.

In focus group discussion and in-depth interview women mentioned their experience of domestic violence. It was revealed that physical violence such as slaps, punches and kicks were said to be very common which is in agreement with research finding from different countries that showed physical violence affected both a third to over half of ever partnered women (Hiese *et.al* , 1999).

The result of small survey also confirmed the above situations. In order to asses the physical violence, women were asked and their response is summarized in the following table.

Table2.6.Percentage of respondents experiencing physical violence

physical violence	Frequency	percent
Moderate violence (Pushed or shoved , Kicked, Slapped and Punched)	36	59.1
Severe violence (dragged, thrown objects and threatened/assaulted with weapon)	25	40.9
Total	61	100

Source: survey data.

⁴*Interviewed by the researcher on 13/9/06.*

As table 2.6 indicates, out of the whole respondents (N=150) 40.6% reported having experienced physical violence by their current husbands. Respondents have reported to one or more of the above types of violence by their husbands. The acts of violence most frequently mentioned by women were being slapped, pushing, punches and kicked (59.1%), followed by dragging, thrown objects and threatened /assaulted with weapons (40.9%). The severity of a physically violent act was ranked according to its likelihood of causing physical injuries. Being slapped, pushed or shoved were defined as *moderate* physical violence. Being hit with a fist, kicked, dragged, threatened with a weapon, or having a weapon used against her was defined as *severe* physical violence (WHO, 2005). According to this definition, among women reporting physical violence, a relation between frequency and severity of violence was found, such that women reporting moderate violence accuse less frequency of violence, while women who experience severe violence also reported higher frequency of violence.

Psychological violence

Most physical abuse occurs in the context of other forms of abuse, such as verbal, emotional or economic abuse and social isolation. All the women in the study experience a high level of both physical and psychological abuse. This finding suggests that men who are physically abusive are also psychologically abusive. Women often say that the psychological abuse and degradation are even more difficult to bear than physical abuse. Verbal humiliation, such as being called names, sworn at or put down, were discussed and reported. They frequently described violence in terms of emotional or psychological abuse, referring to situations in which a man might constantly insult or undermine a woman. Aregash, 39 year-old, states:

*He offended me all the time using bad words. He called me stupid, non sense...If I asked him about things or giving opinions on something. He often ignores and put down my opinion He would say that 'you don't know anything.. You are 'woman'.*⁵

⁵Interviewed by the researcher on 13/09/06.

This revealed how women are perceived as inferior to men cognitively. In relation to this, Eshetu *et.al* (1999) stated that women in Ethiopia are considered as weak both physically and mentally. Accordingly, their idea is not considered as important as men and are expected to be submissive, obedient and respectful of their husband. There are a number of proverbs in the country that clearly display the inferior status of women for example, "ምን ስት ብታውቅ በወንድ ያስቅ"(No matter how well a woman knows, it will be finalized by men), "ሆትና ፈርስ ባንድ ቅጣጫ ነው የሚገዛቱት" (the thought of women and mane of horse go only in one direction).

The women's accounts of emotional abuse also illustrate the processes through which women become demoralized and trapped in abusive relationships. Most women mention that psychological abuse severely affects their self-esteem. As Meseret 37 -year-old notes:

*He calls me idiot, stupid. I feel really upset, embarrassed.
I am often told that as I am not physically good-looking,
Worthless, inferior or lacking ability, cannot cope or
succeed on my own, and am not good cooker, or housekeeper .
He has tried all possible ways to humiliate me.⁶*

From the above anecdote, it can be safely said that the abusers made women to lack their self confidence and to be emotionally dependent. Abused women commonly experience diverse forms of psychological abuse. Threats are common, aimed at terrorizing the woman to such a point that the male partner feels in total control. Many women also live in fear and were psychologically terrified by their husbands. Mulu, age 34, remembers the most violent episode:

*He went to the kitchen and got knife
and held it right my eyes. He was
threatening to take out my eyes⁷*

⁶Interviewed by the researcher on 08/09/06.

⁷Interviewed by the researcher on 06/10/06.

They also reported that ongoing psychological violence – emotional torture and living under terror – is often more unbearable than the physical brutality, with mental stress leading to a high incidence of suicide and suicide attempts. In relation to this, a close association between domestic violence and suicide has been established based on studies in the United States, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Peru, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Suicide is many times as likely to have been attempted by a woman who has been abused than by one who has not (UNICEF, 2000).

Psychological abuse is also manifested based on control of movement, in which husbands want to show their power over their wives. Participants described such abuse in terms of a husband behaving with complete disregard for his wife's feelings. Male partners attempted to limit the respondents' actions in a variety of ways, such as limiting contact with family and friends, reproachful them for paying too much attention to other people or things, and prohibiting respondents from going to work as well as preventing women from participating in different association. Konjit, 25-year-old says:

*He likes to have power over me. He doesn't also allow me to have contact with anyone including my families. As a result, he makes me too dependent on him.*⁸

Social isolation as an aspect of domestic violence is complex. Yewebedar, 30 years old, also states:

*He does not want me to use make up, nor to wear nice clothes. Besides, he wants me to be an isolated person. He always tried to isolate me from society. He knows My work schedule and I am expected to be sharp. If I would be only one minute late, he would start beating, kicking, and hitting me. I don't have social life.*⁹

⁸Interviewed by the researcher on 12/9/06.

⁹Interviewed by the researcher on 28/09/06.

The statements made by abused women are telling how the abusers impose isolation in an effort to control women. In her study, Yllo (1993) pointed out that domestic violence against women can be seen to be a systematic form of domination and social control of women by men. Wife abuse reinforces women's dependence and enables men to exert authority and control.

The survey result also showed that 37.3% of married women experience of psychological violence. It is summarized below in the table.

Table 2.7. types of psychological violence and frequency

Psychological violence	Frequency (59)	Percent (%)
Insult	49	83.0
Humiliation	38	64.4
Intimidation/scaring	32	54.2
threats of harm	24	40.6
Isolation	23	38.9

***percent total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses

Source: survey data.

As table 2.7 indicates 37.3% of respondents claimed that they experienced psychological violence. They had been insulted, humiliated, intimidated/ scared and threatened of harm by their current husbands. A considerable overlap was found between psychological and other forms of violence. This indicates all of the women living with physical violence reported psychological violence. Research suggests that physical violence in intimate relationships is often accompanied by psychological abuse and in one-third to over one-half of cases by sexual abuse. For instance, in Nicaragua, among 188 women who were physically abused by their partners, only 5 were not abused sexually, psychologically, or both (Ellsberg, 2000).

Sexual violence

Women's experiences with sexual violence varied along a ranging from battering rape and bullying to threats, verbal humiliation and nonphysical forms of pressure that compelled them to engage in sex against their will. In an abusive relationship, sex is just another form of male control, in an effort to gain the woman's complete acquiescence. These strategies of control often focused directly on the female victim's body and sexuality. The forced sexual act becomes one in which the woman is silenced, controlled and subordinated.

Sexual violence in marriage is clearly an issue of gender inequality, in which a woman is forced to give in to her husband's demands. Women experienced rape or physically forced sex in the context of a battering relationship. Women are not willing to call their experiences as rape, which could be a sign that the concept of marital rape is rather absent in the Ethiopian culture. For these women, sex is the result of threatening behavior on the part of the husband. In these cases, unwanted sex occurred due to fear of some negative reactions from the husband. Having sex is perceived by some women as the quickest way to cancel out the husband's anger and to avoid further violence.

Tigist, 34 years old, states:

He would ask me to have sexual intercourse with him after he had beaten me in a terrible way. I was so scared that I allowed him to do everything he wanted. Another occasions, when he was drunk, he used to tell me that he had been with another woman.¹⁰

Some women feel obliged to be submissive and have sex with their husband. This type of acquiescence is based on the idea that a woman is obligated to serve her husband's needs, irrespective of her own wishes. Woman, 26 years old, states:

¹⁰Interviewed by the researcher on 28/09/06.

*As his wife, I felt obliged to please his sexual desires. However, I never took the initiative to have sex with him. I never wished to have sex with him. I had to accept his demands, otherwise he would force me. There have been a few situations when I refused sex. Then, he began kicking me out of the bed and insulting me. He used to say: ' I don't need you, I have another woman' . I can't do any thing.*¹¹

Kumssa (2004) mentioned that many Ethiopian women believe that they have to submit to their husband's sexual needs, even at their own expense. For example, 45% of women surveyed in UNDP sponsored study said they would do nothing if they suspected their husbands cheating, even though their husband's infidelity would be placing them at grater risk. Thus, it can be inferred that women who lack sexual autonomy most often do not have power of negotiating use of contraception, and thus are at risk of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS. One woman said:

*My step father had always been violent. He was a very drunken person, returned home in the mid night and sometimes spent the night there. We knew that he had extra marital affair; as result of all his sinful actions, my mother is exposed to the HIV/ AIDS*¹²

Married women's are more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. The main reason is that they don't have the courage to ask their husbands to use condom even though they are aware as their husband have contact with another women. Violence influences the risk of HIV and other STIs directly when it interferes with women's ability to negotiate condom use.

¹¹Focus group discussion with married women on 19/11/06.

¹² Focus group discussion with women victims of domestic violence on 9/11/06.

Certainly, qualitative data from studies in Uganda, India, and elsewhere indicate that women find it difficult to suggest or insist on condom use in face of or threat of violence (WHO, 2005).

Most participants, during discussion and in-depth interview did not feel comfortable with the expression “marital rape”. Even some said women should have sex with her husband. Justification for forced sex came from cultural, religious and legal point of view. For many, marriage translates in to sexual entitlement. Married women, age 49, states:

*Once they are husband and wife, it cannot be called illegal.
It is his right and this right cannot be considered as rape. In my
opinion, it is not an abuse either. It is difficult for me to resist
having sex other wise they will involve in extramarital affairs.¹³*

Women who are raped by their husband often accept responsibility for their attacks, blaming themselves for doing or saying something they should have known, it would make the husbands lash out them. This female culture often encourages men to exercise control over women. Sexual abuse and rape by an intimate partner is not considered a crime in most countries, and women in many societies do not consider forced sex as rape if they are married to, or cohabiting with, the perpetrator. The assumption is that once a woman enters into a contract of marriage, the husband has the right to unlimited sexual access to his wife (UNICEF, 2000). The family Law of Ethiopia also rules that married couples should have sex. Lack of legislation and cultural perception on marital rape both reflects and reinforces the presumption of many men, as well as some women, that it is a wife’s obligation to comply with her husband’s sexual demands. However, the truth that as it was stated in the above, many married women related forced sex exposed to HIV infection and other reproductive health problems.

¹³Focus group discussion with married women on 27/10/06.

Respondents also mentioned being forced to engage in types of sexual activity that they found degrading and humiliating. In her interview, Yewhalashet, 30 years old, point outs how her husband wanted her to watch pornography and make different sexual acts. She says:

*I feel so ashamed to tell you this, but I will tell you, it will helpful for your study. My husband would watch porn movies often, before going to sleep and forced me to watch as well. I never wanted to watch them. He wanted me to do those things that he saw in the movie. They were very horrible. I could not do them. I told him several times that I didn't want to do them, but he forced me to.*¹⁴

By forcing or threatening women to have sex, husbands not only cause their wives to feel emotionally, physically and sexually inadequate, but also create confusions about their identity as women.

As a result, and also because of the almost universal cultural prohibitions related to discussing intimate sexual behavior, sexual violence is even more difficult to investigate than physical violence. Nevertheless, emerging data suggest that for women, ironically, much non-consensual sex takes place within consensual unions. In research gathered from nine countries, on average one in five women acknowledged being forced to have sex by her partner. Thirty percent of a sample of women in Bangkok, Thailand; 48 percent in Peru; and 59 percent in Ethiopia (Butajira) reported being forced into sex by their partners. Evidence from Papua New Guinea and India, where forced sex was reported by one-half to two-thirds of research respondents, indicates that it is often initiated or accompanied by beatings (WHO, 2005).

¹⁴Interviewed by the researcher on 15/09/06.

Table 2.8. Percent of respondents experiencing sexual abuse

Sexual violence	Frequency	percent
Forced to have sex	21	15.7

Source: survey data.

As table 2.8 indicates, women were asked about their experience of sexual violence. However, only 15.7 % reported their husband forced them to have sex. The researcher believed that there is under reporting to marital rape, it is because of the fact that most women in Ethiopia consider sex as the entitlement of husbands.

Economical violence

Economic abuse is another form of abuse in which women are the primary victims. Men have traditionally controlled and dominated the financial assets of the family, and have retained the power to make financial decisions within the family. As women reported, economic or financial abuse involves the control of the use and availability of money, preventing her participation in money-spending decisions and refusing to give her money for basic household necessities. Mulu, 34-year-old woman says:

*He has a job, but most of the time, he spent the money only for himself, not for the family. My husband never tried to help me in solving family problems. He sometimes brings the salary home, most of the time he doesn't, but I never have the courage to ask him why he does that. If I would dare to ask him where the money is, my question could bring abuse.*¹⁵

Even when woman's gets better salary than their husbands, the man continues to control financial resources. Women's economic contributions to the family did not reduce or influence the dominant position of their husbands within the family. Woman, age 39, says

¹⁵Interviewed by the researcher on 28/09/06.

*I have a job, but I am not free, he keeps
all the money. He doesn't think of us
and of the things we need.*¹⁶

Some participants said that economic abuse includes preventing the woman from working outside the home and earning an independent income. Meseret 32-year-old woman says:

*He didn't let me work. He didn't allow me to leave
the house. Sometimes I could not go to work because
of the injuries caused by violence. I felt ashamed to go to
work when my face was all bruised and scared*¹⁷

Many women also indicated that withholding of family support to be severing violence, since most married women in the study area and, for that matter in Ethiopia, are house wives (NCTP, 1997). They found refusing money excruciating. By virtue of their socio economic supremacy and physical strength men exercise different controlling behavior. Men restrict their wives movement and access to resources. They prevent them from getting education. When women fail to comply with their demand they can punish and threatening them by refusing to give them money and physically assaulting them.

Financial domination, like psychological, physical and sexual abuse, has important negative effects on women's emotional, social and physical well-being. The experience of violence itself is the salient aspect of women's accounts of partner's abuse. Victims of partner violence report a range of abusive acts. They primarily talk about physical abuse, but in almost all of the cases, husband violence also includes psychological, sexual, and social and economic components. Abuse occurs in several ways, all are interrelated.

¹⁶Focus group discussion with married women on 19/11/06.

¹⁷Interviewed by the researcher on 08/09/06.

The survey results also show that 35.4% of the respondents reported having experience economic abuse by their current husbands, since most of the respondents had no their source of income. This indicates many women found withholding money tormenting. When men don't provide enough money for family spending, women worry about the needs of kids. Having nothing to prepare food with them lead their life in misery.

The majority of women are abused by their partners several times. This situation is due to their husbands' strong adherence to traditional attitudes favoring dominant and subordinate relations between husbands and wives. It appears that patriarchal mentality is a key factor supporting sustained violence in the home. With regard to domestic violence, there are many existing factors. The following section will focus on the causes and consequences of domestic violence which were identified by the women.

CHAPTER THREE

CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1.3. Causes of domestic violence

This chapter presents the main factors that perpetuate domestic violence and consequences. Data was mainly collected from in depth interview and focus group discussion. The quantitative data also supported the results. Participants mentioned various reasons in connection with the occurrence of violence. Although participants mentioned various reason to the occurrence of domestic violence, the chapter was discussed the major ones which were mainly and repeatedly pointed out by the participants.

While international research indicates that the root cause of gender-based violence is the inequality in gender relations, several factors contribute to the severity and frequency of gender-based violence. Participants who reported having experience of violence mentioned various causes of violence.

Table 3.1 Reasons for Violence as Identified by Women

Reasons of violence	Frequency (61)	Percent***
Financial issue	45	73.7
Drunkenness	39	63.9
Transgression of gender role	29	47.5
Jealousy	13	21.3
Nothing known to the wife	10	16.3
Others	5	8.1

***percent total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses.

Source: survey data.

Table 3.1 reveals that 73.3 % of respondents indicated financial issue is the main cause of domestic violence, 63.3% of respondents reported drunkenness, 47.5% claimed

transgression of gender role and 16.3 % of respondents said that nothing known to them is the reason of domestic violence and 8.1% mentioned others reasons. Wives identified more than one reason that reinforce violence and all of them are interrelated each other. For example, husband's drinking habits were mostly linked to violence and poverty. It is believed that poor men might drink to forget their problems, and that a husband's use of his family's limited income on alcohol may lead to increased marital tension.

Furthermore, in focus group discussion and in-depth interview participants mentioned factors that trigger of domestic violence.

1.3.1. Poverty and domestic violence

The participants frequently mentioned poverty as the main reason of domestic violence. They pointed out that how their dependency on husband's income became worst and vulnerable to violence. Almaz, age 42, explains the situation:

Since I don't have money to support the family, I argue with my husband about money. You know that every goods price has increased .Even sometimes I can't feed our children. As a result, I persist requesting for money, it often lead us conflict, consequently, he acting violently¹⁸

This shows the subjugation of women emanates largely from their subordinate economic status. Most of the participants in this study are not employed and those who are employed get humble and less paying jobs. Resources are under the control of men. As a result power imbalance men and women. This predisposes women to domestic violence and reinforces it. Research also showed that women from all socio-economic groups are risk of physical, sexual emotional and economic violence by their husbands. However, women living in poverty suffer disproportionately (WHO, 2005).

¹⁸*Interviewed by the researcher on 15/09/06.*

It was also said that lack of economic resources supports women's susceptibility to violence and their difficulty in get out from a violent relationship. The link between violence and lack of economic resources and dependence is interrelated. On the one hand, the threat and fear of violence keeps women from seeking employment, or, at best, compels them to accept low-paid, home-based exploitative labor. And on the other hand, without economic independence, women have no power to escape from an abusive relationship. Alemtshyeay 31 years old, states how lack of resource trapped her in abusive relation.

*I am completely depending on my husband's income.
I have to tolerate my husband aggressiveness. What
could I do? I don't want divorce. If I divorce, I will have
nothing... I don't have any place to go with two
children. I have to take him for a while, but at least
I raised my children at home, not on the streets.¹⁹*

If a woman is economically dependant, she cannot leave the violent husband even if she wants to. It is a common belief that if a woman has her won income, she mayn't trap in abusive relation ship and will not worry about supporting her self in the face of separation. Other wise, men tend to be more violent when they see that women have no means of living. In 1993, a UN report based on various research in different countries, reported that poverty can be both a cause and consequences of violence against women. It also exacerbates violence by hampering women's ability to leave violent situation.

Moreover, the participants portrayed that a good financial situation prevents violence. Violence is completely unavoidable in cases where financial insecurity is present. As many women mention, men are just acting out the anger and pain accumulated through confrontation with social stress the insecure economic situation causes a lot of problems and a lot of stress. For some men, living in poverty is likely to generate stress, frustration, and a sense of inadequacy for having failed to live up to their culturally defined role of

¹⁹Interviewed by the researcher on 12/09/06.

provider. Men start drinking and making big problems at home. However, Yewbdar, 28 years old, argues on contrary:

I think some men are born to be violent. Violence cannot be explained through economic situation or financial factors, I have adequate income to support the family and he had too when he had money, he behaved even worse in my opinion, economic security can never prevent violence.²⁰

The above situation indicates that all women are vulnerable to male violence. Violence can touch women of all socio-economic backgrounds. But the fact that when women lack resource, they are more vulnerable and unable to leave the abusive relationship due to poverty, which would made violence worse and worse. Low socio-economic status reflects a variety of conditions that in combination increase women's risk of victimization.

The survey result also confirmed that low status of women is highly associated with the occurrence of domestic violence. It showed that out of the whole respondents, 49.1% women are housewives (not having their own income) while 59.1% of them have low educational status and they are vulnerable to domestic violence. One can understand that women who have low status are more likely to experience physical, sexual, economic and emotional violence or they are more likely to talk about it.

Education and income status of individuals in marriage are important intervening factor for violence. If the woman is educated, she is more likely to know her rights and duties. She will be assertive and free from harmful myth and will defend her rights through all means. In fact it has been shown in the demographic and health survey that educated women are less likely to agree a man justified in abusing his wife for any reason

²⁰Interviewed by the researcher on 06/10/06.

compared to uneducated women. On the other hand, when women have their own source of income the vulnerability of violence will be lower (CSA, 2001).

1.3.2. Alcohol and domestic violence

Drinking was the other consistently mentioned reason for domestic. Excessive consumption of alcohol has also been noted as a factor in provoking aggressive and violent male behavior towards women. The finding revealed that most cases of abuse are associated with the husband's excessive alcohol consumption. Meseret, 32 years old says:

When he would drink a lot of alcohol, he used to hit me with anything he could find. Drinking is one of the main reasons [for violence] because he has no longer know what he is doing²¹

Almaz also added:

My husband always drinks. Hence, when he comes home drunk, he sends us (wife and child) away from our home and he stays alone at home through out the night. He also kicked and forced me to have sex with him.²²

In the above anecdote, it is apparent that the participants consider alcoholism plays a role in abuse but is certainly not a simple cause. Although causal relationship between drinking and domestic violence has not been established, their association has been consistently shown by various studies across the world. Population based surveys from Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, India, Indonesia, Nicaragua, South Africa, Spain and Venezuela found a relationship between a woman's risk of suffering violence and her partner's drinking habits (Heise *et.al* 1999).

There is, however, a great debate about the nature of the relationship between alcohol use and violence and whether it is truly causal. Cole, *et.al* (1999) argued that the link between

²¹Interviewed by the researcher on 08/09/06.

²²Interviewed by the researcher on 15/09/06.

violence and alcohol is culturally dependent, and exists only in settings where the collective expectation is that drinking causes or excuses certain behaviors. This is also supported by this research; it was said that men might come home drunk when they have some misunderstanding with their wives there by they would get courage to say what they want and even assault their wives physically as well as sexually.

Further more, most people believe that a woman should not react to her husband if he is drunk. This indicates that men use the drink to get courage to vent their feelings and do what ever they want. A drunken man can ascribe his misbehavior to the drink he took thereby projecting the blame. Their wife also recognizes the need for not reacting when he is drunk and if she reacts the society will blame.

Despite conflicting opinions about the causal role played by alcohol abuse, the evidence is that women who live with heavy drinkers run a far greater risk of physical violence, and that men who have been drinking inflict more serious violence at the time of an assault. The result also shows women who lived with heavy drinkers were more likely to be assaulted by their partners than those who lived with non-drinkers.

The survey result also indicated that women are more vulnerable when their husbands are an alcoholic. In order to examine the link between alcohol and domestic violence, the respondents were asked about their husbands' drinking habit and their response is summarized in the following table.

Table 3.2 Respondent's Husbands Frequency of Drinking Alcohol.

Frequency of Alcohol Drinking	Frequency	Percent
Do not drink alcohol	67	44.6
Usually	23	15.3
Always	26	17.3
Rarely	34	22.6
Total	150	100

Source: survey data.

As indicated above, 32.6% of the respondents' husbands drink alcohol, which is the largest, and those who do not drink alcohol account for 44.6%. It was found that alcohol drinking has association with domestic violence against women.

1.3.3. Jealousy and violence

It was also revealed that jealousy on the part of the aggressor can provoke violent behavior too. Both the survey and qualitative information showed that jealousy can lead to the occurrence of violence, specially, for women who are at young age. They said that their husband's jealousy demand and accusations, justify their attitude in isolate from fiends, neighbor and family. Konjit, age 25, reveals:

My husband was so jealous. As a result of his jealousy, I was forced to leave my job. He also isolated from my family and friends. When he found me greeting with men even our neighbors started accusing me of having affairs with them and acting violently.²³

Another woman also describe her husband jealousy as follows:

He used to become violent when he was jealous, if I were to dress up or use a little make up when we went for a walk together. I never try to change my look now, as this might cause problems. There have been cases when he used physical violence with me just because of a small misunderstanding.²⁴

As mentioned in the above, the occurrence of violence linked with jealous that made women to limit their activity and participation out side private sphere. Women said that when there is a large age gap between husband and wives, husbands would be jealous and acting violently. Indeed, it is all about controlling women and to show their superiority on their wives.

²³Interviewed by the researcher on 12/09/06.

²⁴Focus group discussion with married women on 19/11/06.

1.3.4. The transgression of gender role

The transgression of gender role was also mentioned as cause of domestic violence. It was said most violent incidents are preceded by arguments, which could as well stem from differences of opinions and disobediences. Disagreement could also arise from disobedience, not fulfilling demands of husband. For instance, refusing sex, which is construed as transgression, was often mentioned as a reason for physical as well as sexual violence. Conflicts also arise when a man sees that a woman is not discharging her expected roles like getting food ready on time, child care and housekeeping. He would blame her for the failure and they might exchange words culminating in beating. Mulu, age 34, reveals:

*I woke up early in the morning, I went to work and when I came back I should perform household chores. I am expected to serve my husband and his relatives. He did nothing. If he did not like what I had done he just shouted and even beat me.*²⁵

This indicates that justifications for violence frequently evolve from gender norms about the proper roles and responsibilities of men and women. In most Ethiopian families kitchen work is considered as women's responsibility, and failure to fulfill domestic chores on the part of them will result in violence. In fact, culture determines and shapes gender norms and it sets the boundary of females and males. Culture defines the do's and do not's and this in turn has bearing on how individuals perceive and react to actions of marital partners. Krug *et.al* (2002) pointed out that cultural justifications for violence usually follow from traditional notions of the proper roles of men and women. In many settings women are expected to look after their homes and children, and show their husbands obedience and respect. If a man feels that his wife has failed in her role or overstepped her limits – even, for instance, by asking for household money or stressing the needs of the children – then violence may be his response.

²⁵Interviewed by the researcher on 06/10/06.

It is also stated that most men don't let the woman take decision. They don't admit that a woman can have a better perspective, and take her perspective in to consideration when deciding. Men don't like when their wives make suggestion oppose their views or answer them. They get angry when women raise questions on resources and decision. One woman puts:

*He never listens me, hardly pays attention to my ideas.
He usually decides on everything. When I insisted him
to accept my idea, he would react violently. I mostly
abstain from giving suggestion and idea.²⁶*

It is rightly stated by the woman that is in most cases men do not want to accept women's idea and it is also considered as challenging of their gender role. In Ethiopia, there are a number of proverbs that put down women's nature and capabilities in order to justify the social predominance of men over them. For example, "Women are children with long legs" or "the thought of women and the light of star do not take one far". Thus, women are thought and expected to be submissive, passive, dependant and obedient to men. If they are disobedient, men will use violence to discipline and maintain control. Ellsberg (2000) asserted that numerous studied around the world have suggested that violence against women is most common in societies where gender roles are rigidly defined and enforced, and where the concept of masculinity is linked to toughness and male dominance.

The opinion of women towards gender role expectation is also aggravated the occurrence of domestic violence. The widespread acceptability of circumstances where wife-beating is justified highlights the extent to which, partner violence is conceptualized as a form of chastisement for female behavior that transgresses certain expectations. For example, by supporting the acceptability of wife beating, Yewbdar says:

*My husband was accusing me of having affairs with
a number of men, some of whom his own friends*

²⁶ Focus group discussion with married women on 27/10/06.

and our neighbors. I knew that he had no any tangible reason rather to cover his extra marital affairs. I would have been accepted any punishment, if I had extra marital affair²⁷

From the above view, it can be said that women appear to make distinctions regarding the circumstances under which wife-beating may or may not be "acceptable". They legitimize violence by prescribing it to an erring wife, which is the result of perceiving men as corrector and women error prone. On population report on ending of violence against women, Heise (1999) note that societies often develop distinctions between reasons for violence against women, defining some violence as just, or acceptable, and other violence as unjust or unacceptable.

The attitude of women towards wife-beating may influence women's experiences of violence and, women who believe that women deserve abuse in certain circumstances may be less likely to challenge male authority and therefore be protected from abuse.

Findings from quantitative data also support the above statement. The respondents were asked their opinion about good reason for wife beating and their response is summarized in table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Percentage of women who agree that a man has good reason to beat his wife if:

Reasons	Frequency	***Percent
failure to complete house hold work	10	6.6
She disobeys him	15	10.0
Husband suspects infidelity	13	8.7
If she refuse sex with him	29	19.4
Wife is Unfaithful	60	40.0
No response	23	15.3
Total	150	100

Source: survey data.

²⁰Interviewed by the researcher on 06/10/06.

As shown in the above table, The reason most widely accepted as a justification for violence was female infidelity (40%), refusing sex with him the next accepted reason (19.4%) and (10%) of respondents said that disobeying a husbands is good reason to wife beating. On the other hand, 8.7% of respondents agree that a man has good reason to beat his wife, if he suspects infidelity. The remaining (15.3%) did not agree in the afore mentioned reason for wife beating. The findings indicate the strength of cultural norms that support men's violence against women, and women's obligation to obey her husband. For example, over half of the women, in the study, believed that husbands have a right to abuse their wives at least for one reason. Thus, it is importance, not only of changing laws to protect women, but also working to change attitudes women and their rights in general.

Women were also asked about their opinion in some gender role and their response revealed how the women see themselves in relation to the position of their husbands.

Table3.4 respondent's opinion about gender role

Variables	agree	disagree	total
Women are equal with men in all aspects.	66% (99)	34% (51)	100% 150
Good wife is obedient to her husband even if she disagree	43.3% (65)	56.6% (85)	100% 150
Wives have the right to refuse sex	54% (81)	46% (69)	100% 150
House hold chores are the responsibility of women	46% (69)	54% (81)	100% 150
The husband should have final say on important family mater.	48.6% (73)	51.3% (77)	100% 150

Source: survey data.

Table 3.4 illustrates that 66% of the women in survey agreed that women are equal with men while 34% of respondents disagree to the statement. Women believed that wives have the rights to refuse sex are 54% and 46% disagreed to the opinion. Out of the whole respondents 46% of them also reported that house hold chores are an exclusive of women while the remaining 54% disagreed to the statement. Regarding the opinion of the husbands should have final say on important family matter, 48% agreed while 51% disagreed to the statement. This indicates how women see their position in relation to men and the acceptability of male dominance.

Research also shows that abuse in partner type relationships is more likely to occur and continue where the couple, particularly the women, holds traditional attitudes towards gender roles (WHO, 2005).

1.3.5. Masculinity linked to dominance

The testimonies also pointed out that domestic violence occurs without any reason or for a trivial reason. Some women said that they could not reach an understanding of domestic violence. Tigist, age 34, describes her confusion:

*I have often asked myself this question, but never found answer. I think it has more to do with his nature. He is a violent person, there is no other reason. We live with our two kids and nobody interferes with our life. We have a normal financial situation, he has a job...but he is still violent.*²⁸

This might be explained by the prevalent tradition that links masculinity to aggressiveness, being powerful and seeking to ensure dominance. Some men want to do everything according to their wishes and likes, and they need to feel to be superior to their wives.

²⁸Interviewed by the researcher on 28/09/06.

Both qualitative and quantitative findings indicate that there are contributory conditions, superseding conditions and contextual factors to the occurrence of domestic violence against women. Contributory conditions are a set of conditions which give rise to disagreements and misunderstandings between a husband and wife. This includes economic reason, drinking, jealousy, disobedience and failure of domestic responsibility. Some of the causal factors are related each another. E.g. drinking habit can result in economic problems. Superseding conditions are also the factors that determine whether or not a misunderstanding between a husband and wife would lead to domestic violence. For example, there could be an argument over expenses. Then, when she doesn't properly accomplish house hold chores, a husband may beat his wife. Moreover, according to the gender norm a woman should not ask or challenge her husband. Contextual factors also like umbrella influencing at all levels. It forms the pattern, define and acts on contributory conditions determine whether they will cause discontent and disagreement, controls superseding factors and dictates the response. The type of response will help to perpetuate domestic violence. There are also interactions among contextual factors magnifying or undermining their impact. For example, ideological factors influence the economic sector and can make legal provision ineffective.

2.3. Consequences of domestic violence

Physical violence coupled with emotional, sexual and economic abuse has multiple effects on women. Among all variations in forms of abuse and situational contexts in which women are victimized, partners seem to use violence to deprive women of their physical, psychological and social integrity and wellbeing. Many informants mention multiple consequences of violence.

Some participants report that their partner's physical violence caused them injuries and fractures that needed medical intervention and long-term treatment. A few point out that the violent event could have resulted in their death. More commonly, informants mention bruises and lesions as physical consequences of violence. For example, Meseret, a 32-year-old, notes:

*I have bruises on my face, my head was swollen, and my eyebrow was bleeding. When I walked short distance, I have breathing difficulties and my heart is beating really hard. It is because my husband comes home and it is his hobby to hit me, kick me....*²⁹

It was stated that domestic violence has profound consequences on women's overall well-being. The experience of domestic abuse puts women at greater risk of physical and mental health problems including injuries, depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder, sleep disorders, low self-esteem, loss of confidence in life and suicidal tendencies (Davis, 1994). The influence of domestic violence can persist long after the abuse has stopped. The more severe the abuse, the more severe its impact on women's physical and mental health. The impact of different types of abuse and multiple episodes over time appears to be cumulative. In its most extreme form, domestic violence kills women. Shewye, age 37, puts:

*He tries to destroy my confidence, my pride and my dignity. I used to look after myself and I used to have a pride in my appearance, but now I look at me, It is because of what he has done to me, just because of what he has done to me...*³⁰

Abuse leads to a number of physical ailments, including irritable bowel syndrome, gastrointestinal disorders, hypertension and various pain syndromes. Violence during pregnancy ended in miscarriage in the case of two of the women whose partners had punched them. In addition, a few informants note that sexual abuse caused unwanted pregnancies. One woman mentioned being infected with HIV/AIDS. Some women feel

²⁹Interviewed by the researcher on 08/09/06.

³⁰Interviewed by the researcher on 02/10/06.

emotionally exhausted and became detached from their bodies. This type of mental detachment is common among women victims of domestic violence of abuse. The husbands' degrading verbal remarks also often erode the woman's self-esteem and sense of competence as a person, woman, worker, wife and mother. Many women consider the psychological consequences of abuse to be even more serious than its physical effects. Aregash, 39 years old says:

I sense like his servant, similar to I was an abnormal person. I felt demoralized and I am always frightened. Above all, I am scared of my husband, and I also feel humiliated in front of others.³¹

At the personal level, the consequences of violence have been examined in terms of 'emotional breakdown', 'mental depression', 'physical injuries', 'deprivation of basic needs', 'suicide thoughts', and 'degree of control over spending money and taking decisions of the family'. It is observed that the consequences do not vary among victims of the different types of violence. The intensity and incidence of physical violence varies marginally among the victims of the different types. The majority of the victims reported that they were haunted by thoughts of committing suicide, the only difference among them being the frequency and intensity of such thought. In fact, one of them had made an attempt at suicide, but did not succeed. In sum, the victims of domestic violence were found to be a dejected and frustrated lot.

³¹ Focus group discussion with women victims of domestic violence on 9/11/06.

Table 3.5 Percentage of consequences of domestic violence

Negative consequences	Frequency (61)	Percent (%)
Physical injury	21	34.4
acquired STD/HIV	2	3.2
Get un wanted pregnant	8	13.1
Mental instability	22	36.1
Isolated from society	19	31.1
Lost job	4	6.5
Lack of self confidence/low self esteem	17	27.8
Others	6	9.8

Source: survey data.

As indicated in table, respondents who experiences violence pointed out the consequences of violence as result of physical, economic, sexual and emotional abuse by their current husband. While physical injury was happened for 34.4% of women, mental instability and isolated from the society were for 36.1% and 31.1%, respectively. On the other hand, 13.1% said that they get unwanted pregnancy and 3.2% respondents acquire STD. The rest of respondents lost their job and became dependent on the husbands and other people.

Children are also profoundly affected by living an environment of violence, fear or intimidation, loss of their concentration or problem at school and most of them are traumatized. Most women victims of domestic violence are more concerned for the sake of their children whether to stay or leave the abusive relationship. The next chapter will discuss the response of women, society and legal enforcers to domestic violence.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The chapter presents the response to domestic violence, which includes women's coping mechanism to violence while they are in abusive relationship. It was also discussed the main reason why women stay and leave the abusive relationship. Moreover, the chapter presents the response of formal (legal bodies) and informal groups (family, friends, neighbors, and elders) to domestic violence.

4.1. Women's individual responses to domestic violence

A women's response to abuse is often limited by the options available to them. In focus group discussion and in depth interview women consistently mentioned the main reasons why they remain in abusive relationships or endure abuse for many years before leaving and even seeking help. Some of the reasons were economic hardship, concern for the children, emotional dependence, lack of support from family and friends, lack of knowledge and information about available services and stigmatization of being a divorced. The emotional attachment of women to their husbands is yet another deterring factor.

It was said that women's lack of resources or insufficient resources prevents them from leaving the violent relationship. As mentioned in previous chapter most of women are economically dependent on men which would hinder them to leaving the violent husbands. Yewbdar, 28 years old, stated:

*The main reason why I have to stay in a violent relationship is the economic factor. If I had another place to go, the problem would be easily solved, without being forced to let me be violated. I have to be patient! What else can I do? I don't have any place to go with my children.*³²

³²Interviewed by the researcher on 06/10/06.

Many women found difficult leaving their violent partner due to lack of resources. Gelles , *et.al* (1988) described women who stay in the abusive relationship as tending to have less education and fewer job skills, and being unemployed when compared to women who actively seek help and leave the relationship because those women may have a less resources that they can utilize.

Women also perceive themselves as the primary person responsible for the children's care and welfare. Women preferred to raise their children with their husband not only because of financial consideration but also they felt it would be best for the child to be nurtured by both parents. They believe in sacrificing their individual interests for the sake of the family. Almaz, age 42, describe how she endured the violence for the sake of her children.

*I have five children with him, so I have to tolerate violence because of them. I hope he will change one day before the kids grow up. I believe in God, and I believe that one day God will change him for the sake of the children. It is not easy to divorce at this time, and with five children. Things are very hard for me, indeed, but it is better for the children to have their father than to grow up without him.*³³

Children are the main factor that makes women endure violence for a long time and not seek help. The fact that many of them believe that children need both parents as stated in the above, despite one being violent, keep them trapped in violent relationships. Women think that whatever the problems are, they have to be patient and obedient for the children's sake. They do not consider divorce to be a solution to their abusive situations. Another woman, Shewaye, 37 years old, reveals:

³³Interviewed by the researcher on 15/09/06.

*If I thought divorce were the solution, I would have divorced him a long time ago, but I think that I would have destroyed my family if I divorced. My children would grow up without a father.*³⁴

It was frequently said that they live for their children. It is not desirable to have a divorce. In their minds, if woman gets divorced, her children will lose a parent, living with the father and no mother, or living with the mother and no father. If the husband remarries, the stepmother may hurt the children. So, many women think that they should endure the suffering and keep the family intact for their children.

Moreover, women's traditional gender role belief is related to greater reluctance to report abuse and the likelihood that a woman would stay with a relationship even the violence is severe. It is well known that in a patriarchal society, women are socialized to accept responsibility to ensure a successful marriage. This way, women are entrapped in the patriarchal structures of family and go to great lengths to save their home and marriage. They believe that violence is part of every man's behavior. For example, Sintayehu, 49-year-old married states:

*I think that the woman should sacrifice herself, because even if she marries another man, it would be the same story.... The woman must maintain the balance in the family.*³⁵

Many women in violent relationships suffer years of oppression because they are taught to live their lives according to traditional values. These women believe that they should try, as prescribed by their roles of wives and mothers, to keep the family together and restore the relationship by any means. Women feel committed to their role as mothers beyond any other consideration. These women link leaving the relationship or making

³⁴Interviewed by the researcher on 02/10/06.

³⁵Interviewed by the researcher on 13/09/06.

drastic changes to a lack of commitment to their families. It is clear that women who endorse the traditional gender roles in many society are more likely to be submissive, less likely to have power relation in relationship and more likely tolerate abuse (Myunghan, 2004).

At the same time, shame and fear of social stigma often prevent women from reaching out for help. Some women say that they have never told anyone about their abuse, as the following example shows:

*I have no words to tell you how he beat, humiliated me.
But I decided to remain silent and not to say anything to
anyone I was so tolerant ... He is my second husband, and I
didn't want to separate for the second time.*³⁶

The above scenario tells us women fear to be divorced. In a patriarchal society, to be a wife and a mother represent key aspects of a woman's identity. Zimmerman (1995), in his study in Cambodia, pointed out that in developing countries most women cited the stigmatization associated with being unmarried as an additional barrier to leaving abusive relationships.

There are women who stated that lack of support from family, religious belief and others are barriers from taking action. The abused women justify stay in the relationship and defend themselves by appealing to high loyalties to religious value. It was mentioned that religious leader frequently sanction discourse of the 'good and religious wife' by persuading her to tolerate her husband violence and to reconcile with him. It's very powerful when women have a system of faith where they are told to be patient by somebody who they are seeing in a position of spiritual authority. In relation to this, Sadaat *et.al* (1998) state that manipulation of religious texts to empower abusers often inhibits abused women from seeking assistance. For women who believe that leaving their abusers is equivalent to turning their back on God's word, staying in

³⁶ Focus group discussion with married women on 27/10/06.

the abusive relationship may be perceived as a moral choice. In religious cultures in which male authority and female obedience are fostered and upheld, even in cases of abuse, the meanings of family life are imbued with religious significance that shapes the thoughts, actions, and decisions of abused women as they seek to make sense of their lives.

In-depth qualitative studies of women in the United States and Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe show that various factors can keep women in abusive relationships. These commonly include: religious belief, fear of retribution, a lack of alternative means of economic support, concern for the children, emotional dependence, a lack of support from family and friends, and an abiding hope that the man will change (Ellsberg, 2000).

Women who stay in abusive relationships develops diverse coping skills include keeping herself out of the husband's sight, refusing to engage in an argument initiated by the husband or simply leaving the home to avoid a probable violent incident, enduring etc. Almaz, 42 years old, says:

*I have to go away when he comes home drunk. However, I am afraid that if I let him alone at home he will break everything in the house. What can I do? He is still my husband and the father of my children. A wife should tolerate this kind of behavior because of the children and the family.*³⁷

Tigist, 34 years old, added:

The woman has to be very tolerant with a violent husband. She has to be quiet when her husband is angry or drunk. She can talk to him about the problem afterwards, using a

³⁷Interviewed by the researcher on 15/09/06.

lot of tact. She has to try to explain to him what he has done. Women have no place to live in case of a divorce; they cannot go back to their parents...they have no support. That's why women have to bear a violent relationship.³⁸

For the women above coping mechanisms it can be said that culture played a significant role because it is so central life in Ethiopia. It has an impact on the level of tolerance and expression in abusive relation ship. The norms and socialization process of society also contributed to the toleration domestic violence.

Some women stated they avoid topics and behaviors that might aggravate their husband's violent reaction. Women begin to make concessions by thinking over their husbands' habits and behavior patterns and by carefully controlling their own tempers. For example, one participant says:

I am submissive person and I endure everything. I don't say word whenever he makes fault in order to avoid arguments Every time I hoped he would never do it again. Thus, we had quiet periods, with no conflicts, because I always tried avoiding them.³⁹

From the above view it can be said that socialization played a significant role. Women considered themselves submissive and tolerant while men are perceived as aggressive, intolerant. A few women in the study fought back verbally and less often physically, recognizing that their actions at times were also abusive. Ayelech, 28 years old, describes this as follows:

³⁸Interviewed by the researcher on 28/09/06.

³⁹ Focus group discussion with women victims of domestic violence on 9/11/06.

*I just didn't know what else to do and I just fought back with the same words "We abused each other...we kicked, we swore, we hit each other, things went flyingWe were both on the same level then."*⁴⁰

The above situation showed that there are a few women who develop coping mechanism of fighting back verbally and physically against their partners. There are researchers argued that violence is equally a problem for both sex. However, this argument ignores the disproportionate rate of male violence against women and that most documented female violence is committed in self –defense (Bogard, 1988).

4.2. Societal and institutional responses to domestic violence

Despite the many barriers to women disclosing violence, the results reveal that women in violent relationships did actively seek ways to reduce or end the violence in their lives. Where women sought help, they primarily turn to informal sources of support, particularly family, friends, and neighbors rather than to formal sources. Some mentioned that friends and family members listened to their fears, intervened to calm down the abusive husband, sheltered women, helped them leave, took them to hospitals, and accompanied them. It was also pointed out that neighbors are very important actors in stopping cases of domestic violence. However, they are often only aware of serious cases that cause a disturbance in the neighborhood.

On contrary, most participants revealed that they didn't receive the kind of support or service they need. They stated that family and friends do not realize their situation, so they are unenthusiastic to ask and share their problems. When they decided they had better seek outside assistance they might not get. Meseret, 32 years old remembers how she lacked support even she was severely being abused:

⁴⁰*Interviewed by the researcher on 19/01/06.*

*He was grapping my hair, grapping my waist and slapping my face. I yelled for help I looked out the window for help ...nobody came my neighbors were bored.*⁴¹

It was also said that when women told their situation for families, they considered as "normal". They were told to be patient and tolerate. In most case, women were made to bring back in abusive relationship by elders 'Shimagle'. Konjit, 25 years old, reveals:

*I never remember peaceful day with him. He always insults and beat me. I run way to my parents many times but just to be brought back by elders, whose words no one dare reject. They would say 'women should be patient and wise to maintain the family instead runaway'...*⁴²

It is clear that in many social group of Ethiopia domestic violence dispute have to be primarily dealt with by the elders. This system provides powerful communal ways of keeping women seeking help from formal institutions. When women consult thier family, they are frequently advice to reconcile with their husbands. Standards of femininity as nurturing, caring and reconciliatory are there by reinforced. A study by Armstrong (1998) also reveals domestic violence as a major problem affecting women and that not many women report such cases. This is because society plays a significant role in determining the options that a woman in an abusive relationship can exercise. Whether she leaves, remains or reports the perpetrator to the police and pursues the case, has more to do with how society has always treated the issue of domestic violence. As the result of the nature of the circumstances in which domestic violence occurs, women who found themselves in this situation are forced to deal with the problem at the personal and private level within the family or in the community.

⁴¹*Interviewed by the researcher on 08/9/06.*

⁴²*Interviewed by the researcher on 28/09/06.*

Armstrong further argues that women who are experiencing domestic violence do not report such cases and that they act only when violence becomes severe and causes serious injury. When this happens women are forced to report to the police.

The result shows that the woman comes to believe that she deserves such treatment and expects no empathy. It was also revealed that when women sought help from formal net work like police, they also encounter unpleasant response. Sintayeue age 49 states:

*They were really unhelpful, they made it really difficult, they didn't explain things to me, and they gave information that wasn't true I found out later.*⁴³

The women felt that the police did not take their fears seriously, that they did not truly comprehend the terror that women experience. Alemtshay, 31 years old says:

*I went to the police; the police said just usual husband wife issues. They no longer wanted to get involved. The police didn't take my complaint and told me to go home.*⁴⁴

From the above scenario it can be said that law enforcement bodies do not take appropriate measures on assailants. They tend to neglect cases of violence considering it as private matter. Some even reflect the prevalent tradition siding with offenders. This indicated that women are not only discouraged by informal groups but also by legal enforcers. Some women asserted that reporting to the police has no value and does not give solutions when they seeking help. Abused women face obstacles from the police, lack of legal support and responses of various social agencies which often demonstrate direct or indirect support for the husband's authority and his use of violence (Dobash and Dobash, 1988).

⁴³Interviewed by the researcher on 13/9/06.

⁴⁴Interviewed by the researcher on 12/09/06.

Although there were a number of problems arising from women's experiences with the police, there are also a few positive cases of women who had dealings with the police in which the police believed them, were quick to respond and were supportive indicated the police services had worked well for them. The variation in women's experiences with the police suggests that the effectiveness of the police in each case depended a great deal on the individual police officer.

On the other hand, the information which was obtained from legal bodies showed that many women feel obliged to conceal with their own abuse and continue to live in violent relationships because of culture and tradition, religious beliefs and society's perceptions. Women abused by spouses or intimate partners confront unique difficulties in bringing their attackers to justice and seeking safety for themselves and other family members. It was also mentioned abused women are reluctant to have their partners jailed or their families break up or are fearful of condemnation by their families or community should they pursue criminal charges. These and other factors often make women reluctant to bring charges of domestic violence or lead them to drop charges already filed. In fact, it was mentioned that the delaying court decisions is another contributory factor to dropping of charges by victims.

Most of the women in the study also mentioned that they did not know what services were available to them when trying to deal with domestic violence or how to directly access to supportive services. They said that EWLA played a significant role by providing information and by creating awareness about their rights. One participant stated how EWLA provide information that enables her to tackle the violence:

*I had no idea what my rights were. I had no information that would enable me to tackle the problem like domestic violence. I had absolutely no idea what was out there but now thanks to EWLA. I know my rights and what to do.*⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Focus group discussion with women victims of domestic violence on 9/11/06.

Lack of knowledge and information was the main constraint to tackle the problem of domestic violence. It is clear that EWLA has educated and has given information that would enable them to fight and tackle domestic violence by taking appropriate action.

4.3. Decision to leave abusive relationship and its barrier

Although most of the participants claimed that they decided to leave the abusive husbands while others left their violent partners, they stated that leaving an abusive or violent relationship is tremendously difficult. Women reported a number of factors that presented problems for them when they were thinking about leaving and when they actually left. It was often accompanied by financial problems or confusion and worries over the effect of parental separation on children. Six interviewed women had left and returned several times before they finally decided to leave once and for all. Women who decide to leave the abusive partner may also have to deal with some troubling behavior on his part. He may become very apologetic and beg her to reconcile with him, he may send elders and he may promise to change or may threaten to hurt or kill her.

*He used to threaten me when he realized my decision regarding divorce. He would say 'if you divorce me, I will kill you and the children'. I was terrified and confused.*⁴⁶

Basically most men saw their female partners as their own property and they don't expect that their wives might to leave them. Men's idea of proprietary right was expressed through their domineering behavior regarding the activities of those women. Violence occurs when they believed that women were slipping out from their control, sometimes certain men threatened to kill their spouse if they left the relationship. As men exerted ever tighter controls and demanded more from women, their wives usually experienced a growing sense of entrapment, mixed with a combination of acute fear, shame and humiliation.

⁴⁶ Focus group discussion with women victims of domestic violence on 9/11/06.

Despite these obstacles, there were women decided permanently to leave the violent husbands. Divorce is one of the active coping strategies for women in abusive relationships. A number of factors mentioned that motivate women to divorce. These include women's awareness that the abuse is getting higher in frequency or severity, that their abusive partner will not change, and when violence begins to take affect on the children as well as emotional and economical support of family and friends. Yewbdar, 28 years old, says:

*I was afraid of what would happen to me if I divorced him. I was afraid of others' opinion (stigmatization of divorce). I decided to find the force to fight against the violence and the public opinion. My sisters and brothers supported my decision. I filed for divorce. He did not believe it; he thought I would always take his behavior. I am finally living as a human being. But he is still threatened me that is why I have come to EWLA.*⁴⁷

From the above scenario, one can understand that after women separated from violent husband, they may be threatened. Leaving an abusive relationship does not of itself always guarantee safety. Violence can sometimes continue and may even escalate after a woman leaves her partner (Bewley *et.al*, 1997).

Two women mentioned the beneficial influence of divorcing a violent partner. They attempted to make sense of what had happened to them, and to better understand their inner worlds and how they could ultimately end their victimization. Yewhalashet, 30 years old, reveals:

There have been situations when I wanted to kill him, especially when I realized about his extra marital affair with my best friend. If I killed him I would be in prison

⁴⁷Interviewed by the researcher on 17/9/06.

*now. This is my advice to other abused women: if you suffer violence in your family, it is better to divorce than to kill your husband. I divorced him after having four children. I would say that it is better to have financial problems than to suffer domestic violence.*⁴⁸

From the above situation one can understand how domestic violence motivates to commit crimes. Many studies also confirmed that women may commit crime when the violence become beyond their capacity. In her findings Tibatemwa (1999) noted that most of the women who commit violent crimes against others are victims of domestic violence from their husband or intimate partners. From the interviews she did with women in prisons who committed violent crimes, most of them justified their actions either on the grounds of self-defense or at least as a reaction to provocative acts (physical violence) by the victim. This was common among women who killed their husbands. Their violence was a reaction to physical abuse.

Participants feel that they regain their dignity and sense of self-worth and personal power. Women try hard to empower themselves in order to rethink their place in the world and to find new ways of life. The way out of victimization is facilitated if they can generate their own income. Tigist 34 years old puts:

*I was trapped to leave him because I had no place to live, neither a job. But now I don't expect anything from him. I know that I have to face everything by myself. I am working and I can solve my problems alone.*⁴⁹

It is important for women to establish a new understanding of themselves, to reanalyze, reinterpret and reassess themselves and their married lives in order to take control and

⁴⁸Interviewed by the researcher on 15/09/06.

⁴⁹Interviewed by the researcher on 28/09/06.

find strength to take up new challenges. This helps them to handle the situation and deal with their new lives.

Regarding divorce as coping mechanism, the information obtained from Ethiopian Women Lawyer Association (EWLA) indicates that the number of women who are requesting divorce has alarmingly increased, as the result of they were victims of marital abuse. Despite this increment, divorce is still considered of last option.

The survey result also confirmed the above situation (qualitative findings). Women victims of domestic violence were asked whether they had told anyone about their partner’s violent behavior or not and their response is summarized below.

Table 4.1 percentage of women who told their experience of violence

Response	Frequency	Percent
never told any one	22	36.0
Informed to friends	17	27.8
Informed to family	15	24.5
Contacted police	6	9.2
Others	2	3.0
Total	61	100

Source: survey data.

As indicated in the table, the respondent's reactions to their husband's violent and abusive behaviors showed variation ranging from doing nothing to contacted police. The table shows that a large proportion of women, 36.0% reported not having told anyone about their partner’s violence. This suggests that in many cases the interviewer was the first person that they had ever talked to about the violence. On the other hand, 27.8% and 24.5% of women said that they told and sought help from friends and family, respectively. The rest of 9.2% is found to be contacted the police. This indicates many women prefer to suffer in silence, especially rather reporting to the police. It may be a widely held belief that domestic violence is considered as private issue. WHO (2005) also confirmed in Ethiopia only 0.2% of women report to the police, which is the smallest (insignificant) as compared to other countries included in the study.

In order to understand the existence of support or response of formal and informal network to abused women in time they need, women were also asked whether the network's response was helpful or not to prevent or tackle the violence as the following table shows.

Table 4.2 the response to domestic violence

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Helpful	13	32.5
blame you	9	22.5
Ignorance/ did nothing	12	30.0
Others	2	5.0
Total	40	100

Source: survey data.

As indicated above, 30% of respondents reported that they couldn't find support or ignored when they sought help. Women who constitute 32.5% said that they receive support while 32.5% of respondents reported they were blamed when they told their husbands' violent behavior. This indicated that although respondents reported having told family, friends and police about their partner's violence as shown table 4.1, they were less likely to report that these people had tried to help them.

Although women reported that they experienced physical, economical sexual and psychological violence by their current husband in the survey, they are still living with the husbands. In order to understand why they stay and the barriers to leave the abusive relationship, women were asked that if they have tried to leave and the barriers to leave abusive relationship. The result shows that 35.6% of respondents have not tried to leave the abusive relationship while the remaining said that attempts were made to leave but they mentioned a variety of barriers include economy dependency, concern of children, lack of support, stigmatization of divorce and other barriers.

CONCLUSION

Domestic violence is a very complex process and influenced by multiple factors. The potential for dangerous violence against women occurs throughout their marital lives. Many women live in fear not only for their own lives but also for the lives of their children.

Women experienced physical, psychological economical and sexual violence. Many of them don't consider forced sex as rape if they are married. The forced sexual act proved to be one way in which the woman is silenced, controlled and subordinated. The justification for forced sex came from cultural, religious and legal points of view.

It was identified that poverty, alcohol, jealousy and transgression of gender role are the prevalent of causes of domestic violence against women; therefore, the adequate explanatory approach for the incidence of domestic violence is a multi-casual one. In this study, using an ecological framework the result of analysis indicated that domestic violence is result from interaction between personal, economical, social, political, and cultural factors. The cultural system predisposes, justifies and perpetuates domestic violence. The socio-economic standing women predispose them to domestic violence and perpetuate their inferior status. The political-legal context has not only perpetuated violence but also it is sometimes an excuse the occurrence of domestic violence and at other time it does not protect and rehabilitate disadvantage women.

Both the qualitative and quantitative findings indicated that experience of domestic abuse puts women at greater risk of a variety of physical, mental health and reproductive health problem like HIV/AIDS. The effects of experiencing violence also include the inability to undertake daily work or social activities. Women perceive the psychological consequences of abuse to be even more serious than physical effects. The process of abuse alters women's views of themselves, their relationships and their place in the world.

A woman's response to abuse is often limited by the alternative existing to her. Some of the reasons women do not leave or use effective coping strategies include a lack of

support from family and friends, economic hardship, and fear of retaliation from and escalation of abuse by intimate partners. Others include their belief that their husband will change for the better, that divorce stigmatizes, and that children need their fathers' In addition, limited access and availability of services, lack of knowledge and information about available services, and familial and cultural constraints often discourage women from seeking appropriate help and leaving the offensive husband.

Furthermore, women who stay in abusive relationships develops diverse coping skills or survival strategies, which include keeping out of the husband's sight, refusing to engage in an argument initiated by the husband or simply leaving the home to avoid a probable violent incident, enduring. Women considered themselves submissive and tolerant while men are perceived as aggressive, intolerant.

Despite these situations, there were women who decided to leave permanently the violent husbands. Divorce is one of the active coping strategies for women in abusive relationships, but is only taken when women realize that the abuse is getting higher in frequency or severity, that their abusive partner will not change, and when violence begins to take affect on the children as well as emotional and economical support of family and friends, however, after divorce they face a lot of social and economic problem.

By giving voice to abused women, this study represents a step forward. The researcher anticipate that this process of understanding cultural meanings of domestic violence and individual perceptions, attitudes and responses is an important base for developing appropriate interventions for violence reduction and prevention in Ethiopia. Moreover, further studies including men attitude perception and experiences in domestic violence would provide a wider view on these issues.

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ANNEXES

Annex- A

In-depth interview with victims
Institute of Gender Studies
Addis Ababa University
School of Graduate studies

This study is being conducted to gather data and information on domestic violence (violence on wives by husbands). The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for research purposes. If you are voluntary to be a participant in this interview, I would like to ask you about the relationship between you and your husband. I hope that you will participate in this interview, since your experience and view is very crucial for the study.

Thank you very much for your interest to participate

Age_____

Occupation_____

Educational status_____

1. How is your marriage life?
2. Have you quarreled with your husband? How often?
3. Who in your family often commits violence or experiences it?
5. Would you describe the abuse you experienced?
6. What are the main causes of violence?
7. Would you tell me the consequences of violence on you?
8. How do you think about the attitude of society towards domestic violence?
9. In your opinion, what is the role of gender and cultural values in the occurrence of domestic violence?
10. What things did you do to cope with your abusive situation?
11. Did you try to leave the abusive relationship?
12. What are the barriers to leaving the abusive relationship?
13. Did you seek assistance? If yes, where, who, and what assistance?
14. Did the assistance meet your expectations?
15. Did you report to the police?
16. What was the response of the police?
17. What do you think should be done about domestic violence?

Annex- B

Focus group discussion guide for victims and married women

We are here today to discuss about issues related domestic violence against women (violence on wives by husbands). Please feel free to disagree one with another. We would like to have many point of view and experiences. All comments are confidential and used for research purposes only. Your names will not record to protect your confidentiality.

Thank you very much!

Age_____

Educational status_____

Occupation_____

1. What do you understand by the term of domestic violence?
2. How do describe the acts that you regard as domestic violence?
3. Do you think the things you have mentioned happen to many women?
4. In your opinion, who should make decision in house hold matters? Why?
5. Who in the family most often commits violence and experience it?
6. Why do think domestic violence happens?
7. Do you think wives have right to refuse sex with their husband in certain situation?
8. Do you think domestic violence is acceptable and expected part of marriage?
9. What are the response of police, family friends and neighbors on domestic violence?
10. In your opinion do you feel the judicial system takes domestic violence and its crime seriously?
11. What do you think should be done about domestic violence?

Annex- C

Structured Questionnaire

The questionnaire is presented to married women at the household level. The purpose of this questionnaire is to examine and assess experience, cause, consequences and response of domestic violence. This is not an assessment of individual personality. Here your name will not be written and will never be used in connection with any of the information you give me, So that, you may feel free to be frank in your responses to questions. If you are voluntary to be participant in this survey, I would like to ask you about relationship between you and your husband. Therefore, you are kindly requested to answer the questionnaire frankly and truthfully. Your individual information is crucial, to the study.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

Section one- respondent's background

1. What is your age in year	_____ (Age in completed years)
2. What is your religion?	1. Orthodox 2. Protestant 3. Muslim 4. Catholic 5. Others (specify)
3. How often do you usually attend religious Services?	1. Daily 2. At least once per week 3. Occasionally 4. Never attend
4. What is the higher grade you have completed?	1. No formal education 2. Primary (1-8 grades) 3. Secondary (9-12 grades) 4. Above secondary (above 12 grades)
5. Are you working?	1. Yes 2. No
6. What is your occupation?	_____
7. How long have you been married your current husband?	_____
8. What is your husband's education?	1. Illiterate 2. Primary 3. Secondary

	4.Above secondary (above 11 grades)
9. Is your husband working?	1. Yes 2. No
10. What is his occupation?	_____
11. Does your husband drink alcohol?	1.Yes 2.No
12. How often does your husband drink alcohol?	1.Usually 2.Always 3.Rarely 4 Occasionally
13. Do you think your husband's drinking alcohol affects stability in the home?	1.Yes 2.No

Section-2 the respondents and their husband relation ship

14. Do you quarrel with your husband?	1.Yes 2.No																												
15. If your answer 'yes' for Q 14, how often did you quarrel with your husband?	1. rarely 2. sometimes 3. often																												
16. Have you experienced violence by your current husband?	1. Yes 2. No																												
17. What was the main reason for violence? 1. financial issue 2. Drunkenness 3 Transgression of gender role (refusing sex, talking back. Not accomplishing house hold chores, disobedient...) 4. Jealous 5. Nothing known 6. Other specify _____	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 60%;"></th> <th style="width: 20%;">Yes</th> <th style="width: 20%;">No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes	No	1	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	2	4	1	2	5	1	2	6	1	2							
	Yes	No																											
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18. The following acts happen to many women, has you current husband done the following to you?	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 60%;"></th> <th style="width: 16.6%;">Rarely</th> <th style="width: 16.6%;">Sometimes</th> <th style="width: 6.6%;">often</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pushed or shoved</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kicked</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Slapped/.Punched</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>dragged/thrown objects</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Threatened/ assaulted with weapons</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Rarely	Sometimes	often		1	2	3	Pushed or shoved	1	2	3	Kicked	1	2	3	Slapped/.Punched	1	2	3	dragged/thrown objects	1	2	3	Threatened/ assaulted with weapons			
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Slapped/.Punched	1	2	3																										
dragged/thrown objects	1	2	3																										
Threatened/ assaulted with weapons																													

19. Has your husband done the following to you?	Rarely	Sometimes	often
Insulted	1	2	3
Humiliation	1	2	3
Intimidation/scaring	1	2	3
threats of harm	1	2	3
Isolation	1	2	3
20. Does your husband often ignore or put down you opinion or contribution?	1Yes		
	2No		
21.Has your husband forced you to have sexual intercourse when you did not want?	1.Yes		
	2.No		
22.Does your husband limit your access to money and other resources in the house?	1. Yes		
	2.No		
23.Did your husband refuse you to work out side home?	1. Yes		
	2. No		
24.Did your husband prevent you from attending meeting or participating organization?	1. Yes		
	2. No		
25.Did you ever told your experience of violence to others	1. Yes		
	2. No		
26. If your answer 'Yes' for Q 24, for whom?	Yes	No	
A. family	1	2	
B. Neighbor	1	2	
C. Friends	1	2	
D. Police	1	2	
E. Other specify			
27. What was the response?	1. Nothing		
	2. Helpful		
	3. Blame you		
	4. Ignorance		
	5. Other specify _____		
28. Have you tried to leave the violent relationship?	1. Yes		
	2.No		

29. What the barriers to leave?	Yes	No
A. Economy dependency	1	2
B. Stigmatization of divorce	1	2
C. Lack of support	1	2
D. Concern for children	1	2
E. Other specify		
30. What efforts did you make to over come the acts of violence you experience?	1.Nothing 2.Run away 3.Asking help from other 4.Fighting back 5.Other specify_____	
31. Which of the following acts occurred to you following physical sexual, economical and psychological violence you experienced?	Yes	No
A. Get pregnant		
B. Physical injury	1	2
C. Acquired STD	1	2
D. Isolated from family society	1	2
E. Lack of self confidence	1	2
F. Lost job	1	2
G. low self confidence	1	2
H. Disempowered	1	2
I. Other specify	1	2
	1	2

Section Three- Opinion about gender roles and attitude towards wife abuse

32. Women have equal right with their husband in all aspect.	1. Agree 2. Disagree
33. Men are superior to women.	1 Agree 2 Disagree
34. Good wife is obedient to her husband even if she disagrees to his opinion.	1. Agree 2. Disagree
35. A wife should assume a lower status in the family.	1. Agree 2. Disagree
36. Wife abuse should be considered as 'normal' and taken for granted in the marriage life.	1. Agree 2. Disagree
37. Wives have the right to refuse sex with her husband in a number of situations.	1. Agree 2. Disagree

38. The house hold activities are the only responsibility of wife.	1 Agree 2 Disagree	
39. According to your opinion, good reason for husband to beat/abus his wife if: 1. Fails to complete house work. 2. Disobeys her husband 3. Refuse sex with him 4. He suspects her to be unfaithful 5. Other specify_____	Yes	No
	1	2
	1	2
	1	2
	1	2
	1	2