

**Domestic Violence from the Perspective of Women Supported by Shelters and Crisis
Centers in Armenia: a Qualitative Study**

Master of Public Health Integrating Experience Project
Professional Publication Framework

by

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Domestic violence is a serious public health issue which touches on both women's lives and well-being as well their children who are directly and/or indirectly involved in the abusive relationships within the family. Women victims of domestic violence endure multiple forms of violence within family, including psychological, physical and sexual, which are combined by the desire of the perpetrator to control her. During the course of an abusive relationship, women consider leaving the abusive relationship, conditioned by a number of predisposing factor within the personal, societal and legal layers.

Study purpose: This study explored the main reasons Armenian women stay in abusive relationships. In addition, the study sought to understand who the main perpetrator of the violence is within the family, how the stay/leave decision is associated with personal and social risk factors, health status, and the empowerment of the women victims of domestic violence.

Methods: The study was a cross sectional, qualitative content analysis employing individual interviews with professionals and women victims of domestic violence. All participants, both professional and women victims of domestic violence, were recruited from domestic violence shelters. Conventional content analysis methodology was employed to derive categories and themes from the interview data. The emerging codes were clustered into categories, which were then clustered into four main themes.

Results: Eleven women victims of domestic violence and six professionals from the three shelters currently functioning in Armenia were interviewed. The emerging themes were 1) Factors Supporting Violence by the Husband; 2) Experience of Domestic Violence; 3) Factors for Decision to Stay in Abusive Relationships; 4) Factors for the Decision to Leave the Abusive Relationships. Violence as an accepted form of behavior is associated with the style of family upbringing, with the presence of abuse in the nuclear family both of the victim and the perpetrator. The early onset of marriage, lack of professional education, and financial dependence on the family makes women vulnerable to the violence, while the presence of abuse within the family and socially accepted gender inequality allow the perpetrator to be abusive. Women's experience of domestic violence involves multiple forms of violence including psychological, physical and sexual, ranging in severity. The decision of the women to stay in abusive relationships is conditioned by women stigmatization, diminished health status, concern for children, lack of family support, and threat from the husband. The decision to leave also is conditioned by prior attempts to leave the man, the presence of family support, care for the child, and women empowerment. Thus, even domestic violence in its manifestation in Armenia does not differ much from other settings and countries, the role of the perpetrator and the risk factors of the women to be a victim can be addressed in a way to minimize the probability of the violence and increase the possibility for further intervention and prevention in Armenia.

Implications: Future research is needed to address the gap existing in the understanding of the problem from the perspectives of perpetrators, as well future research is needed to understand the extent and the impact domestic violence has on children. The study aids policy makers and social and health care providers to promote women's empowerment through timely prevention and intervention.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Domestic violence as a public health issue has gained particular attention since 1991. The Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women explains domestic violence as “Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life”.² A number of terms are used in the literature characterizing domestic violence such as intimate partner violence, abused women, battered women, women’s victimization, violence against women.^{3-5,4,6,7} Domestic violence touches on not only the women as a victim but also children who may be abused indirectly by witnessing the situation.⁸ This last notion makes domestic violence a much more important public health issue as incorporates women’s and children’s mental, physical and social health into an issue that requires immediate intervention and effective prevention. To achieve that goal, this issue must first gain public, political, and scientific recognition.

Magnitude of Domestic Violence

The magnitude of domestic violence varies from country to country. A multi-country study initiated by WHO on profiling domestic violence shows that the prevalence of women who have experienced violence ranges from 15% to 59%, while the prevalence of women ever experiencing intimate partner violence ranges from 22% to 47%.¹ The proportion of women who report violence during pregnancy varies from 1% to 11%.⁹⁻¹² Moreover, according to CDC, nearly 28.8% of women in the United States have been victimized either by rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner.¹³

Risk Factors

A number of characteristics describe women who are subject to domestic violence, which is being married, relatively young, economically dependent onto family/unemployed, and having lower level of education and self control.¹⁴ Despite the fact that younger age of women is correlated with higher possibility of being exposed to domestic violence, a number of studies shows that older women also are subject to domestic violence.¹⁵⁻¹⁷ Domestic violence is a phenomenon which has the tendency to be repeated. Partner violence as a prerequisite for the violence to take place is associated with psychological difficulties of the victim.^{7,16-18} The number of children a woman has may have ambiguous impact onto the possibility of exposure to domestic violence: a woman may be more vulnerable to domestic violence or less vulnerable while having more children.¹³ Aside from these characteristics, developmental aspect of a person also may have impact onto further exposure to domestic violence, such as witnessing violence within family as a child, exposure to abuse as a child, limited involvement by parents as a child, lack of social support, mental health problem, etc.¹⁴

The risk factors for the violence to take place are associated also with the characteristics of the abuser. The characteristics of abuser are mainly use of alcohol, or illicit drugs, which makes a person less prone to self-controlling.^{8,12,19-21} Another characteristic of abusive partner is the previous unsuccessful relationship with another woman.¹² Lower level of education, financial difficulties or challenges with employment compliment the list of attributes of the abusive partner the.^{13,21,22} Other characteristics of the abusive partners are related to their childhood: having witnessed interpersonal violence, being abused as a child, having been brought up with patriarchal values^{11,21}.

Social, economic and cultural factors also lead to women's vulnerability towards domestic violence. Social stigmas, economic dependence, poverty, cultural, traditional norms shape the perception of the issue.^{6,7,14}

Thus, the characteristics of both abusers and the victims can serve as a base to understand the complex relationships that exist in the families from the spectrum of domestic violence early identification, intervention and timely prevention its health, economic and social consequences. By identification of risk factors a more successful approach can be initialized to identify those who are at greater risk for domestic violence. This attempt will also be the bases of women empowerment as a strategy for successful prevention of domestic violence.

Decision to Stay or Leave

Women's decision to stay in the abusive relationships is a complex question²³. And the attempts to understand what is behind the submissive behavior leads to the acknowledgment societal, family and internal inhibiting factors²⁴. But these factors are embedded within traditional and cultural roles leading to staying in the abusive relationships.²⁵

Women's attitudes toward domestic violence has been within the scope of Demographic Health Survey which reveals that the justification of domestic violence is associated with domestic violence as social learning phenomenon, socio-economic conditions, as well with the social, cultural norms.²⁶ And despite the relationship between personal control and domestic violence, there is room for decision making determining the future development of the relationships.²⁷ But the decision making about the abusive relationships is relevant not only to married couples, but also to dating couples, composed of situational and relational vulnerability.²³

The point which describes the women's decision to leave the partner is shaped by the cost-benefit ratio, associated with the feeling of being protected and supported.²⁸ Nevertheless, the concept of power, leading to submission or initiative taking arises, determining the final outcome of the conflict within the family related to the husbands ability and desire to accept mutual resolution.²⁹ The attempt to leave the relationships is accompanied with the reevaluation of the self and the situation, with which the women go through a process of reassessment of the contradictions relevant to the relationships.³⁰ Change in the situation, facing more severe form of abuse, danger to the life of the children, force the women make the decision to leave.³¹ The overwhelming answer why women stay in the abusive relationships encompasses a variety of social, psychological, cultural factors, particularly social background, financial dependence, lack of family support, for the sake of children, social consequences of divorce, especially in developing countries.²⁵ The process of leaving the abusive partner on average takes 2-5 times to leave the husband.¹

Health Impact

Domestic violence is associated with a number of negative consequences on health status of women victims which is negatively correlated with the intensity of domestic violence.²² All of the health outcome of women victims of domestic violence could be combined into three main categories.

The first category is the harm to physical health with injuries as the most visible signs.^{32,33} Physical harm is present not only to the women but also to the fetus.^{4,11,22} Women's reproductive health suffers along with the physical health through increased rates of abortion, induced abortions, low level of using modern contraceptive methods, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual dysfunction and other related complications.^{9,33}

Deterioration of mental health is another aspect of health of women victims of domestic violence. Among the indicators of poor mental health are depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder^{3, 25,26} with the potential of being involved in risky behaviors, such as smoking and substance abuse with the suicidal attempts being particularly underestimated.^{33,35}

Diminished physical and emotional health is the third category. Several studies show that women exposed to violence have lower health-related quality of life in contrast to those women who were not abused.^{5,19} Nutritional status is among the indicators of health outcomes for domestic violence which suffers as well.³⁶

Prevention and Intervention

Over the course of the past decades, domestic violence starts to gain recognition as a phenomenon which deserves social, political and public attention. While the magnitude and consequences of domestic violence are documented in the literature, little can be found on intervention and prevention of domestic violence, particularly in developing countries.³⁷ One of the ways for effective intervention and prevention is intergenerational approach which targets not only couples but also Mothers-in-Law, who as part of the family, may have specific role in conflict resolution within families.³⁷ Another approach to domestic violence prevention is regarded in the context of maternal and child health.³⁷ Intervention and prevention of domestic violence is particularly of interest within clinical settings where doctors and nurses have a better “access” into families.³⁸⁻⁴⁰ But effective organization of domestic violence intervention and prevention has to go hand in hand with cultural aspects.⁴¹ But as the evidence shows, the intervention is particularly effective when combined with training educational component.⁴²

Screening, as a secondary prevention strategy, is regarded as a means for early identification of violence and its consequences. International experience shows that

screening for domestic violence could be conducted within clinical settings.^{16,20,43,44}

However, so far no single best way or tool was created to implement the screening in its best effective and efficient way. Moreover, the lack of resources to deal with the identified cases might become a real challenge for the screening.²⁰ WHO provides a number of recommendations that include insuring privacy of the victims during the interview, training of the professionals involved in research, considering additional information, and collaborating with local women's group and others.³⁷

Intervention and prevention of domestic violence is related to the perception and attitude towards domestic violence which in most cases is negative particularly among females^{45,46} The perception of the phenomenon of domestic violence may be perceived as personal with no need for external interference.³⁷ A number of reasons can justify the wife beating including leaving home without asking the husband which indicate the submissive status a women has in the family among one of the Caucasian nations.⁴⁷

SITUATION IN ARMENIA

Background

Domestic violence is an issue which has obtained scientific, public, and policy makers' attention over the last 20 years in Armenia.⁴⁸⁻⁵² The situation regarding domestic violence in post-Soviet countries, of which Armenia was part of till 1991, is somewhat different from the situation prevailing in the Western countries, as the movement against the domestic violence started only in the 1990s.⁵³ Although a number of surveys have revealed the burden of domestic violence in Armenia since 2007, Armenia still lacks statistics on domestic violence revealing time trends due to the lack of a surveillance system for domestic violence.^{49,54,55} This gap creates barriers to understanding dynamic changes during decades, leading causes,

risk factors.^{48,49,51,55} In addition Armenia does not have a law on domestic violence which inhibits successful intervention, and prevention of the issue.⁵⁶

The issue of domestic violence in Armenia differs from the Western countries resembling more to the Eastern countries due to cultural peculiarities.⁵⁷ The difference is related to cultures, traditions which constitute the nature of human relationships, values and approaches to meeting the needs of a family.³⁷ Armenia has strict traditions with family maintenance. Armenian men have to take good care of women, and divorce is often regarded as a failure to follow the traditions.³⁷ Only certain reasons could justify divorce, and one of them is abusive husband.³⁷ However, the phenomenon of domestic violence is surrounded with secrecy and remains highly underreported.^{37,48,49} Particularly, majority of the surveys show (over eighty percent) domestic violence must be dealt with as a private issue, with no need to contact police or other agencies for support.^{48,49,55} The issue even gets more serious, as Armenia does not have specific law on domestic violence.⁵⁸

Magnitude

Data of a survey poll in Armenia (2010) show that 59.6% of the respondents have been subjected to domestic violence during their lifetime, while 38.4% - during the past two years.⁵⁵ Domestic violence in Armenia has the following typology: psychological abuse 66%, physical violence 27%, severe physical violence 12% with 41% children witnessed. In Armenia, 11.9% of the surveyed men also have suffered domestic violence during their lifetimes, which is less spoken about due to less severe consequences to the victims' health.⁵³ The data show that almost 50% of the respondents know someone who is a victim of domestic violence, and 6 in 10 indicated that victims are their acquaintances, 3 in 10 are their friends and relatives, and 2 in 10 their neighbors.⁴⁸ Another study on violence among female refugees in Armenia, found that 17% of the respondents had been exposed to partner violence

at least once (physically, psychologically or sexually) and among them 7% was experiencing it daily.⁵⁴ The leading reasons were identified as alcohol or illicit drug abuse, mental problems of the abuser, unequal distribution of power within family, sudden financial difficulties, poverty.^{49,54,55}

To the question if domestic violence is a widespread phenomenon, the percent of the population thinking that it is a problem varies 55%-61% according to different sources, with increasing tendency.^{48,55} This data are different from Russia where, over 87% of men and 93% of women perceive it as a widespread problem.⁵³ Russia as a post-Soviet country, similar to Armenia, had the most comprehensive approach to domestic violence unlike other post-Soviet countries, particularly Moldova and Armenia, by having significant number of local organizations in mid 90ths, nationwide campaigns and policy reforms as the least successful component.⁵³

The perception of domestic violence among Armenians has the following peculiarities: more severe forms of domestic violence, such as physical, are relatively easily identified. The opposite is true about less “severe” forms of domestic violence such as psychological abuse (38% of the Armenian respondents consider that only battery is a form of domestic violence).⁵⁵ The recognition of psychological abuse, particularly threatening and intimidation, as a form of domestic violence has very low rates (20% of the population).⁵⁵

According to Demographic health survey in Armenia in 2010 36% of married women were employed in the preceding 12 months, with less probability for younger women aged 19-24.⁵⁰

The financial dependency of women onto husbands are shown in the rates of employment of married man versus married women (96% versus 36%), with 67% of working women earning less than their husbands.⁵⁰ Along with the education level and age the rates of participation in decision making, as an indicator for women empowerment, either

individual or joint with the partner, increases, especially in rural regions. The rate of joint decision making is 71%. As for the decision making as a proxy for women autonomy, the rates of participation of women varies from 86% (household purchases) to 94% (health care decisions), with 91% participation in visiting family or friends, with only 3% who have no say in any kind of decision making within family.⁵⁰

Overall the findings suggest that as rates of abuse increases, less appreciation is given to the role the women can play in the family, leading to suffered human dignity.⁵⁰ Higher education is equivalent to lower tolerance towards wife beating as well lower rates for being abused. The data show the positive tendency in overall attitude towards wife beating over the last decade: 31% to 20% among men, and from 22% to 9% among women.⁵⁰

Domestic violence in Armenia, similar to other countries, is a public health problem which requires recognition of the problem by political, social and public sector to make it possible to organize targeted interventions for successful prevention. But this will be more possible when we have an insiders' view onto domestic violence in Armenia to be able to better depict its breadth and relation to socio-cultural particularities.

Three shelters for women victims of domestic violence are currently functioning in Armenia, in addition to that one of the shelters offers women victims of domestic violence who are still in the abusive relationships psychological and legal counseling in the Crisis Center, which is completely protected by the police and women come there being sure that their husbands' or other member of the family are unaware of their location. The same staff that works in the shelter works also at the Crisis Center.

PURPOSE

Armenian culture is a crucial factor leading to slow changes in domestic violence policies.^{53,58} Still a number surveys have revealed the prevalence of domestic violence in Armenia, disclosing the risk factors and some characteristics of abusive husbands and women exposed to violence. In the 1990s Armenia adopted a new movement to combat domestic violence, which mainly involves NGOs activities.⁵³ Unfortunately, Armenia's legislation does not provide a clear definition of domestic violence.⁵⁵ Consequently, Armenia lacks systematic data revealing time trends, the prevalence, and the burden domestic violence has onto society.

Despite these attempts to quantify the prevalence, little is known about domestic violence from the victims, who could tell their stories, disclosing the risk inherent to women victims and most probably to their children within Armenian families and decision to stay or leave the relationships. Underreporting of the problem is associated with the perception that whatever happens within a family is not subject to publicizing, and the lack of proper advocacy of women's rights makes them vulnerable to domestic violence.^{48,55} This situation creates serious barriers for women who suffer domestic violence, as well children who bear the consequences of direct and indirect harm of the domestic violence.

This study adds to our knowledge about the health consequences of domestic violence onto women victims, revealing the risk factors inherent to being victimized within families, and the reasons why Armenian women stay in this relationship over a period of time. This study went beyond the social-cultural description of risk characteristics leading to domestic violence in Armenia, which increases our understanding of the issue and informs practical preventive strategies.

The research question was: What are the experiences of women who endured domestic violence in Armenia and why do they stay or leave the abusive relationships?

1. Who are the perpetrators of the domestic violence towards the women who report exposure to domestic violence?
2. What are the risk factors among Armenian women who suffered domestic violence?
3. What are the health consequences of Domestic Violence on women victims?
4. What are the needs of women for empowerment who suffered domestic violence in Armenia?

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

The study was a cross sectional, conventional qualitative content analysis employing individual interviews with professionals/shelter workers and women victims⁵⁹⁻⁶¹. As Armenia lacks systematic data on domestic violence, this study was descriptive, exploratory trying to fill in the gaps in the existing literature on domestic violence in Armenia.

Preference of qualitative method over quantitative method in the study has the following justifications: qualitative method allowed exploring the phenomenon of domestic violence in Armenia as a complex phenomenon hard to explore with quantitative method.⁶² Furthermore, qualitative method was used to develop concepts in a sensitive topic, like domestic violence.^{59,63} The study will use in-depth interviews as a qualitative method for data collection.

Strategies for Enhancing Study Rigor

To sustain the rigor of the study by increasing the credibility or internal validity of the study the following strategies were implemented: negative case analyzes, member checks, debriefing or subject review, and triangulation by making use of different data sources, background of the investigator, proved the credibility of the study thus increasing its

trustworthiness.^{36,54,64,65} The in-depth methodological description sustains the dependability of the study.⁶⁵ As the data was analyzed along with the data collection, the recruitment of the participants was determined by reaching saturation of data^{62,66}. The student researcher gave a clear description of the context of data collection and data analyzes to support the transferability of the findings⁵⁹. All the findings presented below were triangulated between the women –women and women - professionals.

Study Ppopulation

Two groups of participants were involved in this study. The first group of participants comprised of professionals from shelters for women victims of domestic violence. The second group of participants comprised of women who report exposure to domestic violence.

Sampling

Recruitment of the study population both professionals and women exposed to domestic violence was snowball⁶¹. Professionals were considered eligible if they worked in one of the shelters. The eligibility criteria for women were report the exposure to violence within family perpetrated by husband, mother-in-law, father-in-law or other family members, being Armenian, 18 years old or above and knowledge of Armenian. The student investigator determined eligibility during initial contact with potential participants. Those who were not eligible were offered an explanation and expression of thanks.

Recruitment of the Participants and Setting

The shelter worker was the starting point for the recruitment of the participants. Professionals were asked at the end of the interview if he/she knew any other organizations which are dealing with the issue of domestic violence in. All interviewees (professionals/

women at the shelter) were asked if they knew any women who are in the same or other shelter. Additionally those professionals of the shelter who also worked in adjunct Crisis Centers were asked if they knew any women who were in the abusive relationships and visited the Crisis Center. The investigator left all the study information and contact information of the investigator with the interviewees to pass on to women who were currently in shelters. If these women chose to contact or consented to be contacted by the investigator they could part of the study. The investigator conducted the interview with these women at any date, time and place convenient to them. After obtaining an oral consent, participants participated in individual interviews. The location of the interviews was determined by the best preference of the participant before conducting the interview. As for the women who visited Crisis Centers also were offered to determine the most convenient time and place for the interview before conducting the interview.

Study Instruments

A semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix A) was developed for the professionals asking the same questions as to the victims, but phrased so that representatives of the organizations could be eligible to answer. In the instrument possible probe examples were added in addition to main questions linked to the research question and the major ideas posed in that question. These guides were constructed in a way to optimize the value of the information necessary to answer the research question. A semi-structured in-depth interview guide was developed based on standardized qualitative research methods for the group of women identified as victims of domestic violence. Semi-structured in-depth interview guides included warm-up questions, proceeding with questions about domestic violence, their experience, health effects of the violence, reasons for staying in the abusive relationships, and the cut point when women decided to leave. Additionally women were given a self-

administered questionnaire (see Appendix B) on demographic data. Both Guides were pretested and refined to maximize the potential for answering research question. The guides were further developed during the interviews, eliminating those questions which did not work, or provoked similar answers as gained from other questions. As the new themes emerged during the interviews, they were probed during the following interviews even if they were not included in the research question or sub-questions.

Overall 6 professional from 3 shelters (two professionals per shelter), and 11 women from shelter and Crisis Centers were involved in the study. Mean duration of the interviews with professionals was 35 minutes (ranging from 25 minutes to an hour), with women 45 minutes (ranging from 15 minutes to 65 minutes).

Protection of Human Subjects

The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of the American University of Armenia (See Appendix C). The protocol assured anonymity and confidentiality of the study participants asking. Participants were informed about the potential stress that the interview might trigger and the specific procedures in place to assure their comfort. Two women did ask to stop the interview. One was able to continue the interview in ten minutes; the other completed the interview the next day. All the participants were asked for oral consent (see Appendix D).

Data Analysis

The study used qualitative inductive conventional content analysis^{59,67}. The data were analyzed in three stages - those of preparation, organizing and reporting⁵⁹. During the preparation stage words, sentences and themes were chosen as the analytical unit. The organizing phase of analyzes was creating open coding, categories and abstraction. After the

open coding, list of the categories were developed which were combined into higher order heading. Subcategories were combined with similar ones into category, which were then named based on content-specific names. Content specific categories were then abstracted into main themes.

RESULTS

Two groups of key informants 1) professionals and 2) women, who were exposed to domestic violence, participated in the study. The mean age of the 6 professionals was 34.7, ranging from 22 to 71 with the average number of years of professional experience in area of domestic violence 6.9 ranging from 5 months to 20 years. All professionals were women.

The mean age of the 11 women, who were exposed to domestic violence was 32, ranging from 19-46. The majority of this group of participants had only 10 years of school education, had one or two children, were from urban areas, were unemployed at the time of the study, and were divorced. The mainstream of women were married before 20 years of age and stayed in abusive relationships for almost 12 years on average (ranging from three to 30 years). Violence toward them started within the first three months of marriage and most lived with their husband's parents at the time the abuse started. At the time of interviews, more than half of women were at the shelter, while others lived with their nuclear family or had returned to their husband's place (Table 1).

Table 1. Socio-demographic and personal characteristics of women

Characteristics	N
Age, Mean (range)	32 years (19-46)
Residency (Urban)	7
Education	
School	8
University	3
Employed	3
Marital status	
Married	2
Divorced	7
Separated	3
Onset of marriage	
16-21 years	9
21-25 years	1
22-30 years	1
Number of children	
1- 2	9
3 and more	2

Family structure at the time of abuse	
Lived with in-laws	8
Lived with husband and children	3
Onset of Abuse, (n)	
During dating	1
Within first 3 months of marriage	9
After the first year of marriage	1
Mean duration of the abusive relationship in years, Mean (range)	11.9 years (2-30)
Place of residence at the time of the study	
Shelters	6
Out of shelters	5

Findings

The main findings in the face of four main themes will be presented, which are 1) factors supporting violence by the husband including role of family and society, mental health and alcoholism; 2) Experience of domestic violence, including the perpetrator of the violence, forms of violence women were exposed to, pregnancy and the violence and children's abuse; 3) Factors for decision to stay in abusive relationships, including unusual circumstances of marriage, societal attitude towards women victims of domestic violence, diminished health status, abuse as an accepted form of behavior as a result of exposure to abuse as a child, children's factor in "Stay" decision making, lack of family support, fear from husband; 4) Factors for the decision to leave the abusive relationships, including prior attempts to leave the husband, family support, children role and the empowerment of the woman.

1. Factors Supporting Violence by the Husband

1.1. Role of family and society

The women who participated in the study indicated that violence as an accepted form of behavior was practiced in their husbands' families. The professionals went on to explain the

existence of violence within the family as a phenomenon which is “learnt” thus making violence an accepted form of behavior for family members.

I first saw violence at his [husband's] brother's family. His brother was beating wife so wildly that no man will ever beat another man like that.

Woman 04

My father-in-law also was abusive to his wife [my mother-in-law]. ... There was a lot he [my husband] had inherited from the father.

Woman 07

Violence is a learnt behavior. Husbands learn it from their fathers and teach it to their children. It goes from generation to generation.

Professional 03

Domestic violence as a phenomenon in the societal level, is conditioned with the societal negative attitude towards women exposed to domestic violence, taboo on speaking out about the violence within the families, violation of women's rights and limited role of women within families, who are submissive to violence. The issue of societal preconditions supporting violence as an accepted form of behavior within the family was equally pointed out both by professionals and women victims.

The society is very negative towards women exposed to violence. Those women are ignored, and their rights are violated.

Woman 01

Women are shy to speak about it, we are Armenians and we know about gossip... When people discuss violence that they are aware of, they blame women who are actually exposed to violence.

Woman 11

We live in a society where the gender inequality prevails... This stereotype in Armenia deepens the issue of domestic violence making the women silent.

Professional 03

The role of mothers in our society is a life-long sufferer, this concept continuously targeted in local soap-operas. Women rights do not exist in Armenia. Changing perceptions would be just wonderful.

Professional 01

1.2. Mental health and alcoholism

Many women described their abusive husbands as a person who had mental health issues. Some women would associate it with exposure to prior life trauma, family history of mental health, alcoholism and exposure to war. As a justification they pinpointed to the documental proof of the perpetrator's mental health, or referred to their personal justification describing the perpetrator's behavior as inadequate.

When he [husband] was a child he put his mother's head into soup-pot and tied the postmen around the tree as that told him not to use bad words in the street...

Woman 05

He [husband] got head trauma when he was in the military service... He considered himself guilty because his mother got diabetes as the result of the stress when she knew that her son was serving in Afghanistan army during Afghanistan war.

Woman 03

After our marriage I found a paper about his mental health. I did not know about it [presence of mental health problem] before. He also hide from me that his mother had mental problems, as well.

Woman 08

He has not even been to military service as he has a psychiatric problem. I looked at the diagnosis once, but could not understand what was written. I was afraid to ask him more about the diagnosis...

Woman 04

Usually he was a normal person, but when he was drunk he was like a beast. Nothing and no one would stop him from beating us.

Woman 06

In contrast to the women, professionals described mental health and/or alcoholism as a trigger for abusive behavior, not denying directly they can coexist. However, they indicated that behind abusive behavior is the desire of man to have a control and power over the woman rather than presence of mental problems.

It is believed that men beat their wives because they have some mental health problems and/or use alcohol. But the truth is that these factors are just stressors which make the batterer use physical power to set complete control over the women's lives.

Professional 02

The main reason for the violence is the desire to get control over another member of the family. He [man] can do it because of being drunk or due to unemployment... the reason does not matter ... All factors are trigger of violence but do not cause it.

Professional 06

1.3 Multiple partner

All the participants mentioned that their husbands have had other partners, than the wife during the life. The presence of the partners was described as a negative event distracting husband's care from the family. But the presence of other partners was also described as a lie to other partners about the married status of the man.

He has always had a lover, during the years of our marriage.

Woman 01

He has had lovers all his life. The last lover was a person who was visited by our whole district men. He even tried to persuade my son to marry that women's daughter.

Woman 05

We lived a happy life until 8 years ago, he got a lover, who was a relative of mine.

Woman 02

He also had lovers. He was dating different girls at a time [he is 22 now] not telling them that he is married.

Woman 08

2. Experience of Domestic Violence

2.1. Marriage circumstances

The onset of marriage among the participants was on average at the age of 17, which was recognized by study participants as a young age to make a rational choice for the rest of life. The participants reported different reasons for the marriage. One of the reasons for the marriage to take place was that the marriage was perceived as a better option than living with the nuclear family. Majority of women reported that marriage took place due to the prior agreement between the families without consulting the future wife. In these cases the woman was informed about the marriage at the last moment. Majority of women either directly or indirectly mentioned the short period of knowing the husband before the marriage.

I married him being really young. Having lived with my aunt after my parents' divorce, I found a way out of my situation in this marriage. I knew him only for several days

Woman 10

I learnt that I am getting married the day of the marriage. I saw a lot of cars in our yard and wondered what was going on. Then my mother told me that I have to go to the hairdresser to get ready for the marriage ceremony.

Woman 11

Women get married at a very young age, not being ready for the marriage, not knowing the man well enough.

Professional 06

A negative event such as a sexual abuse as a guarantee that the woman will eventually marry the man, was also reported as the woman would be labeled as immoral.

I was forced to marry him as he sexually abused me. "I had to date him one day... I told him it would be the last day we meet... He took a handkerchief out of his pocket and brought close to my nose, saying that it is a medicine against flu. It smelled really bad... I was really dizzy that day, like it was a dream. I was very much surprised to see that my menstruation started that day unexpectedly... Then I realized what happened that day. I did not tell about it to any other person."

Woman 07

But the marriage itself was not always arranged by family members. Women would mention their willingness and affection to the husband as a reason to marry the men.

I married my husband loving him, but I did not know him well enough. He was from another village.

Woman 10

I married him loving, and did not have any idea that things would turn out this way.

Woman 03

2.2. Perpetrator of the violence

Nine out of 11 participants reported that they were abused not only by their partners, but also by other family member like father-in-law, mother-in-law, or sister-in-law. Almost all of the participants, both the women and the professionals, indicated that the husband was the main abuser in the family, though the role of the family members as triggers of violence was also pointed out. However, many participants also pointed out that mother-in-law, father-in-law and sister-in-law as other perpetrators of violence within the family. Vast

majority of the participants reported that the violence perpetrated by other family members mostly took form of psychological abuse. This form of abuse was described as constant encouragement of the son to control the wife and to show her who the head in the family is. Several of the study participants also indicated that they had been also physically abused by their mothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, and fathers-in-law.

My husband abused me [physically] but his parents did it psychologically. Particularly mother-in-law always pushed him [my husband] to beat me. He did it to look good in parents' eyes, to be a 'real man'.

Woman 07

I thought I was married to my mother-in-law. When my husband was not at home, she was telling me what to do [to sit or not, to eat or not, and everything else].

Woman 06

My father-in-law and mother-in-law used violence towards me, but the sister-in-law abused me more than parents, even physically. Once I took the baby out, her hat fell on the ground, a man picked up the hat giving to me. His sister was standing near but I had not seen her. As I saw her she hit on my face accusing that I have a lover. She did it in front of many other men standing near the building.

Woman 11

The main perpetrator is definitely the husband. But in Armenian family we have other perpetrators like mother-in-law and sister-in-law... She encourages the son by telling that he is a truly great man because he can control the wife, even by beating.

Professional 05

2.3. Forms of violence

The vast majority of the women reported being exposed to at least one form of abuse, and indicated that the abuse was intended to get complete control over them making women to feel weak and dependent by forbidding working, seeing friends and relatives, and going out.

All women reported that they were exposed to multiple forms of violence - psychological, physical, sexual, and economic. Quite often different types of violence were in a dynamic relationship, starting from psychological form and progression to economic, physical, sexual, and economic.

I believe I had been violated in all possible forms ...Before it [violence] happened I was working as a principle deputy at school, had friends, was respected, and had large social network. I was a self-satisfied person, a professional with a future, but I had to leave my job and lost everything.

Woman 03

It seems like the psychological abuse is the mildest, but it ruins the most.

Professional 01

He did not care for me, ignored my opinion, forbid to work and communicate with my relatives and family. He was beating me systematically, said bad words in my address... I was to keep silence.

Woman 09

I was mostly exposed to psychological abuse... He made me leave my job, to be financially dependent on him, so that he can control me. He would always say "I will close your air".

Woman 02

When you keep silence, you are abused more and more. He used physical power to set me down. It became part of our usual day.

Woman 03

The economic abuse was coexistent with the psychological abuse, which had the element of control on the women's everyday activity thus creating financial dependence between the batterer and the victim. According to professional opinion economic abuse takes two forms: in one form the victim is forced to work and earn money for the family needs, while in the second form she is forbidden to work thus financially dependent and controlled by the abuser. However, vast majority of women reported that economic abuse took the form of denial to have a work, and in some cases, they had to work and give money to the family.

After marriage he forbid me to work ever after. I had to beg him for money... After giving the money, he asked for detailed description of how I spent it.

Woman 11

When we got married, he found a job for me in the bakery. I would give monthly salary to him and he would buy cigarettes for him. Then I got ill working in cold water at the workplace and had to leave the job.

Woman 04

There are two types of economic abuse. From one side he [husband] does not let her [wife] earn money, from the other side, he takes money from her. He makes her beg for money. He does it to make her believe she is a slave for him.

The findings did not show explicitly how one form of violence develops into another form of violence, but the majority of women stressed that it started from mild psychological abuse and transforms to more serious forms of violence. Physical abuse also has elements of psychological abuse, sexual abuse is related to physical and psychological abuse, economic abuse is linked to psychological and physical abuse. Moreover, different forms of violence had the tendency to co-exist for a single victim. All the women described violence as a systematic, repeated phenomenon, lasting both during the marriage and after the marriage.

Once he made me to get under the table and ordered to bark . I was resisting, and then he started shouting that if I will not start barking he will bit me. He was looking at me as an animal. When he came closer to hit I said “woof, woof”. He shouted “On whom are you barking?” and started to hit me with legs looking at me with crazy wide open eyes as an animal.

Woman 05

He was beating me very severely. He knew I had goiter. Last night, he sat on me and took my neck pushing hard enough to suffocate me. He was not intended to kill me, but he was telling “You have to do whatever I will tell you, or I will kill you”.

Woman04

Only now, when all is gone, I can see that I have been abused during all the time I was in marriage.

Woman 01

After I found this shelter and left him, he traced me. He got me just in front of the shelter and started to hit me all around the body in the street, during the daytime. Children got so scared that ran away.

Woman 11

The majority of women indicated cases of sexual abuse by their partners. In situations when women had courage to resist, the husband used physical punishment as a compensation for a refusal to have sexual relationship. An opposite situation was also described, when the husband refused to have sexual relationship with the wife as a form of control and punishment which negatively impacted her self-esteem and made her feel worthless. Sexual

abuse was also indicated as a means to make the woman to marry the man. The above mentioned shades light onto the traditional and cultural peculiarities that make the victim of sexual abuse unprotected not only from the violence itself, but also from its consequences such as societal, health etc.

I have been also exposed to sexual abuse several times. Irrespective of my desire he had sex with me and I could not refuse. I just wanted him to let me alone.

Woman 01

He had lovers all the time. It made me feel unimportant. He would come home and require sex. Though I did not want, he always did whatever he wanted to even by force.

Woman 08

He would refuse to have sexual relationships with me thus punishing me. I was humiliated...he made me feel worthless, and one day I believed him. So I started to work harder, doing my best to keep him... but my role in his life steadily became less important. The harder I tried, ignoring my dignity, the worse things turned out.

Woman 03

2.4. Pregnancy

Women reported situations when the violence took place irrespective of their pregnancy. Moreover, the physical abuse during pregnancy did not differ by its severity during the pregnancy. The pregnancy was not indicated by any women as a reason stopping the husband from the violence. These notions points out to the fact that the fetus health, either physical or mental, may suffer due to the abuse during the pregnancy. The narratives of the women pointed out to the fact that infertile women have no value. The women would describe how important it was for the family to have a baby, thus directly or indirectly pushing the women to get pregnant as soon as possible. But at the same time when getting pregnant takes longer than expected gives birth to the violence within the family, which is mostly psychological. But when the violence takes place the health and life of child is undermined.

When I was pregnant with my boy, one day he came home with his friend, and said to make hamburger. I put the bread and the rest on the table. He got mad as I let them put the things together to eat. He stood up and hit me with his leg so that it entered my vagina.

Woman 05

There were many cases of abuse, when I was pregnant. He used physical power to punish me, and once took me to my aunt's home as a way of punishing me blackmailing that he does not want to have me back, until I silently accept the fact that he dates other women.

Woman 08

When I was in the 8 month of pregnancy, he would force me to do sit ups 50 times while he was watching. I also had to go up and down the stairs 10 times in 10 minutes [living on the third floor]. If I failed to do any he would beat me with a stick.

Woman 05

My first psychological abuse started when I did not get pregnant in the first months after the marriage... I was suppressed by the family member - mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law who so much wanted my husband to have a baby...

Woman 03

2.5. Child abuse

The study participants, who had children, reported cases of child abuse by the perpetrators. All study participants indicated that children who either witnessed the violence or suffered direct abuse experienced mental health problems due to the lack of safe and protected environment within the family resulting to inadequate communication skills. Moreover, participants reported that the directed violence harmed children physical health - from bruises to neurologic spasm. The overall physical, mental, social health of children suffers as a result of domestic violence.

He [the husband] beat our boy [3 years old] because while playing with a car toy on the ground he [the child] made noise... or if the child did not sleep at the time he wanted.

Woman 04

He [the husband] forced the boy to take off the cloths, beat him so that his finger prints were left on the boy's body. Then he took him to the balcony in the middle of winter and ordered to stay there on brooms shoeless. After that he took him in and put under the bed forbidding us to give him [the son] any food.

Woman 05

He tried to kill himself by hanging, but children came in and helped him to come down of the hanging rope. Next time he poured petrol and tried to burn himself on the street. As he had

the light ready, my son saw him, ran to him, heat his hand with the leg preventing attempt... Though the doctor cannot identify epilepsy, after these incidents my son is having convulsions when stressed.

Woman 07

Once when my son tried to stop him [the husband] from beating me, he stood in front of him saying not to beat me. He hit the boy so badly that my son felt down and hit the head on a corner of the table. Later he [the son] had eye problems and started to afraid of father, because he bit him more frequently... he [son] was very much afraid of him. When I had to go out for shopping, my son was hiding under the table waiting for me to come back.

Woman 11

In abusive families, children face violence if not directly as a victim, than indirectly as a witness. The child expects protection from the father, but receives violence instead. This lack of support disrupts the child safety and health.

Professional 04

3. Factors for Decision to Stay in Abusive Relationships

3.1. Childhood history of abuse

Childhood exposure to abuse makes the women see abuse by the husband as an accepted form of behavior. They put up with the violence thinking that it is a normal course of life leaving less room for critical review of the situation. In addition, those women, who have already been exposed to domestic violence as a child, have come up with some behavioral strategies on how to deal with the violence and how to overcome its presence every day, through self-distortion both psychologically and physically.

My father died when I was 6 years. My step Mother would punish me a lot, like for not stealing food. When I saw violence also in marriage, I thought that maybe that is how life is to be.

Woman 05

My parents got divorce, when I was 9, with no abuse as such. He left for another woman. He did not abuse her physically, but later, I can see that he has abused her psychologically

Woman 01

I was abused as a child. As long as I remember him [father], my father was very abusive towards my mother, me and my sisters.

Woman 09

But the family as the starting point for the development of the women's perception of what a family is and how it relates to the abuse also comes from the family and the way women were brought up. The manner to the upbringing formulates a specific attitude towards the violence and a set of strategies to deal with the violence ending in silence. This way of upbringing is particularly true for the women's nuclear family.

My education... my parents me and my elder sisters brought us up in a manner that when you marry it is your cross and you have to carry it.

Woman 03

I got married by my mother's force. She would decide for me whatever I was to do. She knew what was the best for me.

Woman 11

My father has abused me, my sisters and my mother. My mother was the victim of his abuse 12 months a year and 24 hours a day all her life.

Woman 09

My Mother was the victim of my father's abuse 24 hours a day. We have been looking for support all our lives.

Woman 08

3.2. Stigmatization of victims of domestic violence

The society has two distinct opinions, according to the study participants, on women who are victims of domestic violence. They either blame or encourage the women. But the majority of women victims describe it as negative stating that they will be either criticized, or blamed having left the husband. The stereotype, prevailing in the society, towards a woman who is divorced leads the woman to stay in the marriage, though the family as such ceases to exist. If she is exposed to domestic violence and the family has already become just physical coexistence of some people, these stereotypes make these women to put up, adjust and keep silence. The stereotypes involve the shame to be divorced, the shame to have left the family.

Society treats badly a woman who is divorce. They do not think that man can be guilty as well. Rather it is the woman, who may have done something immoral so that she gets divorced.

Woman 08

For me, it was a shame to be a divorced person. Somehow it puts the blame on me.

Woman 07

You see criticize of women in every corner, what good thing they can tell about a divorced women?

Woman 11

Though everyone knows that I am a moral person, as well my child, who has left my husband with me, they will still gossip that I have left him. They will criticize me.

Woman 02

Society teaches the woman to be more patient, instead of making her strong. They want to look good couple in the society. The idea of having a husband, dominates.

Professional 01

Once a woman told me “You better be a dog in the street, than a woman without husband”. This idea has been with me over these long years I have been working in this field.

Professional 01

But there is a point at which the society also points to the abuser, and that point was described by the participants as the cutpoint when things have become so devastating that there is a threat to the women’s life and health.

Different people have different opinions. But majority of people think that woman is a saint, she is to be taken care of...especially when things have become so bad that woman is beaten up every day.

Woman 05

Only the extreme cases lead the society judge the men, such as suicide, hospitalization. First the woman is blamed as violence takes place within the family. She is encouraged to keep silence. Then a slap becomes severe form of violence. After it is too late, the woman decides to leave, then the husband is blamed. But the society would not blame the man at the beginning of the violence.

Professional 04

The majority of the participants shared the same opinion that Armenian society is not well educated on domestic violence. The reasons could be different: due to limited role of

women in the society, due to the denial that such a phenomenon exists or due to the lack of proper legal system, which prohibits the successful realization of women's right protection within the families, as well the lack of skills and understanding of how to deal with a woman who was exposed to domestic violence.

We do not have role mothers in our society like we do not have successful women politicians, scientists while the cop-operas provide the role-mother who is a life-long sufferer. If we were to change their mentality first that would be just wonderful.

Professional 01

We want to believe that we are a perfect society and we do not have social illnesses, like handicapped people, LGBT community, Domestic Violence. Even if they happen they are not publicized. Even now in the government there are people who are frightened to hear about such issues.

Professional 03

We are in a state of denial of domestic violence. We see the proof of the denial when Hranush Hakobian believes that there is no domestic violence in Armenia, when Syunik marzpet can slap a woman in Marriott Hotel with no fear.

Professional 03

The lack of law is the main factor which prohibits successful protection of women's safety. As a result child and family suffer.

Professional 06

We do not have law on domestic violence... But as we do not have a definition of domestic violence we can not explicitly define who the victim is and what are his/her rights.

Professional 01

While talking to Mariam Gevorgyan. the journalists would ask such questions that they want to blame her... They do not know how to talk to victims, as they blame the woman anyway.

Professional 05

But the societal attitude also has its history of development and the bases on which the attitude is built on. The way the children are brought up defines how they will treat a certain phenomena, in this case, domestic violence. There is a distinct line which characterizes where boys and girls are in the society, and in what way certain gender is valued over another one. Traditional norms make the women be passive and take a submissive role in the family.

Empowerment of the women comes from the childhood, as girls and boys do not have the same value for the family. Girl children are taught to serve the food, obey to the brothers and father, and later to the husband and his family.

Professional 06

We teach girls to be sexy, to look good to please the men. All these stereotypes ruin women's self-esteem. We [women] do not have any other value. We are not smart; we are not empowered, we are not capable.

Professional 03

Once I witnessed a conversation between a young woman and her two children. The boy told the mother about what the sister had done, and she told him "Why did not you hit on her mount. Then she would know her place". That is how children are brought up, that is how men overdominate in our society.

Professional 01

In a patriarchal society, young girls are not exposed to education. Her father decides for her as a child, than the husband does. So, the woman never affirms herself. She is never exposed to decision making.

Professional 05

3.3. Diminished health status

Women victims of domestic violence endure health consequences of domestic violence, which involves not only physical, but most importantly the psychological health. The physical health and the psychological health going hand in hand, slowly diminished not only the women physical health but also the psychological health thus making the woman take the role of the victim, keep silence and become passive. As a result the diminished health status indirectly lowers the possibility of getting out of the abusive relationships.

He made me feel worthless and one day I believed him. So I started to work harder, do my best to keep him. I tried to be more for me, but my role in his life only diminished.

Woman 03

I lost myself, I had such a low self-esteem that I thought I will not be able to survive. In Armenia women are always for being used... I was passive, until I became active. I leant to be weak.

Woman 11

As the abuse started I appreciated me less and less. I broke down, something broke inside. I was sad all the time, every day. Though I have always thought that I am a strong woman, it turned out I have lost the meaning of life.

Woman 01

The self-esteem of the women victims of domestic violence is killed; they feel unwanted, guilty, and ugly, she thinks that she does not deserve anything.

Professional 06

Through years he brainwashes her making believe that if not the husband, she will not be able to function in the outside world. But he made her be like that.

Professional 03

I was to be silent, adjust to his need and wishes; I was completely dependent on him financially, even at the end morally. We were not equal, he was dominating, and everything was to be as he wanted with no possibility of collaboration.

Woman 01

The denial of access to health care was also mentioned by many of the participants.

The denial took different forms, including denial to give money to the woman for taking care of the health problems. The situation was worse for women who are from rural regions as not only the financial barrier created by the husband inhibits her access to the health care, but also geographical location, which puts the woman onto more dependence from the husband's mercy.

He would not let me see doctors saying that I am Ok, and it will pass.

Woman 03

He did not take me to the doctor. There were cases he said we do not have money, though he had them for his lover, in other cases he would say that there is no way to go to the city, as lived in a really far village.

Woman 02

Being isolated from the society, particularly from friend and family, not having the right to work as well the lack of financial independence make the women more and more susceptible to the abusers influence. Control over their lives, which was constantly emerging in the participants' narratives, impacted their ability to make decision, thus becoming more and more dependent onto the abuser and his wishes. The control over the victim's life was

gained by the abuser by making the woman to adjust to social isolation, not getting education and quitting job. As a result social health of the woman suffers.

As we were just married, I was told that I will not be allowed to work. He [husband] would tell me that I should not go to the shop for a long time. It was the only shop in the street and if it took longer, he would get angry. It was like I was in cage.

Woman 08

He made me leave my job, to be financially dependent on him, so that he can control me, he would always say "I will close your air". He would do this to me so that I become weak not to require him to leave that woman.

Woman 02

But the main reason is the desire to get control over another member of the family: the desire to control the behavior by different means, like denying communication with relatives, friends, denial of having work, and of course education.

Professional 04

But the abuse diminished not only the women's mental health, but also the physical health as such. Women would describe different physical health consequences they have had due to the abuse. The range of physical health consequences involved bruises, injuries, including abortions.

The first time, my mother learnt about the abuse, was when she saw innumerable bruises on my skin.

Woman 11

If he was to hit me, then the first is to heat on my head. I believe that is the reason I am losing my concentration and start to understand things, even simple, with delays.

Woman 07

My mother-in-law and my husband, made me have two abortions, though I was very much against it. Irrespective to my tears and constant begging to let me keep the baby, they refused me.

Woman 08

When I learnt I was pregnant, and seeing how much he abuses my two girls, I did not want any other child to suffer because of him. I bought Pitutrin medicine and did intravenous injection, jumped a wire, took my children onto my back, belly and miscarried the fourth baby. Then I did the same with the next baby who was already over 6 month, almost completely formed.

Woman 05

3.4. Children's factor in "Stay" decision making

The presence of children was often cited as one of the reasons why women would stay in the abuse relationships. The concern of the women was that the child needs a father, especially taking into consideration that some of the women were brought up not in full family.

My children were the only reason I would stand him. Whenever I tried to leave him, he would, by force, take children from me and then I again had to go back.

Woman 07

I was staying for my children. I thought it was the best for them. I did not take care of my needs. I had already lost everything.

Woman 02

The presence of children is another reason why women stay, as after the divorce the women are not able to take care of the children alone. In addition, women think that the baby needs to have a father.

Professional 01

The presence of children is among the major reasons why women stay. But ironically they will not understand that it will have very negative impact on them, like trauma, PTSD, low school performance, and finally they may become batters as well. So children are confused, it is the father that loves, but it is the father who hates. They cannot put together so different realities. And here comes cases of schizophrenia.

Professional 03

3.5. Lack of family support

The decision to stay in the abusive relationships was also related to the mere possibility of where to go. The lack of nuclear family support came out as a category with certain variability. The lack of family support had two dimensions. First the family would make the women stay in the relationships as it is the most appropriate way of maintaining the family.

I was taught that when I marry it is my cross and I have to stand it. Generally speaking I have their support, but I would have to adjust to the new family. That was the stereotype that made me to stand all that for such a long time.

Woman 03

The second reason for facing the lack of nuclear family support was the socio-economic burden the family was facing: lack of financial perspectives and/or lack of a space for the women with children.

The day of my marriage my Mother told me “Forget your way back, I have three more children after you whom I want to get married as well”

Woman 11

My family has so many social-economic problems that they are not able to take me back. They do not have merely a free room that I with my child can move in, or the lack of money to take care of more people. That is why I got just advice to stand, adapt and keep silence.

Woman 04

3.6. Fear from husband

Another issue which makes the women stay in the abusive relationship is the abuser himself as a person who can impose risk to the life and health of the children, women, her nuclear family, and sometimes even on him. The fear from the abuser makes the women stay in the relationships. The fear includes concern for the child’s health that directly can become the target of the abuse: as an attempt to make the woman choose between herself and the child or the fear to be left with no child.

He was telling me that he would take my child. I was most afraid to lose my baby, he was really small, I was already attached to him. He was not speaking and I saw what they could do, how could I leave him with them?

Woman 04

He told me that if I try to leave him he will kill the son. And one day, after he beat me, I ran out. He caught my son, forced him to bend, put his foot on his head and said “I will sacrifice him, if you do not come in”. I went in.

Woman 07

He tried to take my child even by trying to convince the judge to release my parenthood rights. During that process my husband’s lawyer told me about this shelter.

Woman 10

The fear to lose the children makes the women stay in the relationship for many years.

Professional 06

Another reason the fear from the husband makes the women stay in the abusive relationships is the fear for the safety of the nuclear family of the woman. Women are afraid to go, as the husband keeps on telling that he will make something bad to the family and the woman is forced to stay and keep silence for the sake of the family.

He forced me to keep silence by threatening to kill my family, my mother, brother or father. I believed him as I knew how dangerous he was.

Woman 04

It is an overfull thing for the woman to choose between her life and the family's life and safety. The threat from the husband to kill the family makes the woman stay and keep silence. But what else they can do, if they do not have any hope for support. The family is weak not speaking about her.

Professional 01

But the fear to lose the woman, who is willing to quit the relationships, also makes the husband to threaten his life. This form of manipulation included either a warning sign which was truly not intended to kill him, or took the form of an intended death or suicide.

Sometimes he would take a knife, put on his arm as a proof that he will kill him. So that he does not hurt himself, I would have to give up the idea of leaving him.

Woman 04

He tried to kill himself by hanging himself, but the children came in and cut the rope when he was already hanging. Another time, he tried to burn himself but my son could stop him the last moment.

Woman 07

4. Factors for the Decision to Leave the Abusive Relationships

4.1. Act of leaving

The decision to leave the husband as an attempt to find solution to the abusive relationships is a very complex phenomenon involving factors from different layers of social, family and personal domains. According to vast majority of the women, the decision to leave the abusive relationship was an attempt to regain a normal life and believe that nothing can be worse than the abusive relationship.

Every time I went to my parents' home I saw that there was life out of my husband's home so I just wanted to leave him to live again.

Woman 04

As the abuse got worse I just took the baby and left. It would not be worse than it was.

Woman 09

But the act of leaving the husband would take several attempts to get independence from the abusive husband and the family. This process was describes by almost majority of the women and the professionals as a process which can be described as a cyclic process. The reason why women go and return has several justifications: women love their husbands, husband's promise to change for the good, lack of legal system to support the woman.

I loved him, I still do, and I so much wanted him to change. I thought he would, that is why I would return to him after every time I would leave him.

Woman 10

When I was in the shelter for the first time [10 days stay in the shelter], we had a talk a day. He gave good promises that he would change and I made up my mind to go back to him. When we arrived home, I saw in his eyes, he had not changed. I was very much disappointed I came back.

Woman 08

There were times when he would say that thing will change, but after 1, 2 weeks conflict would arise again.

Woman 02

I tried to divorce him earlier, but as he learnt that I took the case to the court, he started to follow me. One day he was following me, and as he saw me coming out of the court with my daughter he attacked me, threw a big stone onto me. I got hurt but could escape.

Woman 05

It takes a woman to leave the husband in average 5 times, until she is truly able to quit this circle. After each attempt to leave the husband, women get more empowered for the next step.

Professional 03

4.2. Family support

Many women who, according to them, have left their husband with no chance to go back, actually found their nuclear family's support while deciding to leave the husband. The family gave them shelter, financial support, and encouragement to keep on living.

After another fight at night, I understood that I no more exist for him, even for me anymore. I have always thought that maybe I love him really a lot but there was nothing left, I was cold to him. I had my family to do [leave the husband] my family support.

Woman 01

He left me and my daughter behind the door s in the middle of winter with home dress. It was cold, we were freezing and our neighbor gave us shelter that night. Then I had to return to my parents' family.

Woman 03

Actually my family decided that I have to leave, and they provided me with anything that I feel good and start a new life. After the divorce I have become more self-confident, thought I have inferiority feeling as well. And sometimes I feel I do not know what I want.

Woman 06

I went to my family for support, who brought me to this center as they had no place to hide me: he can find me anywhere. He is really dangerous.

Woman 04

4.3. For the Child's sake

Some of the participants would describe long years of staying in the abusive relationships, but the point at which they were ready to leave the marriage, was described with the involvement of the child in the abuse, which was either the neglect of child's need or direct violence towards the child. As the violence towards the child would increase the act of leaving the relationship was more doable for women.

He was trying to find a reason to hurt me and my boy, especially the boy. He was abusing girls as well, but particularly my boy. This was getting more and more impossible.

Woman 05

Until I knew that my child was sick, I would stand everything, would be positive, hoping that one day he would return to us. I would excuse him whatever he did. Then....there was no more space to stand this.

Woman 02

I was really tired of his attitude to me, he was always suspecting that I have lover. In addition he was beating the baby very badly. All these forced me to leave him.

Woman 08

4.4. Empowerment perspectives

Interestingly all the participants shared the same opinion about the perspectives of women victims of domestic violence, which starts from the personal development of the women to the legal support to women. The role of social workers and psychologist is crucial to help the victims to see the resources they have, as those resources have been diminished over the course of the abuse in their perception. This process has to go hand in hand with the education, which was mentioned by almost all the participants as a gap in their chances to start the life independently.

They will have to work on their personal development, get education, and if she has children her responsibility increases triple times. And if there is something to do for her at the beginning is to give her a small apartment to start her life anew.

Woman 10

The role of social workers is very important. You point out to what a person was prior to the marriage. The role of psychologist is very important... The community supports it significant as well, though we lack it tremendously.

Professional 04

But the empowerment is more of a complex process which also needs to have in it the element of the employment, or a substitute of it which can give the women financial independence, which, as was mentioned by all the participants, is the tool that kept them dependent onto the husband. And as was mentioned by almost all the participants, the main possibility and challenge for the women to get financial independence is to have an education, with which they can gain financial independence, social networking and a chance to start their lives anew.

Financial independence is the most important thing that a woman need in such situation needs. If there is job, you will be strong... But with the lack of education you do not have a chance.

Woman 01

Financial independence is the key to their success. In developed countries that is what they do, they financially empower the woman so that she can start a new life.

Professional 05

The empowerment of women will start from the education as a key to independence. Then you will have job, friends and can start another life.

Woman 06

But the point which needs special attention is the lack of law in Armenia on domestic violence which creates a gap between the everyday practice of violence and the legal regulations to implement strategies to prevent/intervene the violence towards the women.

We need to know our rights, we do not need to be shy, and we are the ones who can protect ourselves.

Woman 08

It is even hard to think about the empowerment of women, when Armenia does not have a law on domestic violence and when we sit together with the police and discuss the issue, we all talk about the same thing, with no legal definition of what we mean saying domestic violence.

Professional 01

Summary of Main Findings

This qualitative study identified the following main findings per the emerged domain:

Domain 1. Factors supporting violence by the husband

- Domestic violence for the study participants was associated with practice of violence existing in their husband's family.
- Society has negative attitude toward women speaking out about inter-family relationships.

- Mental health disorders and alcoholism of the perpetrator is a risk factor for the domestic violence.
- The presence of multiple partners triggers violence towards the women.

Domain 2. Experience of domestic violence

- Among the risk factors for the women to be victims are unusual circumstances of the marriage, including early age, forced marriage, arranged marriage, and history of violence in the nuclear family.
- The main perpetrator of violence is the husband triggered by other family members including mother-in-law, father-in-law, and sister-in-law, who sometimes become perpetrators as well.
- The victims of the violence are exposed to all the forms of violence, including psychological, physical, economic, and sexual. The severity of the violence ranges from mild to severe.
- Violence did not differ in severity during the pregnancy.
- Children are mostly exposed to psychological and physical violence that negatively affects their mental, physical and social health.

Domain 3. Factors for decision to stay in abusive relationships

- Exposure to abuse in childhood makes the women tolerant to abuse by the husband and accept it as a usual form of behavior.
- Traditional norms of bringing up a girl, teaches her to take the role of the passive and submissive one in the family.
- The critical attitude of the society towards women who are divorced, make them endure the abusive relationships. The societal attitude becomes sympathetic, as the severity of the violence increases.

- Society resists the idea that domestic violence is a problem in Armenia. Lack of law makes the women stay in the abusive relationships as the official institutions do not have any supportive role for the victim.
- The abuse negatively impacts the women's mental, physical and social health thus making them be less proactive in establishing their rights. Mental health consequences of the women include deprived well-being, prevailing negative mood and diminished self-perception. Physical health consequences for women include bruises, injuries, and abortions. Social health consequences are social isolation, denial of communication with other people, including family, friends and neighbors.
- Husband's denial to give money and financial dependence of women leads to their limited access to health care complicated with geographical locations in remote regions.
- Financial and social isolation of women by husbands make them more susceptible to abuse and allow husbands to take control over their lives.
- Women maintain marriage to give the children a full family with the father.
- Lack of nuclear family support, both economic and mental makes women to stay.
- Fear of the husband is the last, but not least important factors why women stay. The fear for her, her children, and her nuclear family life and health, make woman stay.

Domain 4. Factors for decision to stay in abusive relationships

- By leaving family women try to make lives peaceful and believe that anything will be better than they had before.
- The process of leaving the husband is depicted as a cyclic process during which the women leave the husband and return. The factors which make the woman go back are the following: promises of husband to change, love to the husband, and lack of legal protection for the victim.

- Family support, as a factor to leave the husband actualizes when the severity of the abuse increases.
- As the violence starts to trigger also serious danger to the child the woman makes the decision to leave more readily.
- Empowerment that associated with financial independence, having professional education and social networking helps women to leave the abusive relationships. .

The results of the study show that the domestic violence as a phenomenon is also present within Armenian families. The perpetrator of the violence is not only the intimate partner/husband but also other family members - mother-in-law, father-in-law, and sister-in-law. Violence as an accepted form of behavior is present within families, which both supports the perpetrator to be abusive and the women to become a victim. Societal attitudes toward women victims of domestic violence inhibit timely recognition of the problem and additionally limit secondary prevention efforts. Early onset of marriage and lack of professional education make women susceptible to violence. The stay/leave decision comes into the play as the violence starts gaining new forms of violence with the tendency of the severity to increase. But the activation of stay/leave decision is also related to the presence of other people like children and/or nuclear family. The stay/leave decision has several components which either persuade the woman stay in the marriage or leave it: while staying she is under the mercy of the husband, while leaving she is under the mercy of the family which maintains her and the children's' living.

DISCUSSION

Domestic violence as a serious social, political and public health issue in Armenia has gained its attention over the last two decades. A number of nationwide surveys reveal the relative prevalence of the problem,^{48,49,54-56} but to our knowledge this is the first attempt to approach the domestic violence from the perspective of the women victims, who are in shelter or in touch with crisis centers adjunct to the shelters in Armenia. The main research questions provide the organizational framework for the following discussion to better understand the domestic violence in Armenia.

To know why women stay in the abusive relationships and how they come to the decision of staying or leaving the abusive husband, it is crucial to understand the contextual peculiarities of the violence. The first question to be asked is who the perpetrator of the violence is in Armenian families. Our data shows that the main perpetrator is the husband whose actions directly and/or indirectly were promoted by his mother, father, or sister. The literature only partly reflects on the role of non partners as perpetrator, aside from sexual non partner violence.^{37,68}

Along with considering personal and social risk factors making a woman to become a victim of domestic violence, the literature suggests that the victim has to have low level of education, be economically dependent, and be married at a younger age. In addition, the literature suggests that the exposure of women victims to abuse in their childhood or witnessing violence within the nuclear family is also a personal risk factor.¹⁴ Our findings illustrated similar personal risk factors, which make women susceptible to violence in Armenian families, unlike the low level of education, which in case of Armenian women is about lack of professional education.¹ With no specific study aim, the findings showed that a number of abusers have mental health issues making them prone to violence. Mental health

was most often cited by the participants as the main reason for the violence, especially in the severe cases. The literature corroborates our findings.⁶⁹

While one of the sub-questions was about the general health effects of abuse on women's health, the majority of women emphasized the mental health issues that the abuse caused them to have, from emotional distress, diminished health status, and low self-esteem to suicidal ideas which goes along with the health effects of violence. The harm to physical health included mild form as slap and severe form of abuse as multiple injuries and induces abortions. These findings are again in line with the international literature.^{1,3,13,70} Exposure to abuse during the pregnancy, again reflected in the international literature,^{10,22,71} was among the findings of this study: Pregnancy was not a reason for the abuser to stop the violence or diminish its severity. The study findings explicitly show that different forms of abuse coexist within abusive relationships, such as psychological, physical, and sometimes sexual, with the last one as one spoken with specific cautiousness. These findings also were consistent with the literature⁷². The exposure to abuse, according to the study participants, also touched on the children, having resulted in both the mental and physical health of the children.^{68,73}

The core question of the study was related to understanding of the contextual reasons women stay in the relationships and what is the cutpoint that they decide to leave the partner. The decision of staying was described with the following phenomenon: stigmatization of women victims of domestic violence and stigmatization of divorced women diminish their self-perception making women become less aware of possibilities and resources for self-accomplishments. Another reason for the woman to stay in the relationships was associated with recognition of violence as an accepted form of behavior rooted from their childhood. Fear from husband, lack of family support, financial dependence, and presence of children are among the major reasons making women stay in the relationships. This group of motives

also was supported by the literature showing the relevance of these reasons to other settings and countries.^{25,28}

Another set found within this study was the reasons or the cutpoint when the women leave the abusive relationships. The range of reasons which made the woman come up with the decision to leave the abusive husband was associated with the care for children's well-being, nuclear family support and the empowerment perspectives. The family support was of great interest as in most cases the nuclear families actually took the initiative for the divorce and further support. Moreover, if during the life period with the husband, women were caring for children to have father, considering absence of father as a psychological threat, after some point the decision to leave is an attempt to save children from physical and psychological threats. In addition, at the decision point to leave women recognize that there is no room for further improvement in the created abusive situation. This kind of process is a cyclic process, as women reported that they had prior attempts to leave the husband. The literature confirms the cyclic idea of the stay/leave decision which might take up to 5 time of leaving the husband.^{1,30}

The empowerment perspective of the women explicitly emphasizes the need for financial independence which guarantees her autonomy. The financial independence becomes one of the key strategies of combating domestic violence in low income countries, according to WHO.⁷⁴

This study expanded our understanding of what domestic violence is in Armenia from the perspectives of women supported by shelters and Crisis Centers. By understating the nature of health needs of women experienced domestic violence (social, psychological, cultural, lack of advocacy or all of them together), the study aids the policy makers to expand the scope of advocacy of domestic violence creating ground for probable early identification strategies, like screening interventions and services for women victims with wider access to

necessary health and social services. As well the study assisted the predictions of the strategies and approaches to combating domestic violence in the best possible manner, taking into consideration national and cultural particularities.

Study Limitation

The major limitation of the study is that women involved in the study were either exposed to the severe form of violence, or had the empowerment to leave the husband or were already in touch with the shelters and Crisis Center and benefited from their social services. The women victims of domestic violence, who are exposed to less severe form of violence, or who lack the empowerment to leave the family were not involved in the study.

Implications

Our findings show that the issues of domestic violence are starting to be part of public, policy makers' discourse, though not in a systematic way. Nevertheless, more need to be done to better understand the conditions which make the women susceptible to domestic violence. For the intervention/prevention perspective the need of screening among women and children should be emphasized. Based on these ideas, the following recommendations are made for the policy-makers, specialists working in the field:

1. The study reveals only the perspectives of the women, thus making the picture of domestic violence less comprehensive. Future research is suggested with the perpetrators to know more about their perspectives which will make further efforts of prevention and intervention more scrutinized.
2. A tight look has to be kept on the issue of the mental health among the perpetrators which will help the professionals to better address the need of the women victims, and the health care needs of the perpetrators.

3. Future research is needed to understand the extent to which children are exposed to domestic violence and how it specifically affects their mental, physical, and social needs.
4. Promote and strengthen the promotion of law on Domestic Violence in Armenia. The acceptance of the law will make the system more responsive to the need if the women who are exposed to domestic violence. The acceptance of the law will make also children more protective from the consequences of the violence, as the abuser will have to be more accountable for his deeds by obeying to the legal orders.
5. Target women to educate more on domestic violence through different training and activities. For that reason young woman who has kindergarten and/or school age children could be targeted first to make the efforts more effective to meet both children's and Mother's needs.
6. Investigate means for further empowerment of women victims of domestic violence through financial independence and social support.

Thus, as the issue of domestic violence is a problem which touches on not only families, but also the society as a whole, more works needs to be done to support combating domestic violence taking into consideration international experience and local peculiarities.

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APPENDIX A. English and Armenian versions of in-depth interview guides for women and professionals

Professionals

Place: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Introduction of the topic

First of all I want to thank you for this opportunity. But before we start, I would like to ask you to tell me a bit about you.

1. What do you think, why did you decide to work in the field of domestic violence?
2. What are the rewards and disadvantages of working in this field?
3. How would you define domestic violence?
4. Who is the perpetrator of the violence in Armenian family? *Probe:* What general patterns can you identify which would help to better understand the bigger picture of domestic violence in Armenia?
5. How would you describe its prevalence in Armenia? *Probe:* Are these data accurate? Do you think there are many cases unidentified? What are the reasons for underreporting the domestic violence in Armenia?
6. Why does violence happen to women in Armenia? *Probe:* In your opinion to what extent economics, education, social status etc matters? How do you think role of men and women contribute to domestic violence?
7. How does Armenian society treat women who have experienced domestic violence? *Probe:* Do people talk about it openly? Why or why not? To what extent Armenian law protect women from domestic violence and to what extent it is forced in reality?

Health effects

8. What are the health consequences of domestic violence? *Probe:* Physical, mental, social?

Decision to stay

9. Why do women stay in relationships with a partner who practices violence towards them? *Probe:* a) Children, education, social status, financial dependence, etc?
10. What leads a woman to leave a violent partner? *Probe:* a) What holds them back from seeking help? b) Is it the lack of family support, policies protecting victims, etc?

Empowerment

11. How does domestic violence impact women's self-esteem and their ability to make decisions about their lives?
12. How women's employment /non employment status do relate to exposure to domestic violence?
13. How does a lack of a properly functioning referral system of domestic violence in Armenia diminish women's empowerment?
14. What do you think should be done to promote empowerment of women victims?

15. Is there something we have not asked about, but you think it is worth mentioning about?

Thank you very much for your participation! It was very interesting and helpful to us.

Do you know anyone (community, social network, family, friend, neighbors) who was exposed or is exposed to domestic violence? If yes, I will give you my contact numbers to pass to her and she can contact me whenever she wants to. If she agrees, I will contact her by the contact number she provides.

Do you know anyone (colleagues, field experts) who works in the field of domestic violence? Would you, please, provide their contact information?

**Մասնագետների համար նախատեսված անհատական
հարցազրույցի ուղեցույց**

Վայր: _____

Օր: _____

Ժամանակ: _____

Թեմայի Ներածություն

Առաջին հերթին շնորհակալություն Ձեզ հետ զրուցելու այս հնարավորության համար: Մինչ զրույցը սկսելը՝ խնդրեմ մի փոքր պատմեք Ձեր մասին:

1. Ինչու՞ որոշեցիք աշխատել ընտանեկան բռնության ասպարեզում:
2. Որո՞նք են այս ասպարեզում աշխատելու առավելություններն ուղժվարությունները:
3. Ինչպե՞ս կսահմանեք ընտանեկան բռնությունը:
4. Ո՞վ է բռնությունը գործադրողը հայկական ընտանիքում: *Փորձ:* Ի՞նչ ընդհանուր միտումներ կան, որ կբնութագրեն ընդհանուր պատկերը Հայաստանում:
5. Ձեր կարծիքով, որքանո՞վ է տարածված ընտանեկան բռնությունը Հայաստանում: *Փորձ:* Արդյո՞ք այդ տվյալները համապատասխանում են իրականությանը: Ըստ Ձեզ, կա՞ն չբացահայտված դեպքեր: Ո՞րոնք են, ըստ Ձեզ, Հայաստանում ընտանեկան բռնության չբացահայտման պատճառները:
6. Ինչու՞ է կանանց նկատմամբ իրականացվում ընտանեկան բռնություն Հայաստանում: *Փորձ:* Ըստ Ձեզ, որքանո՞վ են տնտեսական, կրթական, հասարակական կարգավիճակը կամ այլ գործոններն առնչվում ընտանեկան բռնության հետ: Ըստ Ձեզ, ինչպե՞ս է կնոջ կամ տղամարդու դերը նպաստում ընտանեկան բռնությանը:
7. Ինչպե՞ս կբնութագրեք հասարակության վերաբերմունքը ընտանեկան բռնության ենթարկված կնոջ նկատմամբ Հայաստանում: *Փորձ:* Արդյո՞ք մարդիկ խոսում են բացեիբաց այդ մասին: Ինչու՞ այդ, կամ ինչու՞ ոչ: Որքանո՞վ է օրենքը պաշտպանում կնոջը ընտանեկան բռնությունից և որքանո՞վ է այն գործում իրականաում:

Առողջական հետևանքները

8. Առողջական ի՞նչ հետևանքներ ունի ընտանեկան բռնությունը կանանց վրա՝ Ֆիզիկական, հոգեբանական, սոցիալական:

Ընտանիքում մնալու որոշումը

9. Ըստ Ձեզ, ինչու՞ են կանայք շարունակում իրենց հարաբերությունները գուզընկերոջ հետ, ով բռնություն է կիրառում իրենց նկատմամբ: *Փորձ՝ հնարավոր պատճառները* երեխանե՞րը, կրթությունը, հասարակական դի՞րքը, ֆինանսական կախվածությունը, թե՞ այլ:
10. Ի՞նչն է դրդում կնոջը լքել բռնարար գուզընկերոջը: *Փորձ՝* Ի՞նչն է կանանց հետ պահում օգնություն փնտրելուց: Արդյո՞ք պատճառը ընտանեկան աջակցության, թե՞ համապատասխան քաղաքականության պակասն է:

Հգորացում

11. Ի՞նչպես է բռնությունը անդրադառնում կանանց ինքնագնահատականի և իրենց կյանքի վերաբերյալ որոշում կայացնելովրա:
12. Ի՞նչպե՞ս է բռնությունը առնչվում կանանց աշխատանքային զբաղվածության կամ գործազրկության հետ:
13. Հայաստանում բռնության ենթարկված կանանց ուղղորդման համակարգը ինչպե՞ս է անդրադառնում կանանց հզորացման վրա:
14. Ըստ Ձեզ, որո՞նք են Հայաստանում բռնության ենթարկված կանանց հզորացման հնարավորությունները:
15. Կա արդյո՞ք ինչ-որ բան, որի մասին մենք Ձեզ չհարցրեցինք, բայց կարծում եք, որ անհրաժեշտ է այդ մասին նշել:

Շատ շնորհակալություն Ձեր մասնակցության համար: Ձեզ հետ զրուցելը շատ հետաքրքիր էր և օգտակար:

Դուք ճանաչու՞մ եք որևէ մեկին (համայնք, կապեր, ընտանիք, ընկեր, հարևան), ով ենթարկվել է, կամ ենթարկվում է բռնության: Եթե այո, ես Ձեզ կտամ իմ կոնտակտային համարը այդ մարդուն փոխանցելու համար: Նա կարող է ինձ հետ կապ հաստատել երբ իրեն հարմար է, նաև, եթե ցանկանում է մասնակցել հարցազրույցին՝ իրեն հարմար օրը, ժամին և վայրում: Եթե նա կհամաձայնի, ես կարող եմ ինքս իրեն զանգահարել և պայմանավորվել:

Դուք ճանաչու՞մ եք որևէ մեկին (գործընկեր, փորձագետ), ով աշխատում է ընտանեկան բռնության ոլորտում: Կարո՞ղ եք տրամադրել նրա կոտակտային համար:

Women

Place: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Introduction of the topic

First of all I want to thank you for this opportunity to talk. But before we start, I would like to ask you to tell me a bit about you.

1. How would you describe you as a person?
2. Could you share with me what was the most challenging event in your life?
3. What is the most inspiring thing in your life? Children, shelter, etc?

Experience of domestic violence

4. How would you define domestic violence?
5. What was the first time you ever encountered domestic violence? *Probe:* Friends, relatives, family members, etc?
6. Please, tell us about your experience of domestic violence? *Probe:* What forms of violence you have been exposed to? Physical, sexual, emotional, psychological?
7. Who was the perpetrator of the violence towards you? Husband, mother-in-law, father-in-law, or other members of your husband's family? Did any of them somehow provoke violence towards you? What was it like?
8. What made (makes) you susceptible to violence? *Probe:* Personal characteristics, presence of lack of children?
9. Why did violence happen to you? *Probe:* Economics, education, social status etc?
10. How does Armenian society treat women who have experienced domestic violence? *Probe:* Do people talk about it openly? Why or why not? To what extent Armenian law protects women from domestic violence and to what extent is it forced in reality?

Health effects

11. What are the health consequences of domestic violence for you? *Probe:* Physical, mental, social?

Decision to stay

12. Why did (do) you stay in relationships with your partner who practiced (practices) violence towards you? *Probe:* a) Children, education, social status, financial dependence, etc?
13. What lead (will lead) you to leave your violent partner? *Probe:* a) what held (holds) you back from seeking help? b) Was (Is) it the lack of family support, policies protecting victims, etc?

Empowerment

14. How has domestic violence impacted your self-esteem and your ability to make decisions about your lives?
15. How your employment/non employment status relates to exposure to domestic violence?
16. How lack of proper functioning of referral system of domestic violence in Armenia diminishes your empowerment?
17. What do you think should be done to promote empowerment of women victims?

18. Is there anything we have not asked about, but you think it is worth mentioning to be able to help women victims of domestic violence in the future?

Thank you very much for your participation! It was very interesting and helpful to us.

Do you know anyone (community, social network, family, friend, neighbors) who was exposed or is exposed to domestic violence? If yes, I will give you my contact numbers to pass to her and she can contact me whenever she wants to.

**Կին մասնակիցների համար նախատեսված
անհատական հարցազրույցի ուղեցույց**

Վայր: _____

Օր: _____

Ժամանակ: _____

Թեմայի Ներածություն

Առաջին հերթին շնորհակալություն Ձեզ հետ զրուցելու այս հնարավորության համար: Նախքան մեր զրույցը սկսելը, խնդրում եմ մի փոքր պատմեք Ձեր մասին:

1. Ինչպե՞ս կրնոթագրեք Ձեզ:
2. Կարող եք պատմել, թե ո՞րն է եղել Ձեր կյանքի ամենադժվար իրադարձությունը:
3. Ի՞նչն է Ձեզ ամենից շատ ոգեշնչում: *Փորձ:* Երեխանե՞րը, ապաստարանը՞:

Ընտանեկան բնության փորձը

4. Ինչպե՞ս կսահմանեք ընտանեկան բնությունը:
5. Ինչպե՞ս եք առաջին անգամ առնչվել ընտանեկան բնության հետ: *Փորձ՝* Ընկերների՞ց, բարեկամների՞ց, ընտանիքի անդամների՞ց:
6. Խնդրում եմ, պատմեք ընտանեկան բնության Ձեր փորձի մասին: *Փորձ:* Բնության ի՞նչ տեսակի եք ենթարկվել, օրինակ սեռական, հոգեբանական, հուզական, կամ ֆիզիկական:
7. Ո՞վ է բնությունը գործադրել Ձեր հանդեպ: *Փորձ:* Ձեր ամուսինը, սկեսուրը, սկեսրարը, թե ընտանիքի այլ անդամները: Արդյո՞ք նրանցից որևէ մեկը դրդել է Ձեր հանդեպ բնության դրսևորմանը:
8. Ի՞նչն է Ձեզ դարձրել/դարձնում խոցելի բնության հանդեպ: *Փորձ՝* Ձեր բնավորության որևէ գիծ, երեխաներ ունենալը/չունենալը, թե՞ այլ:
9. Ինչու՞ Դուք ենթարկվեցիք բնության: *Փորձ՝* տՏնտեսական խնդիրները, կրթությունը, հասարակական կարգավիճակը, թե՞ այլ:
10. Ինչպե՞ս կրնոթագրեք հասարակության վերաբերմունքը ընտանեկան բնության ենթարկված կնոջ նկատմամբ Հայաստանում: *Փորձ:* Արդյո՞ք մարդիկ խոսում են բացեիբաց այդ մասին: Ինչու՞ այդ կամ ինչու՞ ոչ: Ձեր կարծիքով որքանո՞վ է օրենքը պաշտպանում է կնոջը ընտանեկան բնությունից և որքանո՞վ է այն գործում իրականում:

Առողջական հետևանքները

11. Ի՞նչ առողջական հետևանքներ ունի/ունեցավ ընտանեկան բնությունը Ձեզ վրա: *Փորձ՝* Ֆիզիկական, հոգեբանական, սոցիալական

Մնայու որոշումը

12. Ըստ Ձեզ, ինչու՞ եք (ինչու՞ էիք *նրանք ովքեր ապաստարանում են*) Դուք շարունակում Ձեր հարաբերությունները գուզընկերոջ հետ, ով գործածում է (էր) բնություն Ձեր հանդեպ: *Փորձ՝* Երեխանե՞րը, կրթությունը, հասարակական դի՞րքը, ֆինանսական կախվածությունը, թե՞ այլ պատճառներ կան:
13. Ի՞նչը դրդեց (կամ կդրդի՝ *նրանք ովքեր շարունակում են մնալ ընտանիքում*) Ձեզ լքել գուզընկերոջը: *Փորձ:* Ի՞նչն է Ձեզ հետ պահեց է պահում օգնության

դիմելուց: Արդյո՞ք պատճառը ընտանեկան աջակցության, թե՞ համապատասխան քաղաքականության պակասն էր/է:

Հգորացում

14. Ի՞նչպե՞ս է բռնությունը անդրադառնում/անդրադարձել Ձեր ինքնագնահատականի և Ձեր կյանքի վերաբերյալ որոշում կայացնելու վրա:
15. Ի՞նչպես է բռնությունը առնչվում Ձեր աշխատանք ունենալու կամ չունենալու հետ:
16. Ըստ Ձեզ, որո՞նք են Հայաստանում բռնության ենթարկված կանանց հգորացման հնարավորությունները
17. Հայաստանում բռնության ենթարկված կանանց ուղղորդման համակարգը (այսինքն այդ վիճակից հանելու և օգնություն ստանալու համար ճիշտ ճանապարհ ցույց տալու համակարգ) ինչպե՞ս է անդրադառնում կանանց հգորացման (այսինքն՝ նրանց ինքնագնահատականի բարձրացման, հնարավորությունների ուժեղացման, դերի և նանակության բարձրացման) վրա:
18. Կա արդյո՞ք ինչ-որ բան, որի մասին մենք Ձեզ չհարցրեցինք, բայց Դուք կարծում եք, որ անհրաժեշտ է այդ մասին նշել:

Շատ շնորհակալություն Ձեր մասնակցության համար: Ձեզ հետ զրուցելը շատ հետաքրքիր և օգտակար էր:

Դուք ճանաչում եք որևէ կնոջ (համայնքում, ընտանիքում, ընկերների, հարևանների կամ շրջապատում այլ մարդկանց), ով ենթարկվել է կամ ենթարկվում է բռնության: Եթե այո, ես Ձեզ կտամ իմ հեռախոսահամարը փոխանցելու նրան: Նա կարող է ինձ հետ կապ հաստատել երբ իրեն հարմար է և եթե ցանկանում է զրուցել այս թեմայով իրեն համար ցանկցացած օրը, ժամին և վայրում: Եթե նա կհամաձայնի, ես ինքն կարող եմ իրեն զանգահարել և պայմանավորվել:

APPENDIX B. English and Armenian Versions of demographic questionnaires for women and the professionals

Demographic data of the Professionals (Self administered)

1. Your sex: Male Female
2. Age: _____ (in years)
3. Professional experience in the field of domestic violence _____ (indicate years or months)

Մասնագետների Ժողովրդագրական տվյալներ (ինքնուրույ լրացնելու համար)

Խնդրում եմ նշեք Ձեր

1. Սեռը՝ Կին Տղամարդ
2. Տարիքը՝ _____
3. Մասնագիտական փորրձը ընտանեկան բռնության ոլորտում:
_____ (նշեք տարի թե՞ ամիս)

Demographic data of the women who are in shelters (Self administered)

1. How old are you? _____
What is your highest educational level?

School (less than 10 years)

- a. School (10 years)
 - b. Professional technical education (10-13 years)
 - c. Institute/University
 - d. Higher
2. What is your marital status?
 - a. Married
 - b. Divorced
 - c. Separated
 - d. Single
 3. What is your household family structure?
 - a. Living with in-laws
 - b. Living with my Parents
 - c. Living with my husband and children alone
 4. What are the ages of your children starting from the youngest?
 - 1 _____
 - 2 _____
 - 3 _____

- 4 _____
5. How long have you been married to your husband? _____ (indicate years or months)
6. Are you employed? Yes No
7. How long have you been in the shelter? _____ (indicate years or months)
8. Is it your first visit to shelter Yes No
 a. If no, how many times you have been here before _____
9. Are you here with your children? Yes No

Thank you!

Ապաստարանում գտնվող կանանց Ժողովրդագրական տվյալներ, (ինքնուրույն լրացնելու համար)

1. Քան՞ի տարեկան եք Դուք: _____
2. Ի՞նչ կրթություն ունեք:
- a. Դպրոց (10 տարուց քիչ)
 - b. Դպրոց (10 տարի)
 - c. Միջին մասնագիտական (11-13 տարի)
 - d. Ինստիտուտ/համալսարան
 - e. Մագիստրատուրա/ասպիրանտուրա
3. Ձեր ամուսնական կարգավիճակը
- a. Ամուսնացած
 - b. Ամուսնալուծված
 - c. Ապրում եմ ամուսնուց առանձին
 - d. Միայնակ
4. Ձեր ընտանիքի կառուցվածքը բռնության պահին
- a. Ապրում էինք ամուսնու ծնողների հետ
 - b. Ապրում էինք իմ ծնողների հետ
 - c. Ապրում էինք ծնողներից առանձին ամուսնու և երեխաներիս հետ միասին
5. Սկսած Ձեր ամենափոքր երեխայից, խնդրում եմ նշել նրանց տարիքները
- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____

6. Ինչքա՞ն ժամանակ եք եղել ամուսնության մեջ Ձեր ամուսնու հետ մինչև բռնությունը _____(նշեք տարի թե՞ ամիս)
7. Դուք այժմ աշխատո՞ւմ եք: Այո Ոչ
8. Ինչքա՞ն ժամանակն է, որ Դուք գտնվում եք ապաստարանում: _____(նշեք տարի թե՞ ամիս)
9. Սա Ձեր առաջի՞ն այցն է: Այո Ոչ
Եթե ոչ, ապա սա Ձեր n՞ր այցն է _____
10. Ձեր երեխաները Ձեր հետ են գտնվո՞ւմ այստեղ: Այո Ոչ

Շնորհակալություն

Demographic data of the women who are not in shelters (Self administered)

1. How old are you? _____
2. What is your highest educational level?
 - a. School (less than 10 years)
 - b. School (10 years)
 - c. Professional technical education (10-13 years)
 - d. Institute/University
 - e. Higher
3. What is your marital status?
 - a. Married
 - b. Divorced
 - c. Separated
 - d. Single
4. What is your household family structure?
 - a. Living with in-laws
 - b. Living with my parents
 - c. Living with nuclear family
5. What are the ages of your children starting from the youngest?
 - 1 _____
 - 2 _____
 - 3 _____
 - 4 _____
6. How long have you been married to your husband? _____(indicate years or months)
7. Are you employed? Yes No
8. Have you ever been in shelters before? Yes No
If yes, how long have you been there? _____ (indicate years or months)

Thank you!

Կանայք, ովքեր չեն գտնվում ապաստարանում Ժողովրդագրական տվյալներ (ինքնուրույն լրացնելու համար)

1. Քան՞ի տարեկան եք Դուք: _____
2. Ի՞նչ կրթություն ունեք:
 - a. Դպրոց (10 տարուց քիչ)
 - b. Դպրոց (10 տարուի)
 - c. Մասնագիտական տեխնիկում կրթություն (10-13 տարի)
 - d. Ինստիտուտ/համալսարան
 - e. Մագիստրատուրա/ասպիրանտուրա
3. Ձեր ամուսնկական կարգավիճակը
 - a. Ամուսնացած
 - b. Ամուսնալուծված
 - c. Ապրում եմ ամուսնուց առանձին
 - d. Միայնակ
4. Ձեր ընտանիքի կառուցվածքը բռնության պահին
 - a. Ապրում էինք ամուսնու ծնողների հետ
 - b. Ապրում էինք իմ ծնողների հետ
 - c. Ապրում էինք ծնողներից առանձին
5. Սկսած Ձեր ամենափոքր երեխայից, խնդրում եմ նշել նրանց տարիքները
 - 1 _____
 - 2 _____
 - 3 _____
 - 4 _____
6. Ինչքա՞ն ժամանակ եք եղել ամուսնության մեջ Ձեր ամուսնու հետ մինչև բռնությունը _____ (նշեք տարի թե՞ ամիս)
7. Դուք այժմ աշխատո՞ւմ եք: Այո Ոչ
8. Անցյալում Դու եղե՞լ եք ապաստարանում: Այո Ոչ
 - a. Եթե այո, ապա որքա՞ն ժամանակ եք Դուք գտվել այնտեղ: _____ (նշեք տարի կամ ամիս)

APPENDIX C. IRB approval letter



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA
ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԱՄԵՐԻԿԱՆ ՀԱՄԱԼՍՅՐԱՆ

15 April 2013

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR : Michael E. Thompson, MS, DrPH

STUDENT INVESTIGATOR: Yelena Sardaryan

TITLE: Domestic Violence in Armenia

SPONSORING AGENCY: None

PROTOCOL #: AUA-2013-007

Michael E. Thompson, MS, DrPH and Yelena Sardaryan
Via Email: mthomps@jhsph.edu and yelena_sardaryan@edu.aua.am

Dear Dr. Thompson and Ms. Sardaryan,

The above referenced protocol and was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the American University of Armenia using procedures set forth in 45 CFR 46 on 15 April 2013. This study will be due for continuing review on or before 14 April 2014. Annual continuing reviews will be required for this proposal. The proposed study can proceed as it is approved by the AUA IRB. However, please note, the IRB must be kept apprised of any and all changes in the research that may have an impact on the level and type of IRB review needed for a specific proposal. You are required to notify the AUA IRB if any changes are proposed in the study that might alter its IRB status and consent procedures. New procedures that may have an impact on the risk-to-benefit ratio cannot be initiated until IRB approval has been given. Please retain this letter as documentation of the IRB's determination regarding your proposal. Please contact me, at skagan@nursing.upenn.edu with a copy to skagan@aua.am and hmartirosyan@aua.edu , should you have any questions about the information in this letter. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah H. Kagan".

Sarah H. Kagan PhD, RN
Chair, AUA IRB
Adjunct Professor, AUA
Professor of Gerontological Nursing, University of Pennsylvania

40 Marshal Bagramian Avenue
Yerevan, 0019, Armenia
Tel.: (37410) 512526, 512525
Fax: (37410) 512512

300 Lakeside Drive
5th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612
Tel.: (510) 987-9452
Fax: (510) 208-3576

APPENDIX D. English and Armenian version for consent form for women and professionals

Professionals

Hello, I am Yelena Sardaryan; I am a psychologist and the graduate student in the School of Public Health at the American University of Armenia (AUA). I am completing a research study under the supervision of my faculty at AUA. The main aim of the study is to understand domestic violence against women Armenia, including social, personal and relational risk factors, health effects, and the reasons for maintaining these relationships.

You are being invited to participate in this study as you are a professionals/shelter workers dealing with domestic violence. You and other representatives are being invited to participate in this study in order to expand our understanding of domestic violence in Armenia.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no compensation for participation. There is no risk regarding your participation in this study. You can terminate the interview at any time and you will not be held responsible for the consequences. You can stop the interview at any time. The information you provide will not be accessible to shelter staff or any other person, but the research team, who will use it only for research purposes without mentioning any information about your identity. To ensure the privacy, the final report will not involve any information which may lead to identification of you personally and only the aggregated data will be presented in the final report.

Participation in this study does not have any direct risk or benefit for you, but your participation is valuable for us to better understand domestic violence in Armenia.

The interview should last about one hour. With your permission, I will use either audio-recording, or note taking to make sure that we will not miss any of the information you provide us with. Do you agree to the recording? If YES I will turn on the recorder when we start the interview. But you should be aware that it is within your right to ask to turn off the recorder at any time during the interview, whenever you want to. If NO, I will take notes during the interview, if you do not mind.

All the materials, such as the recordings or notes, will be kept in a not accessible place for every person, but me.

Before we begin I want to make sure that you have received answers to questions that interest you. Do you have any other questions regarding your participation? Have you received answer to your questions? We will continue only when you have all the answers related to your participation in this study. In future you can contact the member of research team Nune Truzyan, if you have any other questions even after the interview by (374 10) 51 25 91.

If you come to believe that you have not been treated fairly during this study or have been hurt by joining the study, you may contact the Human Subject Protection Administrator of AUA Dr. Hripsime Martirosyan at the American University of Armenia (+374 10) 51 25 61.

Do you agree to participate? Please say YES or NO. If yes shall we start?

Do you agree to audio-recording? Please say YES or NO.
If you are ready now we will start.

Բարև Ձեզ, ես Ելենա Սարգսյանն եմ, ես մասնագիտությամբ հոգեբան եմ և միաժամանակ սովորում եմ Հայաստանի ամերիկյան համալսարանի հանրային առողջապահություն բաժնի ավարտական կուրսում: Ես իրականացնում եմ հետազոտություն Հայաստանի ամերիկյան համալսարանի Հանրային առողջապահության ֆակուլտետի դասախոսների անմիջական վերահսկողության ներքո: Հետազոտության գլխավոր նպատակն է հասկանալ կանաց շրջանում ընտանեկան բռնության առանձնահատկությունը Հայաստանում: Մասնավորապես հասարակական և միջանձնային հարաբերություններում առկա ռիսկային գործոնները, առողջական հետևանքները, ինչպես նաև հարաբերությունները շարունակելու հիմնական պատճառները:

Դուք հրավիրված եք մասնակցելու այս հետազոտությանը որպես բռնության ենթարկված կանանց հետ առնչվող կազմակերպության ներկայացուցիչ: Դուք և նմանատիպ այլ կազմակերպությունների ներկայացուցիչներ, հրավիրված եք մասնակցելու այս հետազոտությանը, ովքեր, կիսելով ` և Հայաստանում ընտանեկան բռնության երևույթի վերբերյալ մեղ հետ իրենց գիտելիքները և փորձը, կաջակցեն այս հետազոտությանը:

Ձեր մասնակցությունն այս հետազոտությունում կամավոր է և չի նախատեսում որևէ փոխհատուցում: Մասնակցելով Դուք չեք ենթարկվում որևէ ռիսկի: Դուք կարող եք դադարեցնել հարցազրույցը ցանկացած պահի: Ձեր կողմից տրամադրված ինֆորմացիայի բովանդակությունը երբևէ չի փոխանցվի ապաստարանի աշխատակիցներին, կամ ցանկացած այլ անձանց, բացառությամբ հետազոտական թիմի անդամներից, ովքեր այն կկիրառեն այն միայն հետազոտական նպատակներով, առանց նշելու որևէ անձնական տվյալ: Գաղտնիությունը ապահովելու նպատակով, վերջնական զեկույցում չի նշվի որևէ տեղեկատվություն, որը կարող է հանգեցնել Ձեր ինքնության բացահայտմանը: Միայն ամփոփված տվյալները կներկայացվեն վերջնական զեկույցում:

Այս հետազոտությունում մասնակցությունը չի նախատեսում որևէ անմիջական օգուտ Ձեր համար, սակայն Ձեր անկեղծ պատասխանները կօգնեն ավելի խորը ուսումնասիրել կանանց ծրջանում ընտանեկան բռնության հարցերը Հայաստանում:

Հետազոտությունը կընթանա անհատական հարցազրույցի տեսքով, որը կտևի մինչև մեկ ժամ: Ձեր համազայնությամբ ես կձայնագրեմ մեր հարցազրույցը կամ գրառումներ կվերցնել հարցազրույցի ընթացքում` Ձեր կողմից տրամադրված որևէ ինֆորմացիայից բաց չփողնելու նպատակով: Դուք համաձայն ե՞ք ձայնագրմանը: Եթե ԱՅՈ, ես այն կմիացնեմ հարցազրույցի ընթացքում: Դուք պիտի տեղիակ լինեք, որ Ձեր իրավունքն է պահանջել անջատել ձայնագրիչը հետազոտության ընթացքում ցանկացած պահի, երբ Դուք ցանկանաք: Եթե ՈՉ ես գրառումներ կիրականացնեմ հարցազրույցի ընթացքում:

Բոլոր նյութերը, ինչպիսիք են ձայնագրությունը կամ գրառումները, կպահպանվեն միայն ինձ մոտ՝ այլ անձինք հնարավորություն չեն ունենա օգտվելու այդ տվյալներից:

Մինչ մենք կսկսենք, ես կցանկանայի համոզվել, որ Դուք ստացել եք Ձեզ հուզող հարցերի պատասխանները: Դուք ունեք որևէ այլ հարց կապված այս հետազոտությունում Ձեր մասնակցության հետ: Դուք ստացե՞լ եք Ձեզ հուզող հարցերի պատասխանները: Մենք կշարունակենք, երբ Դուք ստանաք այս հետազոտությունում Ձեզ հուզող հարցերի պատասխանները ստանալուց հետո: Հետագայում հետազոտության վերաբերյալ այլ հարցեր ունենալու դեպքում կարող եք կապ հաստատել հետազոտական թիմի անդամ՝ Նունե Տոուզյանի հետ (374 10) 51 25 91 հեռախոսահամարով: Եթե կարծում եք, որ այս հետազոտության շրջանակներում Ձեզ հետ ճիշտ չեն վարվել կամ որևէ կերպ վիրավորել են հարցազրույցի մասնակցության ընթացքում, Դուք կարող եք դիմել Հայաստանի ամերիկյան համալսարանի գիտական էթիկայի հանձնաժողովի համակարգող Հոփսիմե Մարտիրոսյանին հետևյալ հեռախոսահամարով՝ (+37410) 512561:

Եթե Դուք համաձայն եք, ես կմիացնեմ ձայնագրիչը, որպեսզի համոզված լինեմ, որ Ձեր կողմից տրամադրված ինֆորմացիայից ոչինչ բաց չեմ թողել: Դուք համաձայն եք ձայնագրությանը:

Դուք համաձայն եք մասնակցել: Խնդրում եմ ասել ԱՅՈ կամ ՈՉ: Եթե ԱՅՈ կարո՞ղ եմք սկսել: Դուք համաձայն եք, որ ես միացնեմ ձայնագրիչը: Խնդրում եմ ասել ԱՅՈ կամ ՈՉ: Եթե Դուք պարրաստ եք մենք կարող ենք սկսել:

Women

Hello, I am Yelena Sardaryan; I am a psychologist and the graduate student in the School of Public Health at the American University of Armenia (AUA). I am completing a research study under the supervision of my faculty at AUA. The main aim of the study is to understand domestic violence against women Armenia, including social, personal and relational risk factors, health effects, and the reasons for maintaining these relationships.

You are invited to participate in this study as you are an Armenian woman above 18 years old, who has experienced domestic violence. You and other women are being invited to participate in this study in order to expand our understanding of domestic violence in Armenia.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no compensation for participation. There is no risk regarding your participation in this study. You can terminate the interview at any time and you will not be held responsible for the consequences. You can stop the interview at any time. The information you provide will not be accessible to shelter staff or any other person, but the research team, who will use it only for research purposes without mentioning any information about your identity. To ensure the privacy, the final report will not involve any information which may lead to identification of you personally and only the aggregated data will be presented in the final report.

Participation in this study does not have any direct risk or benefit for you, but your participation is valuable for us to better understand domestic violence in Armenia.

The interview should last about one hour. With your permission, I will use either audio-recording, or note taking to make sure that we will not miss any of the information you provide us with. Do you agree to the recording? If YES I will turn on the recorder when we start the interview. But you should be aware that it is within your right to ask to turn off the recorder at any time during the interview, whenever you want to. If NO, I will take notes during the interview, if you do not mind.

Before we begin I want to make sure that you have received answers to questions that interest you. Do you have any other questions regarding your participation? Have you received answer to your questions? We will continue only when you have all the answers related to your participation in this study. In future you can contact the research team member Nune Truzyan if you have any other questions even after the interview by (374 10) 51 25 91.

If you come to believe that you have not been treated fairly during this study or have been hurt by joining the study, you may contact the Human Subject Protection Administrator of AUA Dr. Hripsime Martirosyan at the American University of Armenia (+374 10) 51 25 61.

Do you agree to participate? Please say YES or NO. If yes shall we start?
Do you agree to audio-recording? Please say YES or NO.
If you are ready now we will start.

Բարև Ձեզ, ես Ելենա Սարգսյանն եմ, ես մասնագիտությամբ հոգեբան եմ և միաժամանակ սովորում եմ Հայաստանի ամերիկյան համալսարանի հանրային առողջապահություն բաժնի ավարտական կուրսում: Ես իրականացնում եմ հետազոտություն Հայաստանի ամերիկյան համալսարանի հանրային առողջապահության ֆակուլտետի դասախոսների անմիջական վերահսկողության ներքո: Հետազոտության գլխավոր նպատակն է հասկանալ կանաց շրջանում ընտանեկան բռնության առանձնահատկությունը Հայաստանում: Մասնավորապես հասարակական և միջանձնային հարաբերություններում առկա ռիսկային գործոնները, առողջական հետևանքները, ինչպես նաև հարաբերությունները շարունակելու հիմնական պատճառները:

Դուք հրավիրված եք մասնակցելու այս հետազոտությանը քանի որ 18 տ. բարձր եք և առնչվել եք ընտանեկան բռնության հետ Հայաստանում: Դուք և այլ կանայք հրավիրված եք մասնակցելու մեր հետազոտությանը, ովքեր կաջակցեն մեզ ավելի խորը հասկանալու Հայաստանում ընտանեկան բռնության առանձնահատկությունները:

Ձեր մասնակցությունն այս հետազոտությունում կամավոր է և չի նախատեսում որևէ փոխհատուցում: Մասնակցելով Դուք չեք ենթարկվում որևէ ռիսկի: Դուք կարող եք դադարեցնել հարցազրույցը ցանկացած պահի: Ձեր կողմից տրամադրված ինֆորմացիայի բովանդակությունը երբևէ չի փոխանցվի ապաստարանի աշխատակիցներին, կամ ցանկացած այլ անձանց, բացառությամբ հետազոտական թիմի անդամներից, ովքեր այն կկիրառեն այն միայն հետազոտական նպատակներով, առանց նշելու որևէ անձնական տվյալ: Գաղտնիությունը ապահովվելու նպատակով, վերջնական զեկույցում չի նշվի որևէ տեղեկատվություն, որը կարող է հանգեցնել Ձեր ինքնության բացահայտմանը: Միայն ամփոփված տվյալները կներկայացվեն վերջնական զեկույցում:

Այս հետազոտությունում մասնակցությունը չի նախատեսում որևէ անմիջական օգուտ Ձեր համար, սակայն Ձեր անկեղծ պատասխանները կօգնեն ավելի խորը ուսումնասիրել կանանց ծրջանում ընտանեկան բռնության հարցերը Հայաստանում:

Հետազոտությունը կընթանա անհատական հարցազրույցի տեսքով, որը կտևի մինչև մեկ ժամ: Ձեր համազայնությամբ ես կձայնագրեմ մեր հարցազրույցը կամ գրառումներ կվերցնել հարցազրույցի ընթացքում՝ Ձեր կողմից տրամադրված որևէ ինֆորմացիայից բաց չփողնելու նպատակով: Դուք համաձայն ե՞ք ձայնագրմանը: Եթե ԱՅՈ, ես այն կմիացնեմ հարցազրույցի ընթացքում: Դուք պիտի տեղիակ լինեք, որ Ձեր իրավունքն է պահանջել անջատել ձայնագրիչը հետազոտության ընթացքում ցանկացած պահի, երբ Դուք ցանկանաք: Եթե ՈՉ ես գրառումներ կիրականացնեմ հարցազրույցի ընթացքում:

Բոլոր նյութերը, ինչպիսիք են ձայնագրությունը կամ գրառումները, կպահպանվեն միայն ինձ մոտ՝ այլ անձինք հնարավորություն չեն ունենա օգտվելու այդ տվյալներից:

Մինչ մենք կսկսենք, ես կցանկանայի համոզվել, որ Դուք ստացել եք Ձեզ հուզող հարցերի պատասխանները: Դուք ունեք որևէ այլ հարց կապված այս հետազոտությունում Ձեր մասնակցության հետ: Դուք ստացե՞լ եք Ձեզ հուզող հարցերի պատասխանները: Մենք կշարունակենք, երբ Դուք ստանաք այս հետազոտությունում Ձեզ հուզող հարցերի պատասխանները ստանալուց հետո: Ապագայում Դուք կարող եք ինձ հետ կապ հաստատել նշված հեռախոսահամարով by (374 10) 51 25 91 , եթե ունենաք այլ հարցեր: Եթե կարծում եք, որ Ձեզ հետ ճիշտ չեն վարվել կամ որևէ կերպ վիրավորել են հարցազրույցի մասնակցության ընթացքում, Դուք կարող եք դիմել Հայաստանի ամերիկյան համալսարանի գիտական էթիկայի հանձնաժողովի համակարգող՝ Հոփսիմե Մարտիրոսյանին հետևյալ հեռախոսահամարով՝ (+37410) 512561:

Եթե Դուք համաձայն եք, ես կմիացնեմ ձայնագրիչը , որպեսզի համոզված լինեմ, որ Ձեր կողմից տրամադրված ինֆորմացիայից ոչինչ բաց չեմ թողել: Դուք համաձայն եք ձայնագրությանը:

Դուք համաձայն եք մասնակցել: Խնդրում եմ ասել ԱՅՈ կամ ՈՉ: Եթե ԱՅՈ կարո՞ղ ենք սկսել:

Դուք համաձայն եք, որ ես միացնեմ ձայնագրիչը: Խնդրում եմ ասել ԱՅՈ կամ ՈՉ: Եթե Դուք պարրաստ եք մենք կարող ենք սկսել: