
**Domestic Violence in Korea: Focusing on Spousal Violence
and Child Abuse**

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I. Introduction

□As domestic violence takes place in very complicated and diverse manners it is hard to accurately identify the prevalence and characteristics of domestic violence. Since the national survey of domestic violence that has secured representation focuses on capturing only the prevalence of violence, there has been insufficient in-depth analysis of the characteristics of the prevalence of domestic violence and its related factors.

□A multifaceted analysis needs to be conducted in order to raise understanding of the prevalence and current aspects of domestic violence in Korea and to prepare measures to prevent domestic violence.

□The purpose of this study is to perform an in-depth analysis of domestic violence in Korea and identify its related factors through a secondary analysis of the data accumulated from basic studies, including the domestic violence surveys conducted in 2010, 2013, and 2016, and the survey of domestic violence victims in 2016.

○First, using the data from the domestic violence survey in 2016 and focusing on female victims and male perpetrators of spousal violence, the study analyzes the prevalence of violence and its related factors, including personal/family/regional characteristics, awareness of domestic violence. It also analyzes the relations of overlapping experiences of domestic violence during childhood, victimization of spousal violence during adulthood, and perpetration of child abuse.

○Second, it conducted an analysis of female victims who used domestic violence support centers in order to investigate thoroughly into victims of spousal violence who could not be identified through the domestic violence survey of the general public.

○Third, it analyzed trends in domestic violence from 2010 to 2016 through surveys of female victims of spousal violence in order to identify changes in characteristics and prevalence of domestic violence.

○Fourth, it analyzed the data from the 2016 survey and trends in domestic violence from 2010 to 2016 in order to identify public awareness and culture related to domestic violence.

II. Main Findings

1) Domestic Violence in 2016

□Characteristics of Women's Victimization of Spousal Violence and its Related Factors

○Of married women (including common-law marriage) ages 19 and over,

12.1% had experienced four types of victimization of spousal violence, including physical, psychological, economic, and sexual violence, in the last year. Of them, 23.2% had experienced four types of victimization in their lifetime.

○Based on the four types of violence experienced in the last year, 64.9% of them had been victims of one type of violence, and 35% had an overlapping experience of two or more types of violence. Based on the four types of violence experienced in their lifetime, 55.4% had fallen victim to one type of violence, and 44.7% to two or more types.

○As for factors related to victimization of violence, it was found that groups with low educational levels of the respondents and their spouses, groups who had experienced domestic violence during childhood, and groups who had experienced control behavior from their spouse in the last year had experienced more victimization of spousal violence.

○When asked whether they responded to spousal violence and asked for help, groups who had an overlapping experience of two or more types violence or groups who suffered physical injury, psychological distress, intimidation or fear were found to have taken more active measures, including confronting spousal violence or asking people around them for help.

○A considerable proportion of women who experienced violence from their spouse and who perpetrated child abuse had been exposed to domestic violence during childhood (under the age of 18). Based on the four types of violence experienced in the last year, 32.7% of women with minor children had no overlapping experience of violence, including victimization of domestic violence during childhood, victimization of spousal violence during adulthood, and perpetration of child abuse. Of the women, 36.4% experienced one type of violence (experienced violence for one generation only), 25.6% two or more types (experienced violence for two generations only), and 5.3% all four types (experienced violence for three generations).

Characteristics of Men's Perpetration of Spousal Violence and its Related Factors

○ Regarding factors related to the offence of violence, the perpetration rate of spousal violence was significantly high in groups of older age, groups with low education levels, unemployed groups, groups who had suffered domestic violence during childhood, and groups who had imposed control behavior on their spouse.

○ According to the results of investigation into an overlapping experience of domestic violence during childhood and during adulthood, men who perpetrated spousal violence and child abuse during adulthood had been exposed to domestic violence during childhood.

○ When men with minor children were asked whether they had an overlapping experience of violence, including victimization of domestic violence during childhood, perpetration of spousal violence during adulthood, and perpetration of child abuse, 31.7% of them had experienced no type of violence in their lifetime, 40.5% had experienced violence for one generation only, while 27.7% had an overlapping experience of violence for two or more generations.

2) Female Domestic Violence Victims Using Domestic Violence Support Centers

Victimization of Spousal Violence

○ The spousal violence victimization rate (four types) of domestic violence victims who are 19 years old and over and who use shelters and counseling centers reached 100%. When examined by types of violence, 98.1% of them suffered psychological violence, 91.6% physical violence, 74.9% economic violence, and 71.3% sexual violence.

○ As for the overlapping victimization rate of spousal violence, various types of violence overlapped, with 96% falling victim to two or more types of violence,

and 4% to one type of violence.

○Their spouse engaged in violent behavior for the first time “when they dated before marriage and less than a year after marriage,” taking up the largest portion of 58.9%.

Response to Spousal Violence

○Regarding response to violence, 41% of the women responded that they “did nothing”, accounting for the largest portion. Respondents with high educational levels or with jobs had a high proportion of exercising violence in response or asking people for help.

○Of the women, 88.8% reached out to family members, friends, support centers, or the police at the time of or after their spouse engaged in violent behavior.

Impact of Spousal Violence

○It was found that 83.8% of women experienced physical injury, 98.2% experienced psychological distress, 97.1% experienced intimidation/fear, and 81.3% experienced difficulties of social life and interpersonal relationships.

Plan after Victimization of Spousal Violence

○Four out of 10 women planned to divorce, three planned to continue their marital life, and one planned to be separated. If the victims were unemployed, if their spouse’s control behavior levels were severe, and if they asked others for help, they had a tendency of planning to divorce.

Overlapping Experience of Domestic Violence during Childhood and during Adulthood

○It was found that eight out of 10 spousal violence victims during adulthood had also experienced domestic violence during childhood.

3) Trends in Domestic Violence from 2010 to 2016

Victimization of Spousal Violence

○The victimization rate of four types of spousal violence in the last year dropped from 39.1% in 2010 to 29.8% in 2013 and 12.1% in 2016. The overlapping victimization rate of two or more types of spousal violence as well fell in 2013 and 2016 compared to 2010.

Experience of Victimization of Spousal Violence by Personal and Family Characteristics

○In the three surveys, the victimization rate of spousal violence was significantly high in groups who experienced victimization of both four types and two types of spousal violence if they had experienced domestic violence during childhood and control behavior from their spouse.

Experience of Victimization of Spousal Violence by Awareness of Domestic Violence

○In the 2016 survey, the victimization rate of spousal violence was high in groups with patriarchal attitude toward gender roles. In all the analyses of 2010 to 2016 surveys, the victimization rates of spousal violence were high if the victims had no intention to report domestic violence when it occurs in their home.

Impact of Victimization of Spousal Violence and Response to Violence

○Physical injury from violence and experience of psychological distress and intimidation/fear were found to have continually been high. In all three surveys, it was more common to ask non-official systems (family members, relatives, neighbors, friends, or religious leaders) for help than official systems (the police, the 1366 Women's Call Center, domestic violence counselling centers,

and protection facilities).

Overlapping Experience of Domestic Violence during Childhood and during Adulthood

○The rates of abuse against minor children in the last year and overlapping abuse types had tended to decrease since 2010.

○As for experience of domestic violence for two generations, the proportion of groups who “experienced none” increased, while that of groups who “experienced both” decreased.

○As for experience of domestic violence for three generations, the proportion of groups who “experienced none” rose in 2016 compared to 2010 and 2013, while that of groups who “experienced one of the three types” or “experienced all” fell.

4) Awareness and Culture

Awareness and Culture in 2016

○According to the results of analyzing the public awareness of domestic violence in 2016, men had a more patriarchal attitude toward gender roles and permissive attitude toward domestic violence than women in all age groups and at all educational levels. In particular, among unmarried men and women, unmarried women groups were most gender equal and took a non-permissive attitude toward domestic violence.

○All respondents’ awareness of legal systems and support centers related to domestic violence was slightly higher than moderate level; their inclination to report domestic violence was relatively high.

○The more patriarchal their attitude toward gender roles, the more permissive their attitude toward domestic violence, and the lower their awareness of legal systems and support centers, the lower they tended to be inclined to report domestic violence when it takes place in their home or in their neighbor’s.

□ Trends in Awareness and Culture from 2010 to 2016

○ As for attitude toward gender roles, they took a more patriarchal attitude toward gender roles in 2013 and 2016 compared to 2010.

○ Awareness of legal systems related to domestic violence was higher in 2013 and 2016 compared to 2010.

○ Inclination to report domestic violence significantly rose in the 2016 survey than in the 2010 and 2013 surveys.

○ In the whole and gender analysis alike, groups with a patriarchal attitude toward gender roles had a low inclination to report domestic violence. Groups with a high awareness of legal systems had a high inclination to report and had a more gender equal attitude toward gender roles.

III. Implications

□ Implications

○ According to the results of analyzing the characteristics of female victims and male perpetrators, patriarchal attitude toward gender roles, permissive attitude toward domestic violence, inclination to report domestic violence, and experience of domestic violence during childhood were related to victimization and/or perpetration of violence against the spouse.

-In preparing policies to prevent spousal violence, it is necessary to enhance equal gender norms and to strengthen a culture where domestic violence is not permitted. It is implied that in order to prevent transfer of domestic violence from generation to generation, priorities in prevention and intervention services should be given to women and men exposed to domestic violence during childhood.

○ The results of analyzing the victims using support centers showed that they had an overlapping experience of various types of spousal violence. Also, the

more severe the victimization of violence was, the higher the spouse's control behavior levels became, and the weaker the victim's competencies were, the more passive the response to spousal violence tended to be.

-There needs to be active intervention for victims who have experienced victimization of spousal violence continually, repeatedly, and in an overlapping manner, and measures need to be taken to strengthen competencies of the victims.

○According to the results of analyzing trends in domestic violence from 2010 to 2016, domestic violence tended to decrease overall, but the figures from the analysis showed that various types of violence still existed in their home.

-It is implied that continued efforts should be made to intervene in domestic violence and to eradicate domestic violence.

○Increases in public awareness of legal systems related to domestic violence and inclination to report domestic violence can be seen as a practical change in awareness of domestic violence.

-As a preventive measure, it is necessary to promote awareness of domestic violence and continue public relations and education concerning related laws, systems and support centers.

Future Research Agenda

○This study is significant in that it analyzed women's victimization and men's perpetration of spousal violence and its related factors based on the representative national data. Further studies need to be conducted on male victims and female perpetrators.

○The scope of investigation into domestic violence should be broadened to intimate partner violence, including dating violence, and preventive and supportive laws, systems, and policies need to be expanded.

○It is necessary to secure a sufficient number of samples for future surveys and to accumulate data by conducting regular surveys in the future.