



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Causes of intimate partner homicide: Gender differences in empathy, psychopathy, and perceived social support

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Intimate partner homicide (IPH) and attempted murder behaviors have increased in recent years. In addition, the causes of partner murder are affected by gender dynamics. This study aims to determine whether individuals who committed murder and attempted murder toward their partners differ in terms of empathy, psychopathy, and perceived social support and to determine the predictive variables of IPH toward their partners.

Method: This study was carried out with a total of 123 participants (73 women and 50 men) from 10 different prisons. Demographic Information Form, Empathic Tendency Scale, Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale, and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support were used.

Results: A value of 82.19% of women and 60.97% of men were charged with killing their partners. Of these, 24% of women and 7% of men killed their partners by planning. The psychopathy scores of men (56.92 ± 8.45) were found to be higher than women (52.73 ± 8.98). The results of the logistic regression analysis indicate that the behaviors of women to kill and attempt to kill their partners are best predicted by physical violence from their partner, feelings of jealousy toward their partner, and perceived weak social support from a significant other and family. It was found that the best predictive variable for IPH in men was physical violence against their partners during their relationships.

Conclusion: It has been evaluated that having insufficient social support and experiencing physical violence from their partners are associated with IPH among women. This result suggests that women use violence against their partners to protect themselves from violence. On the other hand, the physically violent behaviors of men toward their partners during their relationship are an important variable for IPH.

Keywords: Empathy, femicide, intimate partner homicide, psychopathy, social support

INTRODUCTION

Violence is a significant human rights issue that threatens people worldwide, in every culture and at

nearly all socioeconomic statuses (1). According to the World Health Report on Violence and Health drafted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2002, an average of 1.6 million people die every year because

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of violence. Statistics show that death due to violence is the leading cause of death among individuals aged 15–44 years. Worldwide, 14% of men and 7% of women die because of violence, and similarly, violent behavior increases in intimate relationships (1–3). At least two people die everyday in the UK and at least three people die in the USA due to the domestic or intimate partner violence (IPV) (4).

Intimate partner homicide (IPH) constitutes the most significant extent of violence against partners and domestic violence. According to statistics, 13.5% of murders resulted from intimate relationships, and women are six times more likely to be killed by their partners than men (5). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) states that two-thirds of the murder victims in intimate relationships are women, and one-third of the female homicide victims are killed by their intimate partners (6). On the other hand, 10% of the murdered men are killed by the women they are in intimate relationships with (7). Although it is stated that there is a drop in the number of homicidal behaviors in intimate relationships in the USA and Western Europe (8,9), UNODC draws attention to the decrease in other homicidal behaviors but states that there is no significant decrease in partner murders. In Türkiye, the number of cases related to the murder of women by their partners is increasing. According to the Parliamentary Human Rights Investigation Report, the number of murder cases against women was reported to increase by 1400% between 2002 and 2009 (10).

Due to the increase in partner killing and injurious behaviors, studies have focused on the causes of violent behavior in intimate relationships. In the literature, it is emphasized that injuring and killing behaviors toward partners cannot be elucidated by a single risk factor, but multiple factors trigger partners' killing and injuring behaviors toward each other (11,12). Studies conducted with men display that factors such as personality disorder, psychopathy, poor empathy, low education level, jealousy, and psychological control are the most significant risk factors for injuring and killing behaviors in intimate relationships (13–17). Although studies on partner homicide and injuring behavior are mostly conducted on men, it is stated that women's dynamics of killing their intimate partners are dissimilar (17,18). It has been reported that the underlying causes of women's violent behavior are generally to protect their children or themselves from physical violence and/or self-defensive behaviors. Following these, the feelings

and behaviors of jealousy, fear, and revenge are counted as the causes of violence (19–21).

Social support mechanisms may be the mediating variable of violent and killing behaviors in intimate relationships (22,23). Women's need for other social support mechanisms is growing to protect them from partner violence and strengthen their coping mechanisms. Social support, especially from the family, strengthens women's coping mechanisms with psychological stressors and male violence (24). Studies have also shown that women who are exposed to IPV generally have weak social support mechanisms and resort to violence to defend themselves (25,26).

Other influential factors in partner homicides are poor empathy and psychopathy in persons who killed their partners. Psychopathy and lack of empathy (27,28), major predictors of violent and killing behaviors in intimate relationships, are reported to be significantly high in men who kill their partners (16). Many studies have also revealed that men who kill their partners have significantly higher psychopathy scores and lower levels of empathy, and especially those men who kill their partners have significantly higher psychopathy scores than women counterparts (29,30).

In light of the above-mentioned literature, findings that suggest homicidal and attempted homicidal behaviors toward partners are a global issue and that there are behavioral differences between genders are remarkable (18). The rise in homicidal behaviors toward partners in Türkiye has attracted attention in recent years, and such behaviors are observed to be mostly directed toward women (31). However, there is an obvious literature gap due to the limited number of studies on the subject in Türkiye. Therefore, the aim of this study is (a) to determine whether men and women exhibiting violent behaviors toward their partners such as homicide and attempted homicide differ in terms of empathy, psychopathy, and perceived social support from family, friends, and a significant other, (b) to determine the predictive variables of homicidal and attempted homicidal behaviors of men and women who committed these acts toward their partners.

METHOD

Sample Selection

This research was carried out with a total of 123 participants (73 women and 50 men) who were

arrested and convicted of IPH or attempted homicide to their partners. The sample of the research consists of detainees and convicts in the penitentiary institution for the crime of murdering or attempting to kill their partners. For this reason, the purposive sampling method among the random sampling methods was employed in this study. The data that exceeded ± 3.26 SD score were excluded. Therefore, of the 50 men participants, 9 were dropped because of missing data and score greater than ± 3.26 SD from the mean. Finally, 114 participants (41 men and 73 women) were included in the analysis.

Measures

Sociodemographic Information Form

The Sociodemographic Information Form developed by the researchers consists of 147 items. The biopsychosocial risk factors indicated in the literature associated with homicidal and attempted homicidal behaviors toward partners were included in the questionnaire. Therefore, in addition to demographic information such as age, gender, education level, marital status, questions on alcohol and substance use by partners, exposure to verbal-physical violence from parents in childhood, and violent and criminal behavior toward partners were also included.

Empathic Tendency Scale

The Empathic Tendency Scale developed by Dökmen (32) is a 5-point Likert-type self-assessment scale consisting of 20 items. The psychometric studies of the scale were conducted by Dökmen, and the test-retest reliability coefficient was calculated as 0.82. Convergent validity of the scale was performed with the Intraception subscale of the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, and the validity coefficient was found to be 0.68 (32). In this study, the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.68 for women and 0.58 for men.

Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale (LSRP)

Developed by Levenson and Kiehl (33), the Levenson Psychopathy Scale consists of 26 items and has two subscales: Primary and Secondary Psychopathy. Scale items are scored between 1 and 4 as strongly agree and strongly disagree. The Turkish adaptation study was carried out by Engeler and Yargıç, and the primary and secondary psychopathy internal consistency coefficients of the scale were calculated as 0.82 and 0.63, respectively (34). In this study, the internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.62 for women and 0.64 for men.

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

Developed by Zimet et al. (35), MSPSS is a 7-point Likert-type self-assessment scale consisting of 12 items. It has 3 subscales: perceived social support from family, perceived social support from friends, and perceived social support from a significant other. The reliability coefficient of the scale is 0.87 for family, 0.85 for friends, and 0.91 for significant other. Turkish validity and reliability study was performed by Eker and Arkar (36) with university students and hospital samples. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale was observed to range between 0.77 and 0.82 for the total score, 0.82 and 0.92 for the family, 0.78 and 0.90 for friends, and 0.79 and 0.91 for significant other. In this study, the internal consistency coefficient for the total score of the scale was calculated as 0.88 for women and 0.81 for men.

Procedures

Before the study, the aim of the study was informed to participants and an informed consent form was provided to the participants who agreed to participate in the study. The scales were given to each participants in different orders to avoid confounding variables.

The research was carried out, within the framework of the representation of the Turkish sample, in 10 different male and female penitentiary institutions where convicts and detainees who committed partner homicide were permitted by the General Directorate of Penal Institution of the Ministry of Justice. The necessary permission for the applications was obtained from the General Directorate of Prisons and Detention Houses of the Ministry of Justice. The study was approved by the decision of the Ankara University Ethics Committee (IRB: March 26, 2016 - 147-4522). This study was carried out as a phase of the project supported with the number 109K308 within the scope of the TÜBİTAK SOBAG project.

Screening and Preparation

First, all data were converted into "z" scores. Data exceeding ± 3.26 SD scores were excluded from the analysis (37). Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis was performed to understand whether there was multicollinearity between the total scores of scales. It was found that there was no multicollinearity between the variables. Independent-sample t test was performed to observe the difference between genders.

Table 1: Data on the characteristics of criminal behavior of participants who exhibit homicidal behavior toward their partners

Variables	Male		Female	
	n	%	n	%
Types of criminal offenses				
Intimate partner homicide	25	60.97	60	82.19
Boyfriend–Girlfriend/religiously intermarried homicide	2	4.87	7	9.59
Attempted partner homicide	13	31.78	6	8.22
Attempted boyfriend or girlfriend homicide/attempted religiously intermarried homicide	1	2.44	–	–
Crime plan				
Premeditated	3	7.32	18	24.66
Impulsive	38	92.68	54	73.97
Crime scene				
Home	31	75.61	57	78.08
Street	6	14.63	8	10.96
Workplace	–	–	1	1.37
By-place	2	4.8	5	6.85
Others	1	2.44	2	2.74

Binary logistic regression analysis was performed to find the best predictive variables of IPV (37).

The dependent variable in the binary regression analysis is violent behavior toward the partner (Code: 0=No, 1=Yes). The independent categorical variables are exposure to physical violence (Code 0=No, 1=Yes), partner's alcohol use (Code 0=No, 1=Yes), partner's substance use (Code 0=No, 1=Yes), perpetrator's alcohol use (Code 0=No, 1=Yes), perpetrator's substance use (Code 0=No, 1=Yes), jealousy (Code 0=No, 1=Yes), and physical violence against partner during the relationship (Code 0=No, 1=Yes). Finally, the Empathic Tendency Scale total score, the Levenson Psychopathy Scale total score, perceived social support from family, perceived social support from friends, and perceived social support from a significant other total scores were added. All variables were included in the model in a single block. The Hosmer–Lemeshow (38) goodness-of-fit test (HL) was performed to test the fit of the model. All analyses were performed with SPSS 25 (IBM) package program.

RESULTS

Sample

The mean age of the male participants in the sample was 41.02 years ($M=41.02$; $SD=\pm 9.11$), and the mean age of the female participants was 37.49 ($M=37.49$;

$SD=\pm 9.24$). Of the participants, 56.10% of men and 41.42% of women were at a low socioeconomic statute. Among the participants, 41% of women and 48.7% of men were primary school graduates. While 50.68% of the women had no working experience ever, 70.73% of the male participants stated that they were employed, and 12.19% of them stated that they did not work in a regular job. A significant part of the participants had an arranged marriage. Thus, it was revealed that 46.34% of men and 46.57% of women got married in an arranged manner (Table 1).

Results on Gender Differences

An independent-samples t test was performed to reveal whether there was a difference between the scale total scores of men and women. The results of the analysis are provided in Table 2. It was found that there was only a difference between the two groups in the total score of the Levenson Psychopathy Scale. Accordingly, the Levenson Psychopathy Scale scores of men (56.92 ± 8.45) were significantly higher than those of women (52.73 ± 8.98). The difference was significant (95% [0.65, 7.71], $t(112)=-2.35$, $p=0.02$).

Binary Correlation Results

Pearson's product-moment correlation was performed to find out whether there was multicollinearity among the scale total scores (Table

Table 2: Difference between the scale total scores between women and men and t test results

Scales	Gender	n	Mean	SD	t	p
Empathy	Male	41	65.93	9.43	-0.59	0.55
	Female	73	67.17	11.14		
Psychopathy	Male	41	56.92	8.45	2.34	0.01*
	Female	73	52.74	8.98		
Significant other	Male	41	13.70	9.13	0.66	0.5
	Female	73	12.56	8.45		
Friend	Male	41	14.50	5.98	-1.57	0.11
	Female	73	16.82	8.22		
Family	Male	41	20.03	8.91	0.16	0.88
	Female	73	19.73	9.10		

Empathy: The Empathic Tendency Scale total score; Psychopathy: Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale total; Significant Other: Perceived Social Support from a Significant Other Scale total score; Friend: Perceived Social Support from Friend Scale total score; Family: Perceived Social Support from Family Scale total score; n: sample number; SD: Standard deviation; *: P<0.05.

Table 3: Correlation coefficient between means of scale total scores

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Empathy	1				
2. Psychopathy	-0.36*	1			
3. Significant other	0.79*	-0.18*	1		
4. Friend	0.49*	-0.23*	0.55*	1	
5. Family	0.34*	-0.29*	0.33*	0.44*	1
Mean	68.23	53.53	14.65	17.29	21.11
SD	11.68	8.68	6.82	7.61	8.15

Empathy: The Empathic Tendency Scale total score; Psychopathy: Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale total score; Significant Other: Perceived Social Support from a Significant Other Scale total score; Friend: Perceived Social Support from Friend Scale total score; Family: Perceived Social Support from Family Scale total score; *: P<0.05.

3). The results showed a negative association between empathy and psychopathic personality traits ($r=-0.36$; $p<0.01$) and a positive association with the perceived social support from a significant other ($r=0.79$; $p<0.01$), a positive association with perceived social support from a friend ($r=0.49$; $p<0.01$), and a positive association with perceived social support from family ($r=0.34$; $p<0.01$). A negative association was found between psychopathic personality traits and perceived social support from a significant other ($r=0.18$; $p<0.05$), perceived social support from friends ($r=0.23$; $p<0.01$), and perceived social support from family ($r=0.29$; $p<0.01$). As there was no multicollinearity between the variables, it was concluded that this result revealed that the variables were suitable for the binary regression analysis.

Regression Analysis Results

Logistic regression analysis was performed to find out predictive variables of partner violence among women. As shown in Table 4, the result of the analysis was significant ($\chi^2[2, N=95]=56.31$, $p<0.001$; Nagelkerke $R^2=0.67$). On examining the best predictive, it was found that the best predictors of women's violence against their partners were physical violence experienced by women from their partners ($OR=3.35$, $p<0.001$), feelings of jealousy toward their partners ($OR=19.43$, $p=0.01$), and perceived social support from family ($OR=0.81$, $p=0.01$) and from significant other ($OR=0.80$, $p=0.01$). The result of the analysis showed that the explained variance rate was 67%.

The results of the logistic regression analysis to reveal the predictors of partner violence in men were also significant ($\chi^2[2, N=56]=22.70$, $p<0.01$; Nagelkerke $R^2=0.52$). Previous physical violence was found to be the only predictor of violent criminal behavior toward men's partners ($OR=0.19$, $p=0.03$). The explained variance rate is 52% (Table 5).

DISCUSSION

In all over the world and in Turkiye, there is an increase in violent behavior in individuals toward their intimate partners. It has been observed that studies on the subject are mostly conducted with men who perpetrate violence, whereas studies on women's violent behavior toward their intimate partners are limited. Therefore, examining the risk factors causing violence in both genders and all age groups will provide significant preliminary data for studies aimed

Table 4: Logistic regression analysis of the causes of partner homicide and attempted partner homicide among women

Independent variable	Predictor variable	Logit (B)	SE	Wald χ^2	p	OR	OR 95% CI	
Partner homicide and attempted partner homicide in women	Constant	4.94	4.51	1.20	0.27	140.85	1.72	6.56
	Exposure to physical violence	1.21	0.34	12.53	<0.001**	3.35	0.38	7.18
	Partner's alcohol use	10.51	0.74	0.46	0.49	1.66	0.000	–
	Partner's substance use	18.31	82.10	0.00	0.99	92.37	1.92	196.49
	Jealousy	2.96	1.18	6.31	0.01*	19.43	0.94	1.09
	Empathy	0.01	0.03	0.13	0.71	1.01	0.85	1.03
	Psychopathy	-0.06	0.05	1.44	0.23	0.94	0.73	0.96
	Significant Other	-0.18	0.06	7.43	0.01*	0.83	0.94	1.22
	Friend	0.71	0.06	1.17	0.27	1.07	0.70	0.95
	Family	-0.020	0.07	0.98	0.01*	0.81	0.70	0.95

Exposure to physical violence (Code 0=No, 1=Yes); Partner's alcohol use (Code 0=No, 1=Yes); Partner's substance use (Code 0=No, 1=Yes); Jealousy (Code 0=No, 1=Yes); Empathy: The Empathic Tendency Scale; Psychopathy: Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale; Significant Other: Perceived Social Support from a Significant Other Subscale; Friend: Perceived Social Support from Friend Scale; Family: Perceived Social Support from Family Scale; SE: Standard error; OR: Odd ratios; CI: Confidence interval; *: P<0.05; **: P<0.001.

Table 5: Logistic regression analysis of the causes of partner homicide and attempted partner homicide among men

Independent variable	Predictor variable	Logit (B)	SE	Wald χ^2	p	OR	OR 95% CI	
Partner homicide and attempted partner homicide in men	Constant	2.29	5.47	0.17	0.67	9.94		
	Exposure to physical violence	-1.66	0.81	4.19	0.03*	0.19	0.03	1.07
	Partner's alcohol use	1.52	1.53	0.99	0.31	4.60	0.16	56.65
	Partner's substance use	-18.39	160.61	0.00	0.06	0.00	1.0	–
	Jealousy	-21.11	848.07	0.00	0.99	0.94	0.89	1.18
	Empathy	-0.04	0.05	0.77	0.37	0.95	0.78	1.13
	Psychopathy	-0.06	0.06	0.89	0.34	0.99	0.88	1.18
	Significant other	-0.07	0.06	0.01	0.91	1.22	0.93	1.43
	Friend	-0.08	0.10	3.45	0.06	1.08	0.89	1.38
	Family		0.93	0.81	0.37	9.94	1.0	–

Physical violence against partner during the relationship (Code 0=No, 1=Yes), Exposure to physical violence (Code 0=No, 1=Yes); Partner's alcohol use (Code 0=No, 1=Yes); Partner's substance use (Code 0=No, 1=Yes); Jealousy (Code 0=No, 1=Yes); Empathy: The Empathic Tendency Scale; Psychopathy: Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale; Significant Other: Perceived Social Support from a Significant Other Subscale; Friend: Perceived Social Support from Friend Scale; Family: Perceived Social Support from Family Scale; SE: Standard error; OR: Odd ratios; CI: Confidence interval; *: P<0.05.

at preventing violence. The most essential dimension of violent behavior in intimate relationships is homicidal behavior between partners. Although the underlying causes of homicidal behavior toward intimate partners have been evaluated in terms of various variables in the literature, studies examining demographic variables for both, together with variables such as empathy, psychopathy, and perceived social support, are quite limited. For instance, despite the major role of psychopathy in

homicidal crimes, the role of this trait in women perpetrators has rarely been studied (39).

Violent behavior toward people is exhibited mostly by men who resort to violence. İnan et al. (40) reported that 89% of the patients with severe mental disorders who were hospitalized for protection and treatment due to homicidal crime during a 1-year period were males, as well as all the patients who committed this crime. This study also found that male participants imprisoned for attempted murder or murder of their

partners inflicted physical violence on their partners in the past and that their previous violent behavior toward their partners was a significant predictor variable for IPH. Remarkably, domestic violence is a fundamental risk factor for partner homicides. It is known that people who attempted murder exhibited violent behavior many times in the past, and men who used violence against their partners in the past tend to repeat violent behaviors (41,42). Besides, it is a well-known fact that men who killed their partners resorted to physical violence against their partners many times in the past (43,44). The studies accessed on the subject accentuate that men who use violence against their partners apologize and expect to be forgiven by their partners; however, they continue to display similar behaviors even if they receive positive feedback (15). The study further states that these men have negative cognitive distortions, rigid attitudes, and thoughts toward women and that they are mostly self-centered (45). Domestic violence is also an important and constantly increasing problem in Türkiye, where many women apply to law enforcement institutions on the grounds that they are victims of violence (46). It is considered that taking these complaints seriously, carrying out urgent psychosocial studies against all kinds of violence against partners, and initiating an education campaign from an early age within the scope of efforts to prevent violence will be preventive for IPH.

One of the major reasons for women's homicidal and attempted homicidal behavior against their partners is found to be exposure to physical violence from their partners. This result indicates that women are more inclined to resort to violence to defend themselves. Emphasizing the basis of women's homicidal behavior toward their intimate partners is a self-protection mechanism. The relevant literature states that women who kill their partners generally have to protect themselves because they are exposed to physical violence, and therefore they resort to this method (17).

For instance, Stuart et al. (47) in their study with 87 women convicted of violence against their partners revealed that 45.9% of them had been exposed to intense violent behaviors such as burning, punching, hitting the wall, and threatening with a gun or a knife by their partners in the past and eventually engaged in violent behaviors toward their partner, such as wounding or killing. Besides, 27.1% of the women in the sample stated that they were exposed to violence by their partners, albeit at a relatively low rate compared with others. Similarly, according to the results of the study conducted by Bourget and Gagné (48) comparing partner homicide on the basis of

gender differences, 28% of women who killed their partners had been subjected to violence by their partners many times in the past. These findings were considered to indicate that the basis of women's violent behavior toward their partners is to be protected from violence. At this point, it is highly probable that the prevention of "male violence" has a consequence that may affect the inclination of women to IPV.

Another finding of our study is that the feeling of jealousy toward the partners triggers the women's violent behaviors toward their partners. The literature reveals that uncontrollable negative emotions such as jealousy and anger are the main motivations for homicidal behaviors toward partners among both men and women (49). Moreover, it is not neglected that jealousy may be a precursor to violent behavior among women (50,51). It was stated in a relevant study that 25.1% of women exhibit violent behavior against their intimate partners because they cannot control their feelings of jealousy (47). For this reason, the relationship between emotion regulation and violence in women has attracted attention as another important issue that needs to be researched in terms of preventive studies.

Social support mechanisms are considered to be one of the most vital needs of women driven into crime (52). Examining the gender differences in the context of IPH, the perceived social support from a significant other and from the family is found to be among the significant variables predicting IPH among women, and its limitation plays a role in women's inclination to commit murder. In light of the literature, this result suggests that women who lack support from their family and social environment feel lonely and helpless, cannot develop proper coping skills, and therefore display violent behaviors toward their partners to protect themselves and their children (53). On the other hand, studies indicate that women who cannot get support from their social circles when they need help are exposed to more abusive behaviors by their partners, and the dose of violence elevates (22,54). This situation can be analyzed as leaving women in a dilemma. On the contrary, women with adequate and strong social support are more resistant to psychological problems and have higher self-esteem and coping skills (55). Therefore, improved coping skills are considered a positive protective factor for women (56). In this context, these findings can be associated with the fact that female perpetrators who are deprived of social support, continue to be exposed to increasing spousal violence, and resort to violence to protect themselves and their children.

In the context of gender differences, the psychopathy scores of men who homicide or attempted to homicide their partners were found to be higher than women in our study. There are studies in the literature that reveal the relationship between homicidal behaviors and psychopathy in intimate relationships (29,43). Studies indicate that individuals with psychopathic personality traits display homicidal behavior toward their partners and that these individuals are prone to commit and recommit crimes (57). On the other hand, studies comparing men and women in homicidal behavior in intimate relationships reveal that psychopathic personality traits are higher among men than women (29,58). Studies on the subject state that the prevalence of psychopathy personality traits in men who display homicidal behavior toward their partners varies between 30% and 35% (59). On examining the relevant findings in the literature in general, psychopathy in men is observed to be a major risk factor for homicidal behavior in intimate relationships. Therefore, it is considered that psychopathy should be carefully examined in men who display violent behavior toward their partners, regardless of the type of violence.

Some limitations of this study should be mentioned. First, the sample size of the study is not at the expected level. This is due to the disparities in the distribution of crime in the penal institutions that constitute the universe of the research, the inclusion of the crime of murder in a general framework, and the inability to check the scales in terms of items left blank due to the time limit on the implementation. Partner homicide, child homicide, and other homicide characteristics can only be noticed when personal files are accessible. For this reason, it is considered that the real numbers cannot be reached. The fact that the number of samples was not at the desired level may have negatively affected the analysis results and the reliability levels of the scales. For this reason, the number of samples that should be at a level that will increase the representative power is suggested for further studies. Another important limitation of this study is that it is a cross-sectional study and the survey applications were carried out in a single session. Therefore, no conclusion could be drawn about causality. Prospective studies on the subject are suggested for further studies. Finally, this study is limited to the effects of empathy, psychopathy, and perceived social support on IPH. However, many other risk factors can be specified in IPH. It is suggested to investigate other risk factors in future studies and measure the effect of the coexistence of these risk factors on partner homicide.

On the other hand, there are a limited number of studies on partner homicide and attempted homicide in Türkiye, as well as very few studies on the causes of women's homicidal behaviors toward their partners and gender-specific variables. Considering the significant increase in partner murders, it is clear that there is a need for research on the subject as these studies will provide important data for the prevention of the problem. Therefore, we consider that this study will shed light on gender-specific variables in IPV behaviors.

CONCLUSION

In light of these findings, one of the ways to prevent women's partner violence is to prevent violence against women. As a matter of fact, it has been understood that men who homicide or attempt to homicide their partners had violent behaviors toward their partners many times in the past, and women who committed the same actions against their partners had been exposed to violence many times by their partners. Therefore, it is considered that studies and macropolicies are needed both to take more urgent precautions and to increase the prestige and position of women in society and to strengthen their coping skills. As women exposed to violence by their partners have a high risk of being exposed to it again in the future, meeting women's physical needs such as shelter and accommodation where they can safely stay with their children, as well as provision of vocational training and job opportunities, can be remarkable improvement factors. On the other hand, since weak social support mechanisms play a critical role in women's tendency to violence, the presence of peer and expert support groups that they can easily access can be a vital social support mechanism for them to feel safe.

Our study revealed that men who use violence against their partners have higher psychopathy scores than women. Dissemination of appropriate psychoeducational programs with proven effectiveness, group work on anger management and development of appropriate coping skills, and activities to prevent aggression such as anger management and social skills with men who display violent behavior toward their partners can help reduce and prevent men's partner violence. Although psychopathy is accepted as a personality problem, intervention studies aimed at eliminating the factors that contribute to the development of psychopathic personality patterns, gaining positive behavior patterns for individuals with these characteristics, and controlling awareness and behaviors may be beneficial in preventing violence.

Contribution Categories		Author Initials
Category 1	Concept/Design	A.L.T., T.G., G.E.
	Data acquisition	A.L.T.
	Data analysis/Interpretation	T.G., G.E.
Category 2	Drafting manuscript	T.G.
	Critical revision of manuscript	T.G., G.E.
Category 3	Final approval and accountability	A.L.T., T.G., G.E.

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