

**Examination of prevalence of domestic violence and related factors among women in Ilam city**Rostam Menati <sup>1</sup>, Walieh Menati\*<sup>1</sup>, Aziz Kassani <sup>1</sup>, Ali Delpisheh <sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>. Prevention of Psychosocial Injuries Research Center, Ilam university of Medical Sciences, Ilam, Iran<sup>2</sup>. Department of Epidemiology & Prevention of Psychosocial Injuries Research Centre, Ilam University of Medical Sciences, Ilam, IranE-mail address: [waliehmenati@yahoo.com](mailto:waliehmenati@yahoo.com)

**Abstract:** domestic violence is one of social problems in some families imposed on women by men. Domestic violence as a social issue and medical problems can seriously threat societal health and structure. Although, domestic violence is common in all communities, in poorer and more traditional societies with lower socioeconomic status it shows greater prevalence and severity. The present research aims at study of domestic violence and some related factors among women in Ilam city in 2011. This research is a type of descriptive-analytical study with multi-stage stratified sampling method. That is, on map city Ilam was divided into three graphically upper, central and lower regions. Then, randomly some streets and were selected then a family was randomly selected from among these streets and alleys. After, other families were regularly entered the study. The standardized questionnaires of domestic violence besides interview were research instrument for collecting the data. The data analysis indicate that overall prevalence of violence is 56%, 196 subjects out of 350. Also, mental-psychological violence with 60 %, physical violence 2.30% and sexual violence 4.24 % were the most common forms of violence respectively. Considering other variables, a statistically meaningful relationship was observed between women's education ( $p<0.003$ ), marriage age ( $p<0.02$ ), number of children ( $p<0.03$ ), women's job ( $p<0.01$ ), husband's education ( $p<0.04$ ) and husband's commitment to moral principles ( $p<0.01$ ) and prevalence of violence. Domestic violence against women in Ilam is highly prevalent and several different factors affect on it, therefore, serious actions must be performed in order to prevent negative social consequences of domestic violence.

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**1. Introduction**

In field of study and research, family is a multifaceted reality in a way that it can be approached to from various dimensions. One of family problems is a matter of concern for social investigators, sociologists and psychologist is violence in family or men's violence against women [1]. The term domestic violence refers to all family maltreatments such as woman abuse, sexual violence and a few other terms. Generally speaking, domestic violence can be defined as a series of behaviors the individual adapt for controlling other person's behaviors and emotions. For instance, expression of extreme jealousy behavior and intimidation, which move the victim to loneliness and isolation. This condition, allows the aggressor to get used to controlling other family members.

Women, generally, are victims of domestic violence. Shekter and Genli [1995] introduced one of the most comprehensive description of domestic violence. They stated that domestic violence includes aggressive and repressive behaviors such as physical, sexual and mental attacks as well as imposing economic restrictions by any young or mature person

against the other person he/she is closely interacting with [2].

One of the most common forms of violence against women is violence that takes place by the husband or an intimate man. It is a true reality that victim women are those who in addition to having an emotional relation are economically dependent to those men, which in turn significantly affect on possible abuse or mistreatment. In all countries, in spite of social, economic, religious and cultural differences, husband's violence against their wives is common. In a demographical survey was globally conducted, between 10 to 69% of women reported that have been sexually abused by at least their husbands or one of intimate men in their family [3].

Social consequences of violence against women in family like other psychological disasters cover a wide range of social problem. The impact of violence on children can be observed either directly (the effect of couples fight that children watch it) or indirectly (mother beats the child to get mentally discharged). Moreover, consequences of violence for children can appear in conditions like child mistreatment, not addressing children, children abuse or violence against children [4]. meanwhile, structural

elements including age, sex, socio-economic status and race are known as the predictor factors of violence. Studies on violence factors have indicated that violence occurs mostly in age groups 18 to 30 years old [5] and men are more frequently commit physical violence against their wives [6].

Socio-economic status, too, is recognized as one of significant structural factors in incidence of violence. In fact, prevalence of violence in low income families is greater than its occurrence in rich families. Strauss in an investigation proved that probability that violence takes place among women is higher in below the poverty line families than those in well-off families [7].

Studies also show that the percentage of women were abused within last twelve months ranged from 3% and lower in Australia, Canada and U.S.A to 27% in Leon, Nicaragua among women who have had a continuous sexual relation with the aggressor to 38% of Korean married women, 52% of Palestinian married women in western bank and the Gaza strip. For most of these women, husband's physical violence in addition to his sexual abuse is an integral part of husband's violence [3].

In a study aimed at examination of violence among Tehrani families showed that factors lead to occurrence of violence among men and women include: frigidity 25% in men and 65% in women, severe controlling of the mate 10% in men and 75% in women, lack any verbal interaction, lack of cooperation in house chores, and the mate's insouciance toward religious issues [8].

Azami in a research showed that 56% of women aged 20 to 30 years old and 84% were housewife. Considering frequency of physical harassment, 16.7% of women were physically abused 2 to 3 times a month and 50% of them reacted to the husband's violence pure forgiveness [9].

Qare Baghi (2001) in an investigation indicated that number of battered women who referred to the forensic was smaller than the observed group that could be due to complaining of victims with higher education [10]. Another factor for incidence of violence can rest in instable economic conditions and making decisions which consequently end to family crisis. Some other studies proved the relation of such variables with increase of violence [11].

Moreover, higher education of women and family income affect on rate of men violence. Indeed, in socially and economic low status families, occurrence of violence can act as a compensatory mechanism is displayed by men in response to family tension and conflict [12]. Ezazi in her study found that low income augments probability of occurring

violence. Though, violence shows a direct correlation with men and women depression [13].

In a national survey in 28 capital cities of Iran provinces, in 66% of the studied families women had at least experienced violence once in their marital life. In 30% of families the physical violence is severe and critical and in 10% of families violence has left temporary or permanent injuries [14].

An investigation on factors influential on wife abuse among women referred to forensic centers in Karaj in 2005 performed by Shabani and colleagues showed that no correlation exists between woman's job and wife abuse. In fact, most of wife abuse is more evident among self-employed men. Being uninterested, having no moral understanding as well as polygamy influence wife abuse. Also, wife abuse correlates with history of committing other crimes among men and this indicates that wife abuse shapes under the influence of other crimes.

Commitment to religious issues among men contributes to decrease of violence against women. Economic poverty of the family in-law again increases wife abuse. Lack of family independence, heading someone else outside the family by the husband, having, mental-psychological problems and addition augments wife abuse [15]. Taking all together, identification of social- psychological factors are effective on incidence of violence seems necessary in order to provide some useful solutions for hindering its occurrence and decreasing its consequences.

## 2. Methodology

The population consists of married women living in Ilam city. Through multistage cluster sampling, the samples were selected. Using the map, Ilam city was divided into three high, middle and down areas and based on existing blocks in these areas it was specified how many streets and alleys should be randomly selected. Then, by addressing each family and identifying the married women, the questionnaires were distributed.

Finally, 350 married women were selected. After, the participants were asked to fill questionnaires containing demographic, domestic violence and mental health items (GHQ-28). Finally, through SPSS software and Chi-square, T-test and ANOVA the data were analyzed. some other factors that respondents did not participate in the study invaded unwillingness to cooperation, living apart at time of study, not residing in urban areas and irregular and random referral to the selected medical centers.

For collecting the required data, a questionnaire was used. it was divided into two parts: a) items related to the demographical characteristics

of participants with 14 questions and b) information related to occurrence of violence with 7 questions about emotional violence, 9 items about physical violence, 3 items about sexual violence and 13 items about consequence of domestic violence and participants' reaction against the husband's abuse.

Items associated to measurement of different types of domestic violence include physical, psychological –mental and sexual harassment besides consequences of violence in the victim women. The questionnaire is a researcher-made one was designed through reviewing reference books, similar studies in this area as well as adjusting with socio-cultural conditions of Ilam. The content validity of the questionnaire, also, was confirmed. That is, by distribution of 10 questionnaires among university faculty and doing some modifications on it the final version was prepared. To test the questionnaire reliability, test-retest method was performed in a pilot study sample in which the Chronbach's alpha achieved  $\alpha = 0.90$ .

**3. Findings**

The data analysis shows that general prevalence of violence is up to 56%( 196 subjects) out of 350 participants. Furthermore, prevalence of mental-psychological violence is 60%, physical violence 2.30% and sexual violence 4.24 % (Table 1).

Table 1: Frequency distribution of some factor relevant to physical violence against women and their reaction after violence

	Frequency	Percentage
Bone Fracture	9	6.4
Visit to the clinic or	15	7.7
Dizziness	25	8.12
Bruising rally	10	1.5
Lawyer	4	2
Court	5	5.2
Police force	3	5.1
Dropouts and	2	1
Unpaid leave	4	2
Sick leave	1	0.05

The table 2 indicates that in lower educated participants, more violence and wife abuse were common. In a way that, the highest rate of violence relate happened about uneducated and below diploma and the lower rate of violence was among women with education level higher than bachelor. The

statistical tests, Chi-square, and Spearman coefficient proved the strong relationship among these variables (P=0.001).

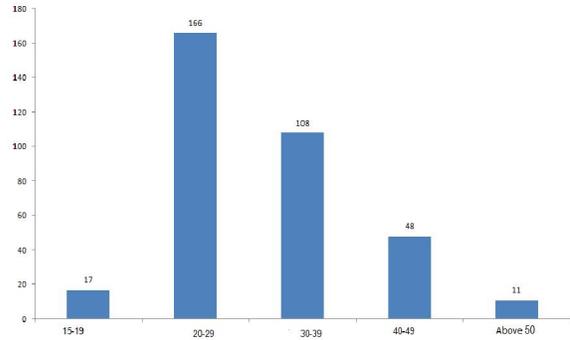


Figure 1: Frequency distribution of Different age groups

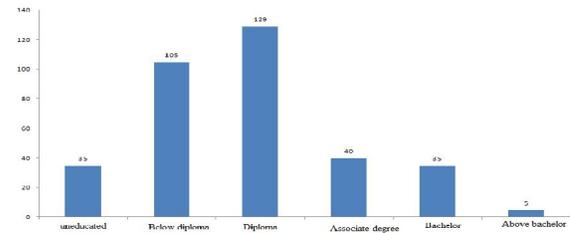


Figure 1: Frequency distribution based on education

Table 2: Frequency distribution of violence based on education

Violence / Education	Incidence of violence		No incidence of violence		Total	
	number	percentage	number	percentage	number	percentage
Uneducated	20	58	15	42	35	100
Below Diploma	70	66.6	35	33.3	105	100
Diploma	76	58.9	53	41.1	129	100
Associate Degree	55	62.8	45	37.2	40	100
Bachelor	20	57.1	15	42.9	35	100
Above Bachelor	1	20	4	80	5	100
Total	209	62	140	38	249	100

Table 3: Relationship between mental health, sex and marital status with violence

	Independent variable	mean	sd	Standard error	P-value
Violence	Incidence of violence	44.5	3.706	1.061	0.002
	No incidence of violence	37.5	5.680	2.052	
Living with parents	yes	39.5	4.562	2.050	0.184
	no	41.7	6.534	4.042	
marital status	married	35.5	1.441	1.038	0.001
	single	39.5	2.487	1.037	

Considering the relationship between mental health and violence, living with parents and, marital status, t-student test was used. According to this test, there is a meaningful relationship between mental health and violence. Also, mental health in either group single and married group shows a meaningful relation. This means that mental health in married subjects is greater than the single. But, there is no such meaningful difference among mental health score in condition of living with parents.

Table 4: Frequency distribution of violence based on marriage time

Violence	Incidence of violence		No incidence of violence		Total	
	number	percentage	number	percentage	number	percentage
Marriage Time						
Less than 5 years	75	62.5	45	37.5	120	100
6-10 years	62	62.6	37	37.4	99	100
11- 15 years	38	58.5	27	41.5	65	100
15-20 years	17	73.9	6	26.1	23	100
20-30 years	15	55.5	12	44.5	27	100
Over 30 years	5	38.4	8	61.6	13	100
Total	206	62	128	38	334	100

Chi-square test indicates that a meaningful relationship exists among prevalence of violence against women and years of marriage ( $P < 0.2$ ). Therefore, shorter time they are married, prevalence of violence is lower. That is, among participants most of wife abuse I occurs against women their marriage period was shorter than 15-20 years. However, in subjects with over 30 year marriage an exception was observed (they showed the least wife abuse).

Table 5: Frequency distribution of violence based on husband's addiction

violence	Incidence of violence		No incidence of violence		Total	
	number	percentage	number	percentage	number	percentage
Husband's Addiction						
Yes	4	58	3	42	7	100
No	195	69	122	31	307	100
I don't know	12	86	2	14	14	100
I'd not like to answer	5	84	1	16	6	100
total	206	62	128	38	344	100

With regard to Chi-square test, women who were unwilling to answer the questions or were unaware about their husbands' addiction were more in risk of wife abuse. So, this disparity is statistically meaningless ( $P > 4.0$ ).

Table 6: Frequency distribution of violence based on husband's income

Violence	Incidence of violence		No incidence of violence		Total	
	number	percentage	number	percentage	number	percentage
Husband's income						
Less than 150000toman	33	72	13	28	46	100
150000-300000 tomans	109	63	65	27	174	100
300000-500000 tomans	48	57	37	43	85	100
More than 500000	16	56	23	44	39	100
total	206	128	128	38	344	100

According to the table, Chi-square test results show that the largest rate of wife abuse is against women with income less than 100,000tomans. that is, by regular increase of income, wife abuse is decreased, but this difference is statistically meaningless ( $P > 3.0$ ).

Chi-square test indicates that the disparity among mean of different groups of the above tables, frequency of being abused, is statically meaningless ( $P > 0.05$ ).

For multivariate analysis of violence, the logistic regression test was adapted. That is, meaningful or near to meaningful variables in the monovariate test were entered the logistic model. Considering the previous tables results, all variables except education were meaningful.

Table 7: Frequency distribution of violence based on type of house

violence house ownership	Incidence of violence		No incidence of violence		Total	
	number	percentage	number	percentage	number	percentage
personal	138	63	84	37	222	100
rental	55	62	37	38	94	100
organizational	9	45	11	55	20	100
Other	7	87	1	13	8	100
total	206	62	128	38	344	100

Table 8: Logistic regression of violence with independent variables

	frequency	percentage
Bone Fracture.	9	6.4
Visit to the clinic or hospital	15	7.7
Dizziness	25	8.12
Bruising rally	10	1.5
Lawyer	4	2
Court	5	5.2
Police force	3	5.1
Dropouts and turnover	2	1
Unpaid leave	4	2
Sick leave	1	0.05

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The data analysis results indicate that general prevalence of violence is 56% (196) out of 350 subjects. Also, prevalence of psychological-mental is 60%, physical violence 2.30% and sexual violence 4.24%. Therefore, similar to the previously performed studies in this area, the present research findings, too, represent some data on wife abuse and domestic violence in one of vulnerable (culturally-socially) regions of Iran. Reviewing other studies

indicate that there is a huge difference between Iran and other parts of the world in recorded figures on violence.

As Mousavi and Eshaghian's study in Isfahan shows that prevalence of violence is 36.8% and probability of its incidence 29.3%, in Khoram Abad the general prevalence is 91.9%, in Ravansar in Kermanshah the mental violence prevalence is recorded as 88% and sexual 76%. Also, in Smenan and Shahmirzad the emotional violence is 63.7% and verbal violence as 43.3%.

Jahanfar and colleagues understood that prevalence of violence in Tehran is 60.6%. Moreover, Salhi and Mehr Alian reached a 67.5% record of violence in Shar-e Kord.

Similarly, Ghahari and colleagues in Tonekabon realized that prevalence of violence is 93.6% including sexual violence 42%, emotional violence 91% and physical violence 55% [33]. Jokar's investigation in Yasouj and Qom recorded a 78.4% rate of violence prevalence [34]. In Esfandiari's study rate of mental violence was understood as 99.5% and physical 91.5% which is a rate above recorded violence in Tehran province [37].

The results of different investigations also state effectiveness of many environmental, social cultural and economic variables on incidence and prevalence of domestic violence, this disparity is observable in studies of other countries. Moraes and colleagues, physical violence was reported as 33.8%, mental violence 78.3% and sexual violence as 15.6% [41].

Ellsberg (2000) investigation on physical violence it was stated as 52%. In addition, 21% of victims had been experienced three types of violence [3]. Rhatour conducted a study in New Delhi reported the rate of violence in pregnancy 21% [40]. The World Health Organization research reported the rate of violence prevalence in 15 regions around the world. According to this report, prevalence of violence in all 15 regions within 12 countries fluctuated from 15% to 71% [38].

Hence, it is evident that Ilam has its own unique conditions. Here, women are under the influence of their local beliefs and values and identify themselves the second sex. As a result, they respond to these cultural restrictions in form of heinous reaction of self-burning, which require the need for further investigations.

The cultural background or sub-cultural interpretation is one of fundamental factors in violence against women. Dominance of patriarchal relations, tolerance of violence by women and women's violence experience in their family in childhood, is clearly evident in Ilam, can be a ground for incidence and prevalence of violence. As Ahmadi

found out that more women hold a passive view about their role, acceptance of violence will increase [26].

Furthermore, tendency to have boy rather than girl child among Ilami citizens can be realized as another reason for doing further investigation about wife abuse in Ilam. Jewks (2002) studied this tendency as one of cultural grounds for domestic violence in Southern Africa [48,24,18]. Herbert and Fitzbeck, also carried an investigation on domestic violence in different cultures, introduced this problems as a cultural phenomenon[58].

Ahmadi in a study in Ravan sar city, Kermanshah, asserted that by increase of women's cultural capital as well as economic independency, they will less experience violence. In this research, too, culture had a fundamental role in prevalence of violence [26].

In their qualitative research, Ponaghi and colleagues investigation most of women believed that cultural problems and dominance of patriarchal culture is the chief cause of wife abuse[38]. Similarly, answering this question what group of men commit violence, most of respondents answered that most of men who do wife abuse had observed their fathers' wife abuse [38].

Therefore, some cultural variables in addition to socio-economic factors in Ilam province can be regarded as fundamental factors and risk factors for prevalence of wife abuse. Irrational obligation in how to wear, what to wear, preventing from wife's employment, education and unacceptable restrictions in social relations, obligation in sexual relations when the woman is unready, are among these cultural characteristics. Besides, the role of personal and social characteristics of Ilami women should not be ignored. The victim woman is one who culture teaches her not to complain, and being shy is a merit. These issues, thus, have made women highly vulnerable. on the other hand, the aggressor man is one who culture trains him it's his quite natural right that his wife obeys him and violence, sometimes, warns his wife about necessity of a powerful management in family.

In this study prevalence of violence against 15-19 year old women was above 80% and more than other groups. But Chi-square and Pearson's correlation coefficient tests showed that this relation is statistically meaningless (  $P>0.01$ ). ( Table 4 through 17). High prevalence of violence among very young women in Malek Shahi's study confirmed this result in Khoram Abad[17]. Also, Ghahari's research found a correlation between couples' age and violence. In Babol, Bakhtiari and Omid Bakhsh's study [39] discovered a meaningful relation between personal characteristics of women and violence. In

Bradford et al research, young mothers were tolerated harassment more than others [43].

However, many other studies like Saberian in Semnan [30], Salehi and Mehr Alian in Shahr Kord [32], Jokar in Yasouj[34], Nazparvar [13], Motevali Emami in Karaj [35], Aziz Zadeh in Sanandaj [36] and Esfandiari et al in Tehran [37] similar to the current study found no meaningful relationship between prevalence of violence and women's age. The current research data analysis indicated that low educated or uneducated women ( 76.6 % and 70% respectively)experience high degree of wife abuse. Chi-square test showed that there is a meaningful relationship between prevalence of violence and women's level of education (  $p<0.01$ ).

It is evident that level of education work as an important factor in women's awareness about their own rights, increase of self-confidence, denial of absolute directorate of men and achieving economic independency that can, also, prevent from increase of wife abuse. The results of most of previously performed studies on domestic violence confirm this, either. The finding of the present research is in accordance with Ahmadi, Saberian, Jokar, Aziz zadeh, Bakhtiari and Omidbakhsh as well as Moraes and Reichem in Brazil, and Leung et al in China[59]. Although in Salehi and Mehr Alian investigation in Shahr Kord [32] and Naparvar ( 1979)[13] this relation was absent. In this study, violence was more common among women with bachelor degree 42.1% and women with education higher than bachelor 50%.

In terms of husband's education and violence, the results indicated that women with uneducated husbands (73% prevalence) or lower than diploma (prevalence 79.9%) more than others experienced harassment (Tables 4-25). As Table 4-25 shows with a regular product, through increase of the husband's education, prevalence of violence and wife abuse decreased among subjects. That is to say, women with highly educated husbands tolerated least degree of violence (30.4%). Chi-square and Pearson's correction coiffing tests showed that there is a meaningfully reverse relation between prevalence of violence and husband's education among women ( $P=0.000$ ). this, therefore can be due to the reasons about the relationship between wife's education and husband's violence.

This result is the same as other previously performed studies in Iran like Aziz zadeh (2000) in Kordestan, Saverian in Semnan (2003), Ghahari (2003) in Tonekabon, Malek Shahi (2001) in Khoram Abad, Jo kar (2003) in Yasouj, but in contrast with Salehi and Mejr Alain (2003) in Shahr Kord, and Nazparvar (1996). Moraes and Reichem in Brazil [41], and Leung et al in China, accordingly found a

correlation between culture and mate's education with prevalence of violence.

In the present paper, the age of marriage in most of samples were 15 to 24 ( 77.8 subjects), however, 12 subjects were married over 30 years old ( 3.6%) and 25 subjects (7.5%) had an age of marriage below 15 years old. in subjects with marriage age of 15, prevalence of violence was 76%, but with a relatively gradual process by increase of marriage age, lesser violence was observed. that is, those who were married over 25 years old, had experienced less violence (41%). The Chi-Square test showed that there is a meaningful relationship between violence and age of marriage (  $P=0.000$ ).

Omid bakhsh and Bakhtiari's study showed, too, a correlation between violence and age of marriage. According to them, less prevalence of violence among women with higher age of marriage can be in association with better management of financial resources, rationalism, prevention from irrational emotions and probably higher education of couples. On the other hand, increase of violence among young pairs can be due to lack of necessary skills for their role in family. Saberinan, similarly, found a meaningful relation between physical and financial violence with age of marriage in Semnan.

Regarding the time of marriage and violence the data analysis results indicate that there is a relationship among them. This means that, by increase of marriage time, more violence is recorded. These findings, however, oppose previous studies results [32,33,13,39]. Lower violence among younger couples can be attributed to higher level of women's awareness about their own rights and not submitting to violence or at least resistance against the husband's violence. Since, in the current paper, the young women were mostly employed and highly educated.

Another result in the present research, was the relation between number of children with violence. in a way that subjects with no child (41%) had faced with the lowest violence and women with more than 7 children experienced the greatest rate of violence (80%) in comparison to other groups. having many children is a characteristics of lower social and cultural classes that could be considered as one of background factors in incidence of violence. Moraes and Reichem[41], Leung et al [51], Saberian in Semnan [30] and Ahmadi in Ravan Sar [24] confirm the current research results in this area.

As is shown in results, the housewife women were faced with higher violence compared to employed women (66% vs. 48%). This indicates, thereof, the significance of women's economic independency as one of principle factors in occurrence of violence against women. Mohamadini

in his article "Ilami youths, today's challenges and future life", reported the economic factors such as insufficient income, family income and unemployment as reasons to depression and consequently suicide [56]. In most of previous investigation in this field, similar results were achieved [31,37,30,16,59]. But in Coker et al investigation [60] in U.S.no such meaningful relationship was discovered between violence and women's employment.

Ahmadi's study in Ravan sar showed that women with higher economic status encountered with less violence. As Ahmadi said, outside work and employment for women can benefit them in different levels and protection against wife abuse. Indeed, in personal level it leads to increase of confidence and taking a relative choice right and as a result economic independency. Women's employment also, could modify patriarchal space in family and bring opportunities for women to seek equilibrium and civil rights.

Investigating the relationship between couples' kinship, the current research findings show that women married with a kin experienced a relatively smaller violence versus women with other men. This could be because of more women's family as a result of family communications as well as a balance level of cultural elements among two families. Ponaghi and colleagues' research proved that abused women were those who had lower family support and as such, had lower self-confidence and feared from after divorce conditions. However, the disparity is slight and not a matter to be tested statistically (  $P>0.4$ ). Malekshahi's paper in Khoram Aba, also, found a relation between type of marriage with violence (17).

In the current research, it was understood that women who are living with their family in -law were faced with greater violence than those who live apart ( 67% vs. 59.5%). But this disparity was also meaningless (  $P>0.1$ ). In Bakhtiari and Omid Bakhsh study, in Babol, women who were living with their family in-law were more abused. Malekshahi's research similarly achieved this result in Khoram Abad. Since living with family-in law in most of modern countries is disappeared, this factor was not considered in most of other studies. But, in the present research, 27.8% of samples were living with their family in-law.

**\*Corresponding author at: Walieh Menati**

Prevention of Psychosocial Injuries Research Center, Ilam university of Medical Sciences, Ilam, Iran.

Tel: +98 9188412938. Fax: +98 8413342887

E-mail address: [waliehmenati@yahoo.com](mailto:waliehmenati@yahoo.com)

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