

Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Forms and Effects

Abdel Hadi Fathi^a, Mounir Abdel Salam Al-Murtaji^b

^a *Badji Mokhtar University – Annaba, Sociology, Algeria*

^b *Badji Mokhtar University – Annaba, Sociology, Algeria*

^a *fathi.as@mokhtar.edu*

^b *al-murtaji.as@mokhtar.edu*

Received: 2 Oct. 2025 — Accepted: 7 Nov. 2025 — Published: 1 Dec. 2025

Abstract

The research aimed to clarify the causes of gender-based violence and its resulting effects. To achieve the research objectives, the descriptive approach will be used by reviewing the closest previous studies related to the research field. The findings revealed that Violence takes many forms, including sexual violence, sexual harassment, rape, trafficking in women, and forcing women into prostitution. All forms of violence have negative psychological and economic consequences for the victim. Gender-based violence has numerous negative psychological, social, physical, and emotional effects. These effects are reflected in the lives of women and children, causing psychological harm and diminishing their self-confidence, especially if they are unable to disclose the violence they have experienced or confront their abusers. The research recommended to strengthen the role of media in educating the public about gender-based violence and to intensify awareness campaigns in this area.

Keywords: *Gender-Based Violence (GBV), forms, effects, women, children*

1. Introduction

Violence is a complex socio-psychological problem that has become a reality of this era, with a wave of violence sweeping the world, threatening and destabilizing it. Violence is as old as humanity itself, and it is a complex and multifaceted behavior rooted in several factors, including environmental, psychological, social, and educational factors. Rodriguez and Gomez-Baya (2025) indicated that violence refers to physical force and bodily harm. It means using force, coercion, and pressure in a way that contributes to causing harm to an individual.

The phenomenon of gender-based violence is complex. The risk of women and girls experiencing gender-based violence stems from social, circumstantial, and personal factors. At the same time, there are dominant gender dynamics that harm all women and girls and contribute to their vulnerability to gender-based violence (Bloom, 2015).

There are multiple forms of gender-based violence affecting women worldwide, including intimate partner violence, rape, sexual violence perpetrated by a partner or non-partner (in conflict situations), female infanticide, early and forced marriage, prenatal sex selection, dowry-related violence, female genital mutilation, honor crimes, and trafficking (Youns et al., 2023). Women and girls are at risk of violence throughout their lives, reflecting a lifelong decline in their health, safety, and well-being.

This research gains importance from the escalating phenomenon of gender-based violence and its numerous effects on the social lives of women within society. This necessitates studying this problem, identifying its forms and consequences, and guiding decision-makers toward taking effective measures to overcome gender-based violence.

2.1 Research problem and questions

Statistics confirm that gender-based violence is a widespread problem, and despite its prevalence, current methods and approaches to address it remain ineffective and inadequate. According to the United Nations Population Fund, over 90% of African women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM) or other procedures that result in female genital mutilation. In South Africa, reports indicated that a woman is raped every 83 seconds, yet only one in 20 cases is reported (United Nations Population Fund, 2017). Furthermore, gender-based violence often leads to the death of victims due to the harm inflicted upon them. Many rape

victims, for example, die from HIV infection. Therefore, gender-based violence contributes to the harm and suffering of women as a result of prevailing societal attitudes based on discrimination and inequality in rights and responsibilities. Therefore, the problem of the current research is to clarify the causes of gender-based violence and its resulting effects, which can be summarized in the following questions:

1. What are the forms of gender-based violence?
2. What are the effects of gender-based violence?

2. Research methodology

To achieve the research objectives, the descriptive approach will be used by reviewing the closest previous studies related to the research field.

3. Literature review

3.1 The phenomenon of gender-based violence

Violence is a general theoretical concept that forms the subject of study in many human and social sciences. It is a set of unacceptable practices and behaviors specific to humans, whose roots are intertwined with the natural, cultural, psychological, social, economic, and political (Ezeji, 2022). It is a complex human phenomenon that takes on many forms and manifestations, some physical and material, and others moral, symbolic, and ideological. Violence has its own tools, means, and mechanisms (Alkhaddam, 2022). Violence is also defined as the use of force against a person or group of people in a way that leads to psychological and physical harm, and in some cases, may lead to death (Bloom, 2015, 2015).

Regarding gender-based violence specifically, it inherently involves the distinction between male and female, referring to the roles expected of men and women, which vary from one environment to another (Yousef, 2020). Studying this type of violence contributes to identifying gender differences between males and females and determining the factors that influence the strength and cohesion of their relationships (Bott et al., 2005).

Gender-based violence has been defined as harm inflicted on a specific group, whether physical or psychological. It has also been defined as a form of violence that can affect children or women (Rodriguez and Gomez-Baya, 2025). Social learning theory is one of the theories that has addressed the concept of violence against women. This theory suggests that violence is a learned behavior, acquired from one's environment, thus emphasizing the link between the violence women experience and the family environment in which they are raised. Ezeji (2022)

argued that victims of violence are sometimes unable to express or report it because the consequences and obstacles may be worse than the violence itself.

3.2 The forms of gender-based violence

Violence takes many forms. Sometimes it is physical, psychological, or sexual. In general, all forms of violence have negative psychological and economic consequences for the victim (Rodriguez and Gomez-Baya, 2025). These forms of violence also include (Bott et al., 2005; Yousef, 2020; Alkhaddam, 2022):

1. Sexual violence against women and children within the family.
2. Violence within the community, which can harm both women and children. This includes sexual harassment, rape, trafficking in women, and forcing women into prostitution.
3. Violence based on depriving women of their rights, including the right to vote, the right to drive, the right to hold political office, and others.

Violence is not limited to a specific age group; it can begin in childhood, even before birth. Some women are forced to have abortions, especially if the fetus is female, because men do not want daughters (Yousef, 2020). Children are also sometimes subjected to violence through genital mutilation, particularly of girls, or through sexual assault and rape at school. Violence can also occur in adulthood, with women experiencing abuse from partners and husbands, including marital rape. In some cases, violence can even lead to the murder of the partner.

Workplaces are also places where women may be exposed to various forms of violence, including harassment and rape during or after working hours. Sexual harassment has become a major issue gaining importance both internationally and locally because it significantly impacts family, psychological, and social stability at both the individual and community levels. Sexual exploitation is also considered a form of gender-based violence (Bott et al., 2005; Alkhaddam, 2022). When someone in a position of power forces another person to engage in inappropriate sexual activities, it is a form of violence where the perpetrator is coerced into sexual acts (Ezeji, 2022). This coercion is often motivated by the desire of the weaker party to gain a specific benefit or advantage. Moreover, forcing girls into marriage is considered a form of gender-based violence, as it involves compelling a minor to marry to achieve a particular benefit for the family, such as obtaining a dowry.

3.3 The effects of gender-based violence

Gender-based violence has numerous negative psychological, social, physical, and emotional effects. These effects are reflected in the lives of women and children, causing psychological harm and diminishing their self-confidence, especially if they are unable to disclose the violence they have experienced or confront their abusers (Rodriguez and Gomez-Baya, 2025). Women who experience violence may also be negatively impacted in their ability to work, particularly due to a loss of confidence in going to the workplace or interacting with others. Zvara and Mills-Koonce (2024) indicated that women who have experienced harassment develop a psychological complex towards men, even becoming reluctant to marry, have children, and start families.

Exposure to violence limits a woman's ability to participate in political and economic activities due to the resulting psychological distress (Artz et al., 2014). Violence also reduces women's motivation to work and their desire to improve their performance. Furthermore, women who have experienced violence suffer from constant stress and fear, which can lead to job loss.

On the social level; violence contributes to family breakdown and fragmentation, deteriorating economic conditions, and an increased likelihood of children experiencing violence within the family (Lv and Li, 2023). It also leads to psychological conditions such as emotional and behavioral disorders, social isolation, and low self-esteem.

Certainly, violence also impacts the economy through the increased cost of healthcare for women and children who have experienced various forms of violence. These cases require specialized care to protect victims from further complications (Rodriguez and Gomez-Baya, 2025).

4. Research conclusion

Current research underscores the numerous negative consequences of gender-based violence. Some of these effects may be short-term, while others can be long-term, significantly impacting the lives of women and children. Psychological, physical, health, economic, and social harm are among the most prominent outcomes of gender-based violence.

In some cases of rape, unwanted pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections can result, endangering lives. Victims often experience increased isolation and decreased motivation to improve their performance or career prospects. In many cases, abused women lose their jobs because they lose the desire to work and suffer from a state of constant anxiety and stress.

6.1 Recommendation

Based on research findings, it is crucial to raise women's awareness of gender-based violence and enhance their knowledge of the most appropriate methods and approaches to dealing with it. It is equally important to educate children on how to respond appropriately when they experience any form of violence. Furthermore, it is essential to strengthen the role of media in educating the public about gender-based violence and to intensify awareness campaigns in this area.

References

- Alkhaddam, H. (2022). Social Work Students' Awareness of the Phenomenon of Gender Based Violence. *Jordan Journal of Social Sciences*, 15(3), 323-341
- Artz, S., Jackson, M.A., Rossiter, K.R., Nijdam-Jones, A., Géczy, I., Porteous, S. A. (2014). Comprehensive Review of the Literature on the Impact of Exposure to Intimate Partner Violence on Children and Youth. *Int. J. Child Youth Fam. Stud.* 5, 493–587.
- Bloom, S. (2015). *Violence against Women and Girls: A Compendium of Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators*. Boston: Mass Allyn & Bacon.
- Bott, S., Morrison, A., and Ellsberg, M. (2005). *Preventing and responding to gender-based violence in middle and low-income countries: a global review and analysis*. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3618.
- Ezeji, C. (2022). Gender-based Violence: Its Impact on Women and Girls during COVID-19 Pandemic in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Alternation*, 29(2), 76 – 96.
- Lv, H., and Li, H. (2023). Association between exposure to domestic violence during childhood and depressive symptoms in middle and older age: A longitudinal analysis in China. *Behav. Sci.*, 13, 311.
- Rodriguez, M., and Gomez-Baya, D. (2025). Scoping Review of the Psychological Effects of Gender-Based Violence on Children. *Children*, 12(9), 1277.
- United Nations Population Fund (2017). *Managing Gender-Based Violence Programs in Emergencies. E-Learning Companion Guide*. Available at: <https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/GBV%20E->

Learning%20Companion%20Guide__ARABIC.pdf (Accessed on 19/8/2025) (in Arabic).

- Youns, M. (2023). Gender-based digital violence among Egyptian female university students: a field study in the light of Pierre Bourdieu's theory. *Journal of Education*, 2(197), 324-377 (in Arabic).
- Yousef, A. (2020). Problems of the Woman Subject to Violence and the Role of Common Practice in Social Service in Reducing Them. *Journal of Studies in Social Service and Human Sciences*, 1(49), Helwan University.
- Zvara, B.J. and Mills-Koonce, W.R. (2024). The role of early caregiving environments in shaping child stress response systems following exposure to interpersonal violence. *Child Dev. Perspect.*, 18, 38–44.