

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL STABILITY OF YOUNG BRIDES

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the complex interrelation between exposure to domestic or psychological violence and the mental stability of young brides during the early stages of marriage. The research highlights how social, cultural, and familial structures affect the emotional resilience and adaptive capacity of women entering new marital environments. Based on psychological and sociological perspectives, the study identifies key factors contributing to psychological vulnerability, such as control, social isolation, economic dependence, and emotional suppression.

Introduction

Marriage is traditionally viewed as a socially and emotionally stabilizing institution. However, for many young brides—especially in patriarchal or traditional societies—the transition from parental home to marital life can be an emotionally challenging experience. This transition involves not only new domestic responsibilities and social roles but also a fundamental psychological adjustment to unfamiliar interpersonal dynamics, expectations, and sometimes oppressive circumstances. When this process is accompanied by psychological or physical violence, the outcome is not stability, but rather chronic stress, fear, and emotional withdrawal.

In recent decades, numerous psychological studies have revealed that the early period of marriage is a critical stage in the development of a woman's self-concept and adaptive mechanisms. Violence—whether physical, verbal, emotional, or symbolic—disrupts this process by damaging cognitive equilibrium and reducing the sense of personal security. As a result, young brides may experience anxiety, depressive states, psychosomatic symptoms, and, in severe cases, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The psychological cost of enduring violence extends far beyond the immediate harm; it reshapes behavior, thought patterns, and even neurochemical balance in the brain.

Understanding the relationship between the level of violence and the psychological stability of young brides is therefore not only a psychological but also a social necessity. It allows for the identification of key risk factors, protective mechanisms, and the development of preventive measures that can help maintain mental health, emotional well-being, and social functionality during the critical stage of marital adaptation.

Main part

Violence against women, especially young brides, is often rooted in deep social and cultural traditions. In many communities, early marriage still represents a transition from dependency to subordination rather than to partnership. Young brides, often under twenty-five years old, are placed in hierarchical family systems where their behavior is controlled by older relatives or in-laws. Such power asymmetry creates fertile ground for various forms of violence—physical, emotional, or psychological [1].

Psychological violence may manifest as humiliation, persistent criticism, isolation from family and friends, restriction of communication, or denial of personal freedom. Over time, these experiences lead to emotional exhaustion, decreased motivation, and chronic anxiety. The woman begins to internalize negative beliefs about herself—believing she is inadequate, incompetent, or unworthy of respect. This process severely undermines psychological stability, erodes self-confidence, and fosters learned helplessness.

In this context, the level of violence is not measured solely by the presence of physical harm, but by the frequency and intensity of control, coercion, and manipulation. The continuous experience of fear and unpredictability prevents the formation of a stable emotional background necessary for healthy adaptation. Consequently, the young bride's psychological stability—defined as the ability to maintain emotional and behavioral balance under stress—gradually deteriorates [2].

Psychological stability is a multidimensional construct encompassing emotional regulation, stress tolerance, self-esteem, cognitive flexibility, and interpersonal competence. For newly married women, stability means the ability to respond adaptively to the new social role of a wife, the expectations of her husband's family, and the management of domestic duties without losing self-identity or emotional balance.

From a psychological standpoint, repeated violence diminishes self-efficacy—the belief in one's ability to influence personal outcomes. Without this inner resource, a young woman's resilience declines sharply, and she becomes more dependent on external validation and less capable of autonomous decision-making. This dependency reinforces the cycle of violence, creating a closed system of fear, silence, and psychological degradation [3].

Cultural traditions can serve as both a protective and destructive force. In collectivist societies, marriage is often seen as an alliance between families rather than individuals. Young brides may feel immense pressure to maintain family honor and harmony, even at the expense of their own well-being. Reporting violence or seeking help can be viewed as shameful or disloyal, thus forcing women to suppress emotions and endure abuse silently.

This relationship can be summarized as follows:

Table 1

Level of Violence	Dominant Psychological Response	Resulting Behavior
Low (occasional verbal conflict)	Mild anxiety, emotional sensitivity	Attempts at negotiation, temporary withdrawal
Moderate (emotional pressure, criticism, isolation)	Persistent stress, self-doubt, lowered self-esteem	Passive acceptance, avoidance of conflict
High (regular)	Chronic anxiety,	Learned helplessness,

psychological or physical violence)	depression, fear-based compliance	social withdrawal, PTSD symptoms
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The table illustrates how violence gradually deconstructs mental resilience. Even when the abuse is primarily emotional or verbal, the psychological effects are comparable to those of physical trauma. The body and mind interpret constant threat as danger, triggering neurochemical reactions similar to those observed in war veterans or disaster survivors.

Conclusion

The relationship between the level of violence and psychological stability among young brides is deeply intertwined. Violence erodes emotional balance, diminishes self-esteem, and compromises adaptive mechanisms essential for social and psychological integration. The more persistent and intense the violence, the greater the psychological instability, which in turn perpetuates vulnerability and dependence.

Addressing this issue requires a holistic perspective that unites psychology, sociology, and cultural studies. Effective prevention depends on education, empowerment, and early psychological intervention. By nurturing self-respect, resilience, and social awareness, it is possible to protect young brides from the destructive effects of violence and to ensure that marriage becomes a source of emotional growth rather than psychological harm.

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