



## THE DIMENSIONS OF ADAPTION TO MARITAL VIOLENCE IN SAUDI SOCIETY. “A FIELD STUDY ON A SAMPLE OF THE MARITAL WOMENS IN JEDDAH CITY”

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to determine the role of certain dimensions that compels a wife to adapt with marital violence thus elect to continue in such a turbulent marriage. The study adapted the descriptive approach and the measurement of adaption with marital violence for data collection from a sample of 114 battered women whom members of the Family Protection Foundation situated at Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The results of major factors that compels a battered wife to adapt with marital violence were: The wife's below average appearance, obesity and below average beauty as to the dimension of the wife's personality aspects. Increased divorced process cost and lengthy divorce process as to the dimension of the divorce process and child custody. The wife's inability to control her children's behaviors, difficulty to fulfill her children's needs, depending on the father for extending such orientation and guidelines to children as to the dimension of caring for children. The wife's family's inadequate support as a result of the family's hard economic condition and lack of social status, the family's rooted conception that the husband has the right to discipline his wife as to the dimension of the family support. Inadequate social security for the wife and her children, the wife's total financial dependence on the husband, inadequate financial support (designated by a competent court) for both of the mother and children after divorce, inadequate financial support from the wife's family as to the dimension of financial dependence on the husband. However, the physical, health, sex and economic violence are the major types of violence adapted by battered wives.*

**Keywords:** Adaption with marital violence, Wife's personal traits, Divorce process, Child custody, Caring for children, Inadequate family support, Financial dependence on the husband, Type of violence.

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### Contribution/ Originality

This study contributes, in the existing literature, the role of certain dimensions that compels a wife to adapt with marital violence thus elect to continue in such a turbulent marriage in spite of violence.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The study of the family (marital) violence phenomenon grew as early as the international community becomes more supportive for the woman's right. Therefore, countless studies conducted in this regard – even though tackling different themes worldwide. Nonetheless, all of such studies in spite of their different points of origin, unanimously concluded, that marital violence is the most type of violence that exists in every nation and country; moreover, it exists in every social class, religion and ethnic group that forms a society and it involves married couples of all ages without exception. Accordingly, the Saudi society is part of the international community thus having such social plague represented by marital violence in spite of urbanization, economic growth, social

improvements combined with Islamic teachings which emphasized the rights of women. To support this fact, local media, social, religious and educational institutions confirms the family violence in general and marital violence in specific. In spite of these facts, there is a tendency not to reveal or to discuss such phenomenon in public due to rooted customs and traditions within the Saudi society that contributes to concealing such dangerous behavior; hence, that is why official statistics of family/ marital violence are rare. However, due to social, medical and academic efforts, such phenomenon is increasingly surfacing thus it is not secret any more. Moreover, most of such studies that tackled family violence against women focused on trends, causes or connection to social, economic and demographic changes, meanwhile there are rare social studies that tackled the adaption with marital violence taking into account the various dimensions that compels wives to remain in marriage bond in spite of violence. Therefore, this study focuses on such factors that compels a woman to survive a violent marriage. The objective of this study involves sub-objectives that covers the role of the wife's personal traits, complicated divorce process, child custody, care for children, inadequate family support, financial dependence on the husband and the type of violence survived by the wife.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAME

### Firstly: The Wife's Personal Traits and Adaption with Marital Violence.

The word "Trait" implies a tendency in a given person to act within the limits he/she conceived. Hence, certain traits could exist in reality if such traits tends to resist changes as external circumstances or conditions changes. However, the trait's existence should be measured based on the self-conceived act as well as the implied intention (Ghaith, 1990). Personality, however, is the general frontier of the individual's behavior, including the way of thinking, style, interests, philosophy in life (Algassim, 2000). Through such meaning of the trait, we can say that personal traits, procedurally, in this study means physical, mental, psychological and social characteristics that forms the wife's personality which in turn plays a role in adapting with marital violence.

The cognitive perspective, however, indicates that woman abuse, physically or psychologically, depends on how she sees it, estimate it, interpret it, imagining it and remembering such abuse. As a result, in studying a woman's abuse, we must take into account the cognitive analysis as to how the violence woman thoughts, thinking, comprehension and vision as to such violence. By that, we can understand how the victim woman overcome such nightmares (Hasan, 2003). This means, the woman's definition of violence plays vital role on up to what extent she suffers from such physical, sexual or psychological violence. This fact was confirmed by "Ellis", the pioneer of the cognitive theory of rationality, by saying "people do not act necessarily based on the incidents but acts based on how they conceive such incidents" (Ellis, 1975). Moreover, such fact was further confirmed by Darwish (2008) in his study which concluded that women who mostly accept marital violence feels inferior and are irrationality as well as suffering psychological and cognitive disorders. Interestingly, such findings are in line with such results concluded by the study conducted by Ola (2001) which confirms that the victims personal traits hinders and or obstructs a battered wife from abandoning a violent husband. The interactive symbolic theorists, however, believe that the community is the outcome of such interactions among the people who are capable of interpreting such symbols. Moreover, such theorists focused on how the people develop their perspectives as to themselves or self-concepts through interaction with each other. Both theorists, however, concluded that a person self-perspective is an outcome of the way others deals with such person as well as his/her interpretation of such person of such interaction by others (Alzayat and Tala'at, 1999). The most piece of information we can draw from the interactive perspective is represented by learning the importance of family interactions or actions, the extent of comprehension and the exchangeable impact among such elements, taking into account that family interactions and actions are impact by a number of matters; most importantly, is how the family members define their standards as well as the

whole family definition of such standards (Alghamdi and AlQurshi, 2015). In such theory frame, the adaption of a woman with family violence (by a father or husband) can be interpreted as the outcome of the accepting such interactions and on how the woman conceive herself, thus such woman becomes enable to deal with or confront the violent father or husband; instead, she goes along and accept the situation, and the violence continue as being of a weak personality or lacks the ability of social confrontation. However, "Med" believes that a battered woman in a given community is an outcome of internal psychological factor represented by low self-confidence, weak personality traits combined by the social factor represented by low education which helps adaption with violence (Alhasan, 2005). The results of both of the studies conducted by Altaher (2006) confirms low self-stem with battered wives, and that self-blame and controlling of stress are among the most strategies used by such battered wives to adapt with marital violence. Such traits (low of self-stem, self-blame, controlling of stress) were confirmed in the studies conducted by Altaher (2006).

#### Secondly: Divorce Process, Child Custody and adaption with Marital Violence

The author of this study meaning of the divorce process and child custody, the competent channels and authorities, legal requirements and administrative procedures that the woman has to go through in order to file for a divorce, to secure the right for child custody as well as other legal and financial rights. However, the structure-functionalism' perspective of the society – any society - is based on a group of responsibilities connected to each other, thus each element depends on the other elements and subsequently wherever a change occurs in any of such elements leads eventually to similar change in the other elements (Aljuhani, 2009) which means that the social structure should remain steady and balanced so to avoid malfunctioning. Taking into account such perspective, the competent authorities may complicate the divorce' process and settlement of child custody issues by directly and indirectly advise the woman to "enter into amicable settlement" or "cool-off period" or "re-think filing for divorce", therefore, the woman finds herself walking a long and endless road. In addition, the woman's fear from taking away her children and accordingly she elects to refrain from filing for divorce and accepts to remain a battered wife. This conclusion is supported by the results of the study conducted by Mohammed (2007) which indicated that the social values and norms enhances the husband's position to exercise violence against his wife. In other words, the complicated process for filing for divorce prevents the battered wives from revealing the fact that they survive spousal violence. However, the feminist direction takes the violence against women as an individual case, rather women looks at such violence as a "reality" in a "male's world" – a world that believes the male is the builder, the ruler and the final word empowered with such authorities; moreover, the male is the one who decide "who does this and who does that". Furthermore, the male controls the media thus ensures cultural blackout and spare neither time nor effort to weaken the women position in order to maintain supremacy (Alhajj, 1989). As a result, women tend to be passive as to such persecution, exploitation and degrading by men – the men who utilizes such laws and jurisdictions that rules for the male's supremacy. Moreover, the society's point of view as to the importance of "fatherhood" assists the male to be in strong position in case of conflict combined with health, security and legal organizations that advises the woman it is in the whole family interest NOT to report the husband's violence. These facts are supported by women's rights fans who call such violations "human rights" cases and who support such claim by such laws that discriminate between men and women; furthermore, the legislative restrictions that distains women as inferior thus disregards their dignity (Tjaden, 2005). Moreover, the fact of non-reporting of husband's or father's violence to competent authorities was confirmed in the study conducted by Abdulrahman (2006) however, such non-reporting is either due to inadequate knowledge of their rights or knowing in advance such reports if filed shall be neglected or fearing the police or to avoid guilt or fearing the consequences of divorce or fearing

abandoning the children or finally fearing the attitude of the society, e.g., customs and traditions implies that a woman should not report her husband to police or other competent authorities.

Thirdly: Fear of Leaving Children Behind and Adaption with Marital Violence

According to the social-system theory, the family can be analyzed based on two essential elements: family relations are depends on each other – take and give and vice versa – aims to achieve connection with each other and balancing (Gehring *et al.*, 1990). Such family structure and the connection of components (family members) exchange total impacts (pros and cons) between each other (Galvin and Brommel, 1996). Such structure is imperative in order to achieve the family goals as well as balancing and stability. However, violence with a given family is either as a result of detachment from such groups that regulates proper behavior or as a result of improper behavior and lack of proper behavioral standards within such community. Therefore, when a wife survives spousal violence and she has to take a decision, the children are a cornerstone within the family structure, hence such battered wife elects to adapt with violence for the sake of the children. In short, the children becomes the "escape goat" for maintain the family consistency and stability (Alkhateeb, 2007) whose believe was supported in this conclusion in the study conducted by Abdulrahman (2006) e.g., the mother's care for the children and fear of the society attitude – especially when there is no family support – are among the main factors that compels a wife to endure spousal violence.

Fourthly: Inadequate Family Support and Adaption with Marital Violence

We can, also, interpret the violence using the "social discipline" which claims that deviation is a normal thing and inevitable; in addition, the social discipline is connected with ethical aspects, and if both weaken the deviation is catastrophic (Musa and Zainab, 2009). The wife who has a social status that supports her has more control over the husband in subduing marital violence and further takes decisive decision to end up such turbulent marriage. Those wives who lacks adequate family support fears negative reactions by the society as well as those surrounding her including the fear of unknown future in terms of financial support which in the same time could become a burden on her family; hence, hesitate to take such decisive decision Chen (1996) and Waldrop and Resick (2004) and Alkhateeb (2005) and Hendrson (2000) all of such studies confirmed such fears, obstacles and hesitations by battered wives.

Fifthly: Financial (Economic) Dependence and Adaption with Violence

The wife's total financial dependence, as defined by Mohammed (2007) is that "the husband is the only provider and the only source of money for her and her children"; nonetheless, in spite of different interpretation of economic dependence, The Source Theory, say that the power of decision making is in the hands of the provider and financial supporter. Among the fans of such theory (Blood and Wolf) who also added that the social status of the husband and educational background play vital role in the decision-making within the family. However, the Normative Source Theory focused more on the exchangeable relationship and the sub-cultural aspects in terms of division of power in a given family, e.g., based on the legal power which bestow such power to the strong economically and socially - and that power could be in the hands of either the husband or the wife. In fact, the first scholar applied the normative source theory (Good, 1971) in terms of power-building, e.g., the more a person (male or female) gains resources the more such person exercise power and gains more power as well. However, O'Brian and Rodman introduced a modification to such theory using the term "conflict-of-status" or "inconsistency of status" as a result of higher professional career and educational background leads to increased violence. Accordingly, the more the wife is weak economically and social status the more she is exposed to spousal violence (Helmi, 1999). In agreement with such theory, however, Alkhateeb (2005) in her study revealed that wives who are financially independent

boldly rejects and resists spousal violence. In agreement with such theory, Alkhateeb (2005) in her study stated that 69.41% of battered wives (study's sample) are unemployed; moreover, Mohammed (2007) indicated in his study that among the reasons behind violence against wives is unjust distribution of social and economic resources between husbands and wives, high rate of women unemployed and family's low income. As a result the "male-world" dominates, controls and takes advantage of wives due to scarce resources.

The radical direction, however, interpret violence based on Karl Marx who focused less on the crime and criminals. Therefore, radicals say that the family violence is related to historical injustice, e.g., women historically were and are deprived of fair wealth and power in comparison to men (Helmi, 1999). The radicals, moreover, believe that the social relationships, in any society, is based on the male's dominance and further is based on qualitative segmentation. As a result, the fatherhood directs and controls the family thus the mother (and other females) are under such control with little to say but to obey. Some scholars, in fact, believe that the family is the first establishment persecuted by the male. This claim is evident in the book (The Origin of Family, Private Ownership and the State) authored by Engels (1884) who is among the founders of Marxism, which says "Marriage is a clear example of historical animosity", thus the struggle between capitalists and the proletariats (working class) is attributed to the persecution exercised by the (wealthy) against the working class (the poorer); accordingly, the struggle within a given family is similar to the historical struggle between the bourgeoisies (the wealthy) and the proletariats (the working class). In other words, the individual who possess the "materials and resources" is the strongest hence is the individual dominates, and as a result the wife has to adapt with marital violence regardless of its type: Verbal, psychological or physical violence (Alhamed, 1980). Also, the study conducted by Almahameed (2008) revealed that the struggle between the partner and his battered wife escalates when the male lacks adequate income on one hand and the wife's non-satisfaction with such low income that doesn't correspond to her work and social status on the other hand. Furthermore, Gerber (1995) stated in her study that financial (economic) subordination is among the reasons that makes battered women unwilling to continue living with violent husbands but such women knew that divorce or separation means "poverty". In addition, (Zadeh, 2005) study revealed a relationship between the wife's educational background, career and stamina to tolerate violence.

#### Sixthly: Type of Violence and Adaption with Marital Violence

The violence survived by a given wife is not necessarily limited to physical violence, but includes all acts that hurts a given battered wife psychologically, physically, health-wise or economically. There were many attempts to come up with a classification of (type of violence, objective and the tools used in violence ... etc.) based on the results of a sample of husbands "the assaulters" and wives "the victims", in addition to various researches classifications. Nonetheless, it is evident that marital violence (against women) is the most damaging violence exercised by men against women. The cultural dimension, also, plays a role in the ability/inability of a battered woman to live with violence. Moreover, the sub-culture theory sees the individuals' values and orientations reflect their acts and behaviors in social interactions thus varies between a group and another as well as a social class and another. Furthermore, the sub-culture, encourages actual or possible violence depending on the extent of violence culture within such group or class, hence such behavior is socially acceptable (Saleh, 1997) as the individual acquires ethical and behavioral aspects from the his/her environment. In addition, Alkhateeb (2007) in his study revealed that the relationship of a woman with a man (in the Saudi traditional society) involves tremendous dominance, e.g., the man dictates and the woman must executes unconditionally. The woman's subculture may make the woman interpret the violence exercised against her in a given case as "a mandatory measure" thus accepts such violence exercised by the other party. Finally, Hasan (2003) in his study stated that there is no such a culture that compels a wife to adapt with spousal violence, but such acceptance is attributed to the woman's internal sentiments and

dedication to her children, subsequently the wife endures such violence for the sake of a safe and stable family. Among the theories that we may utilize in the interpretation of spousal violence (against the wife) is (Al-Anoumi's Theory), from the stand point of (Robert Merton), which sees most of the community individuals shares a common stream of values that they fight hard to keep. As a result, if such cultural and social tools aren't available justly, the situation shall be Anomic. However, in a disintegrated community, such social objectives and means are variable and unjust, thus the individuals of such communities seeks other means known as "The trends of adaption", hence the expected trend shall be the "innovative" behavior, which is off-the-road, and if the individual rejected either the objectives or the means, the expected behavior is the "ritual behavior" which is off-the-road also, and if the individual rejected both of the objectives and the means, the expected behavior shall be "withdrawal behavior" which is "disobedience behavior" (Almahaimed, 2008). As "Merton" sees it, the social and cultural structure enforces discipline on the individual; therefore, we may interpret the spousal violence according to such theory. In other words, the society as a unit creates a group of cultural, material and moral objectives for the family within the community thus such objectives varies depending of the position of the individual forming a member of that family. Hence, the society determines a group of objectives for the wife that involves materials needs in addition to a group of moral objectives relating to the management of the family affairs and the children thus the whole society is required to adapt such objectives. Including legitimate objectives such as legal income, economic dependence on the husband, obedience and complying with Islamic teachings that governs the family relationship. Therefore, the society may accept such objectives regardless of the means utilized. Thus, the adaption with family violence may be interpreted – if the wife accepted the material and moral objectives, even if the husband exercises physical or moral violence in order to secure, in addition to physical abuse, a portion in an inheritance eligible for his wife or to take the wife's salary this can be called (economic violence). The more the violence escalates against the wife, in such cases, is due to the wife's rejection to take away her legitimate rights; sadly, the society interprets such rejection as a disobedience and actions that to the contrary of the values of such society. As a result, the battered wife is forced to stop protesting, objecting and protesting and she might abandon marriage life. These facts are confirmed in Alfayez (2006) study, e.g., the woman in the society suffers various abuse, as follows: Physically, 90%, psychologically, 95%, sexually, 6.8%. However, Alkhateeb (2005) study stated that the most violence spreading is the physical violence firstly, and secondly is the psychological violence.

### 3. DETERMINING THE PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

The current study aims to answer the following questions:

- Major traits that compels a wife to adapt with marital violence?
- Major divorce process sophistications and child custody complexities that compels a battered wife to adapt with marital violence?
- Major fears relating to leaving children behind that compels a battered wife to adapt with marital violence?
- Major inadequate family supports that compels a battered wife to adapt with marital violence?
- Major aspects of economic dependence that compels a battered wife to adapt with marital violence?
- Major types of family violence that adaptable that compels battered wives to adapt with marital violence?

### 4. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The current study is based on descriptive analytical methodology to achieve the objectives of the study, to answer such related questions and illustration of the roles of certain dimensions in adapting with marital violence.

However, the study shall utilize the "social survey" process to collect such data and information required as part of the descriptive methodology.

**4.1. The Study's Population and Sampling**

The current study utilized non-random sampling due to difficulties of unavailability of precise data related to battered wives. The sample (114 battered wives – refer to table 1 below) was taken from battered wives who are members of the Family Protection Foundation, an affiliate organization with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Jeddah Branch.

**Table-1.** The study sample characteristics

Variable	Variable classes	K	%	Variable	Variable classes	K	%	
Age	Below 30 years	22	19.3	Wife's family social status	High	19	16.7	
					Middle	86	75.4	
					Low	9	7.9	
					Total	114	100	
	Below 30	22	19.3		First	92	80.7	
	30 – below 40	62	53.5		Second	17	14.9	
	40 – below 50	26	22.8		Third	5	4.4	
	50 +	5	4.4		Total	114	100	
	Total	114	100					
Professional Status	Employed	55	48.2	Husband's Ranking				
	Unemployed	59	51.8					
	Total	114	100		Once at least a month	24	21.1	
Educational Background	Illiterate	4	3.5	Wives Sequence	First	92	80.7	
	High school and below	46	40.4		Second	13	11.4	
	University and above	64	56.1		Third	4	3.5	
	Total	114	100		Fourth	5	4.4	
Number of children	None	8	8.8	Times of spousal violence	Numerous times a day	7	6.1	
	3 and less	42	36.8		Almost daily	15	13.2	
	3 to 5	44	38.6		Once a week at least	24	21.1	
	More than 5	18	15.8		Once a month at least	24	21.1	
	Total	114	100		Once a year at least	6	5.3	
					Rarely	38	33.3	
					Total	114	100	
Years of Marriage	Less than 5 years	17	14.9	Once a month at least				
	5 years, less than 10	27	23.7	Once a year at least				
	More than 10 years	70	61.4	Rarely				
	Total	114	100	Total				
Relationship of spouse pre-marriage	A relative	52	45.6					
	Non-relative	62	54.4					
	Total	114	100					

Source: Author

**4.2. Tools of the Study**

Firstly: Demographic Data Questionnaire (designed by the researcher)

Such document consist of closed questions regarding certain variables that may impact adaption with marital violence, including (wife's age, professional status, educational background, number of children, marriage years, relationship pre-marriage, wife's family social status, husband's sequence, wife's sequence and repeated time of spousal violence.

Secondly: Marital Violence Scale (designed by the researcher)

A tool used to measure the extent of marital violence based on the objectives of the current study. The scale was set on three points, e.g., applicable, I don't know and inapplicable, which means 3, 2, 1; moreover, the total of each dimension can be attained as well as arithmetical addition. The scale consist of 48 items distributed on 6 axils,

e.g., 8 items each: The wife's personal traits (physical, mental, psychological and social), divorce process, child custody and fear of leaving children behind in case of divorce, inadequate family support, economic dependence on husband and the type of violence implicated.

Validity and reliability of the Marital Violence Scale

The consistency of the scale was based using Coronbach,s Alpha, at 0.956 for the total sample, which high, and the same method was used for each of the scale's axils, which was high – refer to table 2, below.

It is obvious, as per table 2 below, the reliability factors ranges from 0.648 to 0.952 which indicative at 0.01, e.g., the adaption with marital violence is high.

**Table-2.** Reliability of the Dimensions Scale

Scales Axils	Total Sample
Wife's Personal Traits	**0.648
Divorce Process & Child Custody	**0.952
Fear of Leaving Children Behind	**0.881
Economic Dependence on Husband	**0.863
Type of Violence	**0.928

Indicative at 0.01

Also, the internal consistency for each dimension and its components was calculated due to its importance as to the consistency with other dimensions as well as it indicates the credibility – refer to table 3 below.

**Table-3.** Internal consistency results to the marital violence scale items

Wife's Personal Traits		Divorce Process		Fear of Leaving children Behind		Absence of Family Support		Economic Dependence on Husband		Type of Violence		
Item No.	Connection to the Component	Item No.	Connection to the Component	Item No.	Connection to the Component	Item No.	Connection to the Component	Item No.	Connection to the Component	Item No.	Connection to the Component	
1	.581**	10	.811**	18	.815**	26	.770**	34	.757**	42	.720**	
2	.538**	11	.895**	19	.823**	27	.716**	35	.850**	43	.779**	
3	.699**	12	.910**	20	.705**	28	.733**	36	.831**	44	.749**	
4	.693**	13	.918**	21	.756**	29	.704**	37	.864**	45	.782**	
5	.317**	14	.726**	22	.750**	30	.771**	38	.807**	46	.732**	
6	.658**	15	.883**	23	.667**	31	.724**	39	.803**	47	.716**	
7	.709**	16	.921**	24	.652**	32	.531**	40	.808**	48	.758**	
8	.656**		.818**		.697**		.834**		.771**		.804**	
Correlation to the gross total		.609**		.818**		.697**		.834**		.771**		.804**

Indicative at 0 (.01)

As shown in table 3 above, all of the dimensions of adaption with marital violence (divorce process, child custody and fear of leaving children behind in case of divorce, inadequate family support, economic dependence on husband and the type of violence) are connected with their components, with correlation coefficient between 0.317, 0.709, 0.811, 0.921, 0.652, 0.823, 0.531, 0.774, 0.757, 0.864 and 0.696, 0.782 respectively. In addition, such dimensions are connected to the total score of the scale thus the correlation coefficient were positive and statistically at 0.01, which indicates the consistency of all dimensions hence reflects credibility.



### **The Study's Results and Interpretation:**

The current study aimed to answer numerous questions; therefore, the results of the statistical analysis of the sample subjected, were as follows:

What are the most important personality traits of the wife that compels her to adapt with marital violence? As shown in table 4, it is obvious that the relative weight of the wife's personal traits ranges between 144.73 and 209.64, and the below average appearance and obesity comes the first factor at 144.73 in both the general sequence and the dimension sequence, followed by below average beauty at 149.12 in both sequences as well, followed by total dependence on husband as to problems solving at 160.52, followed by the wife's believe of her low intelligence at 162.28 in both sequences. This means, battered wives believes that their physical traits comes first in compelling them to adapt with marital violence, followed by social traits and finally by mental traits.

Such result could be interpreted based on the nature of the "male's world" enslaving the Saudi wife as the family and social environment directly contributes to the formation of the individual's personality, e.g. to be strong enough or passive towards her rights or makes her looks to the male as the superior. Moreover, the wife tends to think she is responsible for the violence implicated on the premise that her personality traits are not strong enough, hence she blame herself continuously. The cognitive perspective, however, confirms such conclusion that the woman's degree of hurting by physical or psychological abuse depends on how she looks at such abuse. Furthermore, such result concur with the results of [Darwish \(2008\)](#) e.g., battered wives who mostly adapt with spousal violence are those feeling inferior and experiencing irrationality, psychological and cognitive disorders. Moreover, [Ola \(2001\)](#) confirm that the personality traits of a battered wife prevents such

Wife from abandoning a violent husband. Also, [Altaher \(2006\)](#) confirmed that self-blame and pressure-control are among the strategies used by battered wives to adapt with marital violence. What are the divorce process and child custody complications compelling the wife to adapt with marital violence?

As illustrated in table 5 above, the relative weight of the divorce process and child custody ranges between 183.33 and 209.64; however, the increasing costs to obtain divorce and child custody comes first at 183.33, followed by the difficulty the woman faces to evidence the violence at 149.12, followed by a lengthy process to obtain divorce and child custody at 193.85, followed by difficulty to communicate with lawyers/attorneys to handle such cases at 197.36. Hence, such factors are predominantly the barriers that compels battered wives to survive such turbulent marriages. The sequence of such items is 20, 23, 25 and 29 respectively. Such result, however, can be attributed to numerous wives who lacks necessary skills and opportunities supported by the fact that battered wives believes strongly that they will not get the protection needed from judicial and security agencies; moreover, the inexistence of neither a family violence protection law nor a shelter for battered family members as well as strong social organizations that can provide the minimum of protection. As a result, battered wives elect unwillingly to continue with such violent husbands for the family's non-disintegration thus sacrificing and suffering silently.

Table-4. Distribution and Relative Sequence of the Wife's Personal Traits

Wife's Personal Traits	Responses						Total Responses	Relative Weight	General Sequence	Sequence as to Dimension
	Applicable		I Don't Know		Not Applicable					
	K	%	K	%	K	%				
1. Below average beauty compels me to bear with spousal violence	70	61.4	32	28.1	12	10.5	165	144.73	1	1
2. Simple appearance and non-agility compels me to bear with spousal violence	76	66.7	25	21.9	13	11.4	185	162.28	4	4
3. Below average intelligence compels me to bear with spousal violence	65	57.0	27	23.7	22	19.3	213	186.84	22	6
4. Below average general knowledge of compels me to bear with spousal violence	51	44.7	27	23.7	36	31.6	239	209.64	40	8
5. Tending to nervousness compels me to bear with spousal violence	44	38.6	15	13.2	55	48.2	197	172.80	10.5	5
6. continuous self-blame compels me to bear with spousal violence	60	52.6	25	21.9	114	100	234	205.26	36	7
7. Submitting to husband's actions/reactions compels me to bear with spousal violence	44	38.6	20	17.5	50	43.9	183	160.52	3	3
8. Depending on husband for troubleshooting compels me to bear with spousal violence	69	60.5	21	18.4	24	21.1	170	149.12	2	2

Source: Author

**Table-5.** Distribution and Relative Sequence of the divorce process and child custody complications compelling the wife to adapt with marital violence

Divorce Process & Child Custody	Responses						Total Responses	Relative Weight	General Sequence	Sequence as to Dimension
	Applicable		I Don't Know		Not Applicable					
	K	%	K	%	K	%				
Complicated process/administrative bureaucracy compels me to bear with husband's violence.	51	44.7	11	9.6	52	45.6	229	200.87	31	5
Costly lawyer/attorney fees compels me to bear with spousal violence	61	53.5	11	9.6	42	36.8	209	183.33	20	1
Lengthy process/administrative bureaucracy compels me to bear with spousal violence	55	48.2	11	9.6	48	42.1	221	193.85	25	3
Difficulty to approach male lawyer/attorney compels me to bear with spousal violence	55	48.2	7	6.1	52	45.6	225	197.36	29.5	4
Doubting fairness of the law compels me to bear with spousal violence	46	40.4	20	17.5	48	42.1	230	201.75	32.5	6
Difficulty to evidence/proof violence gains me compels me to bear with spousal violence	54	47.4	15	13.2	45	39.5	219	192.10	23	2
Negligence to enforce the law by competent authorities justifies bearing with spousal violence	43	37.7	17	14.9	54	47.4	239	209.64	40	8
Bureaucracy and red-tape in recognizing women rights compels me to bear with spousal violence	46	40.4	13	11.4	55	48.2	237	207.89	38	7

Source: Author

These facts are evident within the Saudi society where conservatism, custom and tradition and religion and lack of competent protective entities including lengthy litigation process and costly lawyer's fees faces the battered wife. Supporting such facts are the results of [Abdulrahman \(2006\)](#) study as well as [Mohammed \(2007\)](#) study that reflect the cultural background of many Arab countries where violence against wives or family members is justified. What are the most important factors of fearing to leave the children behind thus adapting with marital violence?

As depicted in table 6 above, the relative weight of some of the factors of fearing to leave children behind ranges between 179.82 to 250.87. however, the wife that lacks discipline over her children comes first 179.82, followed by incapability of providing alone for the children 195.61, followed by leaving discipline to the father 201.75, followed by fearing (divorced woman) the community attitude 204.38. Hence, the sequence is 16, 18, 5, 32 and 35 respectively. Such result can be attributed to the mother inner sentiments towards her children who, in most cases, forces the mother to sacrifice thus adapts to marital violence. Moreover, violent husbands threatens battered wives, if demanding or sought divorce, that they shall not see the children anymore, especially if the children are many.

This fact is confirmed by the results of current study where 38.6% of the community sample are mothers of 3 to 5 children. Furthermore, such fact is confirmed by [Alkhateeb \(2007\)](#) and [Abdulrahman \(2006\)](#) that one of the main reasons that compels a mother to remain with a violent husband is the fear of leaving the children behind if divorced.

As reflected in table 7 above, the relative weight of inadequate family support ranges between 171.05 to 205.26 as a result of the family's low economic situation. however, such dimension comes first 171.05, followed by the family incapability to harbor the wife as such family believes on the right of the husband to discipline his wife, 176.31, followed by the family incapability to stand up with the battered wife because such family is not aware of such violence suffered by such wife, 818.57, followed by the battered wife' wish not to return to her parents' house, 185.96.

**Table-6.** Distribution and Relative Sequence of fearing to leave the children behind as to the dimension of adapting with marital violence

Caring for Children	Responses						Total Responses	Relative Weight	General Sequence	Sequence as to Dimension
	Applicable		I Don't Know		Not Applicable					
	K	%	K	%	K	%				
Keeping my children away from psychological pain compels me to bear with husband's violence.	27	23.7	5	4.4	82	71.9	283	248.24	47	7
Keeping my children with a family environment compels me to bear with spousal violence	25	21.9	6	5.3	83	72.8	286	250.87	48	8
Ensuring continuous schooling for my children compels me to bear with spousal violence	29	25.4	7	6.1	78	68.4	277	242.98	45	6
Inability to control my children's behavior compels me to bear with spousal violence	61	53.5	15	13.2	38	33.3	205	179.82	16	1
Depending the children's father as to discipline compels me to bear with spousal violence	50	43.9	12	10.5	52	45.6	230	201.75	32.5	3
Fearing improper discipline (if abandoned marriage) compels me to bear with violence	37	32.5	12	10.5	65	57.0	256	224.56	43	5
Fearing community attitude towards a divorced mother' children justifies bearing with violence	46	40.4	17	14.9	51	44.7	233	204.38	35	4
Inability to provide for my children (if divorced) compels me to bear with spousal violence	55	48.2	9	7.9	50	43.9	223	195.61	28	2

Source: Author

Hence, the sequence is 8, 14, 5, 17 and 21 respectively. Such result can be attributed to the fact that many families' income is barely enough to sustain living requirements; subsequently, such families directly or indirectly forces their married daughters (battered wives) to adjust with such marital violence in any manner and for any cost.

**Table-7.** Distribution and Relative Sequence of inadequate family support as to the dimension of adapting with marital violence

Inadequate Family Support	Responses						Total Responses	Relative Weight	General Sequence	Sequence as to Dimension
	Applicable		I Don't Know		Not Applicable					
	K	%	K	%	K	%				
Absence of family support in case of spousal disputes compels me to adapt with violence	56	49.1	9	7.9	49	43.0	221	193.86	26.5	5.5
My family's belief that the husband has a power over wife compels me to bear with spousal violence	51	44.7	19	16.7	44	38.6	221	193.86	26.5	5.5
I lack father, brother or immediate relative support compels me to bear with spousal violence	50	43.9	12	10.5	52	45.6	230	201.75	34	7
The cultural norm that the husband has full power over wife compels me to bear with spousal violence	46	40.4	16	14.0	52	45.6	234	205.26	37	8
I don't wish to return to my family's house and live there compels me to bear with spousal violence	58	50.9	14	12.3	42	36.8	212	185.96	21	4
My family's belief that the husband has a right to discipline his wife compels me to bear with violence	65	57.0	11	9.6	38	33.3	201	176.31	14	2
Financial and cultural circumstance compels me bearing with violence	70	61.4	7	6.1	37	32.5	195	171.05	8	1
Hiding my marital affairs from my family compels me to bear with spousal violence	64	56.1	7	6.1	43	37.7	207	181.57	17.5	3

Source: Author

For this reason, 75.4% of the current study's sample are made of battered wives who came from low or below average income; furthermore, due to the society's attitude to the woman being inferior and that the husband has the right to discipline her or in other events to maintain the blood-relationship between the battered wife's family and her husband's family (45.6% of the current study's sample are married to blood-relatives). Worst, the battered wife knew in advance that there are not (in the country) public or philanthropic shelters that hosts or accommodates such victims of marital violence. As a result, battered wives endures such painful situation by adapting with spousal violence. It was found by Waldrop and Resick (2004) that women within such communities that believes on the superiority of the male oppresses the women choice to defend themselves. Moreover, Alkhateeb (2005) stated that families with limited incomes tend to oppose the return of their daughters (battered wives) in case of marriage break up; thus, attempts repeatedly to force such battered women to remain in such turbulent marriages. In addition, Penh and Osborn (2003) revealed in their study that most of battered wives resort to "silent-crying" or keep the wrongdoing for themselves fearing negative reactions if they voiced their situation; also, Hendrson (2000) confirmed that the marital life of battered wives who receive support, protection and defense by their families improves significantly.

As reflected in table 8 below, the relative weight as to the economic dependence of the husband ranges from 170.17 to 192.98, thus inadequate social insurance for the mother and her children comes first, 170.17, followed by total economic dependence on husband and inadequate financial support for the mother and her children (after divorce) 171.05, followed by inadequate family financial support for their married daughter, 172.80. Hence, the sequence is 8.6 and 10, 5 respectively. However, such result can be attributed to "economic dependence" which is due to the wife's unemployment and she has no other source of income (non-working women represent 51.8% of the current study community sample) where the remaining either had high school education or intermediate (40.4%) thus having limited opportunity in the labor market. Worst, there are working women among such sample but the husbands controls their monthly income (salaries).

**Table-8.** Distribution and Relative Sequence of economic dependence on the husband as to the dimension of adapting with marital violence

Economic Dependence on Husband	Responses						Total Responses	Relative Weight	General Sequence	Sequence as to Dimension
	Applicable		I Don't Know		Not Applicable					
	K	%	K	%	K	%				
I bear up with spousal violence for total economic dependence on my husband	70	61.4	7	6.1	37	32.5	195	171.05	8	2.5
High cost of living compels me to adapt with spousal violence.	58	50.9	19	16.7	37	32.5	207	181.57	17.5	7
scarce job opportunities compels me to bear with spousal violence	67	58.8	9	7.9	38	33.3	199	174.56	13	5
Lack of financial support from my family compels me to bear with spousal violence	66	57.9	13	11.4	35	30.7	197	172.80	10.5	4
Suitable job opportunities compels me to bear with spousal violence	64	56.1	11	9.6	39	34.2	203	178.07	15	6
Inadequate financial support designated for the divorced wife compels me to bear with violence	64	56.1	19	16.7	31	27.2	195	171.05	8	2.5
Inadequate social insurance financial assistance compels me bearing with violence	65	57.0	18	15.8	31	27.2	194	170.17	6	1
Inability to afford the rent of a separate house compels me to bear with spousal violence	55	48.2	12	10.5	47	41.2	220	192.98	24	8

Source: Author

These findings, however, concur with the Source Theory which states that "power" is attained but such individual who supports and sustains the family members. Also, Alkhateeb (2005) revealed that 69.41% of battered wives are unemployed moreover, Mohammed (2007) confirms that that the most important factor the widespread of

spousal violence is the inequality in distributing social and economic resources among the couples, unemployment of wives and low income of the family.

In addition, we may interpret such results based on the radical direction which believes that social relations is based on supremacy of the male, or as found by [Alhamed \(1980\)](#) that the struggle between a dominant husband and a battered wife escalates when there is a differences in carrier or social status; hence, [Zadeh \(2005\)](#) concurs with such findings and that housewives are subjected to more marital violence than those working women.

As illustrated in table 9 above, the types of violence suffered by a wife ranges from 164.91 to 246.49, and that the "physical" comes first, 164.91%, followed by health suffering, 173.68, followed by economic violence, 197.36 taking into consideration that direct physical and health abuse is the harshest and in spite of such fact most wives adapt to marital violence. The sequence, however, was 5, 12, 19, 29.5 respectively.

The results indicated above can be interpreted by the connection of the violence suffered by the wife and the social and behavioral disorders that impacts the wife's understanding of her abilities, taking into account that the average of violence implicated against battered wives is once a week at least, 21.1%, of the current study sample who feels they are useless, worthless and un-adorable thus such sentiments are supported by local culture and the community attitude and the wrong interpretation of religion teachings.

The cultural aspects, [Saleh \(1997\)](#) as well as the ethics derived from the surrounding community by an individual, allows and encourages such individual to act violently. Moreover, [Hasan \(2003\)](#) concurs with such findings, that the cultural background of the woman is a cornerstone to accepting or rejecting marital violence; furthermore, such factors indicated by (Merton), e.g. cultural and social aspects that compels wives to be financially dependent on husbands, customs and traditions that calls upon the wife to be obedient and subservient to the male. Therefore, such women with such cultural and family background have no other choices but to adapt with marital violence.

Table-9. Distribution and Relative Sequence as to the dimension of the types of violence

Types of Violence	Responses						Total Responses	Relative Weight	General Sequence	Sequence as to Dimension
	Applicable		I Don't Know		Not Applicable					
	K	%	K	%	K	%				
1. In spite of physical violence (beating, choking, burning ...) I elect to continue in such violent marriage	71	62.3	12	10.5	31	27.2	188	164.91	5	1
2. In spite of verbal abuse (beating, choking, burning ... etc.,) I chosen to continue in such violent marriage	41	36.0	7	6.1	66	57.9	253	221.93	42	6
3. In spite of psychological violence (bending to husband's will, ignorance and abnormal sex wishes ... etc.,) I chosen to continue in such violent marriage	25	21.9	11	9.6	78	68.4	281	246.49	46	8
4. In spite of sexual violence (bending to husband's will, ignorance and abnormal sex wishes ... etc.,) I chosen to continue in such violent marriage	62	54.4	10	8.8	42	36.8	208	182.45	19	3
5. In spite of economic deprivation (banned from working, empty pocket money, freedom to spend... etc.,) I chosen to continue in such violent marriage	55	48.2	7	6.1	52	45.6	225	197.36	29.5	4
6. In spite of social violence (banned from family, friends, neighbors visits ... etc.,) I chosen to continue in such violent marriage	48	42.1	7	6.1	59	51.8	239	209.64	40	5
7. In spite of health abuse (too much housework, pregnancy and delivery, no health care ... etc.,) I chosen to continue in such violent marriage	68	59.6	8	7.0	38	33.3	198	173.68	12	2
8. In spite of (negligence and deprivation... etc.,) I chosen to continue in such violent marriage	32	28.1	11	9.6	71	62.3	267	234.21	44	7

Source: Author

Moreover, Alfayez (2006) study results indicated that women within the Saudi society suffers various types of violence and abuse: Physically 90%, psychological 95%, sexual 6.8%, as well as Alkhateeb (2005) study that confirmed the most type of violence against wives is physical psychological, then physical then psychological. =End

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