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15.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been increasing concern about violence against women in general and domestic violence in particular, in both developed and developing countries. Not only has domestic violence against women been acknowledged worldwide as a violation of the basic human rights of women, but an increasing amount of research highlights the health burdens, intergenerational effects, and demographic consequences of such violence (United Nations General Assembly, 1991; Heise et al., 1994, 1998; Jejeebhoy, 1998). Gender-based violence occurs across all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, and in many societies, including Kenya, women are socialised to accept, tolerate, and even rationalise domestic violence and to remain silent about such experiences (Zimmerman, 1994). Violence of any kind has a serious impact on the economy of a country; because women bear the brunt of domestic violence, they bear the health and psychological burdens as well. Victims of domestic violence are abused inside what should be the most secure environment—their own homes.

To stop this violence, which sometimes causes great physical harm, death, psychological abuse, separation, divorce, and a host of other social ills, the Kenyan government has enacted the National Commission on Gender and Development Act of 2003 to help in the coordination and mainstreaming of gender concerns in national development. The Children Act of 2001 also classifies children exposed to domestic violence and female circumcision as children in need of care and protection.

15.2 DATA COLLECTION

Although gender-based violence is usually defined to include any physical, sexual, or psychological violence occurring not only in the family, but also within the general community (such as sexual harassment at the workplace and trafficking in women for prostitution), this survey only covers domestic violence occurring within the household. This was the first time in the history of Demographic and Health Surveys in Kenya that questions on domestic violence were included. Data on female genital cutting, however, were collected as part of the 1998 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (KDHS).

There is a culture of silence surrounding gender-based violence, which makes collection of data on this sensitive topic particularly challenging. Even women who want to speak about their experiences of domestic violence may find it difficult because of feelings of shame or fear. The need for establishing rapport with the respondent and ensuring confidentiality and privacy during the interview are important for the entire survey, but are critical in ensuring the validity of the data on domestic violence. Complete privacy is also essential for ensuring the security of the respondent and the interviewer. Asking about or reporting violence, especially in households where the perpetrator may be present at the time of interview, carries the risk of further violence.

Given these concerns related to the collection of data on violence, organisers of the 2003 KDHS took the following steps to ensure the validity of the data and the security of respondents and interviewers:

- The module was specially designed to allow the interviewer to continue the interview only if privacy was ensured. If privacy could not be obtained, the interviewer was instructed to skip the module, thank the respondent, and end the interview. In Kenya, less than 2 percent of women selected for interview with the module could not be interviewed because of security considerations.
- Only one eligible woman in each selected household was administered the questions on domestic violence. In households with more than one eligible woman, the woman administered the module was randomly selected through a specially designed simple selection procedure. By interviewing only one woman in each household with the module, any security breach due to other persons in the household knowing that information on domestic violence was given was minimised.
- Informed consent of the respondent was obtained for the survey at the start of the individual interview. In addition, at the start of the domestic violence section, each respondent was read a statement informing her that she was now going to be asked questions that could be personal in nature because they explored different aspects of the relationship between couples. The statement assured her that her answers were completely confidential and would not be told to anyone else and that no one else in the household would be asked these questions.

Research on violence suggests that the most common form of domestic violence for adults is spousal violence. Thus, spousal violence was measured using a modified and greatly shortened Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) (Strauss, 1990). The CTS scale has been found to be effective in measuring domestic violence and can be easily adapted for use in different cultural situations. In the 2003 KDHS, spousal violence was measured using the following set of questions:

Does/Did your (last) husband/partner ever—

- a) Push you, shake you, or throw something at you?
- b) Slap you or twist your arm?
- c) Punch you with his fist or with something that could hurt you?
- d) Kick you or drag you?
- e) Try to strangle you or burn you?
- f) Threaten you with a knife, gun, or other type of weapon?
- g) Attack you with a knife, gun, or other type of weapon?
- h) Physically force you to have sexual intercourse even when you did not want to?
- i) Force you to perform types of other sexual acts you did not want to?

The questions were asked with reference to the current husband for women currently married and the last husband for women not currently married. Women could answer with “yes” or “no” to each item, and in cases when the answer was “yes,” women were asked about the frequency of the act in the 12 months preceding the survey. A “yes” answer to one or more of items a to g constitutes evidence of physical violence, while a “yes” answer to items h or i constitutes evidence of sexual violence.

A similar approach was used to measure the prevalence of emotional violence. Respondents were asked the question—

Does/Did your last husband ever:

- a) Say or do something to humiliate you in front of others?
- b) Threaten you or someone close to you with harm?

Women could answer “yes” or “no” to each item, and for items they answered “yes” to, they were asked about frequency of occurrence in the 12 months preceding the survey.

This approach of asking separately about specific acts has the advantage of not being affected by different understandings of what constitutes violence. A woman has to say whether she has, for example, ever been slapped, not whether she has ever experienced any violence. All women would probably agree on what constitutes a slap, but what constitutes a violent act or is understood as violence may vary across women as it does across cultures. In fact, summary terms such as “abuse” or “violence” were avoided in training and not used at all in the title, design, or implementation of the module. This approach has the advantage of giving the respondent multiple opportunities to disclose any experience of violence and, if the different violent acts included in the list are chosen carefully, also allows the assessment of the severity of violence.

In addition to spousal violence, women were asked whether they had experienced violence at the hands of anyone other than their current or last husband: “From the time you were 15 years old, has anyone other than your (current/last) husband hit, slapped, kicked, or done anything else to hurt you physically?” Women who responded “yes” to this question were asked who had done this and the frequency of such violence during the 12 months preceding the survey.

Although this approach to questioning is widely considered to be optimal, the possibility of some underreporting of violence cannot be entirely ruled out in any survey. Caution should always be exercised in interpreting not only the overall prevalence of violence data, but also differentials in prevalence between subgroups of the population. Although a large part of any substantial difference in prevalence of violence between subgroups undoubtedly reflects actual differences in prevalence, differential underreporting by women in the different subgroups can also contribute to exaggerating or narrowing differences in prevalence to an unknown extent.

In the 2003 KDHS, men were not asked about their experience of violence because of security reasons. However, women were asked whether they had ever hit, slapped, kicked, or done anything else to physically hurt their husband or partner at any time when he was not already beating or physically hurting them. They were further asked whether their husband/partner drinks alcohol or takes illegal drugs, which is often associated with violence.

15.3 VIOLENCE SINCE AGE 15

Table 15.1 shows the distribution of women who have experienced violence since age 15—ever and in the previous 12 months—by background characteristics. The data show that half of all women have experienced violence since they were 15 and one in four experienced violence in the 12 months preceding the survey.

The social and economic background of a woman has a bearing on her chances of experiencing domestic violence. Over half of all women in their thirties have experienced violence since age 15, with one-quarter experiencing violence in the 12 months preceding the survey. Those age 15-19 have the lowest proportion of women who ever experienced violence (42 percent).

Data from the 2003 KDHS imply that domestic violence may contribute to separation and divorce. Almost two-thirds (64 percent) of divorced or separated women report having experienced violence since age 15, compared with 53 percent of married women and 30 percent of those widowed. A surprisingly high proportion (40 percent) of women who have never been married report having experienced physical violence since age 15. Violence in the 12 months preceding the survey is high among currently married women, with three in ten reporting violence in the past year.

Table 15.1 Experience of physical mistreatment

Percentage of women who have experienced violence since age 15 and percentage who have experienced violence during the 12 months preceding the survey, by background characteristics, Kenya 2003

Background characteristic	Percentage who have experienced violence		Number of women
	Since age 15	In past 12 months	
Age			
15-19	41.8	26.3	1,335
20-29	49.8	25.1	2,197
30-39	53.0	26.2	1,424
40-49	49.4	21.8	922
Marital status			
In union	52.9	31.0	3,508
Separated/divorced	64.4	19.6	348
Widowed	29.5	2.9	260
Never married	40.1	17.7	1,762
Residence			
Urban	48.1	18.1	1,423
Rural	48.9	27.3	4,455
Province			
Nairobi	50.7	19.0	559
Central	44.0	16.6	838
Coast	30.2	13.8	481
Eastern	36.5	20.0	938
Nyanza	59.6	35.9	902
Rift Valley	46.4	28.1	1,369
Western	72.8	35.9	675
North Eastern	50.8	22.5	116
Education			
No education	43.9	24.5	736
Primary incomplete	53.8	33.8	1,933
Primary complete	46.3	24.9	1,445
Secondary+	47.0	15.9	1,765
Employment status			
Employed for cash	52.8	25.2	2,577
Employed, but not for cash	52.3	28.2	898
Not employed	43.0	23.9	2,401
Wealth quintile			
Lowest	51.9	31.5	986
Second	50.3	29.0	1,091
Middle	48.6	29.0	1,085
Fourth	46.0	22.3	1,218
Highest	47.7	17.5	1,499
Total	48.7	25.1	5,878

There is no urban-rural differential in the proportion of women who ever experienced violence since age 15, although recent violence is more prevalent among rural women. Women in Western Province are most likely to have experienced violence since age 15 (73 percent), followed by women in Nyanza Province (60 percent); women in Coast Province are least likely to have experienced violence (30 percent). Violence in the 12 months preceding the survey is highest in Nyanza and Western provinces (both 36 percent) and lowest in Coast Province (14 percent).

Experience of violence does not vary consistently with education level, except that women who have at least some secondary education are less likely to have experienced domestic violence in the preceding 12 months than less educated women. Women who are not employed (43 percent) are less likely to have experienced violence than those who are employed (52 to 53 percent). There is a slight negative relationship between domestic violence and the wealth quintile. Table 15.2 shows that the main perpetrators are husbands and, to a lesser extent, teachers, mothers, fathers, and brothers. It is notable that one-quarter of women who experienced physical violence since they were age 15 report teachers as the perpetrators.

15.4 MARITAL VIOLENCE

Marital violence refers to violence perpetrated by partners in a marital union. Table 15.3 shows the percentage of married women, divorced or separated women who have ever experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence by their current or last husband or partner, according to selected background characteristics. Note that the different types of violence are not mutually exclusive; therefore, women may report experiencing multiple forms of violence.

Twenty-six percent of ever-married women report having experienced emotional violence by husbands, 40 percent report physical violence, and 16 percent report sexual violence. Almost half (47 percent) of ever-married women report suffering emotional, physical, or sexual violence, while 8 percent have experienced all three forms of violence by their current or most recent husband.

The experience of all forms of spousal violence rises with age. The table further shows that divorced or separated women are most likely to have been abused emotionally, physically, and sexually, giving the impression that the violence might have been a factor in the termination of their marriages, though older age could also be a factor. On the other hand, women who are married and those who have no living children report less emotional, physical, and sexual violence, perhaps because they are more likely to be newly married and still in their courtship.

The relationship between education and spousal violence is not straightforward. Ever-married women with incomplete primary education are more likely than those with less or more education to report all three types of violence. Women who are employed, whether they are paid in cash or not, are more likely to have experienced spousal violence than unemployed women.

One might expect a correlation between spousal violence and poverty. However differences in spousal violence by wealth index are not strong; only the wealthiest women are less likely to experience violence from a husband or partner. It may seem that domestic violence is not related to socioeconomic status.

Table 15.2 Perpetrators of violence

Percentage of women who have experienced physical violence since age 15 and who report specific perpetrators, Kenya 2003

Perpetrator	Percentage
Husband	57.8
Mother	23.8
Father	14.5
Stepmother	0.7
Stepfather	0.3
Sister	2.3
Brother	8.2
Daughter	0.2
Son	0.1
Late/ex-partner	1.5
Current boyfriend	0.0
Former boyfriend	1.5
Mother-in-law	0.2
Father-in-law	0.1
Other female relative/in-law	0.9
Other male relative/in-law	2.6
Female friend/acquaintance	3.6
Male friend/acquaintance	1.4
Teacher	25.7
Employer	0.4
Stranger	1.7
Number of women	2,863

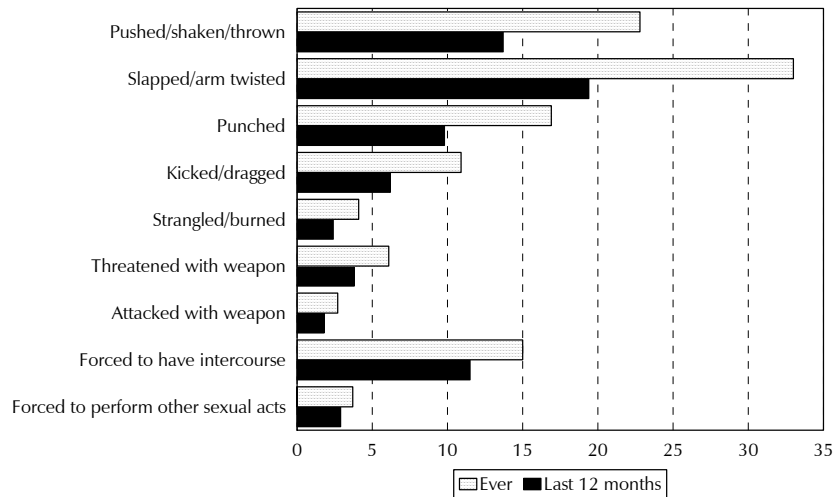
Table 15.3 Marital violence

Percentage of married women and divorced or separated women who have ever experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence by their current or most recent husband, according to selected background characteristics, Kenya 2003

Background characteristic	Type of violence						Number of women
	Emotional	Physical	Sexual	Physical or sexual	Emotional, physical, or sexual	Emotional, physical, and sexual	
Age							
15-19	15.9	26.1	12.0	29.7	33.3	4.7	274
20-29	23.3	37.1	14.5	40.5	44.6	7.5	1,565
30-39	25.8	43.6	15.9	46.3	50.9	8.4	1,248
40-49	33.1	44.0	19.2	47.2	51.9	11.3	769
Marital status							
Currently married	23.4	38.3	14.8	41.5	45.8	7.4	3,508
Once	22.8	37.4	14.4	40.7	45.0	6.9	3,267
More than once	31.8	50.0	21.4	52.3	56.8	13.5	240
Divorced/separated	47.1	54.9	24.5	57.2	62.4	18.3	348
Number of living children							
0	13.6	20.9	9.3	24.6	27.2	3.8	283
1-2	22.9	35.3	14.4	39.1	44.1	6.9	1,372
3-4	27.5	41.8	16.2	44.9	49.6	8.8	1,132
5 or more	30.0	48.5	18.5	50.7	54.3	10.9	1,067
Education							
No education	26.6	39.7	11.3	40.9	44.1	7.2	592
Primary incomplete	29.9	47.9	19.8	51.5	55.9	10.4	1,250
Primary complete	22.1	36.1	14.7	39.3	43.5	7.5	1,022
Secondary+	23.0	33.4	14.2	37.1	42.2	7.3	992
Employment status							
Employed for cash	27.2	42.3	19.6	46.4	50.6	10.2	1,886
Employed, but not for cash	25.8	44.6	16.6	47.8	51.1	8.5	666
Not employed	23.0	33.8	9.6	35.5	40.6	5.6	1,303
Wealth quintile							
Lowest	28.1	43.4	16.4	45.6	50.2	9.1	706
Second	26.8	43.0	18.4	47.1	50.9	9.5	751
Middle	27.2	43.5	17.5	46.9	50.5	9.2	722
Fourth	25.6	38.3	14.9	42.0	47.0	7.6	781
Highest	21.1	32.5	12.1	35.0	39.6	6.8	895
Total	25.5	39.8	15.7	42.9	47.3	8.3	3,856

The proportions of married women and divorced or separated women who have experienced different forms of violence by their current or last husbands, ever and during the 12 months preceding the survey are presented in Figure 15.1. The most common form of spousal violence is slapping or arm twisting, which has been experienced by one-third of women. Almost one-quarter (23 percent) of ever-married women have ever been pushed, shaken, or thrown by a husband; 17 percent have been punched; 15 percent have been forced to have intercourse; and 11 percent have been kicked or dragged. The least commonly reported forms of marital violence against women are attacking with a weapon (3 percent), forced sexual acts other than intercourse (4 percent), strangling or burning (4 percent), and threatening with a weapon (6 percent). Marital rape appears to be common, with 15 percent of married women and separated or divorced women reporting having experienced forced sexual intercourse; 12 percent report this experience in the 12 months preceding the survey.

Figure 15.1 Percentage of Women Who Have Experienced Different Forms of Spousal Violence Ever (Since Age 15) and in the 12 Months Preceding the Survey



KDHS 2003

15.5 FREQUENCY OF SPOUSAL VIOLENCE

Frequency of spousal violence is an indication of the extent to which domestic violence is a current or recurring problem for Kenyan women. Table 15.4 shows the percent distribution of currently married women and divorced or separated women who report physical or sexual violence by current or last husband by the maximum frequency of any form of such violence in the 12 months preceding the survey, by selected background characteristics.

This table shows that 65 percent of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence by their husbands have experienced such violence in the 12 months preceding the survey. One-quarter of ever-abused women (26 percent) have experienced spousal violence three or more times in the last 12 months.

Among those who have ever experienced spousal violence, those who are younger are likely to experience violence somewhat more frequently than older women; 30 percent of women age 15-19 report experiencing spousal violence three or more times in the 12 months preceding the survey, compared with 24 percent of women age 40-49. Women who have been married more than once are most likely (35 percent) to have experienced violence three or more times in the 12 months preceding the survey, while those divorced or separated are less likely (15 percent) than other women to have reported frequent violence in the recent past. Differences in the frequency of violence against women in the recent past by the number of living children, employment status, and wealth index do not show a clear pattern. Abused women with no education are more likely to experience more frequent spousal violence, compared with women who have secondary or higher education.

Table 15.4 Frequency of spousal violence

Percent distribution of currently married women and divorced or separated women reporting physical or sexual violence by current or last husband by maximum frequency of any form of such violence in the 12 months preceding the survey, according to background characteristics, Kenya 2003

Background characteristic	Maximum frequency of any type of physical or sexual violence in the 12 months preceding the survey					Total	Number of women
	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	>5 times	Don't know/missing		
Age							
15-19	8.4	61.3	22.6	7.7	0.0	100.0	81
20-29	23.1	50.8	14.1	11.8	0.2	100.0	634
30-39	41.3	30.9	13.2	13.8	0.9	100.0	578
40-49	48.9	25.9	11.4	12.3	1.5	100.0	363
Marital status							
Currently married	29.7	42.1	14.6	13.0	0.6	100.0	1,457
Once	30.7	42.0	14.2	12.7	0.4	100.0	1,331
More than once	20.0	42.8	18.3	16.5	2.4	100.0	126
Divorced/separated	68.4	15.5	6.5	8.3	1.3	100.0	199
Number of living children							
0	24.1	45.3	11.5	19.1	0.0	100.0	70
1-2	29.2	47.0	12.7	10.8	0.2	100.0	536
3-4	33.2	40.0	14.3	11.4	1.0	100.0	509
5 or more	41.9	28.9	14.1	14.1	0.9	100.0	541
Education							
No education	37.3	29.6	13.2	19.7	0.2	100.0	242
Primary incomplete	28.6	43.9	14.7	11.9	0.9	100.0	644
Primary complete	29.4	41.7	14.3	13.9	0.7	100.0	402
Secondary+	48.1	33.1	11.1	7.0	0.6	100.0	368
Employment status							
Employed for cash	35.6	36.5	14.8	12.7	0.5	100.0	875
Employed, but not for cash	36.1	38.0	13.2	11.7	0.9	100.0	319
Not employed	31.0	44.1	11.6	12.4	0.9	100.0	462
Wealth quintile							
Lowest	25.6	40.9	18.8	14.1	0.6	100.0	322
Second	30.1	46.2	11.2	11.4	1.2	100.0	354
Middle	32.6	41.8	12.0	13.4	0.3	100.0	339
Fourth	43.3	28.5	13.3	13.8	1.1	100.0	328
Highest	40.9	36.3	13.0	9.5	0.3	100.0	313
Total	34.4	38.9	13.6	12.4	0.7	100.0	1,656

15.6 ONSET OF SPOUSAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

To study the timing of the onset of marital violence, the 2003 KDHS asked ever-married women who reported physical or sexual violence by their spouse how long after they got married the violence first occurred. Table 15.5 shows the percent distribution of married women and divorced or separated women by the number of years between marriage and the first time they experienced physical or sexual violence by their current or most recent husband, according to duration since marriage. The percentages who have not experienced spousal violence are shown as well.

Table 15.5 shows that in the majority of cases, initiation of violence takes place early in the marriage. Almost one-fifth (19 percent) of women experience spousal violence within the first two years of marriage, and one-third (32 percent) experience violence in the first five years of marriage.

Women who are currently married but married more than once and women who are currently divorced or separated are more likely to have experienced violence early in their marriages than women who married only once.

Table 15.5 Onset of spousal violence

Percent distribution of married women and divorced or separated women by number of years between marriage and first experience of physical or sexual violence by current or last husband if ever, according to marital status and number of unions, Kenya 2003

Duration since marriage	Experienced no violence	Before marriage	Years between union and first experience of violence					Don't know/missing	Total	Number of women
			<1 year	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-9 years	10 or more years			
Currently married	58.4	0.3	5.4	12.1	12.2	5.8	5.4	0.4	100.0	3,508
Married only once	59.2	0.3	4.9	11.8	12.3	6.0	5.1	0.4	100.0	3,267
<1 year	88.7	0.0	10.1	na	na	na	na	1.2	100.0	164
1-5 years	68.0	0.1	8.2	16.7	6.8	na	na	0.3	100.0	878
6-9 years	56.3	0.3	3.5	13.0	19.2	7.2	na	0.5	100.0	545
10 or more years	52.8	0.4	3.2	9.9	14.1	9.3	9.7	0.6	100.0	1,681
Married more than once	47.7	0.4	11.8	16.3	10.7	3.2	9.8	0.1	100.0	240
Divorced/separated	42.9	0.7	16.7	17.8	16.4	2.4	2.3	0.8	100.0	348
Total	57.1	0.3	6.4	12.6	12.6	5.5	5.1	0.4	100.0	3,856

na = Not applicable

15.7 PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES OF SPOUSAL VIOLENCE

Table 15.6 shows the percentage of married, divorced, or separated women reporting different types of physical consequences resulting from something the current or last husband or partner did to them, by type of violence. Among all married, divorced, or separated women, 13 percent reported ever having had bruises or aches and 9 percent reported having bruises or aches in the past year because of something their husband did to them. Injuries and broken bones are far less common consequences of spousal violence, reported by 4 percent of women as ever occurring and by 2 percent as occurring in the 12 months preceding the survey. Six percent of all married, divorced or separated women reported ever visiting a health facility, and 4 percent reported visiting a health facility in the 12 months before the survey because of something their husband did to them.

Among women who report having ever experienced physical violence, one-third (32 percent) also report having ever had bruises or aches, 9 percent report having had a broken bone or injury, and 15 percent report having visited a health facility because of something their husband or partner did. Although the question was asked of all married, divorced, or separated women as another means of encouraging them to report any spousal violence that they may not have reported in prior questions, the data in Table 15.6 indicate that almost no women who had not previously reported spousal violence said “yes” to these questions on physical consequences.

Table 15.6 Physical consequences of spousal violence

Percentage of married, divorced, or separated women who report specific physical consequences resulting from something their current or last husband or partner did to them, according to type of violence reported, Kenya 2003

Type of violence experienced	Had bruises or aches		Had injury or broken bone		Had to visit health personnel		Number of women
	Ever	Last year	Ever	Last year	Ever	Last year	
Emotional violence							
Ever	36.7	24.2	11.5	5.6	19.1	11.1	985
At least once in last year	37.9	32.6	10.7	7.7	17.9	14.1	701
Physical violence							
Ever	31.7	21.0	8.9	4.7	15.2	9.3	1,534
At least once in last year	35.6	32.4	9.4	7.5	17.1	14.7	924
Sexual violence							
Ever	36.6	25.4	10.7	6.6	18.0	11.3	605
At least once in last year	36.0	31.5	9.9	7.9	16.0	13.1	466
Physical or sexual violence							
Ever	29.7	19.7	8.3	4.3	14.2	8.8	1,656
At least once in last year	32.9	28.8	8.4	6.4	15.3	12.5	1,087
Experienced no violence							
	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	2,032
Total	12.9	8.6	3.6	1.9	6.2	3.8	3,856

15.8 VIOLENCE INITIATED BY WOMEN AGAINST HUSBANDS

Violence by husbands against wives is not the only form of spousal violence; women may sometimes be the perpetrators of violence. In most cultures, however, the level of spousal violence initiated by wives is only a fraction of the level of spousal violence initiated by husbands. To measure spousal violence by women, the 2003 KDHS asked married, divorced, or separated women, “Have you ever hit, slapped, kicked, or done anything else to physically hurt your (last) husband/partner at times when he was not already beating or physically hurting you?” This line of questioning may result in some underreporting if women find it difficult to admit that they themselves initiated violence.

Results show that only 3 percent of married, divorced, or separated women report initiating violence against their husbands (data not shown). Of the women who have experienced violence from their husband, 5 percent report initiating violence; of the women who have not experienced violence from their husband, less than 1 percent report initiating violence.

15.9 VIOLENCE BY SPOUSAL CHARACTERISTICS AND WOMEN’S STATUS INDICATORS

Since the perpetrators of spousal violence are usually husbands, it is important to understand the characteristics of husbands. It is also useful to examine whether spousal violence varies with indicators of women’s status. Table 15.7 shows the percentage of married, divorced, or separated women who have experienced different forms of spousal violence by the current or last husband ever and in the year preceding the survey, as well as the percentage of women who have initiated violence against their husbands, by spousal characteristics and selected women’s status variables.

Table 15.7 Spousal violence, women's status, and husband's characteristics

Percentage of married, divorced, or separated women who experienced different types of spousal violence by the current or last husband ever and in the last year, and percentage who have been violent to their husbands, by spousal characteristics and women's status variables, Kenya 2003

Spousal characteristic/ women's status variable	Emotional violence		Physical violence		Sexual violence		Physical or sexual violence		Never experi- enced violence	Violence against husband by respondent		Number
	Ever	Last year	Ever	Last year	Ever	Last year	Ever	Last year		Ever	Last year	
Husband's education												
No education	22.7	19.6	39.1	27.6	9.5	8.7	39.7	28.4	57.1	3.1	2.0	369
Primary incomplete	29.0	24.6	47.5	32.5	21.2	18.6	51.2	38.2	44.4	2.3	1.3	733
Primary complete	25.8	19.6	39.2	25.4	15.2	13.2	42.7	30.8	52.4	1.1	0.9	996
Secondary+	19.1	14.5	33.0	19.5	12.7	9.5	36.4	23.5	59.5	2.5	1.2	1,362
Age difference												
Wife older than husband	26.4	20.9	41.4	29.0	14.0	12.5	41.4	31.0	53.8	0.9	0.9	84
Husband older by												
<2 years	22.5	16.8	36.8	22.3	14.9	11.8	41.6	26.6	53.5	1.2	0.2	275
2-4 years	22.2	18.4	34.7	21.3	13.7	11.1	38.5	26.8	56.2	1.6	1.1	895
5-9 years	23.6	18.1	39.7	26.2	16.1	13.4	42.8	30.7	53.8	2.4	1.2	1,375
10+ years	24.7	20.1	40.2	26.4	13.9	12.1	42.8	29.9	52.8	2.6	1.8	864
Differences in education												
Husband has more education	26.8	19.1	41.5	24.7	16.6	12.8	44.6	29.4	51.8	2.6	1.3	1,972
Wife has more education	26.6	19.6	41.5	25.3	17.7	14.7	45.3	30.4	49.0	2.7	1.6	817
Both have equal education	21.8	14.4	35.0	20.9	13.9	9.4	38.1	23.9	56.5	1.7	0.9	677
Neither educated	22.8	18.2	37.4	24.5	8.2	7.0	37.9	24.9	59.3	3.6	1.1	300
Alcohol/illegal drug consumption of husband												
Does not drink/take drugs	17.2	13.6	29.8	18.4	10.5	8.8	32.6	21.9	63.1	1.5	0.6	2,300
Never gets drunk/takes drugs	18.9	8.9	58.7	39.1	4.5	4.5	58.7	39.1	38.4	0.0	0.0	21
Gets drunk/takes drugs sometimes	28.3	19.4	44.4	26.3	16.9	12.9	48.3	31.6	46.4	2.3	1.4	957
Gets drunk/takes drugs very often	55.6	36.2	73.3	43.2	36.1	24.8	76.7	48.8	19.8	7.5	3.6	551
Woman can refuse sex to husband¹												
Yes for all reasons	26.3	18.8	39.9	24.8	17.4	13.9	43.2	29.4	52.5	3.1	1.5	2,001
No for one or more reasons	24.7	17.6	39.7	23.1	13.9	10.1	42.6	26.8	53.0	2.1	1.0	1,854
Number of household decisions respondent participates in²												
0 decisions	24.2	15.2	33.3	21.0	9.1	7.0	34.6	22.2	60.4	3.2	0.8	344
1-2 decisions	26.4	20.3	41.7	28.6	15.3	13.8	44.9	33.4	51.1	2.8	1.3	1,182
3-4 decisions	24.1	19.6	39.1	23.4	16.6	13.4	42.4	28.2	53.1	2.1	1.4	1,304
5+ decisions	26.8	14.9	40.6	20.3	17.2	10.1	44.2	24.1	51.6	3.0	1.3	1,025
Family structure												
Nuclear	26.2	19.1	42.7	27.0	15.9	12.7	45.5	30.9	50.4	2.4	1.2	2,562
Non-nuclear	24.3	16.3	34.1	17.9	15.2	11.0	37.8	22.9	57.3	3.1	1.5	1,294
Total	25.5	18.2	39.8	24.0	15.7	12.1	42.9	28.2	52.7	2.7	1.3	3,856

Note: Total includes 396 women for whom husband's education is missing, 15 women for whom the age difference between spouses is missing, 90 women for whom education differences are missing, and 27 women for whom alcohol consumption of the husband is missing.

¹ For reasons, see Table 3.13.

² For decisions, see Table 3.11.

As mentioned above, 26 percent of married, separated, or divorced women have ever experienced emotional violence, 40 percent have ever experienced physical violence, and 16 percent have ever experienced sexual violence. Women whose husbands have at least some secondary education are less likely to have experienced emotional or physical violence than women whose husbands are less educated. All three types of violence—emotional, physical, and sexual—are more common for women whose husbands have incomplete primary education. Contrary to expectations that age and education discrepancies between spouses would exacerbate spousal violence, the data show only minor variations in the level of spousal violence by age or education differences between spouses.

Women's experience of violence varies strongly with the extent of alcohol and/or illegal drug consumption by their husbands or partners. All three forms of violence are two to three times more prevalent among women who say their husbands get drunk or take illegal drugs very often than among those whose husbands do not drink or take illegal drugs. Differences in spousal violence by women's status indicators and by family structure are minimal.

15.10 FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING

Female genital cutting or circumcision is widely practised in many Kenyan communities. It involves the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female organs for cultural or other nontherapeutic reasons (World Health Organisation, 1997). The practice is widely condemned as harmful, because it poses a potentially great risk to the health and well-being of the women and girls who are subjected to it and it violates internationally accepted human rights. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises this as one of the cultural practices that violate the rights of the child. The Children Act of 2001 also describes girls who are likely to be forced into circumcision as children in need of special care and protection. The act further provides for courts to take action against the perpetrators. In the 2003 KDHS, women were asked whether they were circumcised. They were also asked whether their eldest daughters were circumcised and, for those who were not circumcised, whether they had plans of having them circumcised.

Table 15.8 shows that 32 percent of surveyed women are circumcised. This represents a decline from 38 percent recorded in the 1998 KDHS to 31 percent in 2003, excluding the northern districts so as to be comparable. The proportion of women circumcised increases with age, from 20 percent of women age 15-19 to 48 percent of those age 45-49. This implies a steep decline by about half in the practice of female circumcision over the past two decades.

A higher proportion of rural women (36 percent) than urban women (21 percent) have been circumcised. North Eastern Province, which was included for the first time in the 2003 KDHS sample, has the largest proportion of women who are circumcised (99 percent). Western Province, which is mainly occupied by the Luhya ethnic group, has the lowest proportion of women who have undergone genital cutting (4 percent).

There is a strong relationship between education level and circumcision status. Fifty-eight percent of women with no education report that they are circumcised, compared with only 21 percent of those with at least some secondary education. The survey results indicate that one-half of Muslim women (50 percent) are circumcised, compared with about one-third of non-Muslim women.

Female genital cutting varies widely across ethnic groups. It is nearly universal among Somali (97 percent), Kisii (96 percent), and Maasai (93 percent) women and is also common among the Taita/Taveta (62 percent), Kalenjin (48 percent), Embu (44 percent), and Meru (42 percent). Levels are lower among Kikuyu (34 percent) and Kamba (27 percent) women. Genital cutting is almost nonexistent among Luhya and Luo women (each less than 1 percent). There has been a notable reduction since 1998 in the proportions of Kalenjin, Kikuyu, Kamba, and Mijikenda/Swahili women who reported being circumcised.

Table 15.8 also shows the proportion circumcised among respondents' eldest daughters age 15 or older. Overall, 21 percent of eldest daughters age 15 and older were reported to have been circumcised. Differentials in circumcision of daughters largely mirror those for women's own circumcision status.

Table 15.8 Female circumcision

Percentage of women circumcised and percentage of eldest daughters age 15 and older who have been circumcised, by background characteristics, Kenya 2003

Background characteristic	Percentage of women circumcised	Number of women	Percentage of eldest daughters circumcised	Number of eldest daughters
Age				
15-19	20.3	1,856	*	0
20-24	24.8	1,691	*	0
25-29	33.0	1,382	*	6
30-34	38.1	1,086	12.7	138
35-39	39.7	871	16.9	399
40-44	47.5	788	24.2	591
45-49	47.7	521	22.7	442
Residence				
Urban	21.3	2,056	14.5	281
Rural	35.8	6,139	22.3	1,296
Province				
Nairobi	18.6	835	7.9	100
Central	36.3	1,181	12.8	244
Coast	20.2	667	15.4	115
Eastern	36.4	1,325	13.6	260
Nyanza	35.1	1,222	34.8	257
Rift Valley	42.8	1,872	30.8	370
Western	4.1	927	2.0	200
North Eastern	98.8	168	98.8	31
Education				
No education	58.2	1,039	37.3	388
Primary incomplete	32.8	2,685	18.5	464
Primary complete	31.0	2,069	17.4	373
Secondary+	21.1	2,403	9.9	351
Religion				
Roman Catholic	33.2	2,067	22.8	420
Protestant/other Christian	29.5	5,322	17.7	1,018
Muslim	49.6	619	44.4	105
No religion	39.6	156	(28.9)	28
Ethnicity				
Embu	43.6	129	*	19
Kalenjin	48.1	831	25.9	156
Kamba	26.5	938	9.6	187
Kikuyu	34.0	1,886	12.8	361
Kisii	95.9	466	95.8	91
Luhya	0.7	1,230	1.1	256
Luo	0.7	984	0.9	185
Maasai	93.4	189	(93.8)	48
Meru	42.4	460	11.0	75
Mijikenda/Swahili	5.8	407	0.7	75
Somali	97.0	298	97.5	47
Taita/Taveta	62.1	101	*	18
Turkana	12.2	116	(14.6)	25
Kuria	(95.9)	49	*	11
Other	17.6	111	*	23
Wealth quintile				
Lowest	40.0	1,364	26.8	320
Second	40.4	1,475	28.8	332
Middle	36.0	1,503	20.9	312
Higher	31.8	1,711	13.7	342
Highest	19.1	2,141	13.6	271
Total	32.2	8,195	21.0	1,577

Note: Total includes women with religion "other" or "missing." Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.