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## Derleme Makalesi ● Review Article

### Evaluation Of Domestic Violence and Substance Addiction as A Social Work Field

*Bir Sosyal Hizmet Alanı Olarak Aile İçi Şiddet Ve Madde Bağımlılığının Değerlendirilmesi*

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#### ÖZ

Teknolojinin gelişmesiyle birlikte, bireylerin yaşadıkları sorunlar değişime uğramıştır. Dünya çapında, aile içi şiddet ve madde bağımlılığı bireylerin günümüzde sıklıkla yaşadığı sorunlar kapsamındadır. Aile kurumu da bu sorunlardan etkilenen grupların başında yer almaktadır. Madde kullanan bireylerin oranının geçmişe oranla artması, şiddeti de beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu çalışma, literatürdeki bilgiler ışığında yapılmış olan bir derleme çalışmasıdır. Literatür bilgisinin yanı sıra, çalışmada, aile içi şiddete ek olarak madde bağımlılığı sorununun yaşandığı bir vaka örneği ele alınmıştır. Bu çalışmada, sosyal hizmet bağlamında nasıl bir yol izlendiği, sosyal hizmetin çevresi içinde birey ve bütüncül yaklaşımından hareketle sosyal hizmet uygulamaları literatür çerçevesinde anlatılacaktır.

#### ABSTRACT

With the development of technology, the problems experienced by individuals have changed. Worldwide, domestic violence and substance abuse are among the problems that individuals frequently experience today. The family institution is also one of the groups affected by these problems. The increase in the rate of individuals using substances compared to the past brings violence along with it. This study is a compilation study made in the light of the information in the literature. In addition to the knowledge of the literature, a case example of substance addiction in addition to domestic violence is discussed in the study. In this study, social work practices will be explained within the framework of the literature, based on the individual and holistic approach in the social work environment and how it is followed in the context of social work.

## 1. Introduction

The family, which forms the basis of society, has an important function in the progress, development, change and transformation of societies. Family; “Beyond a formal union of women, men and children, it is an environment where the closest and longest relationships are maintained, where the physical, social and psychological care and equipment of the

individual (such as speech, agreement, competition, conflict) is provided or provided.” (Mavili Aktaş, 2013). The family is of great importance in the preparation and inclusion of the individual in society from the moment he/she is born. The stronger and healthier the attitudes, attitudes and behaviors of family members towards each other, the stronger, healthier and more functional the

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individuals' relations with the society will be (Zevkliler, 1992). However, unhealthy relationships, attitudes and behaviors of individuals with each other constitute the basis of "domestic violence". As a result of the fact that agricultural activities were replaced by different economic pursuits with industrialization, migration to the cities became a factor on family structure especially after the 1950s (Koc, 2018; Karagöz, 2015).

## 2. Domestic Violence

With the changing family structure, domestic violence issues have also started to be talked about more, and it has become a common problem in the global context and it has started to be discussed with wider masses. In this regard, the World Health Organization has made the following definition of violence: "As a result of the deliberate application of physical force or power to another in the form of threat or reality, the act applied to the exposed person causes or is likely to cause injury, death and psychological harm" (Polat, 2016). According to the World Report on Violence and Health, there are categories about individuals exposed to violence. These are violence against the person, interpersonal violence and collective violence. Domestic violence is examined under the title of interpersonal violence from these categories. With the development of technology, the type of violence called "cyber violence" is also included in the literature in recent years. This type of violence has various effects on the family institution. With the intense use of social media, family members' sharing their problems on the internet instead of sharing with each other leads to deterioration or weakening of family relations (Yalçın & Yalçın, 2018). There are many biological, psychological, social and cultural reasons for domestic violence. It is possible to see different definitions of domestic violence in the literature. Domestic violence is the risk of one's body, life, independence or psychic integrity by other family members by force (Page and İnce, 2008). According to another definition, domestic violence is the threat that the individual shows in the form of acts that violate the physical, mental, sexual, economic or social freedom of his children, parents, siblings, spouse or other family members, or on the basis of the family members' urge to control each other, It is possible to see various definitions that define many behaviors such as insult, murder, sexual assault (Özgentürk et al. 2012). In the concept of violence, only physical violence should not come to mind. In addition to physical violence, there are also verbal, sexual, economic, psychological and emotional violences. Although all family members are involved in the concept of domestic violence, more than 90% of those exposed to domestic violence in our country are women and children (Sezen, 2018). According to Law No. 6284, violence against women is defined as "all kinds of attitudes and behaviors that are perpetrated against women simply because they are women or that affect women in general and lead to discrimination based on gender and violation of women's human rights" (<https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuatmetin/1.5.6284.pdf>).

Although violence against women is not only a social problem in society; It should not be ignored that there are factors that threaten women's life and prevent their participation in social life (Atan & Atan, 2017). When we look at the studies, it has been determined that the most important factor in terms of violence level is related to marital status. While the rate of physical violence for single women is 7%, with marriage this rate increased approximately five times and reached 34%. It doubled and reached 74% when the woman lived independently or got divorced (Ministry of Health, 2013). In addition, there has been an increase in domestic violence due to the Covid-19 pandemic in the world and in our country. According to the domestic violence report published by the United Nations Women's Commission in 2020, it has been reported that domestic violence cases have increased throughout the world during the pandemic process (Tuncay and Tekin, 2021). According to the data published by the United Nations after the Covid-19 pandemic, during the pandemic process, the cases of violence against women increased compared to the pre-pandemic period and increased by approximately 25% (Policy Summary: The Impact of Covid-19 on Women, <https://turkey.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/policy-brief-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-women-en.pdf>).

Global processes such as the pandemic, which affects the mental health of the society and individuals, which the whole world lives in, also affect many social areas. Many disadvantaged groups are more affected by this process. Domestic violence and violence against women can also turn into more social problems in times of such social difficulties. In order to solve these problems, many professions can combine and offer solutions for the problem area. Social work studies and professionals working in this field, while working with the phenomenon of domestic violence, make an intervention plan according to the problem and perform their applications at micro, mezzo and macro levels. While social workers focus on the phenomenon of domestic violence at a micro level, they must first recognize and understand the existing problem. It should pursue the best interests of individuals. Social service professionals working in this field during the intervention process take on the roles of advocate, mediator, intermediary, educator, and reinforcer (Tuncay and Tekin, 2021: 265). In addition, at the mezzo level, social workers evaluate the clients as a whole, biopsychosocially, with all and different dimensions, and the client in a situational or ecological sense (Payne, 1997). It first protects and strengthens the victim of violence, and then plans work to regulate the relations with the environment. At the macro level, it plans and carries out studies on the formation, monitoring and functioning of social policies, and increases social awareness. Social work profession and studies working with individual, group and society have the important mission of protecting-preventing-supporting and improving domestic violence. In this respect, an important social problem area such as domestic violence may be

related to another problem area such as substance abuse. For this purpose, a case study examining the relationship between domestic violence and substance abuse is also discussed in this article.

### 3. Drug Addiction

Addictive substances have been used for different reasons in many geographies throughout human history, as they are natural resources that have also existed in nature in the past. These substances, which were used for treatment in the field of health in the first periods, started to be abused with the discovery of various properties in the following periods. Substance use, as it turned into addiction, started to become a social problem and evolved into a mental illness that needed treatment (Uzbay, 2009). Matter, all kinds of chemicals such as alcohol, tobacco, heroin, cocaine or drugs that adversely affect physical and mental health cause abuse and addiction, can be taken in various forms, cause intoxication and drowsiness, cause changes in emotion, perception, cognitive and other functions of the brain. (Altuner et al. 2009: 88; Başkurt, 2003: 75). Dependence is a situation where the use of a substance cannot be prevented even though increasing over time causes problems in the life of the individual as a result of pleasure developing against the purpose and against that substance, and a state of abstinence occurs when the substance intake is reduced or stopped. The common features of addictive substances are that they have a reinforcing effect on their own intake. Its effects on the reward system in the brain cause the substance to be enjoyable and addictive by reusing it. The addicted person continues to use the substance they are addicted to repetitively, despite the negative consequences (Işık, 2009; Uluğ, 2007). In other words, addiction can also be expressed as the emotional void or perception of inadequacy experienced by the individual as a way of getting support with chemicals taken from outside (Tuncer, 2007). Addiction brings many problems such as medical, psychosocial, psychiatric, familial, occupational and economic ones (Daley & Feit, 2013). Some of these problems are problems such as the delinquency of the individual due to the physiological and psychological effects of domestic violence or substance use disorder. These problems pose multiple risks and dangers for individuals and society (Karataşoğlu, 2013). Today, alcohol and substance abuse are from the most important public health problems (Karakuş et al. 2012: 38; Ulukoca et al. 2013:230). There are various risk factors that cause substance addiction. These elements can be psychosocial, familial, cultural and sociocultural. Examples can be extended such as sense of discovery, individual tendency, peer pressure, inadequacy in coping skills, desire to look different, presence of an individual or individuals in the family who use drugs and substance use is tolerated, individual's desire to appear strong, biological factors, leisure time, social environment in which the individual lives. Factors such as approval of substance addiction, traumatic events experienced by the individual, and inadequate perceived social support can cause substance addiction (Zastrow, 2010; Dilbaz et al.

2014; Ögel, 2014). Substance addiction negatively affects the family as well as the individual. Therefore, the relationship between family members tends to become increasingly unhealthy due to substance use. Although the family factor is an important risk in addiction, it is also considered as a protective and healing factor since family members are present at every stage of the process (Küçükşen et al. 2016). However, family can also have negative effects in substance addiction. The presence of an addicted individual in the family of most of the substance addicted individuals has been observed. Dependency is often seen in divorced or broken family forms. At the same time, the children of parents who cannot cope with problems or produce solutions are also considered as risky in terms of substance use (Erükçü Akbaş & Mutlu, 2016). In a study conducted to evaluate the families (according to their socioeconomic and family relations) of young individuals aged 13-18 who are drug addicts, young individuals who grow up in families with low income level, poor family interaction and communication, and have difficulties in solving problems, tend to use substances. (Arslan, 2016). There are various approaches to substance abuse. The current approach is the biopsychosocial model. According to this model, addiction is explained by a combination of biological, psychological and social factors. According to the biopsychosocial model, addiction emerges with these three components (Borsos, 2009). Antisocial personality disorder is frequently encountered in addicted individuals. Borderline and passive-aggressive personality disorders are listed as personality disorders mostly seen in addicts (Ögel, 2001). Substance abuse is a brain disease that causes functional disorders in the brain as in schizophrenia, depression, epilepsy, Parkinson's or Alzheimer's disease and they should be examined in this context.

There are three phases of successful substance abuse treatment:

1. Isolation Period: The addicted person is isolated from the society by being admitted to the clinic where he/she will be treated.
2. Purification Period: In order to completely cut off the person's connection with the substance and pass the withdrawal syndrome, a low rate of addictive substances and tranquilizers are given to purify the body from the substance.
3. Rehabilitation Period: This phase may take longer than the other two phases. By focusing on familial, social and psychological problems that cause the individual's substance use, coping skills are developed. In addition, the probability of relapse is high in individuals who are treated and fit into society (Uzbay, 2009).

### 4. A Case Study of Domestic Violence and Drug Addiction

The case study we will examine is the story of a mother of two children, who was born in 1990. Applicant H. has four

siblings. Since her father cares about her education, he allowed H. to continue her high school education with her brothers. H. stated that there was no problem in her relations with her elementary family during her childhood and youth. She stated that her father was a construction worker, and he had rarely spent time with them. She said that she was more attached to her mother, than to her father. She stated that she sank into a deep depression after her mother's death, and that she continued her life with psychiatric drugs. She stated that she was on good terms with her siblings before. Yet, after the decision of divorce, neither her siblings nor her father supported her. Therefore, she do not see any of them. At the time of the decision of divorce, her father and siblings said that she could return to her father's house only if she leaves her children to his father. As a result, H. has not seen her family members for 8 months. H. stated that she had a boyfriend during her high school years, but her family forced her to marry her husband that commits violence, just because they were relatives. Ms. H. stated that she married her husband at the age of 19, their marriage lasted 10 years, and that she had been subjected to violence since the first year they got married. However, she was afraid of divorce due to the pressure of society. She stated that her husband did not have a regular job. Although her mother constantly supported them during their marriage, and that her husband did not return to the home for weeks, leaving her alone at home. H. suspects that her husband has a religious marriage partner in Istanbul, other than herself. H. stated that she went to house cleaning in order to take care of her children, that she sometimes worked for a tailor, and she received financial assistance from the district governor's office. She stated that her husband, whom she was about to divorce, constantly used alcohol and drugs, that he came to house with his friends, and forced her to serve them, and that resorted to physical and psychological violence if she does not serve. H. stated that her children also witnessed the domestic violence, and that they informed the police on such a day, and thereby her connection with violence prevention and monitoring centers has occurred. She stated that her son and daughter received psychological help and that their psychological condition has improved. H. wants to find a regular job, and to start a new life with her children. He also expressed her discomfort with the prolongation of the divorce process, stating that her husband had accepted the divorce on the condition that he would take the children, and that the lawyer did not care enough about the process.

The system that the social worker needs to change is the target system. In this context, deliberate changing steps (acquaintance-making connection, pre-evaluation, planning, implementation, final evaluation, termination and monitoring) were applied for the comprehensive evaluation of the target system. Considering the case, it was observed that H. had primarily needed the psychological support and the legal counseling. In addition to her husband's addiction to alcohol and drugs, his violent behavior against her made it compulsory for Ms. H. and her children to be legally protected. The lack of her economic competence put her in

an even more difficult condition in this process. The priority targets are to meet the educational needs of her children, following-up of the divorce case, finding H. a regular job, and continuing individual interviews throughout the process.

As her children, H. was also provided with the proper psychological support. Necessary medical examinations of her children were made in the hospital, under the supervision of a social worker. Since they had no income, financial aid was granted to them. Interviews were held in communication with a social worker, a psychiatrist, and a lawyer. In these interviews, proper guidance and evaluations were made about Ms. H.'s employment. Educational support was provided to her children to maintain the continuity of their education. Necessary information was provided through interviews with the school counselor and classroom teacher, and their support was requested in this context. It was observed that the lawyer assigned to case of H. caused setbacks in the case. Therefore, legal consultancy service was provided to H. in order for the divorce case to proceed in a healthier way. During the interviews, the rules that H. and her children should follow were emphasized, in order to facilitate their adaptation to the shelter. When the case is concluded, and the living conditions of children and H. reach an acceptable level, they will be supported to find a house to stay. At the same time, husband of Ms. H, whom is addicted to drugs and whom Ms. H is in the process of divorce with, was offered a treatment and rehabilitation process in order to quit the addiction. While working with Ms. H. in the case, studies were planned for her social environment with the understanding of the individual in her environment.

## 5. Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

As it can be observed in the case study, violence and drug addiction are two factors that severely damage family relations and the relationship between spouses. Domestic violence and drug addiction damage family relationships and relationship between spouses. The discord between the parents is also reflected in the children. This disagreement sets a bad example for children. Witnessing violence and bad events in the family at a young age is quite traumatic for their future lives. It is also very important for individuals to develop healthy and functional relationships with their elementary families. The healthier the relations with the root family, the healthier the relations of the individual with the environment, and the family whom he/she starts a family. While working on issues such as domestic violence and drug addiction, the Social Worker should manage the case with the concept of the individual within the knowledge, skills, values and environment of social work. Interviews with the clients should be carried out by collecting and analyzing the related information about the cause of the problem. In the context of social work, social workers working with substance addiction have a great importance in the fight against addiction. Social workers in the multidisciplinary team perform their professional practices at protective-preventive, educational-supportive and rehabilitative levels.

They examine the addicted individual with the concept of the individual in their environment holistically and do their work. Social workers working in the field of addiction treatment and working in the medical field effectively realize the purpose of the treatment with their work at different stages of the treatment; they contribute to increasing the well-being of the individual (Polat, 2014). In order for the addicted individual to re-adapt to social life after treatment, social workers should work at micro, mezzo and macro levels. Interventions at this level target individuals, families, groups and society. The aim at this level is to bring about change in individual functioning, social relations, and people's interactions with social and institutional resources. In addition to the micro-level work with the individual, knowledge and skills as a mezzo, counseling skills for the individual and the family, crisis intervention and group work should be planned. Macro level intervention includes working with larger systems such as teams, organizations, service networks. The target of change is organizations and their functions, structures and goals. In order to create change at the organizational level, group dynamics, facilitation in the decision-making process, organization and planning skills are mostly used in this process. Macro-level intervention is the state of social workers to be functional in areas such as community-level organization, social planning, regional development, community education, policy development, and social action (O'Melia & Dubois, 2013). In this context, social workers can play an effective role in the post-treatment reintegration process with different methods. For example, studies in different areas such as "social support strategies, occupational and activity-oriented strategies, skill development strategies and advocacy strategies" (Hawkins & Catalano, 1985) should be planned. As seen in the example case, while the victim of violence, Ms. H. is given legal counseling, many complementary and supportive studies such as the education processes and educational opportunities of her children, the living conditions of her children and herself, their psychosocial and economic needs and solution suggestions, rehabilitation programs for her husband to quit alcohol and drugs were carried out together. It is essential that policies regarding violence against women, domestic violence and substance abuse are further expanded and implemented in a qualified manner. Policies should be developed both through state policies and local governments, and the basis for the implementation of these policies should be prepared. Although substance addiction, which is a worldwide problem today, cannot be completely eliminated, the number of individuals using substances can be reduced with qualified laws and strategies. In this regard, education and rehabilitation programs on substance abuse should be organized in order to encourage individuals for treatment. It is thought that reducing the rate of substance use will increase the quality of life of these individuals and their families and will be protective-preventive in reducing domestic violence.

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