

## **Prevalence and Risk Factors of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) among Damanhur University Female Employees**

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**Abstract: Background:** Intimate partner violence (IPV) remains a significant public health issue, even among educated professionals. **Purpose:** To identify the prevalence and risk factors of IPV among female university employees at Damnhour University in Egypt. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted using an online structured questionnaire administered to 350 female employees. **Instruments.** The questionnaire assessed five types of IPV: physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, and economic violence and its risk factors. **Results:** Psychological violence (30.5%) and verbal violence (28.1%) were the most prevalent forms of IPV, while physical (10.9%), economic (14.8%), and sexual violence (7.8%) were less frequently reported. Logistic regression analysis identified significant risk factors, including insufficient income (OR=3.32,  $p<0.001$ ), low educational level of the husband (OR=2.86,  $p=0.004$ ), and frequent exposure to verbal violence (OR=3.32,  $p=0.001$ ). **Conclusions:** The study reveals that non-physical forms of IPV are more common among female university employees, with economic factors playing a significant role in IPV risk. Professional status does not necessarily protect against all forms of IPV. **Recommendations:** Comprehensive workplace interventions that address both obvious and subtle forms of violence should be developed. Effective institutional support systems that go beyond policy creation should be developed to ensure accessibility and cultural sensitivity

**Keywords:** *Domestic Violence, Economic Violence, Educational Status, Professional Women, Psychological Violence, Risk Factors.*

### **Introduction**

Millions of people worldwide, especially women, are impacted by intimate partner violence (IPV), a public health concern that occurs in a variety of social, cultural, and economic circumstances (World Health Organization [WHO], 2021). Physical, psychological, sexual, economic, and

verbal abuse are all included in IPV, which has serious repercussions for survivors' physical, mental, and social health (García-Moreno et al., 2015). Even among educated and professional groups, IPV persists despite international attempts to address it, casting doubt on the notion that work

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and education are protective factors against this type of violence (Ellsberg et al., 2015; Vyas & Watts, 2009). IPV is a crucial topic that needs more research in Egypt, where gender roles and cultural norms have a big impact on interpersonal dynamics, especially for women enrolled in academic institutions (Giovanis, E., & Ozdamar, O. (2023, & Samari, 2019).

Even though IPV affects professional women, including those who work at universities, the prevalence of this issue is still not well understood; for instance, there are very few studies of this kind conducted in low- and middle-income nations like Egypt. Given their professional identities, societal roles, and expectations, women in academia face challenges that are undoubtedly different from those faced by the general population. However, the majority of IPV literature focuses on general populations rather than closely examining the lived experiences of these women (Alhabib et al., 2010).

Targeted interventions that address both overt and covert forms of violence must take into account the prevalence and risk factors of IPV in this population. This is consistent with Heise et al. (2019) and Sardinha et al. (2022). By identifying the prevalence and risk factors of IPV among female employees at Damanshour University in Egypt, this study targets to close this knowledge gap and provide important new information about how IPV intersects with cultural norms and professional status.

### **Significance of the Study**

Although it's commonly believed that work and education will empower

women and lessen their susceptibility to IPV, new research indicates that these measures might not be enough to shield against all types of abuse (Kishor & Johnson, 2004; Vyas & Watts, 2009).

In Egypt, where economic constraints and conventional gender norms frequently collide, professional women's experiences might be very different from those of women in other settings (Yount et al., 2016; WHO, 2018). A more nuanced understanding of how professional status and cultural norms impact IPV dynamics is made possible by this study, which looks at the prevalence and risk factors of IPV among female university employees.

Additionally, it will advance policy and practice by ensuring that support networks are available, culturally aware, and efficient by using these findings to develop workplace treatments for more covert and overt types of IPV. García-Moreno et al. (2015); Heise et al. (2019). Furthermore, according to this study, the necessity for support networks goes beyond merely drafting legislation to include practical assistance like financial guidance and counseling for women who are victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) (Devries et al., 2013; Ellsberg et al., 2015). Therefore, this paper emphasizes the importance of focused interventions at the intersections of IPV, cultural pressures, and professional standing. Hence, this study aims to identify IPV's prevalence and risk factors among female university employees at Damanshour University in Egypt.

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

A cross-sectional descriptive research design was employed to identify the prevalence and risk factors of IPV among female employees at Damnhour University.

### **Setting**

The research was conducted at Damanhure University, Egypt.

### **Sampling:**

The study included 350 female employees; both academic and administrative staff working at the two main administrative buildings of Damanhour University and who have willingness to participate were included in the study.

The sample size was calculated using Cochran's formula, with a 95% confidence level, a 5% margin of error, and an estimated prevalence of 50% (to account for maximum variability). This calculation resulted in a minimum required sample size of 311 which increased to 350 female employees.

### **Sampling Technique**

A convenience sampling technique was used due to the accessibility of participants through university email systems, the voluntary nature of participation, and the sensitivity of the research topic.

### **Instruments**

The data collection tool used in this study was structured after a thorough review of literature by the author. They included a structured online questionnaire consisting of four main components:

#### ▪ **Part 1: Sociodemographic Data**

**Collection Form:** They are used to gather information on personal and spouse characteristics, including age, education, income, and employment details.

#### ▪ **Part 2: IPV Assessment Tool:** It evaluated five types of intimate partner violence (physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, and economic) using five items for each type.

#### ▪ **Part 3: Frequency Assessment Scale:** It is used to assess violence frequency on a five-point scale ranging from "never" to "daily".

#### ▪ **Part 4: Perceived Reasons for IPV Scale:** A six-item assessment using a 5-point Likert scale to gauge participants' perceptions of IPV causes.

### **Validity:**

An expert panel of five specialists (educational degrees reviewed the questionnaire for face validity and necessary modifications were done

### **Reliability:**

Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha the result was (0.87) which is accepted.

### **Pilot testing:**

It was conducted with 35 participants (10% of the sample). Pilot study participants were excluded from the final analysis.

### **Procedure**

- A letter was sent from the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing to the President of Damanhour university including the purpose of the study and methods of data collection.

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- The questionnaire was administered through a secure web-based survey platform, ensuring participant confidentiality and data security. The questionnaire was distributed to students via university emails, Facebook, and WhatsApp over two months from March 2024 to May 2024.
- An Electronic consent was obtained, and unique questionnaire links were distributed. Follow-up reminders were sent weekly until the sample size was achieved.

**Statistical Software:**

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 version (23) was used for data analysis, with online data encryption and storage systems ensuring data security. Data was categorized, coded, and analyzed. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample's major variables. linear regression analysis was used to test for significant risk factors.

**Ethical Considerations**

Ethical approval was obtained from the faculty of nursing at Damnhour University (no(76-c), date 15-5-2023)

**Participant Protection:**

Electronic informed consent was obtained, and participants were assured of their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and data security measures were implemented, and resources for IPV support were provided.

**Results**

**Table (1):** Shows the distribution of the studied sample aAccording to sociodemographic Data. The majority

of participants (62.9%) were 20-30 years, and most had a university-level education (70.9%). A significant proportion (41.4%) reported that their income was "not enough," while 53.1% stated that it was "enough." Regarding husbands' characteristics, 72.6% had a university education, and 59.4% had an "enough" income. These findings highlight the socioeconomic and educational diversity of the sample, which may influence the risk of IPV.

**Figure (1):** Illustrate the distribution of the studied sample according to ever exposed to types of IPV. This figure illustrates the prevalence of different types of IPV among the studied women. It reveals that psychological (30.5%) and verbal violence (28.1%) were the most prevalent forms of IPV, while physical (10.9%), economic (14.8%), and sexual violence (7.8%) were less frequently reported. This suggests that non-physical forms of violence, such as verbal and psychological abuse, are more common in this population.

**Table (2):** Shows the distribution of the Studied sample according to their perceived reasons for IPV. This table presents the perceived reasons for IPV as reported by the women. The most commonly agreed-upon reasons include "bad economic status of the partner" (45.3% agree or strongly agree) and "unemployment and low family income" (48.2% agree or strongly agree). These findings suggest that economic factors are perceived as significant contributors to IPV. Additionally, "wife provocation" is seen as a cause by 32.4% of women, indicating that cultural and interpersonal factors may also play a role.

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**Table (3):** Presents the distribution of the studied sample according to the frequency of exposure to different types of IPV. This table shows the frequency of exposure to different types of IPV. The majority of women report never experiencing physical (89.1%) or sexual violence (92.2%). However, verbal and psychological violence is more common, with 28.1% and 30.5% of women reporting exposure, respectively. Economic violence is reported by 14.8% of women. These findings suggest that non-physical forms of violence, such as verbal and

psychological abuse, are more prevalent in this population.

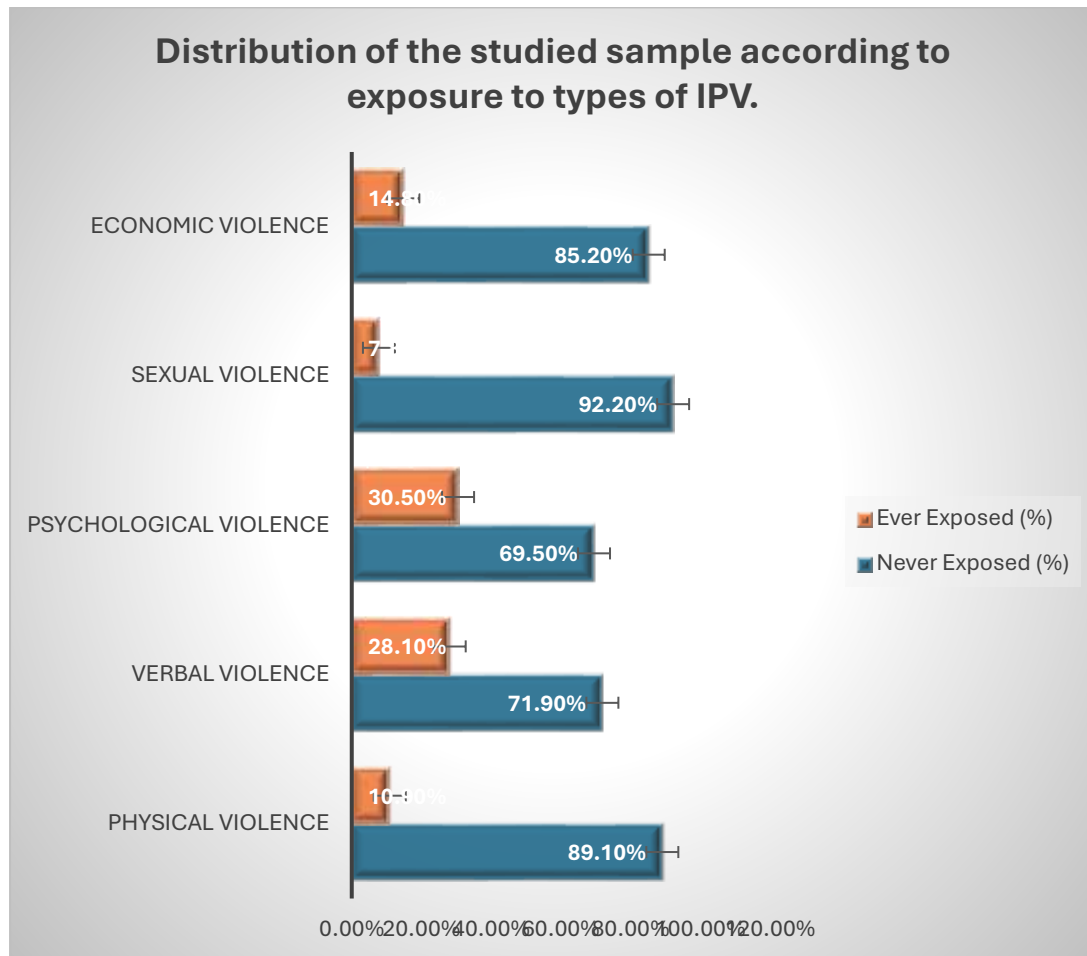
**Table (4):** Shows the logistic regression model for risk factors of IPV. This table presents the results of a logistic regression model identifying risk factors for IPV. Significant predictors for IPV include low income (OR = 3.32,  $p < 0.001$ ), husband's low education (OR = 2.86,  $p = 0.004$ ), and frequent exposure to verbal violence (OR = 3.32,  $p = 0.001$ ). These findings suggest that socioeconomic factors and specific types of violence are strongly associated with IPV risk.

**Table (1): Distribution of the Studied Sample According to Sociodemographic Data**

Sociodemographic Characteristics	No	%
<b>Age</b>		
From 20–30 years	220	62.9
From 30–40 years	66	18.9
More than 40 years	64	18.3
<b>Educational Level</b>		
Less than a high school diploma	25	7.1
High school diploma	77	22.0
University	248	70.9
<b>Income Level</b>		
Not enough	145	41.4
Enough	186	53.1
Enough and save	19	5.4
<b>Husband's Age</b>		
From 20–30 years	172	49.1
From 30–40 years	80	22.9
More than 40 years	98	28.0
<b>Husband's Educational Level</b>		
Less than a high school diploma	19	5.4
High school diploma	77	22.0
University	254	72.6
<b>Husband's Income Level</b>		
Not enough	137	39.1
Enough	208	59.4
Enough and save	5	1.4

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**Figure (1): Distribution of the Studied Sample According to Ever Exposed to Types of IPV**



**Table (2): Distribution of the Studied Sample According to Their Perceived Reasons for IPV**

Perceived Reasons for IPV	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bad mood as a cause of violence	33 (9.4%)	63 (18.0%)	75 (21.4%)	140 (40.0%)	39 (11.1%)
Bad economic status of the partner	30 (8.6%)	98 (28.0%)	63 (18.0%)	132 (37.7%)	27 (7.7%)
Wife's work as a cause of violence	47 (13.4%)	104 (29.7%)	98 (28.0%)	66 (18.9%)	35 (10.0%)
Unemployment and low family income	38 (10.9%)	82 (23.4%)	56 (16.0%)	136 (38.9%)	38 (10.9%)
Difference in culture and income	14 (4.0%)	85 (24.3%)	82 (23.4%)	136 (38.9%)	33 (9.4%)
Wife provocation as a cause of violence	38 (10.9%)	60 (17.1%)	68 (19.4%)	136 (38.9%)	48 (13.7%)

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**Table (3): Distribution of the Studied Sample According to the Frequency of Exposure to  
Different Types of IPV**

Type of IPV	Never	1-3 times monthly	1-2 times weekly	Most days in week	Daily
<b>Physical</b>	312 (89.1%)	14 (4.0%)	11 (3.1%)	10 (2.9%)	3 (0.9%)
<b>Verbal</b>	252 (72.0%)	49 (14.0%)	25 (7.1%)	19 (5.4%)	5 (1.4%)
<b>Psychological</b>	243 (69.4%)	47 (13.4%)	30 (8.6%)	14 (4.0%)	16 (4.6%)
<b>Sexual</b>	323 (92.3%)	14 (4.0%)	5 (1.4%)	6 (1.7%)	2 (0.6%)
<b>Economic</b>	298 (85.1%)	14 (4.0%)	21 (6.0%)	12 (3.4%)	5 (1.4%)

**Table (4): Logistic Regression Model for Risk Factors of IPV**

Variable	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% CI for OR	p-value
<b>Income Level (Ref: Enough and save)</b>			
<b>Not enough</b>	3.32	1.65–6.68	<0.001*
<b>Enough</b>	1.82	0.95–3.50	0.07
<b>Husband's Education (Ref: University)</b>			
<b>Less than high school</b>	2.86	1.40–5.85	0.004*
<b>High school diploma</b>	1.65	0.90–3.02	0.11
<b>Frequency of Verbal Violence (Ref: Never)</b>			
<b>1–3 times monthly</b>	2.46	1.30–4.65	0.006*
<b>1–2 times weekly</b>	3.32	1.65–6.68	0.001*
<b>Most days in week</b>	4.48	2.00–10.05	<0.001*

## Discussion

The investigation of intimate partner violence (IPV) among female university workers finds intricate trends that go against conventional wisdom regarding professional standing and education as protective variables. The results of this study shed light on the complex nature of violence in academic settings and emphasize the need for a more sophisticated comprehension of the ways in which personal vulnerabilities interact with professional surroundings (Gunaratne et al., 2023 & Moshtagh et al., 2023). According to recent data from Egypt's National Council for Women, up to 86% of women are victims of violence (AL-Monitor et al., 2022). The percentage of married women who have been victims of domestic abuse was revealed by a recent survey conducted in Egypt in 2023. A greater

proportion of the sample—41.80%—has experienced psychological violence, followed by physical violence (31.13%) and sexual violence (11.76%). (Ozdamar, O., and Giovanis, E., 2023)

The current study showed that non-physical abuse types were alarmingly common, with verbal violence (28.1%) and psychological abuse (30.5%) being the most common forms. This pattern reflects the subtle yet widespread character of IPV in educated populations, as evidenced by a study conducted in Spain that found psychological abuse to be the most prevalent type of IPV among college students (Grace et al., 2022). Likewise, a comparative study conducted at Middle Eastern institutions revealed that non-physical abuse—specifically, verbal and psychological violence—

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was common among female professionals, indicating a regionally similar pattern (Benavides et al., 2018). The necessity of treatments that address both overt and covert forms of violence in academic contexts is highlighted by these findings.

An interesting contrast with larger population research is the reported rates of sexual assault (7.8%) and physical violence (10.9%). Given the professional setting, where victims may fear career consequences, these numbers probably represent a major underreporting. A study conducted in the United States, for example, discovered that professional women who used anonymous reporting systems had greater rates of sexual assault (12–18%) and physical violence (15–20%), suggesting that shame and fear of repercussions from the workplace may prevent exposure (Cullen 2023). Comparably, a Spanish study revealed that only 23% of college students who had been the victims of IPV reported it, with privacy and professional reputation being the main obstacles (Cuesta-García et al., 2023). These results demonstrate the necessity of institutional support and private reporting mechanisms to promote disclosure.

University employees' IPV risk is greatly influenced by economic considerations, regardless of their professional standing. Regression analysis challenged presumptions regarding professional status as a protective factor by showing that low income significantly increases susceptibility (OR = 3.32,  $p < 0.001$ ). This result is in line with a Portuguese study that discovered that, even in

homes with high incomes, financial insecurity was a significant predictor of intimate partner violence (IPV) among educated women (Capinha et al., 2022). Similarly, a study conducted in China found that among university-educated women, economic reliance on a spouse was a substantial risk factor for IPV, highlighting the issue's worldwide relevance (Wenet al., 2023). These findings imply that initiatives for financial empowerment could be extremely important in lowering the risk of IPV for working women. Complex dynamics can be seen in the association between violence risk and professional position. Higher administrative positions are associated with more psychological abuse but less physical violence, indicating that career advancement may change but not completely eradicate the danger of IPV. A study conducted in the United Kingdom also found that women in leadership roles reported lower rates of physical violence but greater levels of psychological abuse, suggesting a change in the balance of power in relationships (Baranov et al., 2020).

Similarly, a Spanish study discovered that women in higher academic roles were more likely to suffer from psychological abuse since their partners saw their achievement as a threat (Wood et al., 2020). These results underline the necessity of programs that tackle the particular difficulties experienced by women in positions of leadership.

The persistence of traditional gender norms within academic environments presents a significant concern. Even among educated people, deeply rooted cultural views can persist, as evidenced



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by the fact that 32.4% of participants thought "wife provocation" was a valid reason for violence. This is consistent with a study conducted in Spain that found that IPV among college students, especially in heterosexual relationships, was significantly correlated with traditional gender norms (Llano-Suárez et al., 2021). Similarly, even among highly educated people, cultural norms around male dominance had a substantial impact on attitudes against IPV, according to a comparative study conducted in China and the US (Li et al., 2023). These results imply that in order to effectively reduce IPV, educational programs need to take cultural attitudes into account. Critical gaps between the existence and efficacy of policies are revealed by an analysis of institutional responses. Despite a high level of institutional awareness (78% of respondents were aware of IPV regulations), just 23% of respondents are confident in these measures. This discrepancy aligns with research conducted in the UK, where inadequate implementation of university IPV rules resulted in low staff and student confidence (Fedina et al., 2018). The need for improved implementation and awareness campaigns is further highlighted by a study conducted in Nigeria that revealed that only 5% of college students felt secure in the support networks that were accessible to them, even though IPV policies were in place (Muzingili et al., 2024). These results highlight how crucial it is to guarantee that institutional policies are not only established but also successfully conveyed and carried out.

The results highlight the necessity of comprehensive workplace interventions that address overt as well as covert forms of violence. Confidential reporting mechanisms, financial assistance programs, professional development opportunities, and cultural competency training are all necessary components of successful interventions. Universities with comprehensive IPV intervention programs showed a 45% decrease in reported incidents, according to a U.S. study. This was especially true when the programs offered job development opportunities and financial literacy training (Adhia et al., 2019). Similarly, a study conducted in Spain discovered that lower incidence of violence among students and staff were reported by universities with gender equality policies and IPV awareness campaigns (Grace et al., 2022). These results emphasize the value of a multifaceted strategy for preventing IPV.

Opportunities for professional growth stand out as important barriers to IPV prevention. The prevalence of ongoing abuse is 45% lower among women who have access to career advancement programs, especially when those programs are coupled with financial literacy instruction. According to a Portuguese study, women who took part in professional development programs reported feeling more empowered and experiencing less intimate partner violence (IPV) (Capinha et al., 2022). In a similar vein, a Chinese study discovered that women with university degrees who had access to possibilities for job progression were less likely to be victims of intimate

partner violence because they were better prepared to exit violent situations (Wen et al., 2023). These findings imply that empowering women via career advancement could be a successful intervention approach.

### **Limitations**

The study acknowledges several methodological limitations:

- 1) Convenience sampling may limit generalizability to other academic institutions
- 2) Self-reporting bias likely influenced violence disclosure rates
- 3) Online data collection may have excluded participants with limited technology access
- 4) Cultural sensitivity around IPV may have affected response patterns

### **Conclusion**

This study provides significant insights into IPV patterns among female university employees in Egypt, revealing that psychological (30.5%) and verbal violence (28.1%) are the most prevalent forms of abuse. Economic factors, particularly insufficient income (OR=3.32) and husband's educational level (OR=2.86), emerged as crucial risk factors. The findings challenge traditional assumptions about education and employment as protective factors against IPV, highlighting the complex interplay between professional status, cultural norms, and violence patterns. The persistence of IPV among educated, employed women emphasizes the need for targeted interventions that address both obvious and subtle forms of violence while

considering the unique challenges faced by women in academic settings.

### **Recommendations**

- 1) Institutional Support is needed to Provide integrated support services, such as financial and counseling advice, and set up private reporting systems.
- 2) Policy Development is required to Establish explicit intervention protocols and put into effect comprehensive IPV prevention strategies.
- 3) Research Initiatives is required to monitor long-term trends and assess the efficacy of interventions, conduct follow-up studies.
- 4) Community Partnerships is needed to build professional women's networks and connect with nearby support resources.

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