

Economic Violence against the Wife and Social Control Mechanisms in Algeria

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Abstract:

Economic violence against wives constitutes one of the forms of domestic violence that undermines family stability and social cohesion. This study examines the concept of economic violence, identifies its main manifestations, underlying causes, and consequences, while highlighting the social control mechanisms this phenomenon within Algerian society from socio-psychological and legal perspectives.

The study revealed that economic violence against wives takes multiple forms, the most prominent of which include the deprivation of financial support and resources, as well as the control and restriction of access to personal property. The findings also demonstrated that economic violence generates various adverse consequences, including anxiety, depression, and a diminished sense of security, in addition to contributing to the deterioration of family relationships and the weakening of both familial and social cohesion. Furthermore, the study concluded that addressing this phenomenon requires the reinforcement of social regulation mechanisms through raising awareness of women's rights, developing family counselling services, and promoting the economic empowerment of wives.

Keywords: Economic violence, wife, family, social control mechanisms.

Introduction

The phenomenon of violence against women represents one of the persistent and increasingly recognized issues documented across societies worldwide. No society is entirely exempt from this phenomenon, which constitutes a form of social violence that has generated widespread concern and condemnation among various social groups. Violence against women remains a serious global social issue, with its severity intensifying in recent years. Scholarly interest in this phenomenon has also increased due to its growing prevalence and its association with other social problems, as its effects extend beyond individual women to affect society as a whole.

Violence directed against women refers to any behaviour specifically targeting women, whether wives, sisters, or daughters. It is characterized by different degrees of discrimination, oppression, domination, and aggression arising from unequal power relations between men and women within both society and the family. The United Nations General Assembly defined it as “an act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty.”

Violence against wives constitutes a form of domestic violence that has attracted increasing attention and monitoring over recent decades from governmental and civil institutions, as well as from specialists in the social, legal, and psychological fields. This growing interest is attributed to the fact that violence against wives threatens the structure of the family, which represents one of the fundamental foundations of society. Despite the traditional emphasis placed on physical and psychological violence, economic violence against wives has remained, for a long time, a concealed form of domestic violence that is difficult to identify due to its connection with cultural and social structures that may provide it with a certain degree of acceptance or implicit recognition. Consequently, certain behaviours and practices may be perceived as natural or legitimate despite the absence of explicit declarations or formal regulations that grant them legitimacy.

Economic violence against wives within the Algerian context is of particular significance due to the social and economic transformations experienced by Algerian society, particularly the increasing participation of women in the labour market. These transformations have contributed to the restructuring of power relations within the family.

Research Problem and Questions

The participation of women (wives) in professional and economic life through integration into the labour market represents one of the major social and economic transformations experienced by Algerian society, producing significant effects on family dynamics. Within this context, economic violence has emerged as a form of domestic violence practiced against wives. This form of violence is associated with cultural and social structures that have contributed to legitimizing certain forms of economic control within marital relationships. As a result, new patterns of family tension have emerged, reflected in various practices of economic violence, including the control of financial resources and property, preventing wives from working, and exploiting their economic resources. Despite the existence of regulatory mechanisms designed to protect wives from all forms of domestic violence, this form of violence continues to persist to varying degrees, particularly within the context of enduring social representations related to male dominance and insufficient legal and social awareness regarding the seriousness of this phenomenon.

In order to address the various dimensions of the research problem examined in the present study, the following questions are formulated:

1. What is meant by economic violence against the wife, and what are its main forms?
2. What are the causes of economic violence against the wife?
3. What are the consequences resulting from the practice of economic violence against the wife?
4. To what extent are social control mechanisms effective in protecting wives from economic violence in Algeria?

Research Objectives

Based on the analysis of the theoretical literature related to economic violence against the wife and the mechanisms regulating this phenomenon, as well as the review of various field studies, the present study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Analyzing the concept of economic violence against the wife and identifying its various forms.
2. Determining the causes of economic violence against the wife.
3. Examining the consequences associated with the practice of economic violence against the wife.
4. Assessing the extent to which social control mechanisms are effective in protecting wives from economic violence in Algeria.

Research Significance

The significance of the present study lies in its focus on economic violence against the wife and the social control mechanisms this phenomenon, as it provides an objective approach for understanding the patterns and nature of family relationships and their extensions within the broader social structure. Therefore, it contributes to anticipating future developments affecting both the family institution and Algerian society as a whole.

The importance of the present study is further demonstrated at both theoretical and methodological levels through the information and data it provides regarding economic violence against wives in Algeria. This is achieved through the adoption of a descriptive-analytical approach based on Algerian legislative texts (the Family Code, the Penal Code, and the Civil Code), as well as Islamic jurisprudential provisions related to financial support (alimony) and marital rights, in addition to reviewing the most significant literature addressing this issue.

Accordingly, the present study seeks to provide scientific material for researchers and professionals working in the field of domestic violence by considering economic violence as one of its significant forms. This contribution may support the advancement of scientific research in this area. Moreover, the study holds practical scientific relevance, as it addresses issues and challenges that society must confront in order to reduce the problems affecting families, thereby contributing to the promotion of family stability and the stability of society as a whole.

Operational Definitions of the Study Terms

- **Economic violence:** It is defined as "the deprivation of economic resources" (Al-Sayed, 2021, p. 550).
- **Economic violence against the wife:** Economic violence against the wife refers to the control and restriction of access to financial resources, including the wife's salary, preventing her from freely managing her own money or accessing her sources of income, as well as depriving her of basic living necessities. It represents a form of violence practiced within marital relationships (Domestic Violence), in which economic control and domination are used as mechanisms of authority and power within the marital context.
- **Wife:** "A woman who is connected to a man through marriage; she is also referred to as a spouse, consort, or partner" (<https://www.almaany.com> / Al-Maany Comprehensive Dictionary, 15/05/2026).
- **Family:** "The family is a social group composed of a husband, wife, and children, and it may extend to include one of the relatives. It performs biological, psychological, social, and economic functions."

- **Social control mechanisms:** "They are a set of intentional social procedures adopted by society, aimed at directing individuals' behaviours according to collectively agreed-upon norms, in order to protect the wife from economic violence. These procedures may be either formal or informal."

2. Theoretical Framework of the Study

2.1 Economic Violence against the Wife

2.1.1 Definition of Violence:

Linguistically, the term violence derived from concepts related to harsh treatment, reprimand, rebuke, and blame. It also refers to coercive action, meaning the use of pressure or force in an illegitimate manner, that is, in a way that does not conform to legal principles (Badawi, 1978, p. 441).

The term violence originates from the Latin word "*Violentia*", which refers to brutal characteristics and the use of force. The verb "*Violare*" denotes acting with harshness and violence, as well as committing desecration, violation, and transgression. All these terms are associated with the word "*Vis*", which refers to force, suffering, power, and violence, and also indicates the use of physical force (Michaud, 1988, p. 4).

In general terms, violence refers to behaviour involving the use of force to assault another person against their will, or engaging in or refraining from an action or statement that causes harm to that person, resulting in physical, psychological, or social damage (Abu Shama & Al-Bushra, 2014, p. 13). The World Health Organization (WHO) defines violence as: "*The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.*" (Galtung, 1969)

The concepts used to define violence have diversified according to the perspectives through which it is examined, including psychological, social, and legal perspectives. From a psychological perspective, violence is considered an aggressive behaviour directed toward others, resulting from an unconscious psychological state characterized by the desire to inflict harm on another person. This behaviour may arise from frustration and anger, which can develop into cruelty, aggression, oppression, and coercion (Rahmani, 2020–2011, p. 37).

From a social perspective, violence is defined as the use of force and cruelty within the human social environment. This indicates that violence represents a behaviour committed by one individual against another, whether male or female, child or adult. It is an emotional behaviour expressed by one person and directed toward another individual (Abu Rashed, 2022, p. 148).

From the perspective of social psychology, "*Violence refers to those acts which are intended to cause, or actually cause, hurt, injury, or death to a person*" (Gilligan, 1996). From a legal perspective, violence refers to all crimes involving the use of force or threats aimed at intimidating others or achieving unlawful and illegitimate personal or political objectives, including the practice of domestic violence in all its forms (Chenah, 2017/2018, p. 20).

2.1.2 Definition of Economic Violence against the Wife:

Economic violence against women is defined as “the deprivation of women’s ability to manage economic resources or participate in financial decision-making related to their lives and future, rendering them entirely dependent on others. It includes preventing women from managing their own property, meeting their basic needs, benefiting from inheritance, or owning assets, as well as exposing them to economic exploitation. Economic violence also involves controlling women’s financial resources, such as confiscating their salaries or preventing them from working. It further includes practices such as financial blackmail, expenditure control, and the misuse of the concept of guardianship over women” (Gacem & Mahmoudi, 2022).

Economic violence against the wife constitutes a form of marital violence in which the husband controls the family’s financial resources and determines the conditions governing the use of money, with the objective of restricting the fulfilment of the woman’s personal needs. It is also defined as the husband’s exploitation of his wife’s private economic resources through depriving her of her monthly salary, taking possession of her inheritance against her will, stealing her gold jewellery or household furniture, and, in certain cases, depriving her of all financial resources by adopting a policy of starvation and preventing her from accessing food (Rahmani, 2020–2011, p. 53).

Forms of economic violence include preventing the wife from working, restricting her access to education, using the wife’s money or salary without her consent, and taking possession of her property against her will (Ben Abid, 2023, p. 2015). Economic violence against the wife has also been defined as the practice of economic pressure exerted on the wife, including preventing her from working, controlling her assets and inheritance rights, restricting her access to money, confiscating her monthly salary, compelling her to work without involving her in family projects and activities, depriving her of financial resources necessary to meet her needs, refusing to provide household expenses, and humiliating her when she requests money (Abu Rashed, 2022, p. 146).

In legal and social literature, economic violence is defined as the control exercised over financial resources within the family, preventing the wife from freely managing money or accessing sources of income, depriving her of basic living requirements, or imposing complete financial dependency. It represents a form of violence practiced within marital relationships (Domestic Violence), where economic control and domination are used as instruments of marital power and authority.

It is also considered a form of the husband’s exploitation of his wife’s economic resources, including depriving her of her monthly salary, taking possession of her inheritance share against her will, or confiscating her jewellery. Therefore, economic marital violence refers to the husband’s unjustified control over the wife’s financial resources without her consent, with the aim of preventing her from satisfying her personal needs.

Economic violence is generally employed as a mechanism of control intended to prevent women from achieving economic independence. It forms part of a broader pattern of marital violence and includes several manifestations, such as preventing the wife from accessing economic resources by restricting her ability to work or maintain employment; preventing her from pursuing education or completing her studies; using the wife’s money or salary without her consent; taking possession of her property against her will or damaging it; exploiting rural women by involving them in family

work and agricultural activities without financial compensation; using physical violence or threats to force the wife to provide her money to the husband; and threatening to expel the wife and children from the home (Qammar, 2023, pp. 834–835).

2.1.3 Forms of Economic Violence against the Wife

Based on legal and social studies, economic violence within the Algerian context (while adopting a scientific generalization based on findings from comparative studies) can be classified into the following main forms:

a. Deprivation of the Wife from Financial Support (Alimony): This occurs when the husband deprives the wife of her basic needs, such as food, healthcare, education, and transportation, or obliges her to assume the expenses of relatives or children without providing adequate financial resources. It also includes failure to provide marital maintenance despite the existence of religious and legal obligations.

b. Deprivation of the Wife from Resources: One of its manifestations is the appropriation of the wife's salary, whereby the husband prevents her from accessing or managing her own income or shared financial resources. It also includes preventing her from working and participating in productive activities.

c. Control over the Wife's Property: This is manifested through preventing the wife from managing her personal property, restricting her ability to spend on her basic needs, depriving her of inheritance or ownership rights, and exposing her to economic exploitation.

2.2. Theories Addressing the Issue of Economic Violence against the Wife

To understand the issue of economic violence against the wife, it is necessary to adopt a multidimensional theoretical approach:

2.2.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory, developed by George Homans and Peter Blau, explains the marital relationship as a process of exchange involving emotions, feelings, opinions, ideas, interests, financial resources, and other forms of interaction. Through this exchange process, individuals seek to maximize potential benefits while minimizing possible losses. In relation to economic violence as a form of marital violence, this theory considers the marital relationship as an interaction based on the exchange of resources. The party controlling economic resources possesses greater power to impose conditions, resulting in an unequal relationship between partners (Homans, 1958).

2.2.2. Male Domination Theory

Male domination represents a central theme examined and analyzed by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, even before the publication of his work *Male Domination*. He explored this concept within the framework of explaining the relationships established between individuals across various fields of the social world. The concept of domination reflects an existing social reality in which men are not the sole actors involved; women may also participate, often unconsciously, through the internalization and adoption of the same perceptions and classification systems as both the victims and perpetrators. This situation allows for the examination of the reproduction of domination, its persistence, and even its reinforcement (Bikouassi & Behraoua, 2023).

According to Pierre Bourdieu, family relationships are structured by an unequal distribution of power. Money functions as a mechanism of domination within the framework of what he describes as symbolic violence, through which certain practices become perceived as natural, legitimate, and socially accepted (Bourdieu, 2000).

2.2.3 Murray Bowen's Family Systems Theory

Murray Bowen considers the family as an integrated system in which economic violence reflects a dysfunction in the distribution of roles and power. Such an imbalance negatively affects family equilibrium and stability (Bowen, 1978).

2.3 Causes of Economic Violence

The causes of economic violence against the wife are diverse and interconnected, making it difficult to explain this phenomenon through a single factor. The main causes can be identified as follows:

2.3.1 Individual Causes:

The causes of economic violence against the wife, as a form of marital violence, may be associated with certain characteristics related to the wife's personality and personal circumstances. The wife may be perceived as more vulnerable to violence due to her physical characteristics and weaker bodily structure, as well as her potential tendency to accept abusive behaviours as a result of socialization processes. In many cases, the wife may relinquish her rights due to fear of harm or rejection by family members. This vulnerability may become more pronounced when the abused wife lacks access to social support or individuals capable of providing protection.

Furthermore, a low educational and cultural level, limited knowledge of legal provisions, and insufficient awareness of the importance of reporting economic violence in order to reduce such practices may contribute to the persistence of economic violence exercised by the husband against the wife. The existence of a strict criminal and punitive framework, combined with legal, economic, social, and psychological support mechanisms for abused wives, also represents an important factor in addressing this phenomenon.

Additionally, fear of and reluctance to submit complaints to competent authorities due to concerns about social rejection, lack of self-confidence, and the development of a negative self-perception may increase the wife's vulnerability. Moreover, the wife's failure to contribute to reducing the economic burdens faced by the family, her refusal to comply with the husband's demands, and her rejection of submission to family norms or the expectations of the husband's family may expose her to economic violence from the husband (Belkhdari, 2018, pp. 20–21).

2.3.2. Social Causes:

The social causes of economic violence are multiple and diverse. Some researchers attribute them to socialization processes through which individuals acquire characteristics from their families and the societies in which they live, including values, customs, prevailing attitudes, and socially accepted behavioural patterns (Al-Azmi, 2021, p. 665).

Many social systems grant the husband, as the head of the household, authority over family management. This authority may be interpreted as providing justification for the use of various methods, including economic violence against the wife as a form of marital violence. Such perceptions have continued to persist within many cultural contexts in Arab societies.

Other contributing factors include the husband's low educational level, his inaccurate understanding of religious principles, his misinterpretation of masculinity and guardianship (*qiwama*), as well as weak religious commitment (Ahmed Youssef, 2020, p. 105).

Moreover, families characterized by psychological oppression, lack of harmony among members, absence of communication, dialogue, and mutual understanding, as well as inappropriate child-rearing practices, constitute environments that facilitate the emergence of marital violence in its various forms. Individuals exposed to unhealthy upbringing patterns, such as authoritarian control during childhood, may be more likely to reproduce and apply similar behaviours in their adult relationships.

2.3.3. Economic Causes:

Limited income, particularly the husband's income and the family's overall financial resources, represents one of the direct factors contributing to the prevalence of economic violence within societies. The husband's inability to satisfy the economic and material needs of the family may lead him to adopt alternative practices aimed at obtaining financial resources, while simultaneously constituting forms of economic violence. These practices may include the forced appropriation of the wife's salary, inheritance, or personal property.

He may also compel her to sell valuable personal belongings, such as gold jewellery, or demand financial support from her, particularly when she is employed while he is unemployed, or force her to seek financial assistance from her own family (Abu Nakhaa, 2009, p. 128).

2.4 Effects of Economic Violence on the Wife

2.4.1 Psychological Effects:

Economic violence against the wife, as a form of marital violence, is associated with various psychological and behavioural disorders that negatively affect her physical and mental health, as well as her ability to fulfil her roles as a mother, wife, and working woman.

These psychological consequences include reduced self-confidence, diminished self-esteem, feelings of frustration and depression. Women may experience a loss of self-worth and feelings of guilt, which may, in certain cases, lead to suicidal behaviours (Mohamed Abdel Samad, 2020, p. 110).

Women may also experience difficulties in their professional activities and may contribute to the reproduction of violent patterns within the family. Families experiencing violence among their members often develop psychological barriers, behavioural disturbances, and internal divisions, resulting in estrangement, hatred, resentment, jealousy, and a desire for revenge.

2.4.2. Social Effects:

Economic violence affects the wife, as the abused wife may experience difficulties in communicating with others, social isolation, and weakened relationships with her children (Mohamed Abdel Samad, 2020, p. 110).

Economic violence also affects the family, which represents the primary foundation and fundamental unit of society. It contributes to increasing levels of family disintegration and is closely associated with several negative social phenomena, such as children leaving the family home, juvenile delinquency, and school dropout. It also contributes to increased divorce rates, disrupted

relationships between spouses and children, introversion, and aggression. These consequences may limit individuals' ability to understand and perform their social roles, while weakening commitment to and compliance with social regulation mechanisms, whether formal mechanisms, such as laws, or informal mechanisms, such as religion and social customs, through which social institutions seek to reject and prevent violence.

Economic violence also affects society through the significant material costs related to healthcare and psychological treatment required to address the consequences experienced by abused wives, in addition to the costs associated with providing basic needs through care centres and rehabilitation programs (Al-Azmi H., 2021).

3. Research Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach to describe and analyze the phenomenon of economic violence against the wife, identify its various aspects and dimensions, and examine the relationships between its different components.

4. Previous Studies Addressing Economic Violence against the Wife

- **First Study:** *Legal Protection of Women from Marital Violence: Economic Violence as a Model* by Fatima Bouzid. This study was published in the *Journal of Comparative Legal Studies* in 2021, Volume 7, Issue 1, pp. 1948–1974, Algeria.

Research Findings:

1. Most definitions related to violence do not include economic violence directed against the wife, despite the fact that it represents one of the most widespread forms of violence and takes various manifestations. These forms are based on material deprivation, the husband's control, and his failure to fulfil the obligations imposed upon him by religious and legal provisions toward his family.
2. The Algerian legislator addressed the phenomenon of economic marital violence through the introduction of a new legal provision within the 2015 amendment to the Penal Code. This amendment provided a certain degree of protection for the wife's property while establishing penalties against the abusive husband.
3. Legislative provisions related to economic violence targeting the wife's financial resources remain insufficient, as the criminal legislator has incorporated only one legal article addressing this issue, despite the continued development of the phenomenon and the need for additional and more effective legal provisions.

- **Second Study:** *Economic Violence as a Form of Domestic Violence and Its Interpretation According to Pierre Bourdieu's Theory of Male Dominance* by Souad Laksam and Roukia Mohammedi. This study was published in the *Journal of Human Sciences* in November 2022, Volume 22, Issue 2, pp. 1171–1187, Algeria.

Research Findings:

1. Economic violence represents a form of domestic violence characterized by the difficulty of identifying and addressing it due to the existence of family ties and interpersonal relationships.

2. Its main causes include poverty, unemployment, social traditions, and the preference for males.
3. It manifests through various forms, including financial control and domination, extending to preventing women from working, controlling expenditures, and depriving wives of essential financial resources.
4. It is associated with psychological and physical violence and is reported to be present in 99% of domestic violence cases.
5. Its consequences involve negative effects on the stability of both the family and society.

- **Third Study:** *Protection of Women from Marital Violence (A Study in Light of Law 15-19 Amending the Algerian Penal Code)* by Hanane Lakhsheba. This study was published in the *Numerous Academic Journal* in January 2023, Volume 4, Issue 1, pp. 85–101, Algeria.

Research Findings:

1. The amendment of Law No. 15-19 eliminated explicit provisions allowing the termination of prosecution, or the cancellation or reduction of penalties imposed by the court, in cases where the victim forgives the perpetrator.
2. The adoption of comprehensive legislation criminalizing domestic violence in all its forms, along with the establishment of services and assistance mechanisms for survivors, while ensuring preventive and protective measures, including emergency and long-term protection orders and the definition of law enforcement responsibilities.

- **Fourth Study:** *Economic Violence as the Deprivation of Women's Financial Rights in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Causes and Remedies* by Hettab Juma Abu Rashed. This study was published on December 30, 2022, in the *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Volume (6), Issue (15), pp. 144–156.

Research Findings:

1. Violence against women represents a broad and multidimensional concept. The study focused specifically on economic violence as a distinct form because of its direct impact on women's needs and daily lives.
2. The study identified the factors contributing to the economic exploitation of women through a brief historical overview and discussed potential remedies by referring to the principles of divine religious teachings.
3. Economic violence against women is practiced through various behaviours, the most prominent of which include control, deprivation, coercion, and restriction. These practices include controlling household living expenses and welfare expenditures; denying women ownership of their personal assets and resources or acting against their interests; depriving them of inheritance; forcing them to work without remuneration; manipulating credit and loans or using them in ways that negatively affect women; preventing women from freely participating in social and economic activities; exercising financial surveillance and excessive control over expenditures; refusing to contribute alongside women to living expenses or fulfil financial obligations such as alimony; imposing financial burdens on women; sexually exploiting women for financial purposes; taking possession of the wife's

property against her will or damaging it; and exploiting the wife's difficult economic circumstances.

4. Islam addressed economic violence by recognizing and protecting women's right to inheritance.
5. Islam granted women the right to participate in various economic and financial transactions:
 - Islam granted women the right to own and possess their dowry (*mahr*).
 - Islamic law granted women the right to provide testimony in economic transactions.

5. Social Control Mechanisms and Economic Violence against the Wife in Algeria

5.1 Religion as a Social Control Mechanism for Economic Violence against the Wife:

Religion, as one of the strongest informal mechanisms of social control, performs significant social functions. In addition to maintaining social order and harmony, religion contributes to strengthening social bonds and reinforcing collective unity through shared beliefs, participation in religious practices and occasions, and adherence to divine commands, regulations, and prohibitions. Consequently, religious norms acquire a binding and regulatory authority within society (Al-Saleh, 2004, p. 73).

According to the provisions of Islamic law, the fundamental principle is the financial independence of the wife. This principle has been established by Islamic law for fifteen centuries, affirming that the husband has no authority over his wife's property, whether movable or immovable. The wife retains independent ownership of her wealth separate from that of her husband, and he has no right to take any part of her property without her consent. Therefore, Islam has clearly regulated women's financial affairs by granting them the capacity to exercise financial rights and assume financial obligations. It has safeguarded women's financial rights when they possess wealth, and neither relatives nor husbands have the authority to interfere with their property without their permission.

5.1.1 Religion and Deprivation of the Wife from Financial Support:

Maintenance (*nafaqah*) is considered one of the fundamental financial rights of the wife. Islamic jurisprudence scholars have examined the components of the wife's maintenance in detail, including the following:

- Clothing:

Clothing constitutes a right of the wife that must be provided by her husband. This matter is unanimously recognized among Islamic jurists, based on the Qur'anic verse: ﴿And upon the father is their provision and clothing according to what is acceptable﴾. It is also supported by the statement of the Prophet during the Farewell Pilgrimage: ﴿They have rights over you that you provide them with their provision and clothing according to what is acceptable﴾ (Cheybout, 2019, p. 393).

- Food:

Islamic jurists agree that the wife has the right to receive food and that the husband is responsible for providing all necessary provisions according to Islamic law and the prevailing customs of each society (Abdelhadi, 2007, p. 312). Therefore, the husband is required to provide his wife with adequate food and drink in accordance with religious principles and accepted social norms.

- Medical Care:

Medical care refers to the provision of treatment aimed at curing illnesses or preventing their occurrence (Kanaan, 2000, p. 193). Islamic jurisprudence has differed regarding the obligation of medical care. The majority of jurists from the Hanafī, Maliki, Shafī‘i, and Hanbali schools consider that the expenses of medical treatment are not an obligation upon the husband (Khalil, 2015, p. 36), as they are not regarded as part of permanent maintenance. Instead, medical expenses are associated with exceptional circumstances and may be covered by the wife’s own wealth or by her father’s wealth.

However, the Ibadi school differs from the majority of jurists by considering that the husband is obligated to provide medical treatment for his wife and bear the costs of medical consultations and medication (Cheybout, 2019, p. 395).

The fact that medical care was not considered an obligation by the majority of jurists is related to differences in historical periods and social contexts, as such issues did not receive the same level of attention in earlier eras compared with contemporary societies, where severe and complex health problems have emerged, affecting not only families but humanity as a whole (Khalil, 2015, p. 36).

2.1.5. Religion and Deprivation of the Wife from Financial Resources:

The wife acquires part of her financial resources through marriage, as the husband provides her with gifts on various occasions. Gifts offered during the engagement period, such as jewellery, personal belongings, clothing, and other items, become part of the wife’s financial assets when the marriage is concluded (Jouadi & Yakhlef, 2021, pp. 523–524).

The dowry (*mahr*) is considered a fundamental element in the establishment of marriage and represents a significant financial resource for the wife. According to Islamic law, the dowry belongs exclusively to the wife, who has full ownership and authority over it. Neither her guardian nor her husband has the right to dispose of it or take any part of it. Furthermore, neither the husband nor the guardian may compel her to use it for marriage preparations, as it is a right granted specifically to her by God, allowing her to dispose of it according to her own wishes without requiring the husband’s permission or approval. Allah says: ﴿And it is not lawful for you to take anything of what you have given them﴾ (Surah Al-Baqarah, Verse 227).

The dowry is also considered one of the most important elements establishing the wife’s independent financial status. She is entitled to receive it in full upon the husband’s death or after the consummation of marriage, and she is entitled to half of it in cases of divorce occurring before consummation. It constitutes the exclusive property of the wife, provided by the husband, and she has the right to manage and dispose of it freely. Thus, it represents one of the essential aspects of the financial relationship between spouses (Masoudi, 2005–2006, p. 43).

In this regard, women, like men, possess independent financial capacity and have the right to undertake transactions that contribute to increasing and developing their financial assets. Therefore, Islam preceded many legal systems, including Western legislation, in recognizing women’s financial rights and enabling them to achieve human and economic autonomy, thereby strengthening their position within the family (Aqas, 2006, p. 16).

Although women's work was not addressed in Islamic law in the same form as it exists today, it was practiced through various activities, such as midwifery and spinning, which provide examples for assessing the extent of women's independence in engaging in professional activities. Some jurists compared women's work to the employment of a wet nurse (*ijarat al-dhir'*) and consequently permitted women to work under certain conditions, including obtaining the husband's permission as a restriction on women's employment.

They considered women's work permissible provided that the husband's consent was obtained. Moreover, marriage conditions represent one of the restrictions governing women's employment, as the husband may stipulate, at the time of concluding the marriage contract, that his wife should not engage in professional activity.

2.1.6 Religion and Control over the Wife's Property:

Inheritance is fundamentally a right granted to women and does not constitute an act of charity or favour. This principle is established in the Qur'anic verse: ﴿For men is a share of what the parents and close relatives leave, and for women is a share of what the parents and close relatives leave, whether it is little or much, an obligatory share﴾ ((Surah An-Nisa, Verse 7).

This principle has also been reinforced by national and international legislation. Islam has honoured women, elevated their status, and granted them a specific share of their father's wealth after his death, known as *inheritance*. This share was explicitly determined in the Holy Qur'an, as stated in the verse: ﴿Allah instructs you concerning your children: for the male, what is equal to the share of two females﴾ ((Surah An-Nisa, Verse 11). Allah Almighty established these provisions Himself and did not delegate this responsibility to anyone else. He also specified different inheritance shares in other verses.

The deprivation of wives from inheritance, as a manifestation of marital violence, continues to exist in some societies to this day. Such deprivation is considered a continuation of pre-Islamic practices, when women and children were excluded from inheritance rights. Islam abolished these practices; however, certain customs and traditions contributed to their persistence, representing another form of oppression against women (Mechri, 2022).

5.2 Law as a Mechanism for Controlling Economic Violence against the Wife in Algeria

Law and its institutions represent one of the strongest formal social control mechanisms established by society to exercise purposeful control over individuals and ensure compliance with established norms. It constitutes a fundamental social necessity for collective life and contributes to strengthening systems, rules, and behavioural standards aimed at achieving social order and regulation.

The importance of law lies in its role in organizing social relationships among individuals, as it provides protection and security for individuals, their lives, and their property, while making social life more structured and manageable (Al-Saleh, 2004: 176).

5.2.1 Law and Deprivation of the Wife from Financial Support:

Maintenance (*nafaqah*) is considered one of the financial rights of the wife, even when she possesses independent financial resources. This right is only forfeited in cases of disobedience (*nushuz*). The Algerian Family Code adopts the principle of separation of property, according to

which the husband remains solely responsible for financial support, as stipulated in Article 74 of the Family Code:

"The wife's maintenance is obligatory upon her husband after consummation of marriage or after she invites him to consummate the marriage with valid evidence, while taking into consideration the provisions of Articles 78, 79, and 80 of this Code."

The Algerian legislator defined the components of maintenance in Article 78 as follows:

"Maintenance includes food, clothing, medical treatment, housing or its rental cost, and what is considered necessary according to customs and social practices."

Accordingly, the legislator considered the circumstances of both spouses when determining the amount of maintenance, as provided in Article 79 of the Family Code:

"The judge shall take into consideration, when determining maintenance, the circumstances of both parties and living conditions, and the assessment shall not be reviewed before the expiration of one year from the date of the judgment."

The wife becomes entitled to maintenance after the consummation of marriage, provided that she does not prevent the husband from exercising marital rights and fulfilling marital obligations, and provided that she is not considered disobedient. The Algerian legislator also stipulated in Article 74 that the wife is entitled to maintenance after consummation or after inviting the husband to consummate the marriage with valid evidence (Bejag, 2009, pp. 76–77).

5.2.2. Law and Deprivation of the Wife from Financial Resources:

According to Article 37, Paragraph 1, of the Family Code, each spouse enjoys full legal capacity to dispose of their own property through all forms of lawful financial transactions. Each spouse is also responsible for fulfilling debts arising from their own financial liability, without marriage affecting this principle (Belhaj, 2013, p. 538).

From a legal perspective, the husband does not automatically have any legal authority to seize his wife's salary or restrict her ability to manage it solely on the basis of the marital relationship. The legal principle is based on the independence of each spouse's financial liability. Therefore, when the wife is employed and receives a salary in her own name, this salary constitutes part of her personal financial assets unless a legal agreement exists between the spouses regulating joint ownership or financial management.

The Algerian legislator has not only adopted the principle of separation of property but has also permitted spouses to agree on the sharing of assets acquired during marital life and to determine the respective share of each party. Academic studies indicate that this system is optional and does not constitute an imposed obligation on the wife (Mahrouk, 2017).

The Algerian legislator has also introduced criminal protection for the wife against being compelled to dispose of her property or financial resources. Legal studies indicate that Article 330 bis of the Penal Code criminalizes any person who uses coercion or intimidation against his wife in order to force her to dispose of her property or financial resources (Aissaoui & Chouki, 2026).

Coercion and intimidation used to compel the wife to dispose of her property or financial resources constitute a violation of the principle of her independent financial liability. The Algerian legislator

has intervened to safeguard this right through amendments to the Penal Code (Rouahna & Ouzani, 2026).

5.2.3 Law and Control over the Wife's Property:

Article 37 of the Algerian Family Code establishes the principle of independent financial liability for each spouse. Algerian legal studies confirm that the wife retains ownership of her private property and has the right to manage and dispose of her assets without requiring her husband's authorization or consent (Tiraoui, 2019).

This means that the wife's savings, inheritance, gifts received by her, and personal property do not become the husband's property solely due to the existence of marriage. Marriage does not affect the wife's legal financial capacity, and she maintains the right to dispose of her property independently without requiring authorization or permission from her husband (Tiraoui, 2019).

The Algerian legislator has introduced criminal protection for the wife against being compelled to dispose of her property or financial resources. Legal studies indicate that Article 331 bis of the Penal Code penalizes any person who uses coercion or intimidation against his wife in order to force her to dispose of her property or financial resources (Chouki & Aissaoui, 2026).

Accordingly, the Algerian legislator considers exerting pressure on the wife through coercion or intimidation, including threats intended to force her to dispose of her money, as a criminal act punishable by law. Disposing of the wife's property under pressure and without her consent is prohibited and constitutes a form of economic violence against the wife.

The Algerian legislator classified this offence as a misdemeanor and established a penalty of imprisonment ranging from six months to two years. Furthermore, the legislator considered the victim's forgiveness as one of the circumstances that may result in the termination of criminal proceedings, with the objective of preserving marital continuity and maintaining family cohesion (Qammar, 2023, p. 835).

Conclusion

The study concluded that economic violence against the wife represents one of the most complex and serious forms of domestic violence due to its connection with power relations and domination within the family, as well as its reliance on indirect mechanisms based on the control and exploitation of economic resources. The study demonstrated that this form of violence is not limited to financial deprivation alone but also includes controlling the wife's income, preventing her from working, imposing financial restrictions, and engaging in economic exploitation. Such practices contribute to reinforcing economic dependency and weakening women's autonomy within the family.

The theoretical analysis, based on Male Domination Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Family Systems Theory, further revealed that economic violence reflects an imbalance in the distribution of power within marital relationships, where money is used as a mechanism of control, regulation, and reproduction of patterns of domination. The study also highlighted that the persistence of this phenomenon is associated with interconnected social, cultural, economic, and psychological factors, particularly patriarchal culture, limited legal awareness, and women's economic dependency.

Despite the efforts undertaken by the Algerian legislator through the adoption of legal provisions aimed at protecting women, particularly Law No. 15-19 relating to combating violence against women, the effectiveness of these mechanisms remains dependent on their practical implementation and on strengthening social awareness regarding the seriousness of economic violence and its consequences for family stability and cohesion.

Therefore, addressing economic violence against the wife requires a comprehensive and integrated approach that combines legal, social, psychological, and economic dimensions in order to ensure women's protection and promote balance within the Algerian family.

Recommendations

In light of the findings reached by the study and the significance revealed regarding economic violence against the wife and its consequences for women and families, several recommendations can be proposed that may contribute to preventing this phenomenon and reducing its effects, as follows:

- Strengthening psychological and social support mechanisms directed toward wives who are victims of economic violence by providing specialized services that assist them in overcoming the psychological and social consequences resulting from this form of violence and enable them to regain self-confidence and the ability to make decisions concerning their lives.
- Intensifying awareness and sensitization programs regarding the risks of economic violence against the wife through the organization of awareness campaigns targeting different segments of society, with particular emphasis on identifying the forms of violence and their effects on wives and family stability.
- Enhancing women's legal and rights-based awareness, particularly regarding their financial and economic rights within the family, through the development of guidance programs that help wives understand their rights and the legal mechanisms available for protecting them when exposed to violence or deprivation of their financial rights.
- Promoting financial literacy within the family by encouraging dialogue and shared participation in the management of household financial resources, while strengthening principles of responsibility, transparency, and balance in decisions related to income, expenditure, and property ownership, thereby reducing manifestations of economic control within marital relationships.
- Strengthening the legislative and institutional framework for addressing domestic violence to ensure comprehensive legal protection against all forms of violence, including economic violence. This requires the development of effective mechanisms for reporting, support, and protection, while ensuring that survivors have access to legal, psychological, and social assistance services.
- Developing prevention and protection mechanisms through the adoption of effective and rapid legal and institutional measures for addressing cases of domestic violence, including preventive and emergency measures and protection orders, while clearly defining the roles

and responsibilities of authorities responsible for law enforcement and intervention in cases of violence.

- Enhancing coordination among various concerned bodies and institutions, particularly social, judicial, security, and health institutions, to provide an integrated response to cases of economic violence against the wife and avoid restricting the treatment of this phenomenon to its legal dimension while neglecting its psychological, social, and economic aspects.
- Encouraging women's economic independence by supporting initiatives and programs aimed at economic empowerment and strengthening women's ability to access economic resources and opportunities, thereby reducing their vulnerability to forms of economic control and deprivation within the family.

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