

VIOLENCE AGAINST THE ELDERLY IN TURKEY

A SECTION FROM 1ST TURKEY ATLAS OF GERONTOLOGY (GEROATLAS)

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For our senior citizens...

Foreword

Senectitude is a risky phase of life. This study will consider this idea as the main hypothesis and the argument will be based on empirical data.

Why do we need such a study? This question might be answered in several ways, simplest of which is the fact that everyone will age. This is not just a hypothesis. Each and every one of demographical indicators suggest that our chances of longer lifespan have increased distinctively. Interestingly, everyone is aware of this fact. Why would anyone dream of having a good education, satisfying profession and a nice retirement if s/he is not thinking about living a long life? Our dreams should not be exclusive to our own lives only, we should also dream of a society we want to live in. Do we want to live in a society based on solidarity and tolerance; or in a society where the big fish eats the small? If we are dreaming of a society where we can actualize our dreams provided by the opportunities given by our life spaces then people of old age should be included in our dreams too. Surely, most of the people agree this, they even respect old people. Thinking that the society we live in today exists thanks to their past efforts, they respect old people. But is this enough? Is it only receiving congratulations from young people that people of old age need? Is not to better life conditions of them like we do with other phases of the life a better alternative?

Senectitude is a life time of risks for various reasons. It maybe will be “risk of dying” that would be thought first. Of course, as we age, this idea becomes undeniably distinct. This should not indicate that old people are consumed thinking about death all the time. This idea is proved wrong by several studies. When they have suitable living conditions, people of old age do make future plans and try to actualize their plans. If we are not surprised seeing old people getting into university, and getting excited in their commencement, this is because of the radical shifts in our thoughts about them. Majority of the risks of old age, are not caused by senectitude, rather by false construction of senectitude. One of the indicators of this is the violence against elderlies. Neglect and exploitation, considered as types of violence, have turned senectitude into a dangerous life phase in our country. We cannot stay blind to the fact that people of old age, whom we respect and want to protect are victims of violence everyday.

Violence has never been isolated from society. It is coincided in every part of history and in every society. Yet, it is “the violence against old people” that has been least uttered. This is why, we are unable to see tragedies behind the scenes which makes the word “respecting elders” an emptied concept.

This study has been prepared to contemplate aforementioned ideas and to illuminate dangerous_lives of old people. This by-product of a wider research is a gift to our society and includes findings gathered by the five-year research project, 1st Turkey Atlas of Gerontology (GEROATLAS). Reader should evaluate this research by considering his/her own age too.

All demographical indicators agree that Turkey has begun being affected by aging. Thus, we

may conclude that there is an emerging demand for construction of processes of aging. In order for this to be done, senectitude shall be studied thoroughly; determined problems shall be publicly discussed, and suggestions for solutions shall be raised.

Increased life expectancy results in societies in which multiple generations live together, thus changing inter-generational social relations. As overly emphasized solidarity of generations is, deficiencies of this solidarity are brushed aside. There are several problems concerning inter-generational social relations.

Though, inter-generational conflicts are not mainstream in Turkish society, it would be a big mistake to ignore potential conflicts that may emerge in the multigenerational families. Social aging, on the other hand, should not be abstracted from other social concepts, as this might avoid perception of breaking points of relations caused by inter-generational conflicts. Not only it is appropriate to consider effects of social aging on society seriously, but also it is must to do so, in an aging society. This is the only way to secure the future of the society by making better plans.

Exercise of, or drift into violence against, or Abuse and neglect of elderlies in the family are among the issues to harm social development. Discussing the condition, rather than tabooing it will increase our chances to resolve the problem.

Unfortunately we lack data to start this debate. Although we also lack the evidence to prove we are a nation that respects elders, it is widely believed we “respect old people”. We can trace this condition even to the chief governmental offices. Probably because it sounds nice and relieves the social conscience; this false belief has penetrated into deepest levels of our minds. This is why people suspicious about presence of violence against, Abuse and neglecting of people of old age are high in number.

Mainstream conception of intergenerational relations is a romantic one. Ornamented by philosophical, moral and religious beliefs, intergenerational relations are presented as and believed to be based on love and respect and thus generations live in a peaceful solidarity.

The purpose of this study is not to destroy these dreams; contrarily, it is to actualize them. For this, we have to step into real life of old people a little if not totally; explore this life and bring out problems.

Even if their number is lower than the non-victims, we can never ignore old aged victims of violence. To ignore, does not become our social values or base principles of social government. Deficiency of information on Abuse and neglecting of and violence against people of old age was partially contemplated by 1st Turkey Atlas of Gerontology research conducted between years 2005 and 2009.

As it would not be possible to resolve social issues of such complex nature relying on a single research, it will be unavoidable to conduct more detailed researches. This research is important to make Abuse of and violence against old people known by public, and so to start walking on this path full of challenges. This study is prepared with the hope of triggering initiatives to create changes in the lives of old people.

Many friends, colleagues, experts and institutions helped me throughout this research. They supported and motivated me to make research on this impossible field. Without their support and help, the research would have been impossible. This research has been done only with

the courage I have gained by their knowledge, experience and motivation in spite of financial difficulties and lack of personnel. I would like to express my thanks to all friends, colleagues, experts and institutions for presenting me with their supports. An empirical research relies on individuals in the research team to be credible. Results become credible especially with the honest works of interviewers. According to my supervisions as the research executor, I know that our interviewers carried out their tasks with a great care. I would like to express my thanks to them too. I also would like to thank to state planning organization for making the research possible.

Prof. Dr. İsmail Tufan, Antalya 2011

Abstract

It is the first time in Turkey that violence against old aged people becomes the subject of a research. This subject, integrated into 1st Turkey Atlas of gerontology is argued by being based on empirical evidence. Research resulted presented that, for people of old age, family is not only an environment of love, tolerance and solidarity, but also an environment bearing risks of violence, Abuses and neglect. Projecting the research results onto the society in general, it is understood that around 200.000 old people are victims of violence, Abuse, neglect and various combinations of such situations. Real numbers are estimated to be much more higher than this, as reality is kept secret by families because they fear, and by old people as they are ashamed. This research created leaks on the walls of taboo for the first time. Successive researches and taken measures will break this wall down.

Introduction

Violence, neglect and Abuse are types of violence. The subject matter of this book is the conditions of people of old age victimized by violence. Psychologically, we may conceive these conditions as conflicts. According to Freud, discoverer of inner conflicts of human beings, psychosocial suppressions are expressed via psychological and physical indications all of which have meanings for the person who is experiencing them. Thus, Freud perceives conflicts positively.

Faced with psychosocial suppressions, one tries to discover the meaning behind them. At the source of conflicts are uncompromisable interests. A conflict may be regarded as the clash of these interests. Faced with conflicts, one triggers defense mechanisms. With the help of such defense mechanisms as sublimation, refusal or rationalization the suppressing condition is tried to be overcome (Lang & Faller,1998)¹.

Neglect, Abuse and violence exercised on them by their families, surely leave marks on the souls of seniors. To be deemed worthy of such actions by their beloveds, creates constraints and conflicts in the inner world of a person. In this condition the person might be expected to use defense mechanisms.

Psychological experiences of human beings, which can be made tangible by qualitative and quantitative research methods ((Bortz & Döring,2006)² is also a subject a empirical studies. Types of reactions of senior citizens to violence, neglect and Abuse is also included in our research.

On the other hand, we will find out the favorite targets of violent actions, and present information about types of violent actions.

Family: Center of Solidarity and Violence

Family is defined as a system based on relations carried out through generations with solidarity, sympathy and a distance privacy (Fookan, 1999)³. Yet, it is not difficult to assume that such a definition would not be thoroughly valid, so some new perspectives should be added to it.

The concept of family as we perceive today was born with the start of industrialization in the end of 18th century. Before this, in the Ancient Rome, for example, neither scope, nor the definition of family was as we conceive it today. With the start of industrialization work sphere become separated from domestic sphere. This division affected family members and caused

¹ Lang, H. & Faller, H. Medizinische Psychologie und Soziologie. Heidelberg: Springer, (1998).

² Bortz, J. & Döring, N. Forschungsmethoden und Evaluation für Human- und Sozialwissenschaftler, 4. Aufl., Heidelberg: Springer, (2006).

³ Fookan, I. Intimität auf Abstand. Familienbeziehungen und soziale Netzwerke, A. Niederfranke, G. Naegele & E. Frahm (Ed.), Lebenslagen und Lebenswelten, soziale Sicherung und Altenpolitik, Funkkolleg Altern 2. Opladen, Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, (1999), S.209-243.

them to change (Aries, 1975)⁴.

Professional knowledge of the father, which used to be inherited by the son was devalued and replaced by the systematical information provided by the educational system. Thus, once valued experiences of senior citizens lost their importance. Changing working conditions, introduced retirement system and marginalization of senior citizens from social reproduction caused senectitude to be perceived as insufficiency, and aimlessness in the society. Contrarily, family is valued more in this developing society of industrialization. Changing position of family in accordance to the concept of social aging continues to be valued. Family became one of the most important subject matters of sociology too, which helped origination of various perspectives on family, partially conflicting each other.

According to one perspective, relations of family members, and intergenerational relations are affected by living conditions of the family and subjective perceptions of family members (Schütze, 2000)⁵. Objective living conditions are the perceivable from outside like economical, residential or infrastructural conditions. Subjective perceptions on the other hand are about emotions, consciousness and attitudes of the individual. Among the factors affecting intergenerational relations within the family, aging related issues are of the most important. Care dependency, caused by disease, disability and natural losses because of aging is the most important factor to create a distinctive shift in relations of family members.

Care dependency as one of problems affecting society and family would have become insolvable. Researches indicate that care dependent senior member is not abandoned by the family. Most of the old aged people are cared by their families. Unlike some researches suggest, families do not evade responsibility (Künemund, 2002)⁶.

The issue whether the family takes this responsibility or not is overvalued today in response to current demographical developments. This is why the number of researchers on this subject is increasing. Most of these researchers conclude that family continues to be the major social institution to attend needs of old aged people today. It is proved by empirical researches that 85-90% if the care dependent senior citizens are being cared at home by family members. 4 care dependent adults out of 5 is attended by women of the family, such as the daughter, wife, or daughter-in-law (Witterstätter, 2003)⁷. This condition requires another question; is it the family, or only the woman that does not evade responsibility? According to research, it is especially women to take the responsibility. Interestingly, the word "woman" is used like as simile to concept of "family". Contrarily, general profile of women in domestic space, society, and in work space does not seem to be perfect. Whenever there is a condition men want to avoid taking the responsibility of, this condition is said to be attended by the "family", while in reality the burden is loaded onto women.

⁴ Aries, Ph. *Geschichte der Kindheit*. München, Wien: Hanser, (1975).

⁵ Schütze, Y. *Generationenbeziehungen*. H.-W. Wahl & C. Tesch-Römer (Ed.), *Angewandte Gerontologie in Schlüsselbegriffen*. Kohlhammer: Stuttgart, (2000), S. 148-152.

⁶ Künemund, H. *Sozialstaatliche Leistungen und Familienbeziehungen im Alter - Verdrängung oder Ergänzung?* G. M. Backes & W. Clemens (Ed.), *Zukunft der Soziologie des Alter(n)s*. Opladen: Leske+Budrich, (2002). Pp.: 167-182.

⁷ Witterstätter, K. *Soziologie für die Altenarbeit, Sozialgerontologie*, 13. Aufl., Freiburg im Breisgau: Lambertus, (2003).

Psychosocial problems of such woman caused by such situations “may cause recurring painful intergenerational conflicts which sure are the basis of violence against old people within families” (Kaiser, 2006)⁸

Thus, we have indicated that family is not to be considered as a system of love only. The fact that violence against old people is present where violence against women and children is evident is being underestimated (Remschmidt, 1987)⁹. The condition is kept in secret and made a taboo, and reasons are ignored.

Only currently, these reasons have begun to be considered in researches which conclude that increasing demands of old aged family members and conflicts caused by these demands are the reason for the situation. Negative effects are piling up, while relations of demands and conflicts strengthen. Probably for this reason, old aged people are able to develop better strategies in defending themselves than young people (Carstensen, Gross & Fung, 1997)¹⁰.

On the other hand, as not all senior citizens have same skills and opportunities it cannot be concluded that they all can develop successful strategies. Care dependent elderlies are under a bigger threat in the circumstances of violence, neglect and Abuse caused by the constraints in their social relations (Lang, 2000)¹¹.

Especially unwilling supporting actions, Abuses of trust, exaggerated emotional empathies and addictive behaviors further increase the risk (Baltes & Silverberg, 1994)¹².

This means: The behavior of the family taking the responsibility of caring its old aged member cannot be defined only as “not evading responsibility”. all support provided by the family are not voluntary. For many families, there are no other options but to take over the responsibility.

On the other hand, voluntary responsibility is not problem-free either. Constraints caused by increasing physical, spiritual, social and financial burdens which were not anticipated in the beginning can cause families to regret this responsibility.

Degree of care dependence might change over time and the old aged person might become more dependent to the family member who took over the duty of attending him/her. This means increased burden of the caring person.

⁸ Kaiser, H.J. (2006): Generationenbeziehungen. In W.D. Oswald, U.Lehr, C.Sieber & J. Kornhuber (Ed.), Gerontologie - Medizinische, psychologische und sozialwissenschaftliche Grundbegriffe, 3., vollständige überarbeitete Aufl., (S. 183-188). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

⁹ Remschmidt, H. Körperliche Kindesmisshandlung, H. Helmchen & H. Hippius (Ed.), Psychiatrie für die Praxis 5. München: MMV Medizin Verlag, (1987). Pp. 276 - 284.

¹⁰ Carstensen, L.L., Gross, J.J. & Fung, H.H. The social context of emotional experience. In K.W. Schaie & M. P. Lawton (Ed.), Annual review of gerontology and geriatrics (Vol. 17). New York: Springer, (1997).

¹¹ Lang, F. R. Soziale Beziehungen im Alter: Ergebnisse der empirischen Forschung. In H.-W. Wahl & C. Tesch-Römer (Ed.), Angewandte Gerontologie in Schlüsselbegriffen, (S.142-147). Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, (2000).

¹² Baltes, M. M. & Silverberg, S. B. (1994): The dynamics between dependency and autonomy: Illustrations 2: Theoretical models across the life-span. In D.L. Featherman, R.M. Lerner & M. Perlmutter (Ed.), Life-span development and behavior (Vol. 12, pp. 41-90). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

From this perspective, it is obvious that assumptions about family shall be based on more realistic perspectives. Family is one of the concepts that should not be over-idealized, because, evidently it cannot be an institution based on love, solidarity, tolerance and protection and supporting of its members.

If seen as such, family may be thought to be the center of good intergenerational relations (Schütze, 2000). Unfortunately, such a consideration of family would exhibit the fact only partially. On the flip side of the coin, are conditions only explainable by violence, neglect and Abuse. The number of elderlies victimized by such situations is increasing. Thus, family is one of the centers of violence too (Brückner, 2005)¹³.

Increased life expectancy caused multiple generations to live together not only in the society but also within family. Especially in developing countries the number of multi-generational family house holds is high as senectitude and poverty are still related.

First researches showing that intergenerational conflicts are more wide spread in such families were conducted in 1960s. This issue was proven in researches made in Italy, Japan, and African countries. In societies shifting from traditional to modern family models, intergenerational conflicts are unavoidable. Relations of this condition with industrialization is emphasized (Rosenmayr, 1976)¹⁴.

Inappropriate behavior against elderlies is presented not only in family but also in institutions. Violence against old aged people practiced by care attendants in nursing homes is constantly brought to attention (Petzold&Müller,2005a)¹⁵. For instance, it is estimated that about 10.000 elderlies die because of insufficient care, and that about 400.000 elderlies are victimized by violence in care homes of Germany (Petzold & Müller, 2005b)¹⁶.

In USA, it is confirmed that 700.000 to 1.000.000 senior citizens face violence caused by family at least once in a lifetime (Hansson & Carpenter, 1994)¹⁷.

Violence against elderlies, practiced in various countries shall be considered as supra-cultural in order to be more realistic and to step into the path of solution as soon as possible. Wherever people of old age live, it should not be ignored that people might be inclined to

¹³ Brückner, M. Gewalt gegen die Kinder, Frauen und in Familien, H.-U. Otto & H. Thiersch (Ed.), Handbuch: Sozialarbeit, Sozialpädagogik, 3. Aufl., München, Basel: Reinhardt, (2005). S. 723-729.

¹⁴ Rosenmayr; L. Schwerpunkte der Soziologie des Alters (Gerosozilogie), R.König (Ed.), Handbuch zur empirischen Sozialforschung, Band 7: Familie, Alter. Stuttgart: Wissenschaftliche Reihe, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag & Enke Verlag, (1976). Pp. 218-372.

¹⁵ Petzold, H. G. & Müller, L. Supervision in der Altenarbeit, Pflege und Gerontotherapie - Brisante Themen, Konzepte, Praxis: Integrative Perspektiven. Paderborn: Junfermann, (2005a).

¹⁶ Petzold, H.G. & Müller, L. Der permanente Skandal - gefährliche Pflege, sozialtoxische Kontexte, maligner Burnout. Verletzte Menschenwürde dehumanisierende Heimsituationen - in Tirol und überall. Eine sozialwissenschaftliche und supervisorische Felderkundung. H.G. Petzold & L. Müller, L. (Ed.), Supervision in der Altenarbeit, Pflege und Gerontotherapie - Brisante Themen, Konzepte, Praxis: Integrative Perspektiven. Paderborn: Junfermann, (2005b). Pp.: 28-117.

¹⁷ Hansson, R.O. & Carpenter, B.N. Relationships in old age: Coping with the challenge of transition. New York: Guilford, (1994).

violent behavior, thus the triggering factors behind such tendencies shall be identified and measures shall be taken.

POPULATION SHIFT

Looking through the probability theory, we might say that, as the number of old aged individuals increase with the increasing life expectancy, the number of old aged individuals under the threat of becoming victims of violence is increased too.

Current demographic developments unseen in the history, are causing the number and proportion of old aged individuals to heighten and once ignored social issues to surface. This is why, "social politics based on traditional family and gender models" is demanded to catch up with the changes in demographics (Backes, 2004)¹⁸.

Modern social politics are now expected to be constructed in accordance to needs, problems and opportunities of development of the aging society. Behind this demands lie undeniable scientific facts.

Researches indicate that life expectancy increases 2,5 years in every 10 years and this trend tends to continue (Oeppen & Vaupel, 2002)¹⁹. Only until a few years ago human beings were assumed to live 115 years at most, but now the best life expectancy is raised to 125 years. Some researchers even believe that life expectancy may become eternal (Rott, 2004)²⁰.

Scientific evidences and analysis of population statistics alike conclude that: Demographical changes are universal. These changes affect past, present and future alike (Korte & Schäfers 1997)²¹. The need to conclude presumptions by exploring population shifts is caused by this (Kohli, 1992²², 2000²³). This is because, long lifespan means multi-generational societies. Aging and social development are needed to be considered in relation to each other (Backes, 2004).

This is because, each decision taken today will affect future generations. Life expectancy of a baby born in Turkey today is 70 years (TÜİK, 2006)²⁴. On the other hand, In Japan, for instance it is over 90 years (Rott, 2004). Life expectancy is related to the welfare of the society. So each initiative to improve welfare will cause life expectancy to increase. Thus, our

¹⁸ Backes, G.M. Alter und Altern im Kontext der Entwicklung von Gesellschaft. Kruse, A., Martin, M. (Ed.), Enzyklopaedie der Gerontologie. Bern, Göttingen, Toronto, Seattle: Huber, (2004). Pp.: 82-96.

¹⁹ Oeppen, J., Vaupel, J.W. Broken limits to life expectancy, Science, 296, 1029-1031, (2002).

²⁰ Rott, C. Demographie des hohen Alters, A. Kruse, M. Martin (Ed.), Enzyklopaedie der Gerontologie. Bern, Göttingen, Toronto, Seattle: Huber, (2004). Pp: 51-65.

²¹ Korte, H., Schäfers, B. Einführung in Praxisfelder der Soziologie, 2.Aufl., Opladen: Leske + Budrich, (1997).

²² Kohli, M. Altern in soziologischer Perspektive. IN P.B. Baltes & J. Mittelstrass (Ed.), Zukunft des Alterns und gesellschaftliche Entwicklung. Berlin: de Gruyter, (1992). Pp: 231-259.

²³ Kohli, M. Der Alters-Survey als Instrument wissenschaftlicher Beobachtung. M. Kohli & H. Künemund (Ed.), Die zweite Lebenshälfte. Gesellschaftliche Lage und Partizipation im Söiegel des Alters-Survey. Opladen: Leske+Budrich, (2000).

²⁴ T.C. Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, Ankara, (2006).

society will age.

This is why life expectancy changes in every country. In the countries on the South of the Sahara desert it is 50, while in Germany, for example it is 78 (Rosenmayr, 2004)²⁵.

Assuming that the welfare condition of Turkey will continue improving in the coming years, we should not ignore that Turkish society will turn into a multi-generational society. Let us explain the importance of this awareness by briefly showing the results of the research we have conducted a few years ago: Analysis of data provided by Turkish Statistical Institute (2002)²⁶ in 2002, individuals aged above 60 made 8.9% of the population. As the same statistics are repeated in 2010, (TÜİK, 2010)²⁷ it is seen that proportion of the same age group has raised to 10.3%, indicating the fact that we are rapidly aging.

According to a presumption taking international demographic shifts into consideration, in 2020's Turkey the proportion of old age individuals in total population will be 15%, while by 2050 it will reach 30%. This presumption is based on the idea that population shifts are long term, which is why such presumptions are generally proved to be true. The reason of the rapid aging of the society also can be found in the past. No society may start changing suddenly. Thus, how the society produced so many old aged people in a few years can be understood by exploring the past. For instance, between 1960-2002 in Turkey, people aged 60 and above increased in population by 57%, while the population of people of age 80 and above increased by 266%. Highly stable nature of the demographic shift makes our presumptions highly probable (Tufan, 2007)²⁸.

The expected development for the coming years is that population of old aged people in Turkey will increase almost by 1000%. This can be assumed, as population shifts are known to show similarities internationally. For example in Germany, it is seen that between years 1950-1990 population of 80-89 age group increased by 380% (Rückert, 1992)²⁹, while the population of age group 90-99 increased by 790% and population of people aged above 100 increased by 2200% (Wahl & Rott 2002)³⁰.

This condition has social meanings: At least one of the grandparents of 80% of 10-14 age group population is alive (Kaufmann, 1997)³¹. This means population shifts do not only

²⁵ Rosenmayr, L. Zur Philosophie des Alterns, A. Kruse, M. Martin (Ed.), Enzyklopaedie der Gerontologie. Bern, Göttingen, Toronto, Seattle: Huber, (2004). Pp: 13-28.

²⁶ T.C. Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, Ankara, (2002)

²⁷ T.C. Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, Ankara, (2010).

²⁸ Tufan, İ. Birinci Türkiye Yaşlılık Raporu. Antalya: GeroYay, (2007).

²⁹ Rückert, W. Bevölkerungsentwicklung und Altenhilfe. Folgen der Bevölkerungsentwicklung für die Altenhilfe - von der Kaiserzeit über das Jahr 2000 hinaus. Schriftenreihe Forum des Kuratoriums Deutsche Altenhilfe, Band 18, Kuratorium Deutsche Altenhilfe (KDA): Köln, (1992).

³⁰ Wahl, H.-W. & Rott, C. Konzepte und Definitionen der Hochaltrigkeit, Expertisen zum Vierten Altenbericht der Bundesregierung, Deutsches Zentrum für Altersfragen (Ed.), Das Hohe Alter - Konzepte, Forschungsfelder, Lebensqualität, Band 1. Vincentz: Hannover, (2002), S. 5 - 95.

³¹ Kaufmann, F.-X. Generationenbeziehungen und Generationenverhältnisse im Wohlfahrtsstaat, J. Mansel, G. Rosemthal & A. Tölke (Ed.), Generationenbeziehungen: Austausch und Tradierung. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, (1997), S. 17-30.

mean general changes in demographic structure, but they also are factors to cause multi-generational societies, and to affect intergenerational relations.

INTER-GENERATIONAL RELATIONS

Generations are one of the elements of social system. They come into existence as dynamic elements of social structure and affect relations by influencing every field of social system. Family is one of the best places to feel this affect. When relations are perceived to be related to help and support, intergenerational solidarity becomes highlighted. The contrary perspective for this idea is the concept of intergenerational conflict (Lüscher & Liegle, 2003, S.54)³² We have defined conflict as created by psychosocial constraints in the psychology of a person. Inter-generational conflict can also be on the social dimension like conflicts of young and old generations in the job market, or conflicts of young people with their parents at home. Thus, this conflict also includes external conditions.

As soon as they are born, people find themselves withing a web of social relations. They affect it and get affected by it (Schulz-Nieswandt, 2006)³³. Every parent knows this. As soon as a baby is born, how the family is affected and how the child constantly changes can be easily explored. The process of change which starts by birth, is never-ending. This lifetime change is called "aging" by gerontologists. It is normal for the euphoria of the beginning to get paler over time, but life does not have to be an unbearable torture as for some old aged people. Yet, as you will see, life, for some elderlies does not worth living anymore.

How as a society can we condone this situation and not do anything to end it? If "Respecting elders week" might be excluded from "anything" we can say that we do "one" thing. Yet, people have interdependent social relationships, and elders are not out of this net. If "there are problems in their relationships...the condition arouse attention. This attention strengthens itself in each breaking point of the relation" (Berger & Berger, 1982, S.22)³⁴. This perfectly explains an important problem: we believe our relations with old aged people are free of problems, thus we cannot see it when we arrive a "breaking point" and cannot perceive the threatening conditions against old aged people.

It should not be ignored that inter-generational relations are not only of solidarity and conflict, but of ambivalence (Lüscher & Liegle, 2003, S.55). These relations are based on antipathy and sympathy. In the cases of violence, neglect and Abuse within a family, sympathy is totally eradicated and replaced by antipathy.

Inter-generational relations are related to social expectations, cultural anticipations and legal grounds (Lüscher & Liegle, 2003). As all these elements change according to

³² Lüscher, K. & Liegle, L. Generationenbeziehungen in Familie und Gesellschaft, Konstanz: UVK Verlagsgesellschaft, (2003).

³³ Schulz-Nieswandt, F. Sozialpolitik und Alter, Grundriss Gerontologie, Band 5. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, (2006).

³⁴ Berger, P. & Berger, B. Wir und die Gesellschaft. Eine Einführung in die Soziologie, entwickelt an der Alltagserfahrung. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt.

time, society and culture, it is apparent that inter-generational relations are dynamic too. This is why evolutionary and normative levels of inter-generational relations of past and present should be taken into consideration (Lüscher & Liegle, 2003, Schulz-Nieswandt, 2006).

Evolution of intergenerational relationships is changes in families, societies and cultures caused by attitude inclinations changing over time, via breaking points and within its own dynamism and effects of all these changes to intergenerational relationships. Normative attitudes towards intergenerational relationships on the other hand are, conscious and purposeful behaviors structured by rights and responsibilities. There are similarities and differences between these two intergenerational patterns.

Behaviorism theory divides behaviors as overt and covert. Not only explorable behaviors but also “mental” behaviors are studied (Hillmann, 2007)³⁵. According to this theory, behaviors are reactions to internal and external stimuli caused by needs.

Need means expectation. There is always an expectation behind every action. In order for an individual to fulfill his expectations, he should take concepts and events that define his actions under control. Control is the ability to conclude, solve, dominate, suppress, limit, and affect something. With their self-awareness human beings try to take the control of their own lives. Consciously or not, an individual always desires to have the control over his own life (Viorst, 2000)³⁶. Thus, it can be considered that there might be unsatisfied needs and expectations behind the actions of people performing violence and Abuse. When the personal control over one's own life is under threat or not present at all, such individuals' probability of performing violent actions increases. Theoretically, on the other hand, the situation is the same for the victimized elders. Their lives whose control have been given away, are now being interrupted by others. Thus, individuals performing violent actions against elders do not have such tendencies because they are “sadists” or “psychos”. May be there are such individuals among them, but generally speaking, violence against elders within families are caused by **hardship** and effects of these hard conditions on social relations.

Yet, people tend to explain their own conditions in different ways. You should be familiar with hypothesis of spill-over in developmental psychology. For example, suppressed problems among partners are tended to be reflected on children. Partners, rather than paying attention to the conflicts of their own relations, tend to reflect these problems on the child and label him/her as a “problem child” (Oerter, Montada 2002)³⁷.

On the family level, intergenerational relations are parent-child relations. Concept of violence against elders may be considered from this perspective, and we can mention “**scapegoating**”. Just like they affect parent-child relations, unemployment, poverty, disease, care dependency and social insufficiencies also affect intergenerational relations. It is objective conditions, generally, that lies beneath psychological problems. Surely, most of the people experienced externally caused constraints and problems that suddenly fly away the minute these external conditions are changed. If we can eradicate negative elements in the

³⁵ Hillmann, K.-H. Wörterbuch der Soziologie, 5. Aufl., Stuttgart: Kröner, (2007).

³⁶ Viorst, J. Kontrolle ist gut, Vertrauen ist besser: Der Weg zu inneren Sicherheit. München: Heyne, (2000).

³⁷ Oerter, R., Montada, L. Entwicklungspsychologie, 5. Aufl., Weinheim, Basel, Berlin: Beltz, (2002).

life conditions of families where elders are exposed to violence, many elders will be rescued from main threats.

Reasons of Violence, Neglect and Abuse Against Elders

Identification of elderly victims of violence, Abuse and neglect is very hard as boyhr families and elders try to keep it sub-rosa. Elders keep the situation secret both as they are dependent to their families and because they are ashamed to explain the situation. Family, on the other hand, with guilty-conscience and fear of being blamed, tries to impress the society as if everything is “alright”.

Especially when there are conditions of ailment, disability and care dependence, elder people become dependent to their families. It can be proven that such conditions become wide spread in senectitude (Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband, 1986)³⁸. Here, we should note that help and care are not similes. Helping means, supporting in order something to be achieved. For example, a person who cleans the apartment of an elder person who cannot clean, is helping. Care, on the other hand includes other services as well as help. For instance, a woman who takes an elder person to toilet is not only helping but also caring, as she has helped the elder person to do her daily basic need. A person can live in an unclean environment, but cannot live if s/he cannot visit bathroom. %90 of the people helping and caring elders are family members (DZA, 2002)³⁹.

We have already mentioned that violence against and neglect and Abuse of elders is mostly coincided in multi-generational families and that the person taking on the responsibility might become aggressive because of the burden s/he is carrying (Pillemer & Finkelhor, 1988)⁴⁰ It is the needs that the elder expects to be fulfilled, needs that are vital to be fulfilled and present abilities of the elder that defines future relations of the elder and the carer (Thomae, 1994)⁴¹.

It is indicated that conflicts have decreased within the family while intergenerational affection increased. Although this statement is true as a generalization, it does not include every family. If we want to protect seniors, we have to pay attention to particular rather than the general. Seniors exposed to violence are of the small proportion in the old aged population, but their number makes it impossible to ignore them.

Most important problems of the families in Turkey are financial. We have to remember this fact in all circumstances. Unless the problem of poverty is overcome, we cannot anticipate a good future. “Financial dependence” in the relationships of family members, creates a perfect ground for conflicts. When the intergenerational financial dependency is reduced,

³⁸ Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband, Landesverband Nordrhein-Westfalen e.V., Abteilung Altenhilfe (Ed.) (1986): ALTERnativen 1; Pflege durch Angehörige. Wuppertal: DPWV.

³⁹ Deutsches Zentrum für Altersfragen, Vierter Bericht zur Lage der älteren Generation in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Risiken, Lebensqualität und Versorgung Hochaltriger - unter besonderer Berücksichtigung demenzieller Erkrankungen. Berlin, (2002).

⁴⁰ Pillemer, K. & Finkelhor, D. (1988): The prevalence of elder abuse: A random sample survey. *The Gerontologist*, 28, 51-57.

⁴¹ Thomae, H. Trust, social support, and relying on others. *Zeitschrift für Gerontologie*, 27, 103-109, (1994).

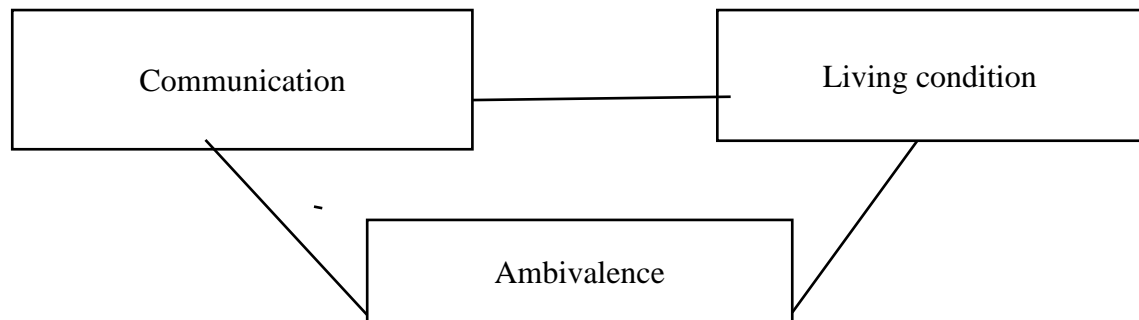
intergenerational family relationships improve (Lehr, 1998)⁴².

More than 95% of senior citizens in Turkey do not have an income (TÜİK, 2002). Thus, old age means poverty, and most of the seniors are financially dependent to their families. When care dependency is added to the problems created by the financial dependence, all types of violence are seeded in the ground. Turkey should add another level to her social politics by stressing conditions of elders.

Theoretical Model

We have already explained that behaviors and actions of violence against, neglect and Abuse of elders have complicated structures making it impossible to understand all the levels of it in a single research. This is why, a section of reality will be tried to be identified and explored by a theoretical model.

Graphic 1: Originating point



Three theories are used for the designation of the theoretical model: Living condition theory (Schulz-Nieswandt, 2006), Communication theory (Bormann, Howell, Nichols & Shapiro, 1971)⁴³ Ambivalence theory that describes intergenerational conflicts (Lüscher & Liegle, 2003). the hypothesis of the originating point of the theoretical model is that: living conditions of the family also affect relationships of the family members. This affect creates ambivalent emotions, thoughts and actions in family members.

Family is environment where senior and other family members live and share opportunities and hardships together. Objective and subjective conditions affect living conditions of family life.

We have defined human begin as a being changing by being affected by its environment while at the same time, changing the environment by affecting it. Individual and changes in the environment are created by interactions. Interactions directly affect individual's actions

⁴² Lehr, U. Solidarität zwischen den Generationen - Wunsch oder Wirklichkeit? Konsequenzen des demographischen Wandels. Vortrag von 23.10.1998 im Rahmen der Offenberger Dialoge. 01.03.2005 Online im Internet: [<http://www.schloss-offenberg.de/s-votr4.htm>], (1998).

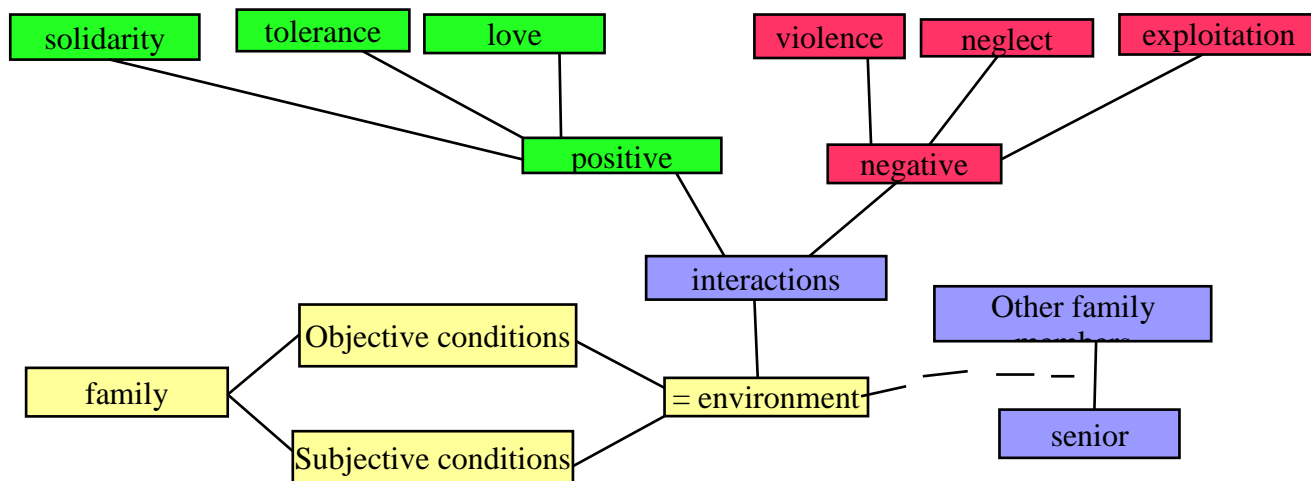
⁴³ Bormann, E. G., Howell, W.S., Nichols, R.G. & Shapiro, G.L. Kommunikation in Unternehmen und Verwaltung, (1971).

and the power within the action (Giddens) create these changes.

Power involved in action, identifies the position of the individual in the interaction. For instance, in the interaction of boss and personnel, these two people are not equals, but they both depend on each other. Yet, positions may change in interactions. For example, a man punching the table in anger is showing his power to his wife and his action is caused by his position in the interaction with his wife. In this example, position of the man is defining a physical power. The same man, if heard that his wife has inherited money from a deceased relative, when he was about to punch the table, would probably stop his action before punching the table. The “inheritance” factor changes the position of woman in the interaction distinctively putting her in an advantageous side. The interaction which was first anticipated to be against woman, shifts its direction and ends up being for the woman. The man who was about to punch the table with anger needs to suit his action in accordance with the changing positions.

Thus, we can assume that, position of elders in interactions with family members is related to objective and subjective conditions that define family members' attitudes towards the elder. For instance, the violence against elders is not caused by care dependency of the elder. It is caused by effects of interactions with external conditions on elders positions. This means, empowering elders' positions in family interactions would provide us with a great development.

Graphic 2: Theoretical Model



According to theory of living condition, financial, social and psychological competencies of a person defines that person's competency in daily life. Conditions of living are defined by accumulations of person-environment relations. We can use the word “resource” rather than accumulations. Psychological competencies are personal resources. Financial, infrastructural and social resources are contextual resources. Health condition, residence building and its environment, traffic system and infrastructure of the living environment make up environmental conditions (Schulz-Nieswandt, 2006). So, interactions are not personal only, environment affects interactions too. For example, for a carer woman, transportation conditions might be of great importance. If this women does not live at the same apartment

with the elder, and if her apartment is distant from the old person, then this woman has to use public transportation twice a day. If conditions of transportation are not good, the problems created by the travel might be reflected onto relations of the carer and the elder. If we consider the fact that caring period might last for many years, we understand that hardships this woman has to bear are not only related to the person she is caring for. Such long term hardships that are not related to care dependency may frustrate the carer causing her to become inclined to violence. This why theory of living condition mentions contextual resources. The condition is defined by personal competencies and environmental resources. Helping elder victims of violence without taking these conditions into consideration is almost not possible. Yet, situation analysis are not included in this research as they are beyond the limits of it.

Competency is application of changes, developments and losses by the person via emotional behaviors. Conscious competency is related to attitudes and emotionally loaded thoughts and behaviors. Everything perceived through thinking is put in an order and enable the individual to give meaning to concepts and behaviors. Reasons of social thoughts and attitudes are related to perception of these by the person and the environment. Perception of the individual, objects and factors of social importance by others is included in this pattern (Pöppel, Bullinger & Härtel, 1994)⁴⁴.

In communication, thoughts (message) are transmitted to another person after being converted into words and actions. So, there is a “sender” to send the thought, and a “receiver” to receive it. SO, two questions emerge. First, how the message will be sent. Second, how the input will be processed by the receiver (Bormann, Howell, Nichols & Shapiro, 1971). We should also note that communication is an interaction thus, we can take interdependency into consideration. Communication is not one-folded.

Individuals primarily use acoustic and visual communication. Communication chain breaks when messages cannot reach the receiver. Too much environmental voice, for instance, may avoid the message to reach the target. Not only noise, though, but also psychological problems present at the time of communication attempt may cause communication chain to break (Bormann, Howell, Nichols & Shapiro, 1971).

When a message is delivered, most probable two reactions of the receiver are: delivered information may create a thought shift, or may become more rooted than his/her own ideas. If the message creates an alteration of thought, it transforms into action. So, changes in attitude and actions are indicators of effects of communication (Bormann, Howell, Nichols & Shapiro, 1971).

Communication chain is circular. The sender observes the reaction of receiver to his/her messages and thus effects of his/her own observation and reacts it. This may be called feedback or “return spring link” (technical expression). Sender, if the message did not create the intended reaction, will try changing the message and sending it again this time with new codes, and more efficient manner. Yet, the return spring link mechanism cannot affect a

⁴⁴ Pöppel, E., Bullinger, M. & Härtel, U. Medizinische Psychologie und Soziologie. Chapman & Hall, (1994).

completed communication neither in positive, nor in negative way. Communication always takes place in ever changing environmental conditions, thus conditions of communication is never the same (Bormann, Howell, Nichols & Shapiro, 1971).

Ambivalence is an artificial concept coined by the Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler in 1910. Later, Sigmund Freud used the idea as a negative concept. Yet, in theory constructed by Lüscher and Liegle (2003), ambivalence may be positive or negative. Contrasting concepts creating ambivalence, love and hate for example, are both included in the same category. Yet, they cannot exist concurrently. If there is love, hate cannot accompany it as the contrast would cause one of the emotions to become dominant.

Ambivalence emphasizes the absence of alternatives or unavoidability of conflicts. Conflicts are concurrent experiences. Effects of time should also be taken into consideration. Conflicts may be either short term or long term. They can include every experience shaping a relationship. They can also emerge in a "critical life event" like a disease. "links between conflicts are built by communication. Contracting elements in how an individual is perceived by others are linked to each other until they create a unit (Lüscher & Liegle, 2003).

Therefore, conflicts are based on comments and pondering. "Interpretations related to ambivalence might be made by the person himself, or might be surfaced by targeted questions asking for ambivalence related experiences. (...) Besides, a third person can understand these by determining conflicting answers" (Lüscher & Liegle). If the conflicts determined by indirect way, are wider than then what the individual told about, then there is ambivalence (Lüscher & Liegle, 2003). In the light of all these ideas, ambivalence is:

If emotions, thoughts, desires, actions and how relationships shape them create conflicts vital for personal and collective construction of identity and if these conflicts are perceived as temporarily or permanently unsolvable, this is called ambivalence. Interpretations may be made by individuals within these relationships or by third persons (i.e: researcher) (Lüscher & Liegle, 2003).

Interpretation of intergenerational relationships by individuals themselves or by third persons would not be sufficient for relieving problems of old aged people victimized by violence, neglect and Abuse. This is because, victims of violence, neglect and Abuse cannot interpret the situation only as conflict, as conflict means concurrent perception of two poles. One of which dominates the other constantly or for a while.

On the other hand, if an old aged person is exposed to violence by his family even for once, the effect will be long term or permanent. If only for a short time, effects of neglect may not be as permanent as of violence, but an old aged person constantly exposed to neglect cannot be expected to perceive positive pole of his relationships. Permanent effects are highly possible in conditions of neglect. Therefore, subject matter of violence, neglect and Abuse is not limited to "intergenerational relationships". The subject here is "problematic relationships" and the reasons behind it shall be erased.

Concepts of Violence, Neglect and Abuse

Personalizing violence and considering it as merely pathological would be to overlook the social level of it. As media is scandalizing it, violence on the other hand is also being normalized by spreading idea that violence is not exceptional but might be come across with everywhere.

Consideration of violence in terms of “victim-guilty” perspective emerges the categorization of “the good and the bad”. Some groups are trying to normalize violence throughout the world. Sometimes, it is even exhibited as a personal asset.

While violence means brute force, illegal actions, domineering, authoritative power, aggression, impudence and austerity; neglect is to not to pay attention to something or someone, to disregard someone or something; Abuse is deliberate overuse of someone or something without permission, and with ill-will. (Wahrig, 1972)⁴⁵.

According to Pusset (2002)⁴⁶, not only the person who “beats” but also the person who is able to control himself although he is upset is a “violence inclined” aggressor.

Violence has different types of it. It can be applied as physical attack or as psychological pressure (Hillmann, 2007). It is these features of it that makes violence hard to define. There are different and contradicting definitions of violence according to police, law, sociology, medicine, psychology and political science (Schwindt et.al 1989)⁴⁷. Yet, violence is a concept that exist in every period of every society and “can never vanish, but only change its face (Sofsky, 1996, S.13)⁴⁸.

So many different definitions of violence are there to prove complicated nature of violence. Yet, this complicatedness should be simplified, in an effort to clarify what it is that we seek for behind this concept.

1st Turkey Atlas of Gerontology (GEROATLAS) uses Magret Dieck's (1987)⁴⁹ perspective in defining concepts of violence, neglect and Abuse. According to this, “neclect” and “Abuse” are types of violence. Thus, violence does not only include brute force and psychological pressure. Neglect as Abuse and limitation of free will by physical, psychological and financial means is also included into concept of violence. Structural, cultural and personal levels of violence have been excluded from this definition.

⁴⁵ Wahrig, G. Deutsches Wörterbuch, 2.Aufl., Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Lexikon-Verlag, (1972)

⁴⁶ Pusset, R. Altenpflege kompakt. Schlüsselbegriffe der Ausbildung und Praxis. Weinheim, Basel: Beltz Verlag, (2002).

⁴⁷ Schwindt, H.-D.; Baumann, J. Et. al. (Ed.): Ursachen, Prävention und Kontrolle von Gewalt. Band I, Endgutachten und Zwischengutachten. Berlin, Duncker & Humblot, S. 1-285, (1989).

⁴⁸ Sofsky, W. Traktat über Gewalt. Frankfurt/Main: Fischer, (1996).

⁴⁹ Dieck, M. Gewalt gegen ältere Menschen im familialen Kontext - Ein Thema der Forschung, der Praxis und der öffentlichen Information. Zeitschr. Gerontologie 20, 305-313, (1987).

Indicators of Violence, Abuse and Neglect

In order to decide whether old aged individuals are being neglected by their families, we need to frame the concept of neglecting. Only by this way, we can assume answers of subjects as relevant to the topic. We defined neglect as “to not to pay attention to something or someone, to disregard someone or something”. While who this “someone” is apparent (the old aged person), it is not clear what “something” is. This might be clarified by determining areas of neglect (in which areas old aged people are neglected).

It is assumed that perceiving the general condition would be better than focusing on particular cases as this is the first research on this subject. Therefore we have not made a detailed list of areas of neglect, but focused on wider concepts related to different types of neglect. For example, it is assumed that in this step it would useful to focus on “neglect in social relationships” rather than focusing on relationships of relatives, neighbors or between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

On the other hand, this will obviously lead to another problem, as the concept of social relationships is also subjective. Thus, definitions of such expressions were explained to subjects before they answered questions. This way, we can assume appropriateness of answers.

Table 1: Indicators of violence, neglect and Abuse

Violence	Neglect	Abuse
<p>corporeal:</p> <p>Physical attack (without tools)</p> <p>Physical attack (with tools)</p>	<p>corporeal:</p> <p>Bodily hygiene</p> <p>Clothing</p> <p>Nutrition</p>	<p>corporeal:</p> <p>housework</p> <p>looking after grandchildren</p>
<p>Psychological:</p> <p>verbal</p> <p>non-verbal</p>	<p>Psychological:</p> <p>deliberately</p> <p>unconsciously</p>	<p>Financial:</p> <p>taking his/her money</p> <p>taking his/her possessions</p>

After categorizing violence as physical and psychological, we tried to focus on general concepts. Corporal violence is defined as attack against body. It is taken into consideration that the attack might be in two ways: using tools (i.e stick) and without tools: (i.e: slap). Psychological violence was explored in two types: verbal (i.e: sarcastic words) and nonverbal (i.e hinting gestures) Abuse is explored in two types: physical and financial Abuse.

While physical Abuse is considered as using bodily power of the elder, financial Abuse is considered as will power of the elder in using his own money and property. This way, number of questions was kept in minimum. We believe, the research is appropriate in framing the situation in general.

Another reason for choosing to focus on wider concepts is ethical. Sensitivity of the problem lead us to ask minimum number of questions as to reduce the pressure that which is not possible to totally disappear, to avoid feelings of shame, and to not to frustrate elders.

According to theoretical model, violence and its types, neglect and Abuse are negative deviation emerging from interactions under environmental influence. Environment, on the other hand is determined by objective and subjective conditions of the family. Objective environmental conditions are defined by number of family members, number of employed family members, family income and residential conditions, while subjective conditions (from elder's perspective) are defined by peace, happiness, solidarity, tolerance and love among family members.

Method

Fore Thoughts

Qualifying and quantifying research methods were used in observing violence against elders in the family. In empirical research, these two methods are two fields developed as parallels that can be used together in one research (Flick et.al. 2007, 24ff.)⁵⁰.

Qualifying research contributes individuals in reflecting experiences from “inside to outside” and social truths to be better understood_(Flick et. al. 2007).

Besides deciding on the contents of questions, their possible effects on subjects shall be presumed. For instance, if a child whose father is unemployed is asked about his/her father's profession, the child may avoid the question, s/he may cry or may not tell that his/her father is unemployed. Thus, validity of answers does not guarantee credibility (Bortz& Döring, 2005). Imagine an elder answering the same question asked multiple times in different circumstances; “I perform namaz five times a day”. This makes the answer credible, yet if s/he, in reality, does not perform namaz, the answer is not “valid” (Scheuch, 1973)⁵¹.

This, therefore, should be taken into consideration while asking elders about violence, neglect, and Abuse, style and order of asking questions should be modified accordingly. It is important to have valid answers as well as credible ones.

⁵⁰ Flick, U. Kardorff, E.v. & Steinke, I. Was ist qualitative Forschung? Einleitung und Überblick, U. Flick, E. Kardorff, v. & I. Steinke (Ed.), Qualitative Forschung - Ein Handbuch, 5. Aufl., Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt (2007), S.13 - 29.

⁵¹ Scheuch, E.K. Das Interview in der Sozialforschung. R. König (Ed.), Handbuch der empirischen Sozialforschung: Grundlegende Methoden und Techniken, Erster Teil, Band 2. Stuttgart: Enke, (1973). Pp.: 66-190.

As the relation between the question and the answer weakens, validity of answers reduces. The lesser subjects were interested in the topic before, the lesser credibility answers bear. The lesser the subject is aware of the topic, the lesser the credibility of his/her answer will be. Credibility of the answer is also reduced, when the individual takes the question as a threat. If questions are organized as judgmental (based on personal judgments), behavioral and perspective-wise this order would increase the credibility.

The more marginal the position of the subject according to the topic, the less valid the answer is. The lower the subject's social position is, the lesser his/her credibility will be. Yet validity is only particular, which means, one invalid answer of a person does not mean other answers are not valid too (Scheuch, 1973).

Conflict of social norms with behavior that is unearthed by the question determines the level of disturbingness of the question (Scheuch, 1973). For instance, if homosexuality causes marginalization, a question about homosexuality will be highly disturbing for a homosexual subject. Thus, if the topic is up to date or not is important (Scheuch, 1973).

We can conclude that: although questions about violence, neglect and Abuse might be disturbing for old aged people who are exposed to these conditions, if these conditions are up to date, the possibility of the subject to overcome the disturbance and tell the truth is higher.

For financially oriented researches, for instance, a decrease in soap sales is related to consumers' changing hygienic behavior. Thus, the question "how many times a week, do you take shower?" would be assumed normal. Yet, the number of answers would not be a lot as hygiene is a personal issue. This is why, psychological "games" are applied for in the making of questions. Questions, for example, may start with the expression: "According to majority..."

Although such a strategy might come up with higher number of answers, a question's level of disturbance and possibility of getting answers are not related (Scheuch, 1973). Disturbing questions might cause the elderly to taboo violence, neglect and Abuse against himself. Thus, the goal is not to get as many answers as possible, but to get credible answers.

Rather than trying to explain why some people choose not to answer a question, with not grounded interpretations, this research preferred attempting to clarify the subject by presuming possible answers given by elder victims of violence.

Strategy of the research brought us to following alternatives: (1) Determining conditions of violence, neglect, and Abuse by indirect questions, (2) to interview only with old aged victims of violence, (3) to interview old aged people whose exposure to violence has been proven.

The first alternative would be slippery as although we can think we are asking "brilliant" questions to old aged people victimized by violence, we can never be sure how brilliant our questions are. In the second alternative, some or all of the subjects may choose not to answer questions truly, as they might be scared or feel ashamed. This would destroy the chances of appropriate assumptions. Even if the subject would say s/he was exposed to violence, this might be triggered by a daily anger, therefore we cannot be sure whether s/he is telling the truth or not. The third alternative requires proofs. Police records or medical reports might be some examples of such proofs. Yet such reports are not accessible (principle of confidentiality), besides only a small number of violent actions within the family against old aged people are reported.

So, the second alternative seems to be the soundest. The subject group will be old aged people who is said to have been exposed to domestic violence. Although it is not impossible for subjects to not to tell truths, the possibility is very low as an old aged person who has never experienced such conditions does not have a reason to blame his/her family.

To determine the number of elders exposed to familial violence is not the main purpose of the research. We cannot access definite numbers in any country. The main purpose of the research is to emphasize the presence of old aged victims of **familial violence**; to observe this conditions in a particular frame; to **bring forth** possible reasons of the condition; and to create awareness for this problem so that some measures can be taken.

It is also possible to observe old aged persons who say they have not been exposed to violence, neglect and Abuse. In this case we would ask them to suppose they were exposed to violence and understand what would they do, or if they would prefer uttering the condition or not. Victims and non victims could have been compared, in an effort to determine the differences. On the other hand, satisfying conclusions **are unlikely in** such a research, as we can never be sure if the ones telling they have not experienced violence, neglect or Abuse are telling the truth. Shame and fear might avoid truths to be told. This is why, the research only includes old aged individuals who accept that they experienced violent actions.

RESEARCH PATTERN

Effecting each step of the research, a research pattern is “a plan which makes it possible for the researcher to find clues and analyze datum to answer the questions he asks” (Ragin, 1994⁵²; Flick, 2007).

Purpose of 1st Turkey Atlas of Gerontology (GEROATLAS) is not only to explain concepts related to aging and senescence from the perspective of old aged people, their experiences, and living conditions, but also to make anticipations. Another purpose is to test relations of empirical evidences to dependent and independent variables via indicators designed by theoretical assumptions. These goals require certain decisions to be taken before the start of the research and studious work on research plan and pattern.

All the decisions taken about how, when, where, how many times the data about elders will be gathered are planned initiatives the which as a whole is a research pattern. Many factors shall be taken into consideration in the making of decisions about research pattern. Especially such factors as financial resources, personnel, nature of the research topic, number and type of scales were very determining in the decisions about the research pattern.

GEROATLAS research, focusing on living conditions and experiences of senior citizens (60+) of Turkey and trying to explain these conditions from different perspectives used Survey Pattern. Reasons for this preference are briefly explained below.

Survey research pattern was not only preferred over other patterns like control grouped pretest and posttest, “Solomon 4 group design” because of its popularity in social sciences.

⁵² Ragin, C. C. Constructing Social Research. Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Pine Forge Pres, (1994).

Survey pattern is also the most appropriate pattern in this kind of researches. This pattern has disadvantages besides its advantages though. Advantageous features of the pattern are that it is inexpensive, it does not require high number of personnel, and it helps collect high number of datum in minimum time as well as it provides an opportunity to “generalize” the collected data (Schnell et. al. 2005)⁵³.

GEROATLAS Selection of Samplings

GEROATLAS worked on a sampling made up of 3150 people aged 60 and higher, in seven cities. In order for the sampling selection be made in a short time with a sound budget, a simple and objective selection of seven districts from Istanbul, İzmir, Antalya, Ankara, Trabzon, Van and Diyarbakır was made. People, aged 60 and older made up the target universe.

The cities that the research was conducted were decided before the start of the research. A city was chosen for each geographical region of Turkey was selected. Each chosen city was to be one of the central cities of its region. Interviews with experts, led us consider population of these cities as reflecting the population of regions they belong to.

The first step for sample selection was to make a list of districts of the aforementioned cities and to determine population of each district. Each district on the lists was numbered and one district for each city was randomly selected. Thus, potential systematic errors were avoided in this step. Akseki from Antalya, Sincan from Ankara, Lice from Diyarbakır, Şişli from Istanbul, Urla from Izmir, Tonya from Trabzon, Gevaş from Van were selected for sampling selections.

The next step after the districts to select samplings were chosen, was the categorization of the old aged population of the districts according to age and gender. Three age categories were created : 60-69, 70-79 and 80+. A total of 8 categories were created when the gender factor was also included.

After the selection of districts, neighborhoods were chosen randomly. Senior citizens residing in these neighborhoods were categorized according to their gender and age. This way the target group was categorized into 7 neighborhoods (one neighborhood from each district), 21 age groups, and 42 gender groups. After these procedures, subjects were chosen from these neighborhoods, and the sampling was made.

Interviews with Elders

Two methods were used in order to access empirical data about violence against, neglecting and Abuse of elders withing in the family. The first method uses interviews with experts with the knowledge of such events, and the second one uses the information given by elders themselves.

Experts were approached with semi standardized interview was applied for, while standardized interview was used for elders. Same questions in the same order were directed

⁵³ Schnell, R., Hill, P.B. & Esser, E. Methoden der empirischen Forschung, 7.Aufl., Oldenbourg: München, Wien, (2005).

to each subject (Bortz & Döring, 2006; Diekmann, 2007⁵⁴).

The part of GEROATLAS on domestic violence, neglect and Abuse was conducted in 2005. Thus all subjects participated in this part of the research.

As said, this problem is a sensitive problem which is tried to be kept secret for various reasons. On the part of the survey related to violence, neglect and Abuse it is reemphasized to subjects that their participation is voluntary, as voluntary participation is very important in social researches (Bkz. Bortz & Döring, 2006).

Interviews With Experts

Mainly qualitative method is used for interviewing experts. Open or semi standardized survey techniques is used about previously decided topics. (Bogner, 2002⁵⁵; Bogner et. al. 2005⁵⁶).

Our lack of knowledge on violence, neglect and Abuse towards elders within family, directed us to interview experts. Experts could have had deeper knowledge about conditions not even publicized. Experts were interviewed multiple times with “open end” questions in order to determine and explain priority problems, and access suggestions for solutions (Bortz & Döring, 2006).

If there is a knowledge deficiency about the research topic, it is appropriate to interview experts and make an evaluation of the issue with the guidance of expert knowledge (Flick, 2007). Thus, a certain lack of knowledge can be compensated by qualitative research. Blumer (1973)⁵⁷ suggests conducting qualitative research for less studied areas.

Interviews were made in 2008, after experts were found, appointments were organized and semi standardized surveys were prepared. The time gap between interviews with experts and with elders did not affect research results as experts and elders made up two different subject groups. Though it may be thought that, if expert interviews are conducted before elder interviews, questions directed to elders might have been more appropriate. Although such a criticism might be right, such an order does not have an affect on violence against elders. If experts had deep and wide knowledge on the problem, they would have conducted a research beforehand. Thus, the already scarce resources were to be used for priority initiatives. Soundness of our decision will be seen in the results of the research.

⁵⁴ Diekmann, A. Empirische Sozialforschung. Grundlagen, Methoden, Anwendungen. 18. Aufl., Rowohlt: Reinbek bei Hamburg, (2007).

⁵⁵ Bogner, A. Das Experteninterview: Theorie, Methode, Anwendung. Opladen: Leske & Budrich, (2002).

⁵⁶ Bogner, A., Littig, B. & Menz, W. Das Experteninterview, 2.Aufl. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaftne, (2005).

⁵⁷ Blumer, H. Der methodologische Standort des Symbolischen Interaktionismus. Arbeitsgruppe Bielerfelder Soziologen (Ed.), Alltagswissen, Interaktion und gesellschaftliche Wirklichkeit, Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, (1973): S. 80 - 146.

Findings

Sampling Selection for Domestic Violence

Whether elders were exposed to violence, neglect and Abuse or not was determined via direct questions. Indirect questions would have directed elders to give untrue answers as they would not understand the purpose of such questions in the beginning of the survey. Therefore, elders “willing” to inform about the condition was selected for survey. To achieve this, before starting interviews, purpose of the survey was explained in details. 107 subjects out of 3510 agreed. Explanation was as below:

“We have met you before and asked you various questions. First of all, we would like to thank you for your time, again. Please listen to my words carefully, before making your decision: Mr/Mrs X, the reason for our meeting today is our interest in the subject related to senior citizens that many researchers in many foreign countries are conducting research about. According to these researches, some of the senior citizens are exposed to domestic violence and pressure, while some are being neglected and exploited.

No research has been conducted in Turkey on this issue. The reason for this is the inability of telling others about the situation. Fear and shame, for example, may silence many elders. Yet, for us, expression of experiences is the true way. A proverb says: “He who keeps his worries to himself can find no remedy”.

It is generally accepted that elders are respected and protected, yet, the truth is that this is not true for all elders. Thus, I want you to answer a question, and if you answer is no, our conversation will end here.

As you know, you answers will be kept confidential, and will not be shared with any third person or institution. I do guarantee this, and I ask? If you are exposed to domestic violence, neglect or Abuse would you be willing to answer our questions, or not? Please take a moment and think about it before making your decision.”

Analyses made afterwards, are only limited to subjects who said “yes”. This group makes up 3.1% of the GEROATLAS sampling. If we consider that randomized sampling was made, we can assume that 3 out of 100 elders in Turkey are targeted by violence, neglect and Abuse. This approximates 200.000 elders, constantly or intermittently exposed to violence, neglect and Abuse.

The Sampling

31 (29%) of the elders accepting to answer our questions (total of 107) were male and 76 were female (%71). Women are significantly higher in number.

Table 2: Gender

	Number	%
Male	31	29,0
Female	76	71,0
Total	107	100,00

Age of the elder and exposure to violence, Abuse and neglect are inclined to be related, as physical and mental assets change in accordance to age. These changes increase the risk of being considered as burden. Therefore age related distribution of this sampling seems important. It is striking that almost 1 of 2 individuals is aged 80 and above 48,6%.

Table 3: Age Groups

	Number	%
60-64	10	9,3
65-69	12	11,2
70-74	14	13,1
75-79	19	17,8
80-84	31	29,0
85-89	14	13,1
90+	7	6,6
Total	107	100,00

Another question is whether region of residence is related to violence, neglect and Abuse. In this sampling, such a relation has not been observed. Differences of numbers are not statistically meaningful. Though Abuse, neglect and violence against elders are related to environment, it is not related to geographical “region”. What is meant by environment is the living spaces of senior citizens. Family is the most important of these environments in senescence though it is not the only living space. Thus, any conclusion about relations of geographic regions and domestic violence against elders would be wrong. Such a conclusion would be a big mistake and may even cause the problem create new problems.

Table 4: Distribution of subjects according to cities

	Number	%
İstanbul	18	16,8
İzmir	16	15,0
Antalya	17	15,9
Ankara	13	12,1
Trabzon	16	15,0
Van	14	13,1
Diyarbakır	13	12,1

Findings on Questions of the Research Questions

Complaints

Analysis of answers showed that the most complaint behaviors are disgraceful words and threatening. Almost all of the subjects expressed that they are exposed to these behaviors. 80% are exposed to neglect, 78% are exposed to castigation and 63% are exposed to violence. If we consider answers to particular 6 questions, it is concluded that these elderlies live under threatening conditions.

General Evaluation of Answers

A total of 33 questions related to violence against, neglect and Abuse of elders were asked. Answers were recorded as “yes” or “no”. As the order of questions is important for th analyses of answers, questions were not listed from bigger numbered to smaller. Because of the order of questions, the numbers under the column “total” shall be taken into consideration. Only “yes” and “no” answers were taken into consideration. The proportional values according to questions can be understood only in this way. Below explanations were made in accordance with question order. Also, below is the brief analyses of the table.

Graphic 3: Conditions of exposure to actions of violence, neglect and Abuse

Violence, Neglect and Abuse

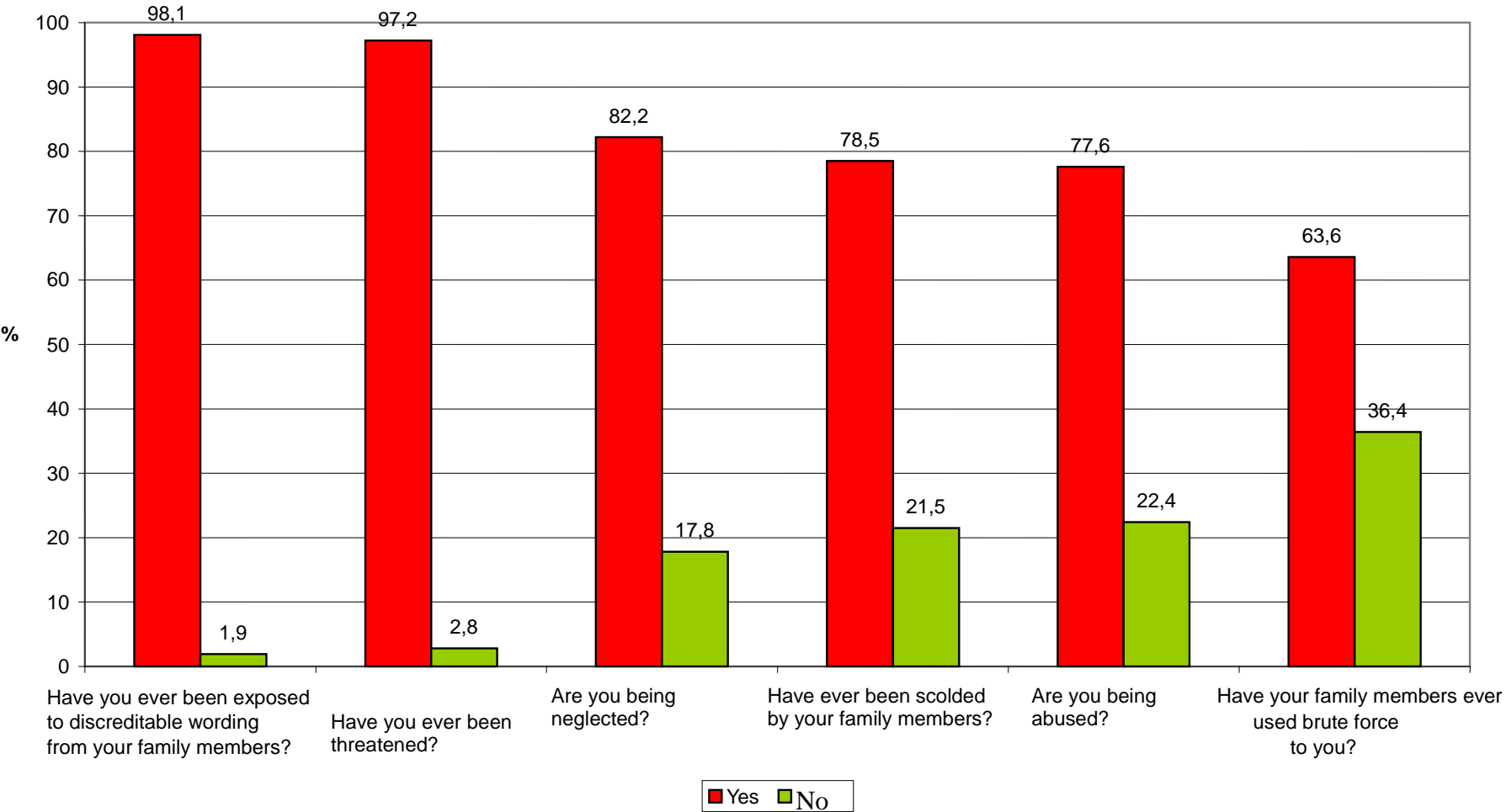


Table 4: A General View on Answers

Question	No (%)	Yes (%)	Total (Number)
Has s/he faced bodily violence in the last 5 years?	57,9	42,1	107
If yes: has s/he faced bodily violence in the last one year?	25,6	74,4	43
Did s/he get injured because of this attack?	79,1	20,9	43
Did the attacker use any tools like stick or knife?	88,1	11,9	42
Did the neighbors hear the attack?	67,4	32,6	43
Are the institutions informed?	90,5	9,5	42
Did you visit any medical institution following the event?	83,3	16,7	42
Does the physical violence continue?	38,1	61,9	42
Has s/he faced psychological violence in the last 5 years?	34,6	65,4	107
If yes: has s/he faced psychological violence in the last one year?	8,6	91,4	70
Psychological violence is generally carried out via words! (If not with: gestures)	54,3	45,7	70
Does s/he need help for bodily hygiene?	51,4	48,6	107
If yes: Is there anyone to help her/him for bodily hygiene?	0,0	100,0	52
If yes: Does the help come timely?	78,8	21,2	52
Does s/he need help for changing her/his dresses?	61,7	38,3	107
If yes: Does anyone help him/her change clothes?	0,0	100,0	40
If yes: Does the help come timely?	50,0	50,0	38
Does s/he need help for her/him eat and drink?	74,8	25,2	107
If yes: Does anyone help her/him eat ?	0,0	100,0	27
If yes: does this person helps him/her eat at time?	59,3	40,7	27
Are her/his psychological needs taken into consideration?	71,0	29,0	107
If no: Is this deliberate or not?	75,0	25,0	76
Is there anyone with whom s/he shares his problems with?	64,5	35,5	107
If yes: can s/he communicate this person any time s/he needs?	78,8	21,2	33
Is s/he forced to help with housework?	77,6	22,4	107
Does s/he have his/her own income?	44,9	55,1	107
If yes: can s/he use his/her income on his/her own?	66,1	33,9	56
If not: does s/he give his/her income to the family?	13,5	86,5	37
Does s/he have property?	68,2	31,8	107
If yes: can s/he use his/her own property as s/he wish?	77,4	22,6	31
If not: has s/he signed away the property?	60,0	40,0	25
If not: Does do family force for signing it away?	42,9	57,1	14

Current Problem

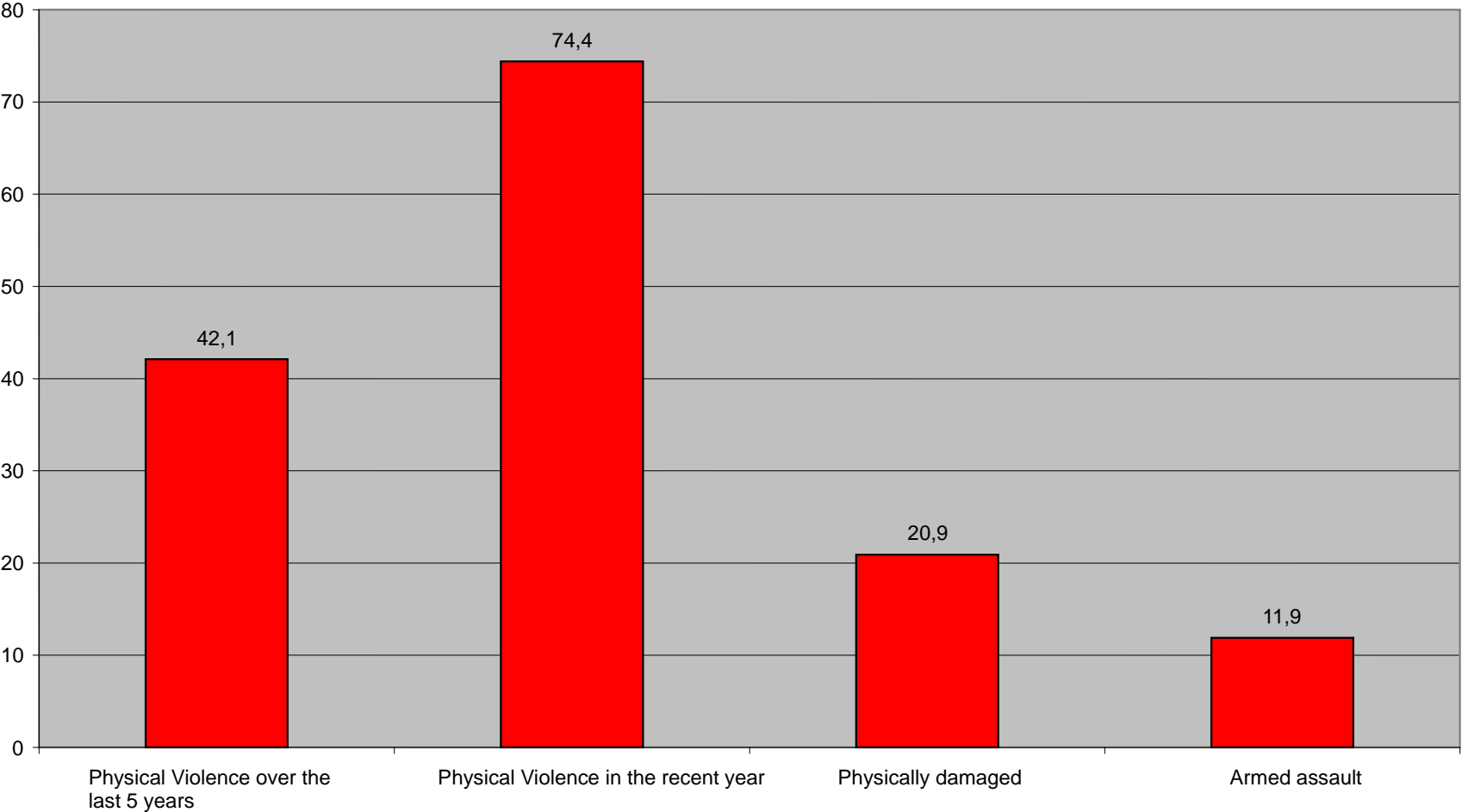
42% of the elders explaining that s/he has been exposed to violence, and experienced neglect and Abuse claims that s/he is also exposed to corporal violence in the course of last 5 years. Yet, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of this group of 43 were exposed to corporal violence in the course of last 1 year. Hence, it would be appropriate to consider domestic corporal violence against senior citizens as a current social problem.

Application of Violence

It is observed that 1 old aged individual of every 5 who have been exposed to violence, has been injured bodily. Bodily injury, here, is externally given damage to human body as broken or dislocated bones, or swollen body parts. 1 out of every 10 elders who have been exposed to corporal violence, have been attacked by a tool like sticks or knives (approximately 12%).

Graphic 4: Exposure to violence during the last 5 and 1 years

Physical Violence



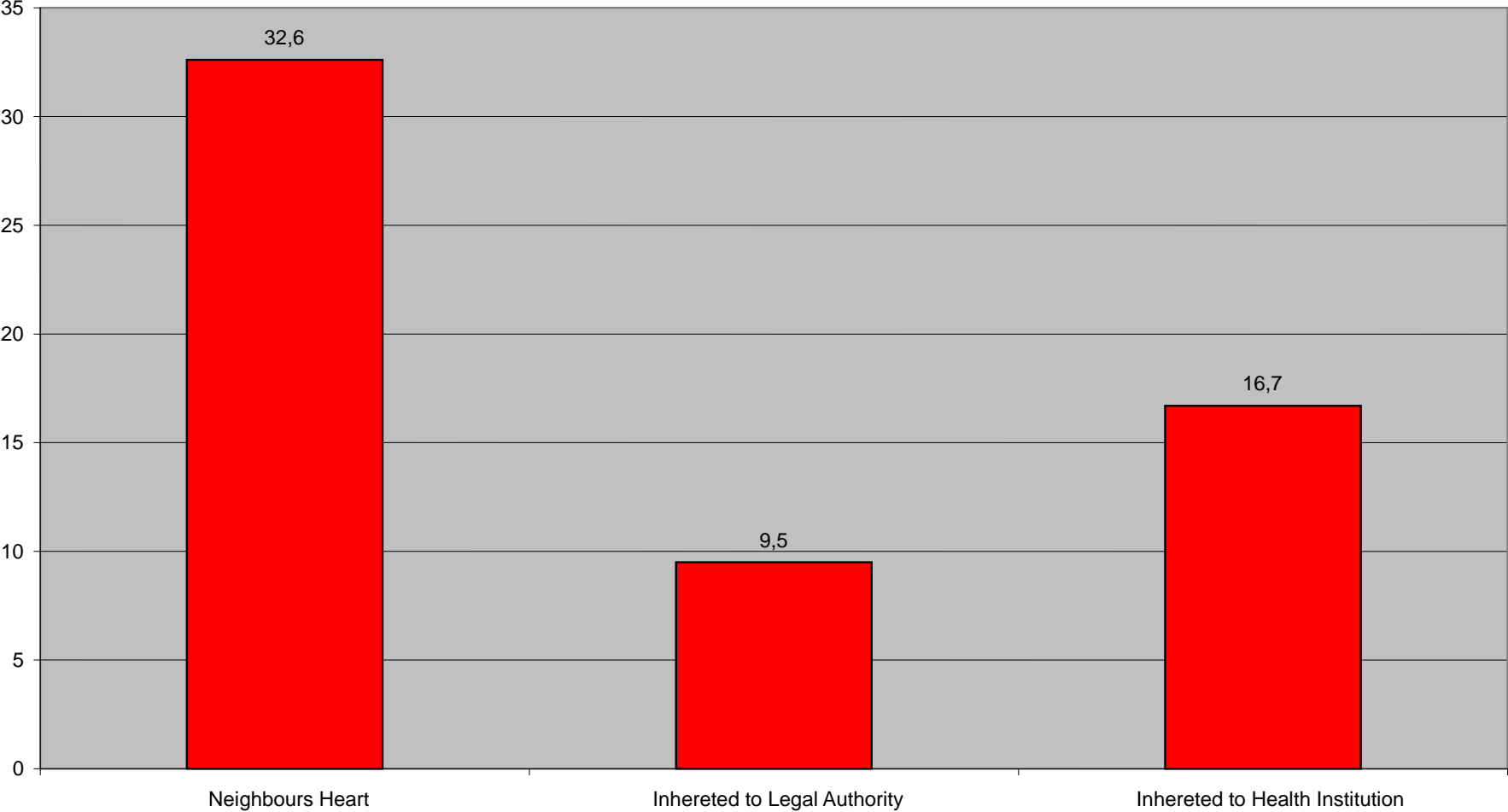
Not Institutions but Acquaintances Know

Answers for whether neighbors know about the situation or not, are one of the proofs that violence against elders is tabooed. Yet, we can also assume that such conditions are tried to be secret by the family. Acquaintances of 3 elders out of 10 do know about the condition, while situation of only 1 has been reported to public institutions. This means social environment is more knowledgeable than public institutions on the situation, although it is scared to tell what it knows. Therefore, violence against elders becomes hand to hand with passivity.

17% of the elderlies who were exposed to violence, say they needed to go to a medical institution because of the bodily injury. On the other hand, we cannot conclude that the rest of the elders did not need to visit a medical institution. It should rather be assumed that, most of such incidents end with bodily injury, most of which are "home cured". Efforts to keep the situation secret, and the likelihood of the incident being realized by doctors avoid elders to be taken to medial institutions. Most of the elders do not have many opportunities. Oppressed elders are to bear the injuries made on their bodies. In Germany, for instance, it is obligatory to take children to doctor every two years, in an effort to determine any domestic violence, or neglect. Such an obligation might be considered for 90+ age group and elders with mental disabilities.

Graphic 5: Is the condition known to social environment

Inheretence to Environment



Constant Threat

Another result emphasizing the fact that corporal domestic violence against elders in Turkey is a current social problem are the answers to the question whether violence continues or not. 6 elders out of 10, who are exposed to violence, explain that the condition continues. Daily or intermittent exposure to violence has been proven by evidences.

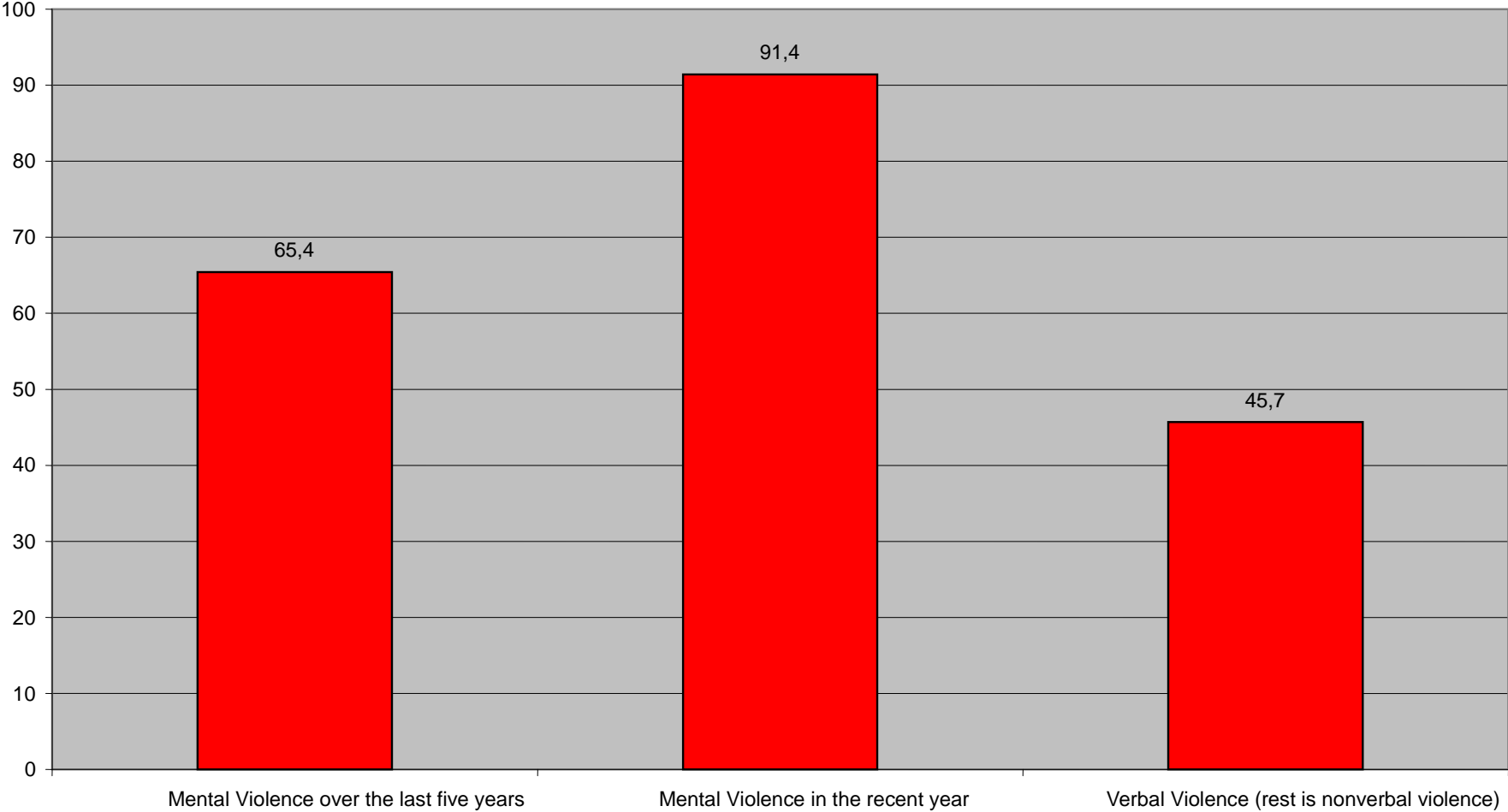
Psychological Violence

It is observed that psychological violence is as threatening as bodily violence for senior citizens. Psychological violence is known to be wide spread in every culture. It is for example, observed that, many people experience psychological pressures from their families and friends via internet. Some countries broadcast tv videos warning citizens against violence. Yet, psychological violence is kept to be ignored.

66% of 107 elders talk about psychological violence in the family. 91% of these explain that the violence continues. 46% says the violence is verbal, while 54% says psychological pressure is applied by gestures.

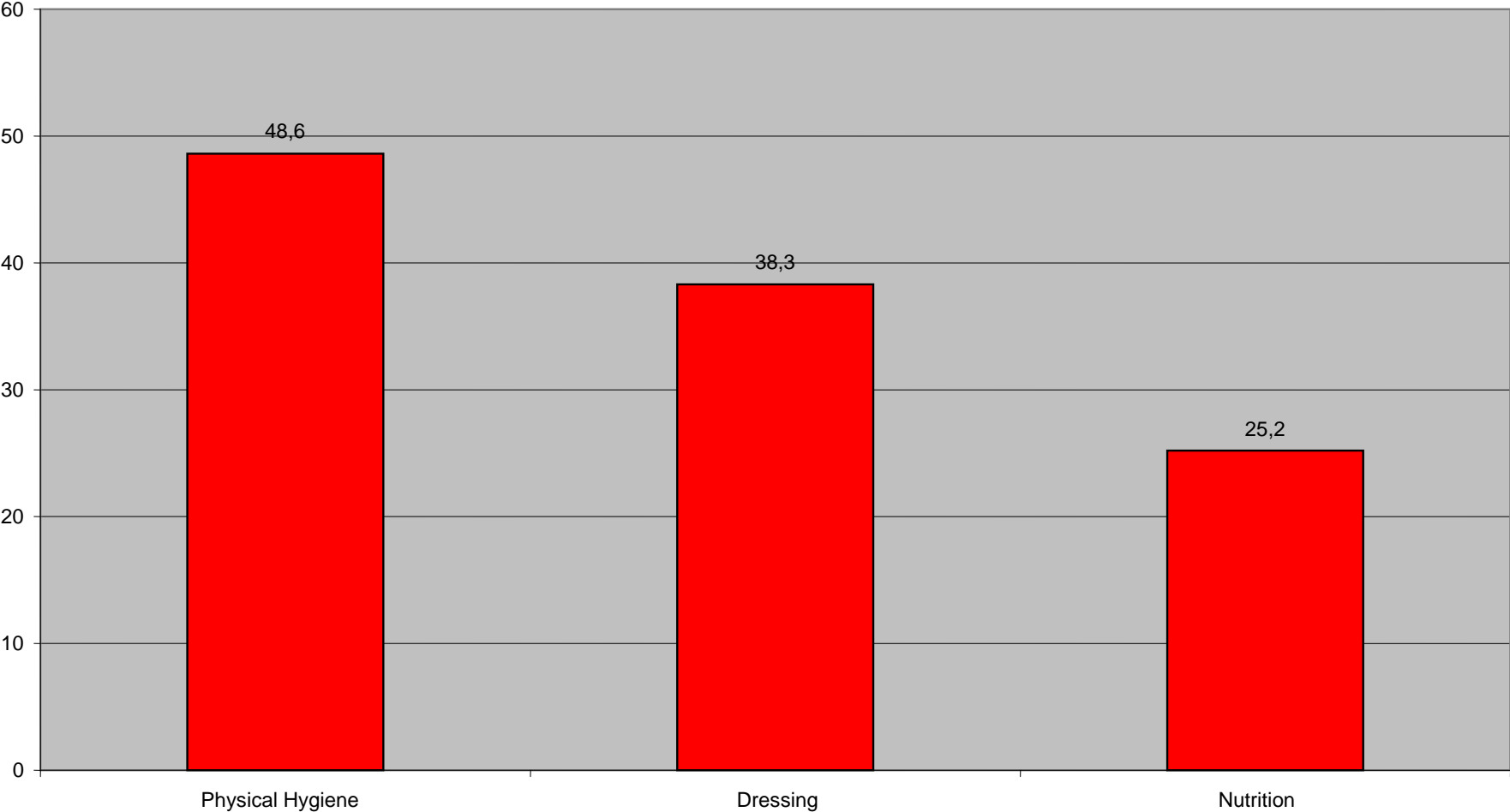
Graphic 6: Psychological Violence

Mental Violence



Graphic 7: Care Dependence

Care Neediness



Neglect Increases As Physical Power Decreases

We have already mentioned that loss in physical functions is an important factor in violent actions against elders. 49% of the elders who are exposed to domestic violence explain that they need another's help for their personal hygiene. All of the elders in this group of 52 say that they are being helped by a family member for this condition. Thus, the often repeated fact, that the family does not escape the responsibility of taking care of the elder member is proven once again. On the other hand, only 21% of this help comes on time, which signifies negligence in care.

38% of the elders need help while changing clothes, and again all of them are helped. Yet only 50% are helped on time.

25% needs help for eating, and is helped by a family member. Yet, more than 40% say that they are not given meal on time (when s/he is hungry).

Not only physical injury but also psychological harm of negligence shall be noted. 71% of these elders indicate that their families are not aware of their psychological needs $\frac{3}{4}$ of which believes this is caused by ignorance rather than bad will. 35% say they can share their worries with one or more family members, yet only 21% is able to share their emotions when they actually need.

5 out of 10 elders indicate that they are forced to do housework. 55% say they have income 66% of whom say that they do not have the freedom to use their income. 9 out of 10 elders indicate that they give their money to the family. 32% indicate that they own property 77% of whom cannot use their property as they wish, while 40% indicate that they handed their property over their family, and 57% of the ones who have not handed over their property tell that they are exposed to pressures on the issue.

These findings signify that old aged victims of domestic violence are a social fact. Elders are exposed to various types of neglect and Abuse, which are types of violence.

In case of care dependence, although families do care their elders, this care does not seem to respond to needs of the elder. Negligence seems to be highly wide spread. Social environment is silenced although they are aware of the situations of violence, neglect and Abuse. Reason for this may be sociocultural, while on the other hand, it might be considered as alliance of the actors experiencing similar conditions.

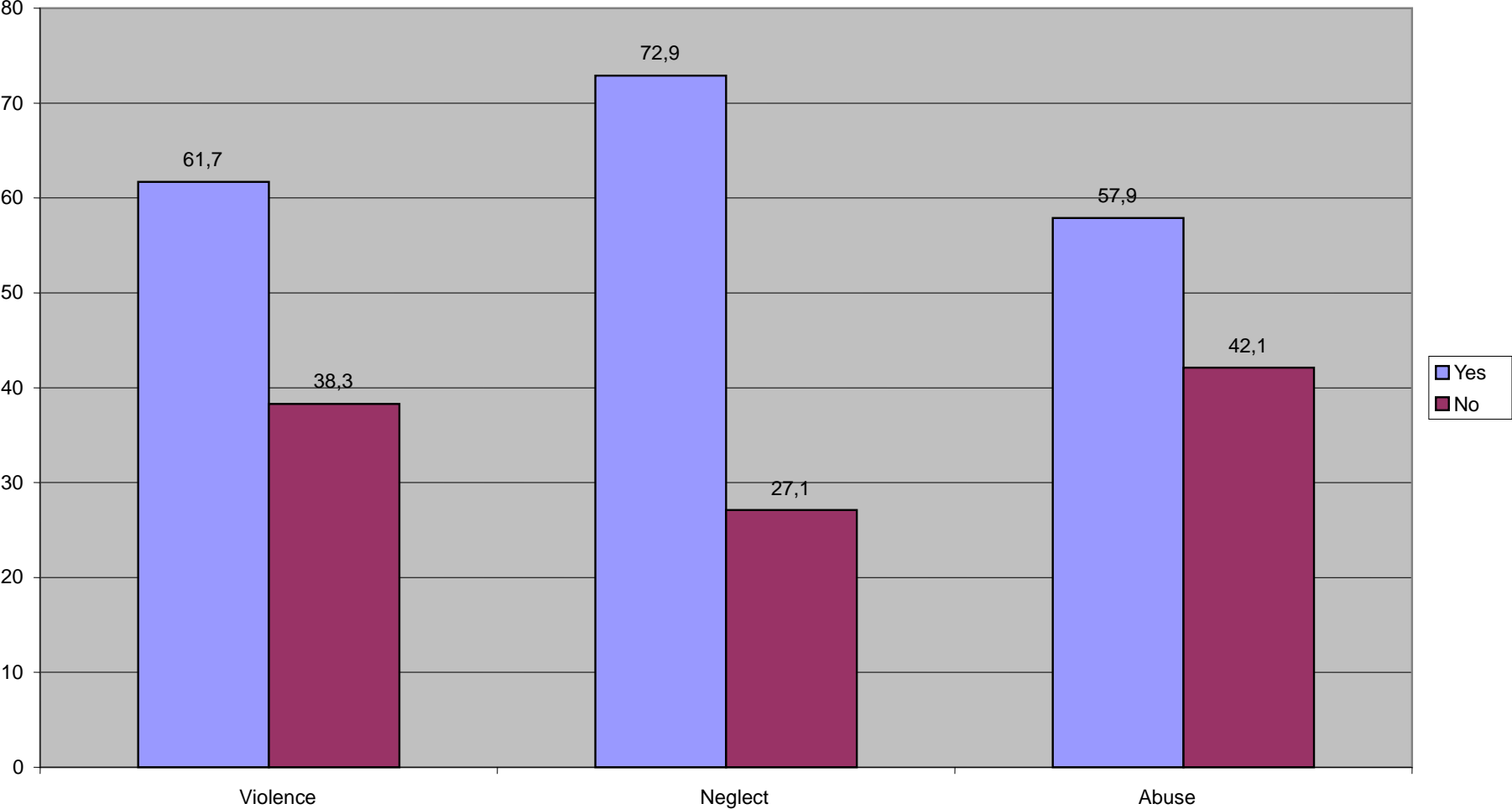
It is observed that police and other public institutions are not informed about domestic violence against elders generally. Public institutions shall try new initiatives concerning the situation. Families are inclined to keep the situation secret, while trying to solve the problem themselves. This conditions can make the situation insolvable, as problems unknown to public can easily be ignored and thought to be myths.

Abuse and Neglect of and Violence against Elders

We asked subjects to tell us about neglect, abuse and violence. The first question was about which one of these they were exposed to. Subjects were asked to answer just by “yes” or “no” and the answers in between, like “i don't know” were not among the alternatives. Yet, they were given the option to say “i do not want to answer the question”. Yet, every subject answered our questions. The graphic below shows the distribution of answers in accordance with three topics. The largest group is of the ones who have experienced neglect (73%). Yet the proportion of the ones exposed to violence (63%) is disturbingly high. 58% of the subjects indicate that they are abused. The analyses can get one step further here, in order to discover whether abuse and neglect are applied together. This may be a useful additional information, yet it is not difficult to guess that the elderly exposed to violence will be exposed to abuse and neglect. Thus, further analysis may be made later.

Graphic 8: Violence, Neglect and Abuse

Violence, Neglect, Abuse



Diseased, Disabled and Care Dependent are Under Bigger Threat

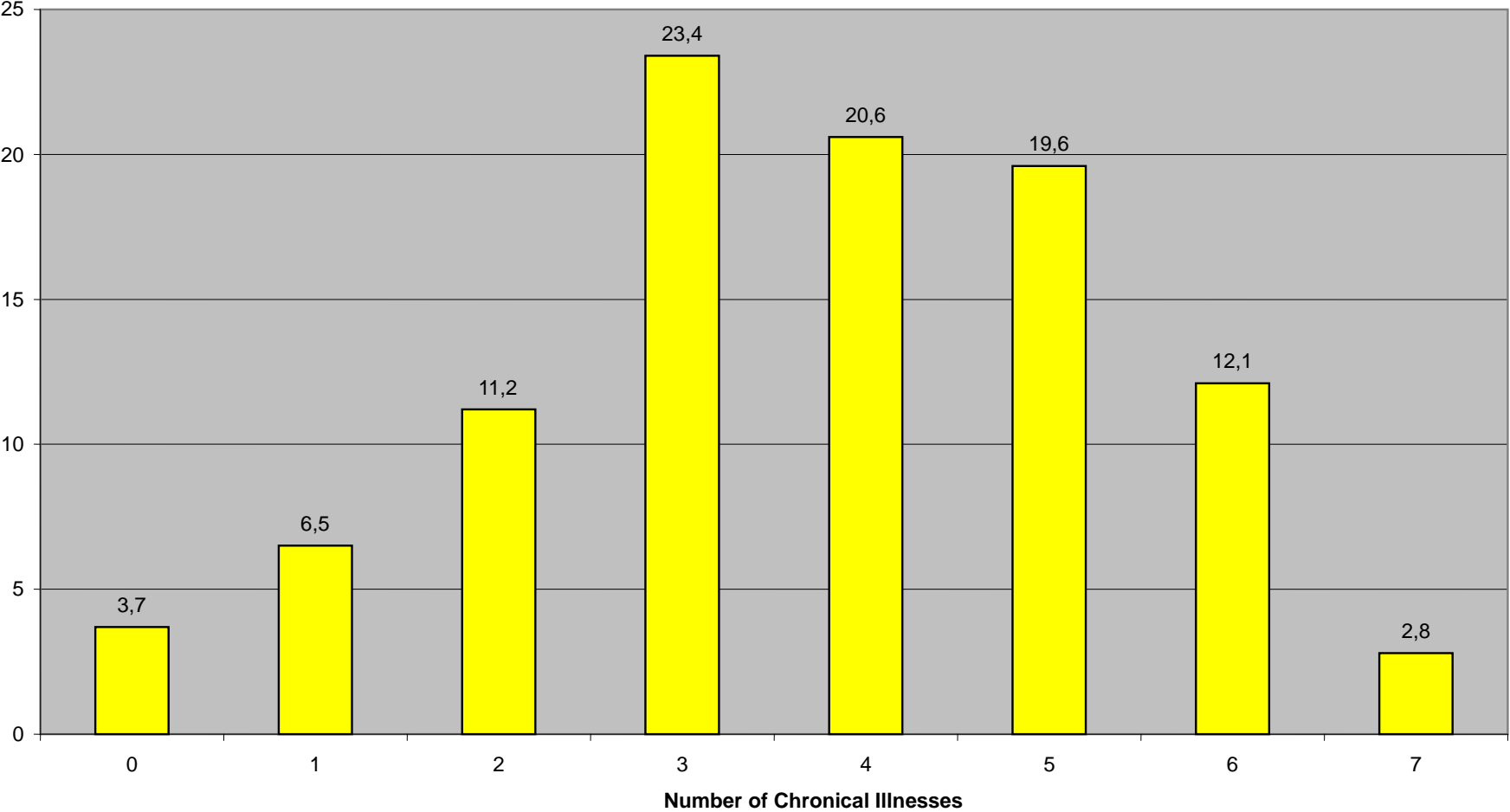
Not only age and gender, but also health condition, disability and care dependency are important factors in exposure to violence as violence, neglect and abuse is about actor's feeling more powerful than then the victim s/he chooses. The more powerless the victim is perceived by the actor, the easier s/he will be inclined to perform neglectful, abusive and violent actions.

In senescence it is not only the possibility of diseases that increase, but also the possibility of developing multiple chronic illnesses. This condition (multimorbidity) is proved to be one of the typical features of senescence. Among the victims of violence, neglect and abuse are the ones whose care dependency has become higher due to health conditions. As disadvantageous this condition is for elders, it becomes advantageous for violent actions.

The number of chronic illnesses in the sampling varies from 0 to 7. 3.7% of the subjects do not have any chronic illnesses, yet 64% has 2 to 5 chronic illnesses, and 15% has 6 to 7 chronic illnesses. This condition is not only another proof for what has been found out in other researches, but also another reason for old aged individuals with chronic illnesses to be exposed to violence, neglect and abuse.

Graphic 9: Multimorbidity

Multimorbidity

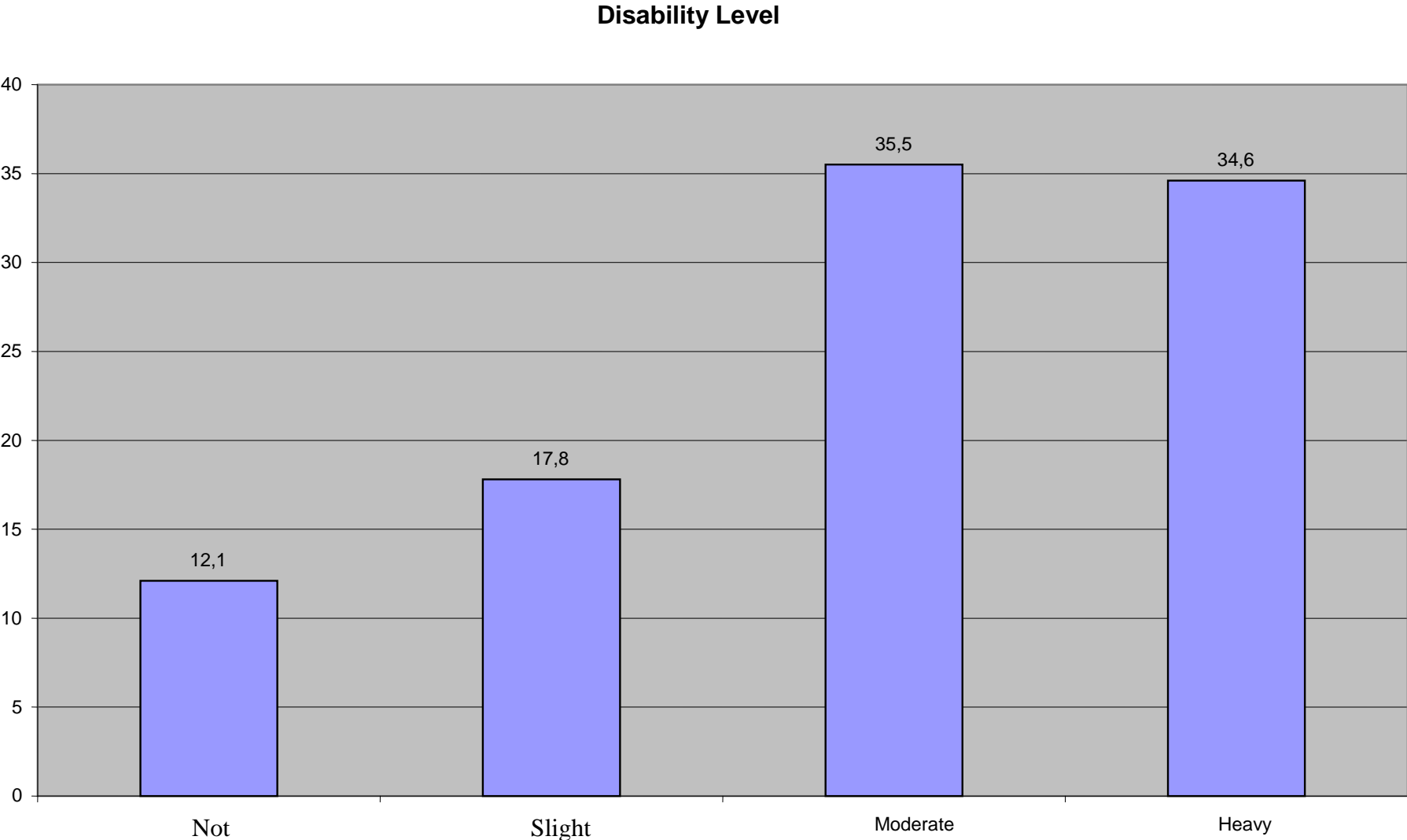


Another reason to make the elder dependent to other family members is disability. Level dependency changes according to level and type of disability.

We will only focus on the "level" of disability, but not focus on the type of disability here. We consider "level" not as an objective medical diagnosis, but as individual's personal and subjective understanding. We also assume that every individual would estimate his/her level of disability fairly. We make three categories: "mild", "moderate" and "severe" disabilities.

Such an evaluation shows that 9 subjects of 10 have disability. We may conclude that disability in senescence is an important risk factor causing violence, neglect and abuse. Level of disability is another factor to support aforementioned conclusion. 70% of the subjects have "moderate disability". (35,5% have mild and 34.5% have severe disabilities.)

Graphic 10: Disability Level

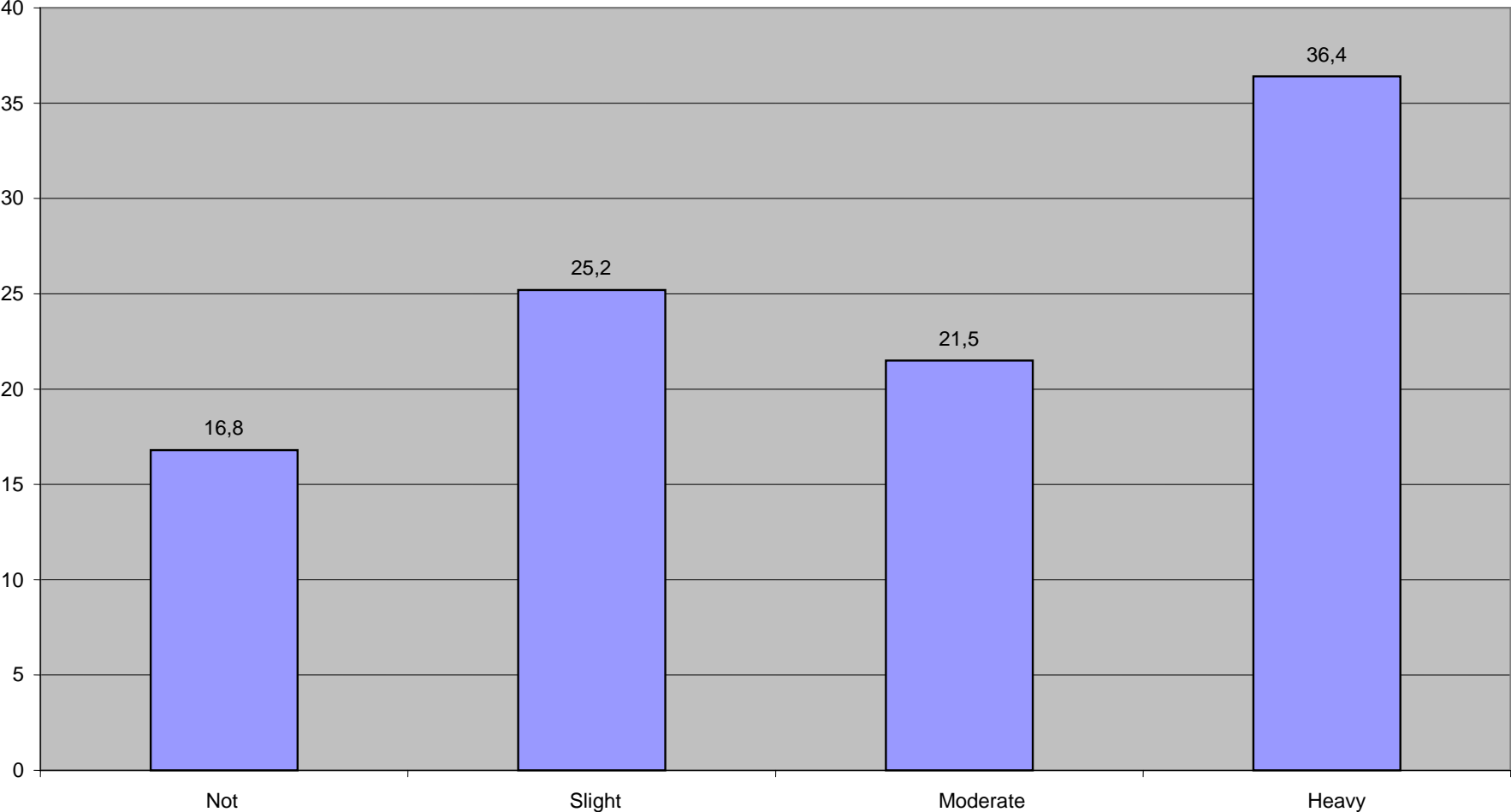


Every chronic illness and disability does not make the individual care dependent. Care dependency is about “special care needs” that emerge when the individual cannot perform daily activities by himself/herself. For example, if the person needs help for such activities like taking shower, visiting bathroom and eating which has to be performed everyday and multiple times a day there is “care dependence”. Ailments and disabilities can cause care dependency. But care dependence is “a condition of special care needs” (Klie).

Approximately 17% of the subjects are not care dependent. The rest have care dependencies of mild, moderate and severe levels. The most interesting and important finding is that the number of individuals with severe care dependency is significantly high (36.4%). This finding confirms our previous assumption that there is a strong relation between care dependency and the possibility of being victimized by domestic violence.

Graphic 11: Level of Care Dependence

Care Dependence Level



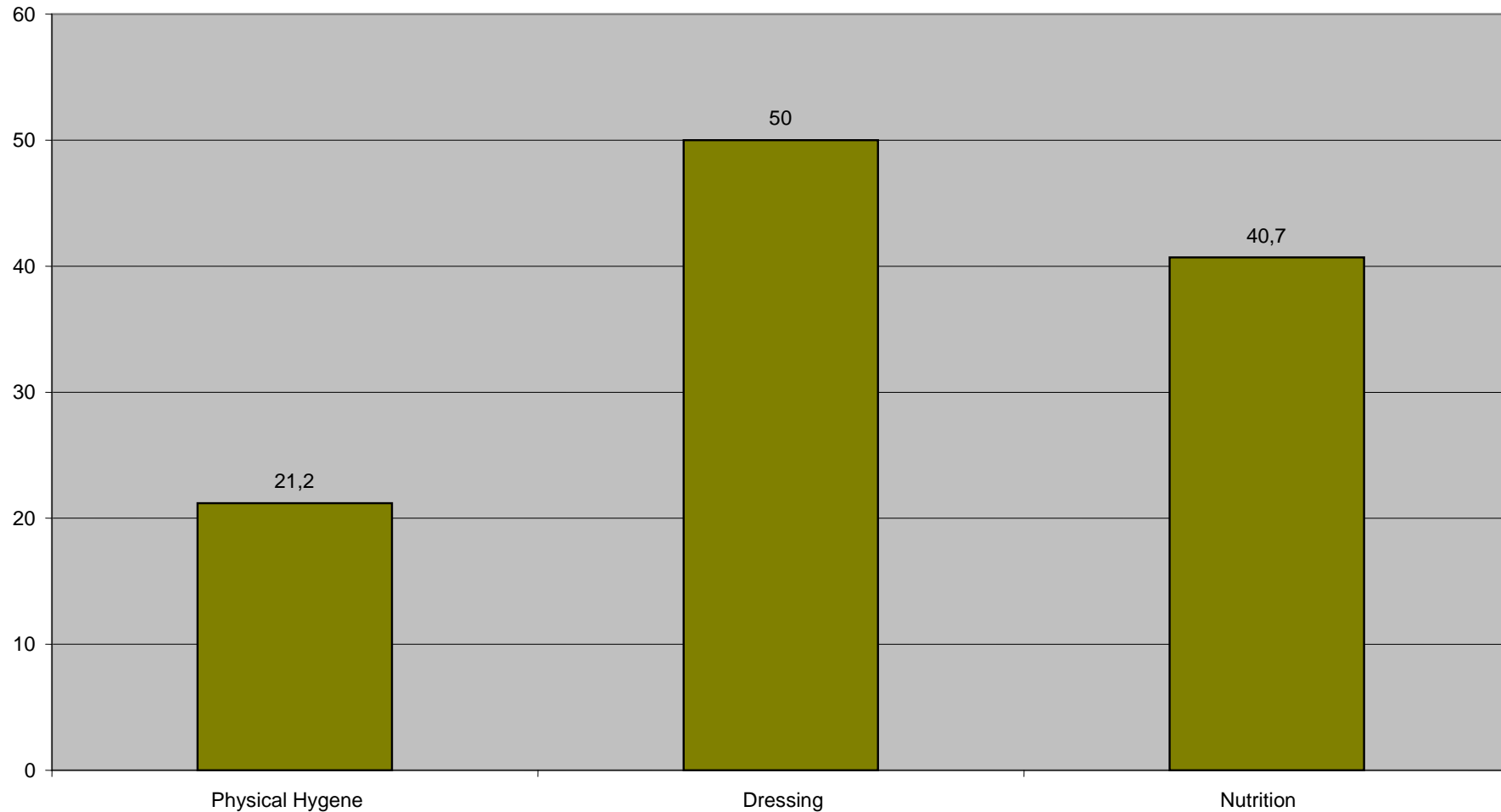
We asked care dependent elders who the carer is. We have to note that, the person performing violent actions does not have to be

the carer. There possibly are carers who do apply violence against elders, but we shall not equate carer with violence as the carer might also be the one who protects the elder from the violence applied by another family member.

For various reasons, subjects were not asked to tell names. Telling a name would be complaining and accusing a family member which might later conscience-wise disturb the elder. On the other hand, this would have presented us more responsibilities. If we know the name, we have to inform the related institutions, ins spite of the guarantee of confidentiality promised in the beginning of the survey. It should also be noted that, although we consider information given by subjects as truths, we cannot be 100% sure. Then, there is a risk of blaming a person who is not guilty. So, subjects were not asked to give names of the ones performing violent actions. Trailing crime is not duty of a researcher. A researcher is responsible for bringing up empirical evidence indicating social problems. It such evidences have been put forward, then the related institutions shall take initiative. Findings of our research should not only concern police and politics, but every one of us.

Graphic 11: Timely Help

Timely Help



Findings reemphasize the respect for elders. This research, like previous ones, shows that care dependent elders are cared by their daughters and daughters-in-law (81%). Carers of 12% are partners (wife/husband), and 10% are sons.

If we accept that the most vulnerable group to violence is care dependent elders, we can make a statistical analysis of relations of

care dependency and risk of concurrence of neglect, abuse and violence. As care dependence is determined via nominal scale, this analysis was made by Cramer-V method. Statistically meaningful difference was only observed on the concept of “violence”. No statistically meaningful differences were observed between care dependency and neglect and abuse. Hence, differences in the distribution of answers are considered to be coincidentally emerge under conditions of neglect and abuse, and there is no systematic relations. Differences related to “violence” on the other hand, are not coincidental but systematic. The picture is even more clear when we conduct same analyses on disability and chronic illnesses. In all three conditions (care dependency, disability and chronic illness), a statistically meaningful differences have been observed. According to findings, we can conclude that risk of care dependent, disabled or chronically diseased elders to be exposed to violence is high. On the other hand, causes of this situation cannot be determined via these findings. Reasons shall be studied in a different research. Another conclusion made from the answers is that distribution of answers given by disabled elders show systematic differences, real reasons behind which is not possible to be observed in this research. Type and level of disability and general living conditions of the family might be possible reasons.

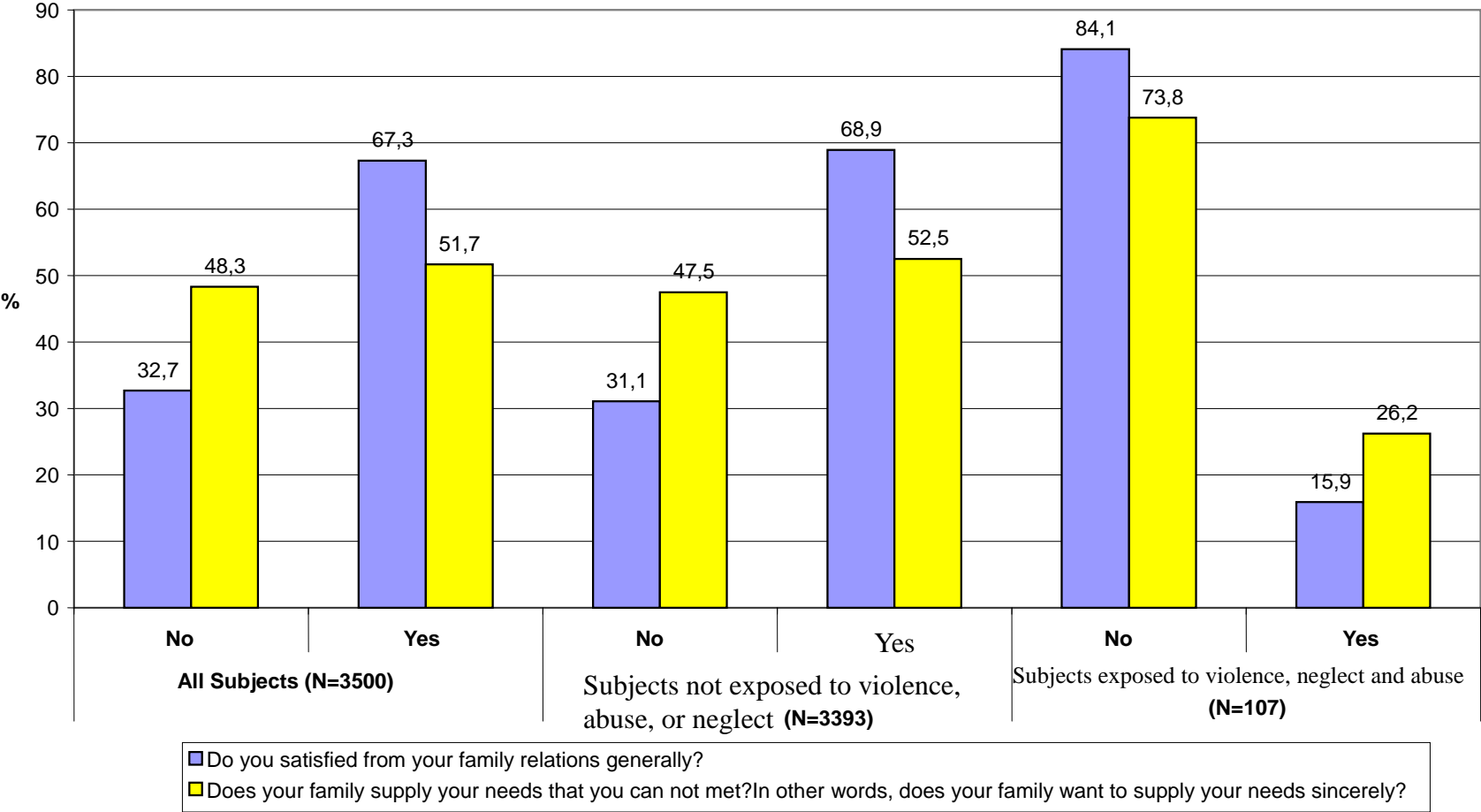
Discontentment in Family Relationships

Another question directed to elders was about their level of contentness in family relationships. In order to let them give a definite answer, elders were given only two options as answer: yes, or no. 32.7% of 3510 subjects indicated their discontent with the general circumstances. 48.3% of the answers to the succeeding question asking whether his/her needs are cared by family gave negative answer.

When we compare answers of the subjects who have not been exposed to violence, neglect and abuse, with the ones who have experienced we observe a significant difference. 68.9% of the non-victims indicate that they are happy with their relationships. On the other hand, only 15% of the elders who indicate that they are exposed to violence, neglect and abuse evaluate their relationships as positive. (As not all elders are exposed to violence, positive family relations are normal)

Graphic 12: Relationships within family

General Situation in Family Relations



victims of neglect, violence and abuse markedly negative answers to the questions about care for their special needs. Only 26.2% indicate they are pleased with the care, while this number is 52.5% in the other group. Thus, 3 out of 10 elders are not satisfied with his/her relations with the family, while almost 5 elders out of 10 suspect honesty of the care.

How They Perceive Their Own Conditions

Our research exhibited that the number of elders victimized by domestic violence, neglect and abuse is high in Turkey, like in many other countries. Of course, such a conclusion can be made only if we consider answers to be truths.

As we perceive this, we wonder how elders cope with the situation. A very detailed research is required in order to answer this question. Yet, as we have mentioned before, this research is a later integrated part of a larger research (GEROATLAS) with the purpose of exhibiting the presence of violence against elders rather than putting forward detailed evidences. Therefore, the question of how elders psychologically fight this condition will be answered more generally according to our findings.

Ailments, disability and care dependence create psychological pressures. Objective and subjective ailments are considered separately. This is not a recent discovery, but we may rather call it re-discovery. Human kind has always been aware of the difference of body and soul.

Violence, neglect and abuse create psychological pressures too. Hence, intellectual, emotional and behavioral reactions observed in diseased shall be observed in victims of violence too. Mental, emotional and behavioral reactions developed in an effort to avoid present or anticipated pressures are “coping” (Lang & Faller, 1998). It should be noted that these reactions shall not be considered instantaneous.

Table 5: Questions to identify reactions.

	Behavioral Reactions	
E1	Re-focusing attention	I create various hobbies and stick with them, in order to forget.
E2	Charitable actions	I help other elders so that they would not end up like me.
E3	Active avoidance	I keep my mouth shut. No words, no maltreatment.
E4	Compensation	I prepare little gifts for myself when I feel depressed.
E5	Constructive Activity	I phone my old friends.
E6	Draw Back	I shut myself into my room, and do not talk to anyone to feel better.
E7	Address himself/herself to housework	I need to help with housework, everything gets better when I do housework.

E8	Consultation	I seek for someone to share myself, and sometimes I find people who listen to me.
	Intellectual Reactions	
B1	Re-focusing attention	There are more important things in my life, I do not care about this.
B2	Acceptance	There is nothing to do, this is my fate.
B3	Downplay	There is no need to exaggerate, everything else is good.
B4	Calmness	I try to keep it secret, no one should know about this.
B5	Analyzing the problem	Why I am treated like this?
B6	Relative perspective	Considering people in worse conditions, my condition is good.
B7	Piety	Everone on the world has problems, but God protects me.
B8	Anxiety	I keep thinking, should it have been another way.
B9	Giving meaning	I am maltreated, but I succeeded to understand myself by bearing this.
B10	Realizing his/her own value	There have been many nice things in my life, I can bear this.
	Emotional Reactions	
D1	Protest	I keep thinking about the same thing: "What have I done to them?"
D2	Emotional Discharge	I can still cry at least. It relieves me.
D3	Supression	No need to be anxious or scared. Everything can happen.
D4	optimism	I should hold on to my faith, everything will be better one day.
D5	Passive collaboration	I do my best to not to annoy them.
D6	misfortune	Everything is wotrhlless for me now.

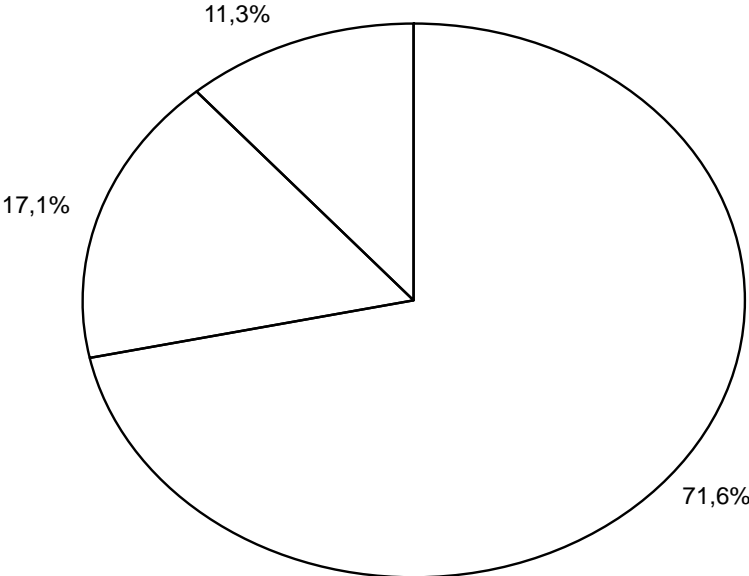
Yet, because of the aforementioned reasons, observation of the processes that lead to these reactions is not possible. Thus subjects were asked to explain their current conditions, and 26 questions were directed. These questions were categorized in three: 8 questions concerning behavioral reactions, 10 questions about intellectual reactions, and 8 for emotional reactions were asked. Subjects were not required to answer all questions but rather to choose one option from every category that defines their current conditions best. This way reactions were tried to be understood. Questions were inspired by Lang and Faller (1998).

Behavioral Reactions

Even these answers given to focused questions make the impression that violence, neglect and abuse are so influencing that it can even homogenize the population of old aged people that gerontologists call heterogen and make the situation harmonical with prejudices. When faced with pressures, most of the elders (72%) choose to stay silent. This is the indicator of lack of opportunities of self defense. Devoid of hope to be helped, pushes these people into "inactive state". To lock oneself into a room

might be considered as staying away from violence. Yet the 17% cannot get out of the violent environment. The rest, finds the solution in sending themselves on an errand, in order to curry favor and cultivate tolerance.

Graphic 13: Behavioral Reactions



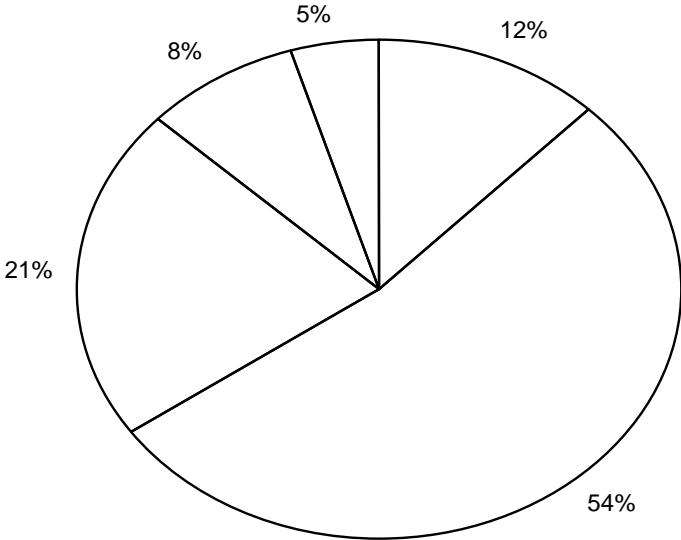
- It's better not to speak, I suffer lesser pain when I don't say anything (71.6%)
- I'm closeted to my room and secluded recover myself (17.1%)
- Everything goes better when I help to houseworks (11.3%)

Intellectual Reactions

Thoughts are said to be free. Only 5 of the questions on this statement (out of 10) were answered. The largest group is of people who try to keep his/her condition secret (54%) SO, the need for keeping the situation secret is reemphasized. As they cannot explain the situation, they themselves are helping the situation to be tabooed. On the other hand, this is not because they want to keep things secret, but because they lack the opportunities to make themselves heard.

The next group is of “the concerned” and “the anxious” who tries to discover the reasons of the situation themselves (21%) The third group is of people have submitted to destiny (12%) who has lost their faith in change. An 8% tries to compare their situations with others, in an effort to feel better. To think “there are some under worse conditions than me” is practically the same with submission to destiny. The smallest group (5%) is of the people who tries to “understand themselves” taking lessons of “personal development” from the situation.

Graphic 14: Intellectual Reactions

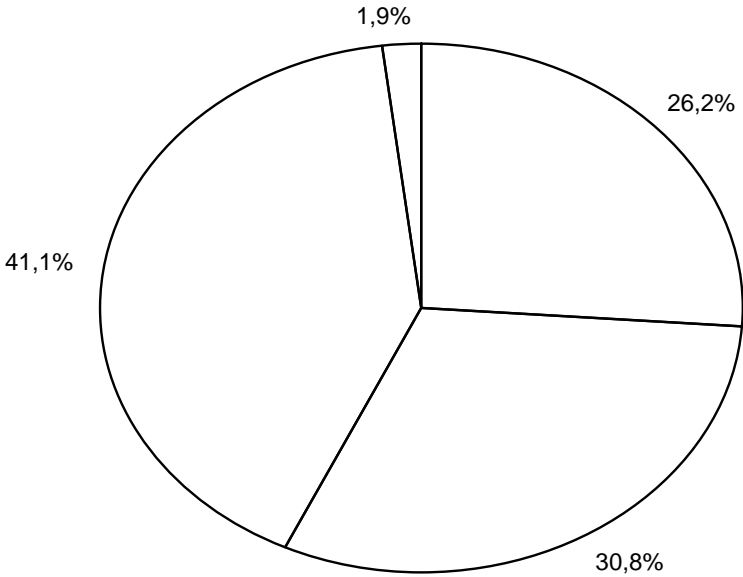


- There is nothing to do, this is my destiny (54%)
- I try to not to show anyone, nobody has to informed about the situation (21%)
- I'm thinking on why I behaved like that(12%)
- Are there anyone in the world without pain, but God protects me(8%)
- I suffer so much pain, but I succeeded to better find myself by tolerating these(5%)

Emotional reactions

The last category is the emotional reactions of elders. We come across with three groups here: emotional “protester” (“what have I done to them?”) (26%), inverted “emotional discharge” (“I am relieved when I cry”) (31%), and the biggest group thinks their lives are stripped of any meaning (“everything is meaningless”) (41%). The answer of the third group indicates a severe depression, and the people in this group possibly are suicidal.

Graphic 15: emotional reactions



- Same question is always in my head: "What did I do to them?"(41.1%)
- I feel myself so much unhappy, at least I didn't forget crying. Crying makes me relax(30.8%)
- Nothing is meaningful to me now (26.2%)
- I don't deserve this(1.9%)

Argument

The only purpose of this research is not only to exhibit the violence that senior citizens are exposed to, but also to question how Gerontology approaches to certain problems. Gerontology, brings together theoretical knowledge of various fields in an effort to understand processes of aging. Taking aging as a process, it exhibits a wide field of study. Gerontology is trying to answer find out how and why processes of aging occur, and if these processes may be interrupted (Wahl & Heyl, 2004)⁵⁸. Conclusions of this research should be evaluated in this sense.

Sociologists indicate that every individual bears a part of society, and every society bears a part of individual. Thus, each individual is a representative of the society, and each society is the indicator of the individuals that it is made up of. Therefore, this research is our own reflection. It is understood that our praised asset, “respect for elders” is relative, and should be re-considered.

One should look at the individual in order to see the society. This research reflected the society from the perspective of senior citizens, and shown that family is not simply a place of peace but also an environment full of threats for an old aged individual.

Informations about demographical shifts, indicate that the population of old aged people will increase. Though this is an important information for gerontologists, it is not enough. The important thing is, how this information will be projected on generations aging and aged people. We cannot include this extensive knowledge in this research. We have started sharing information about successful aging, gratification of life in senescence and intergenerational relationships. Yet, our biggest problem is the little number of the people willing to listen to us. “the old age myth” seems to survive for long years, and our society will relieve its conscience with dreams, while still allowing the heartbreaking realities of elders to go on.

We generally define senescence in relation to calendar age. Yet this research shows that senescence is more than how many times we revolve around sun. It is seen that senescence is not only a physical problem but a social concept.

As targets of violence, neglect and abuse health conditions of old aged people are under threat too. We cannot explain the high number of psychosomatic disorders, depression and depression related suicide among old aged people and solve the problem with mere theories. We can carry the burden of old age, by bringing up more doctors and building up more hospitals.

What we used to consider as old age, is now considered as middle age. This is noteworthy, because it shows how the definition and perception of senescence change according to times and societies.

It is now accepted that senescence is related to social and financial preconditions (Rosenmayr 1996). Desperation caused by living conditions, as objective reasons behind violence, neglect and abuse against elders, is reflected back to elders and

⁵⁸ Wahl, H.-W. & Heyl, V. Gerontologie – Einführung und Geschichte. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, (2004).

signals a big threat for the society.

Senescence is a period of life when we are marginalized from work life. This is a design built on law, yet to tear someone apart from the work life. On the other hand, retirement should not be equated with retirement from life. Senescence should not cause individuals to socially die.

Social designs of senescence is full of social and psychological constraints. We are in a time when people who do not feel old are considered to be old. Retirement is considered to be the start of senescence, but it only changes the legal statute of an individual, not his identity.

The statute of “elderly” gained by retirement, shall not only be related to disadvantages. Contrarily, we should be able to use advantageous parts of it. There are various examples of it in Gerontology. To do this, we have to accept that senescence is a complicated concept that we define via cultural understandings, social labels, different experiences and biological features. We have to change the mental image we created about senescence. We have to increase the number of our perspectives of perceiving senescence rather than thinking about when senescence starts. Then, we can discover the contributions one can make to the society in his/her senescence (Wahl & Heyl, 2004).

Our mental image of senescence is focused on ancient ideas. An Egyptian scholar (B.C. 2500) says “How piteous is an old man's end!” (Wahl & Heyl, 2004). We cannot consider senescence as an ailment like Aristoteles did. Nor we can define elder people as “wreckage” like Seneca (Tufan, 2007).

On a report published by Republic of Turkey Ministry of Development, It is said that “when we observe social behaviors towards elders in our country from a historical perspective, we see that Turks have always protected their elders”. These words should be actualized.

Senescence should not become an insolvable social problem (Backes, 1997) that we inherit from one generation to the other. We have to start solving the problem by accepting it as a problem first, and then being discovering today's senescence by giving up with senescence of ancient times.

If there is enough inclinations, findings of this research can make a good start. We can see that to save old aged people from the claws of violence actually means to save senescence, and to re-define it.

If family “reflects values, traditions, tastes, beliefs and prejudices or simply culture of the society” (Yörükoğlu), then is violence against old aged people a part of our culture? Should we not start fighting to clean our culture from this?

Our perception of old aged people, affected by our relationships with family members and our behaviors and attitudes, create threatening conditions for elders. Such risks, on the other hand are also indicators of the family falling apart. If the family is broken, we may be concerned about the future, and about who will care for old aged people.

It is understood that in families where old aged people are exposed to violence, neglect and abuse, this falling apart has already started. If the possibility of this condition to become wide spread is considered, protection of elders becomes even more vital.

Increased number of elders, and social aging created by increased life expectancy, highlights the importance of family. If families abandon their responsibilities for elders, then the state will be to take over the responsibility. Yet we cannot sacrifice elders just to not to scare families. The state is never excluded from this situation. Thus, it shall do what shall be done, and prepare the conditions for this.

Family may be observed from different perspectives, like as an “institution”, or in relation to developments within itself, or with respect to factors that cause its development. Still, family is a vague concept sometimes it is defined as “the smallest unity of society created by marriage and blood bond, and made up of relationships of partners, children and siblings” (Institute of Turkish Language), sometimes defined as the smallest social institution, and sometimes as a “human community bonded together by marriage, blood or adoption who live together, share their incomes, affect each other according to different roles they have, and carry its own kind of manners from generation to another” (Şahinkaya).

Though they try to define the same thing, differences of these definitions are striking. The first definition, focuses on “blood bond” and claims that solidarity between family members are created by blood bond.

The most ambiguous definition is the second one; “smallest social institution”. This definition is not valid for today's living conditions. Or example, imagine a woman who had made two marriages, and have children from both. All children have blood bonds with each other. But, for the woman, children of both marriages are her family. If this woman becomes care dependent, which of these children will be considered as the “smallest social institution”? There are more complicated family relationships that nullify this definition.

The third is the most detailed definition of family. It includes, sharing of the same living space and financial resources, different social roles, adoption, interactive communication and cultural qualities of family. This definition is also the one to consider complicatedness of domestic relations. Each of indicated factors has an effect on intergenerational relations.

On the other hand, these complicated relationships can both be useful and harmful for elders at the same time. Inevitable relationships and dependencies can create such threats.

Relationships become even more important in senescence. Many researches show that elders generally focus their lives on families. Relationships with partners, children, grandchildren and siblings indicate the strong relations between senescence and family. Therefore, family, for elders, is not only of children. Relationships with grandchildren and siblings are also included.

Family relationships make up the most credible and strong support net for elders.

The research also shows that in spite of maltreatment, old aged people continue to live with their families. This does not mean every family is problem free. Elders bear violence, neglect and abuse as they do not have any other alternatives.

Relationships with partners also gain more positive meanings in senescence. Old couples have less fight, and their relationships are better (Levenson, Carstensen & Gottmann, 1994; Lang, 2000). On the other hand, it is seen that elders value their siblings who are alive, more than their partners. The research shown that old aged people who have never married seems to have stronger relationships with their siblings. Elders who do not have children keeps their relationships with their siblings stronger. Relationships between sisters are more intense than relationship of sisters and brothers. Relationships between siblings get weaker when the mother dies.

Elders consider family as the center of social relations. Social relations of an elder is measured by size of his/her social environment, frequency of communications and the quality of relationships (Rosenmayr & Rosenmayr, 1978)⁵⁹.

The research showed that a certain group cannot benefit opportunities of living in a family. These people are who the society taboo and does not want to see as they disturb social conscience. These people do not look like the sweet, wise and white bearded elders of their dreams. In order to create the elder we dream of, we have to step into a world with social justice. Senescence should be the engine for this step, as we live in an aging world.

Table 6: Statistical significance test.

	Care dependency	Disability	Chronicle Ailment
Neglect	0,06	0,001**	0,1
Abuse	0,3	0,02*	0,1
Violence	0,03*	0,001**	0,004**

⁵⁹ Rosenmayr, L. & Rosenmayr, H. Der alte Mensch in der Gesellschaft. Reinbek: Rowohlt, (1978).

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