



E25 Honor Killings in Turkey: Facts and Figures

Itir Erkan, MSc, Yeni Yuzyil University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Cevizlibag, Topkapi, Istanbul, TURKEY; Rakel Rozant, MA, Maltepe University, Institute of Social Sciences, Psychology Program, Istanbul, TURKEY; E. Hulya Yukseloglu, PhD, Istanbul University, Institute of Forensic Sciences, Cerrahpasa, Istanbul, TURKEY; S. Sebnem Ozcan, PhD, and Gavril Petridis, PhD, Yeni Yuzyil University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Cevizlibag, Topkapi, Istanbul, TURKEY; and Ersi Abaci-Kalfoglou, PhD, Yeni Yuzyil University, Faculty of Health Sciences, Yilanliyazma Cd., No 26 Cevizlibag, Istanbul, TURKEY*

After attending this presentation, attendees will be informed about the idea of honor killings and the way it is covered by the Turkish Law.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by alerting attendees to this cultural phenomenon.

Many countries all over the world are experiencing honor killings for different reasons. Depending on the culture, the level of education, the environment, the living conditions, the written or simply verbal rules and the position of women in society, this issue is named differently. Honor killings are called “the passion killings,” in Europe, whereas Asia and Africa call them “honor killings.” Data in Turkey shows that between 2000 and 2006 there has been 1,091 honor killings. The reported reasons for honor killings are vendetta, family conflict, sexual harassment, prohibited intercourse, rape, and simply honor. According to the survey, the number of cases increases as education level decreases. Victims are not solely women and the number of male killed seems to be higher than those of females. The age of the perpetrator ranges between 19-35 years. The highly populated cities of the country are more likely to host the killings, because the action generally does not take part in its origin but in a big city where the parties have migrated. Particularly inadequate housing facilities, lack of education, unemployment, and poverty are triggering factors. Honor killings vary from country to country. Nearly twenty women are murdered per year because of honor violations despite the opposition of the Royal Family in Jordan. Whereas in Lebanon, the murder of a person based on an honor issue may be saluted. In Europe the situation is somewhat different. The problem in Europe is seen much more in immigrant populations. Germany, Sweden, Italy, Denmark, France, Belgium, Great Britain, and the Netherlands have to face the honor killing issue in their immigrant populations. The reported number of the honor killings by the United Nations Population Fund is approximately 5,000 women victims per year. But it should be noted that a part of honor killings is disguised as suicide or accident which if included would elevate the actual number. Although the old Turkish penal code underestimated honor killings and envisaged a lower penalty in the new Turkish Penal Code, “honor killings” are considered as regular homicides and the perpetrators are sentenced to life in prison. As a result, the economic structure the level of development, the education/training programs and their application, the legal arrangements, the status of women’s rights and women’s awareness, the cooperation between institutions and organizations, and the media coverage are important factors affecting the issue.

Honor Killings, Woman’s Rights, Turkey