

Economic Abuse in Low and Middle-Income Countries: A Scoping Review

TRAUMA, VIOLENCE, & ABUSE

1–16

© The Author(s) 2025



Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/15248380251325194

journals.sagepub.com/home/tva

Sangeeta Chatterji¹ , Julia O'Connor² , Ariana Zane¹,
and Janina Isabel Steinert³

Abstract

Economic abuse (EA) comprises behaviors that impact an individual's ability to acquire, use, or maintain economic resources, threatening their financial security and well-being. While research on EA has increased in the last two decades, most studies have been conducted in high-income countries with little evidence on how EA manifests in different sociocultural contexts. This mixed-methods scoping review provides an overview of the state of knowledge on EA among adults in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), focusing on the conceptualization and measurement of EA, including culturally specific forms of EA, and outlining risk factors and consequences of EA to guide future research, policy, and program development. We searched for eligible studies in the *ProQuest Social Science Collection*, *APA PsycINFO*, *Web of Science*, and *Medline* and identified 30 studies across 20 LMICs published in English up to May 2024. Culturally specific forms of EA in LMICs that emerged from this review included refusal to contribute financial resources, restricting access to shared housing, bride price and dowry-related tactics, and exploitation of women's labor. Findings also highlighted the role of sociocultural norms in shaping the kinds of EA women faced. Gendered norms around women's and men's economic roles, including customary marriage practices and patrilocalty, emerged as the main risk factors. Several studies found linkages between EA and poor mental and physical health and financial hardship. EA also often co-occurred with other forms of abuse. Studies highlighted the need for gender-egalitarian legislation, increasing awareness of EA, survivors' knowledge of financial practices, culturally sensitive interventions, and longitudinal research.

Keywords

economic abuse, economic coercion, IPV, domestic violence, cultural context

Introduction

Economic abuse (EA) is a lesser-known form of abuse used to threaten a survivor's financial stability to keep them dependent on their abuser. It includes behaviors that impact an individual's ability to acquire, use, or maintain economic resources, threatening their financial security and well-being (Adams et al., 2008). EA has three overarching categories: economic restriction, exploitation, and education and employment sabotage. Economic restriction includes refusing to provide money, food, and other essentials; forcing a partner to ask for money; monitoring a partner's expenses; and hiding and denying access to financial information to limit a partner's economic resources. Economic exploitation includes tactics to forcibly or fraudulently use a survivor's financial resources for their benefit (Adams et al., 2020; Stylianou, 2018). This can include behaviors such as stealing, gambling, using joint money, creating debt in the intimate partner's name, and intentionally harming a partner's financial resources and credit history (Johnson et al., 2022;

Stylianou, 2018). Employment and education sabotage encompasses behaviors that prevent survivors from working or obtaining education or training, harassing them at their workplace, and preventing them from creating financial assets (Postmus et al., 2016; Yount et al., 2021).

EA can have a devastating impact on a survivor's health and financial security by limiting their access to economic opportunities, assets, and long-term financial capabilities. Experiences of EA have been associated with increased material and financial hardship in the form of lower educational attainment, earnings, housing instability, material hardship,

¹University of Edinburgh, UK

²University of Utah, Salt Lake City, USA

³Technical University of Munich, Germany

Corresponding Author:

Sangeeta Chatterji, School of Social and Political Science, 2.03, Chrystal Macmillan Building, University of Edinburgh, 15a George Square, Edinburgh EH89LD, UK.

Email: s.chatterji@ed.ac.uk

and coerced debt (Adams et al., 2013; Johnson, 2021; Voth Schrag et al., 2020). EA limits survivors' access to economic resources and increases their financial dependence on their partners, making it harder for them to leave abusive relationships (Heron et al., 2022; Voth Schrag et al., 2019). In addition to financial well-being, EA also has adverse impacts on health. Studies have established a link between EA and depression and post-traumatic stress symptomology (Postmus et al., 2012; Voth Schrag, 2014; Voth Schrag et al., 2019). While these studies highlight the harmful effects of EA, they have primarily been conducted in the US, and there is a lack of information on the manifestations and impact of EA in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

In addition to descriptive research, measurement research on EA has been primarily conducted in high-income countries (HICs). Adams et al. (2008) developed the first comprehensive measure of EA, the Scale of Economic Abuse (SEA), in the US (Adams et al., 2008) to capture two dimensions of EA: economic control and economic exploitation. Eight years later, Postmus and colleagues revised the SEA (Postmus et al., 2016), adding a new subscale of employment sabotage (SEA12). More recently, Adams and colleagues revised the SEA to create a shorter form of the scale, the SEA2. The subscale for "economic control" was renamed "economic restriction," recognizing that economic control is a form of abuse (Adams et al., 2020). These three widely used measures of EA were tested in the US with a sample of low-income women who were accessing services for domestic violence (Johnson et al., 2022).

Conversely, the Economic Coercion Scale (ECS-36) is the only measure developed and tested in an LMIC, Bangladesh (Yount et al., 2021). It has two subscales assessing barriers to acquiring economic resources and interference with using or maintaining them (Yount et al., 2021). The two dimensions of EA in the ECS-36 overlap with those identified in SEA, SEA12, and SEA2. The main distinction is that the ECS-36 does not include tactics to damage consumer credit or hide investments, as they are not relevant for rural Bangladesh, where the measure was tested, highlighting the importance of creating culturally sensitive measures.

Current Study

To date, three reviews of research on EA have been conducted; all three emphasized the need for more research on EA in LMICs (Johnson et al., 2022; Postmus et al., 2020; Yau et al., 2021). These global reviews focused on the conceptualization and measurement of EA (Postmus et al., 2020), the measurement and impact of EA on mental health (Yau et al., 2021), and the impact of EA on survivors (Johnson et al., 2022). Existing reviews have stressed the importance of understanding how different cultural norms shape individual experiences of EA, its impact on survivors, and their help-seeking behaviors. For example, cultural marriage practices such as dowry can be used to exploit women in South Asian communities (Anitha, 2019; Chowbey, 2017; Steinert et al., 2023). In their review,

Yau et al. (2021) also note the need to assess the relevance of existing measures of EA, most of which were developed in the US, for different sociocultural settings to gain a more nuanced understanding of the scope of EA outside of the US. While past reviews have highlighted the nature of EA and its impact, to the best of the authors' knowledge, no studies have yet focused on the role of cultural norms in influencing women's experiences of EA in LMICs or identified its risk factors. The current review addresses this gap by providing an overview of the state of knowledge on EA in LMICs, focusing on the conceptualization and measurement of EA and documenting risk factors and consequences of EA.

Methods

The three main questions that guided this review are: (a) how have researchers defined and conceptualized EA in LMICs, including culturally specific forms of EA? (2) how have researchers measured EA in LMICs? and (c) what are the risk factors and consequences of EA in LMICs? After finalizing the research questions, we registered a protocol for a scoping review in March 2024. We followed Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) framework for conducting scoping reviews along with updated guidance (Levac et al., 2010). Databases included the *ProQuest Social Science Collection* (including ProQuest Sociology collection, Social Science database, Criminal Justice database), *APA PsycINFO*, *Web of Science*, and *Medline*. Search terms included keywords for EA ("economic abuse" OR "financial abuse" OR "economic violence" OR "coerced debt" OR "economic control" OR "employment sabotage" OR "economic exploitation" OR "financial exploitation" OR "financial control" OR "financial conflict" OR "economic conflict") AND terminology for IPV ("intimate partner violence" OR "intimate partner abuse" OR "domestic violence" OR "domestic abuse" OR "dating violence" OR "battered women" OR "gender-based violence"). We used Covidence to organize and screen documents for this review. The inclusion criteria were: (a) EA experience is the focus of the study, (b) research is conducted in LMICs, (c) EA is experienced in intimate relationships, excluding studies that investigated EA in the context of elder abuse, and (d) full-text publication available in English. There was no limit to the year the study was published, as this is a growing field of research, but the end date was May 2024. We used the World Bank's (2023) classification for country and lending groups to identify LMICs.

Eligibility Criteria

Our search yielded 378 research articles on EA. After removing duplicates, 173 unique studies on EA were available for our review. Two authors screened the articles in the first step and had a 92% agreement rate for the initial screening process. They resolved discrepancies based on a discussion of the methodology of the studies. Out of these 173 studies, 137 studies were excluded because they were

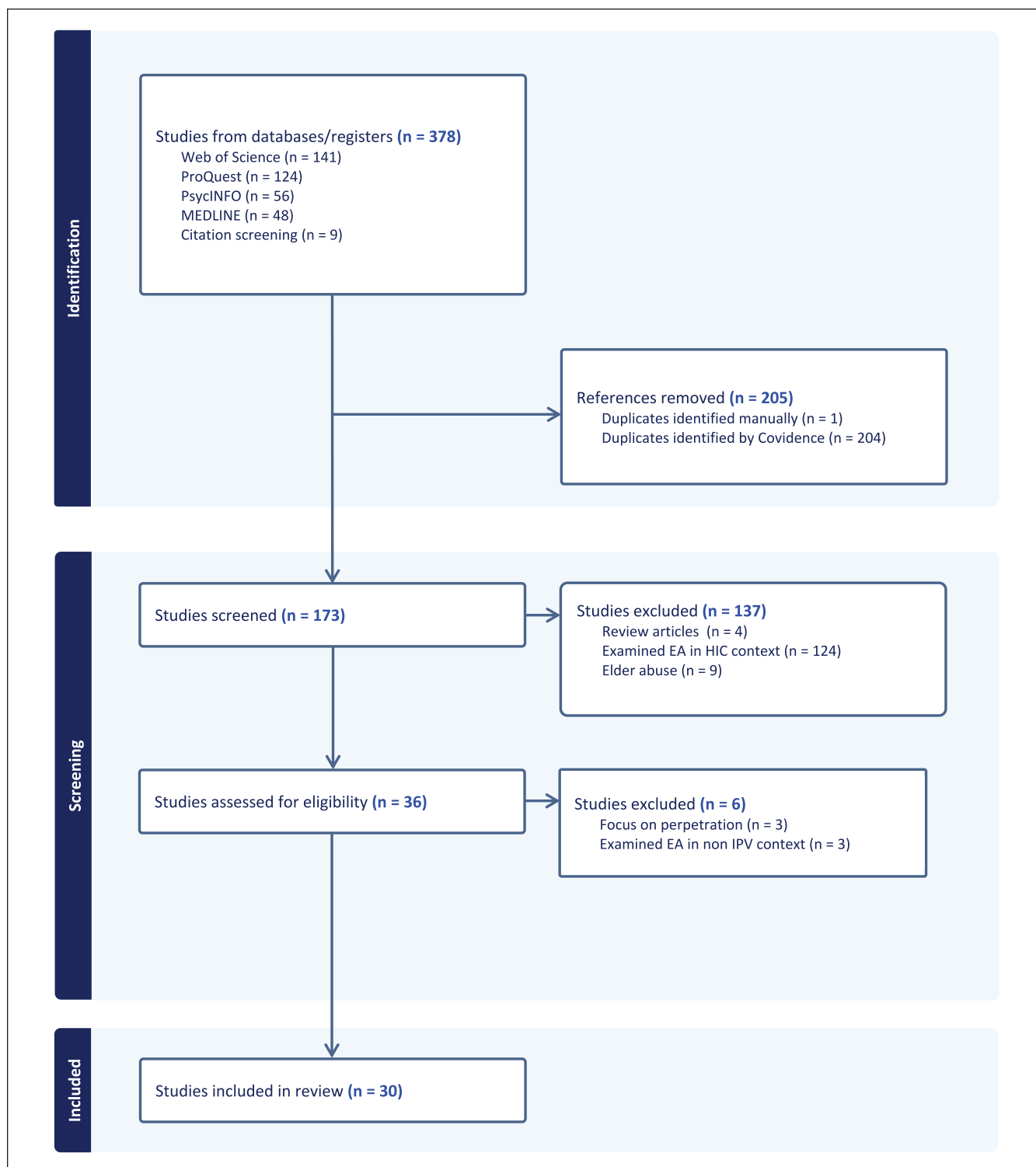


Figure 1. PRISMA flowchart of the study selection process for inclusion in the scoping review.

conducted in HICs ($n=124$), were review papers ($n=4$), or focused on EA in the context of elder abuse ($n=9$). The first author screened the full text of the articles to further establish eligibility. Out of the 36 eligible studies, three were excluded due to their sole focus on the perpetration of EA

rather than the experience of EA, and a further three articles were excluded as they focused on EA in the context of elder abuse. The PRISMA flowchart documents the review process in Figure 1. At the end of the selection process, 30 studies were retained for the review.

Data Extraction and Analysis

In the first step, we extracted data from the 30 eligible studies using a tabular format and used grouping techniques to identify key themes. We did not use a critical appraisal tool as this is a conceptual scoping review, and studies had varied research designs and aims. We included qualitative and quantitative studies to answer our research questions. Qualitative studies discussed EA's conceptual underpinnings, allowing us to identify the different constructs of EA in LMICs. On the other hand, quantitative studies examined the magnitude of associations between EA and various risk factors and consequences.

Results

For this study, we reviewed 30 articles, including 21 quantitative and nine qualitative studies. Table 1 presents the descriptive characteristics of the included quantitative studies, and Table 2 details the findings from the qualitative studies. After describing the studies in our review, we will outline our findings in line with the three research questions that guided this study (Table 3).

Study Characteristics

Most of the 30 studies were conducted in Asia (see Figure 2), followed by Africa, the Middle East, and a single study in South America. All studies used cross-sectional data.

Samples. There was a difference in the samples employed in quantitative and qualitative studies. Most quantitative studies recruited women from households in the general population ($n=16$ out of 21). In contrast, most qualitative studies included samples of women who had experienced EA or any other form of abuse. Less than half of the qualitative studies ($n=4$) included samples of women recruited from organizations or individuals providing support services to women experiencing abuse. All studies employed a purposive sample, with one exception of a theoretical sample (Chowbey, 2017), and five out of nine studies recruited women who had experienced abuse.

Experience of EA. Studies used different designs and measures to assess EA, making it difficult to compare across contexts. Women's experience of EA ranged from roughly one in three women (27% in Turkey) to nearly two in three women (63% in rural Bangladesh and 64% in Nigeria). In studies with purposive sampling, prevalence rates were higher, ranging from 85% among substance-use-involved women in Kyrgyzstan to 93% among sex-working women in Uganda.

Among the 21 quantitative studies that reported frequencies for types of EA, the most common forms of EA differed across sociocultural contexts. Across countries, the most prevalent form of EA was economic restriction. Within economic restrictions, women were most likely to have financial

information withheld, followed by the need to account for expenditures. There was some regional variation. Employment sabotage was the most reported tactic in five Asian studies, while refusal to contribute was the most prevalent form of EA in Africa.

RQ1: Defining and Conceptualizing Economic Abuse

We used thematic analysis to categorize the tactics described in each text's introduction and literature review sections. Almost all studies clearly defined EA using the definition outlined by Adams et al. on the SEA (Adams et al., 2008). Most tactics could be categorized into the three primary constructs of EA: economic restriction, economic exploitation, and employment/education sabotage. A single study described only one tactic of EA: economic exploitation (Asencios-Gonzalez et al., 2018), which was also its focus and another did not specify the tactics of EA (Gibbs et al., 2020).

Culturally Specific Forms of EA

Of 21 studies, 10 highlighted culturally specific forms of EA corresponding to social norms and customary practices in LMICs. Most of these studies used qualitative methodology. Several quantitative studies used measures developed in the US, and their findings were limited to the tactics of EA included in these measures.

Refusal to Contribute and Other Forms of Economic Exploitation.

The most common culturally specific form of EA in LMICs is the refusal to contribute to household expenditures. This tactic has been conceptualized differently in different contexts. In Bangladesh, it was termed "economic neglect," "chronic economic dependency" in Ghana, and "male irresponsibility" in Tanzania. Refusal to contribute includes tactics where husbands and marital family members did not contribute or contributed very little to fulfilling basic household necessities such as food, shelter (Boateng & Tenkorang, 2023; Frost et al., 2023; Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021; Steinert et al., 2023) or healthcare, and children's and women's needs (Chowbey, 2017; Steinert et al., 2023). Women were forced to use their earnings or get a job solely to provide for necessities. While this form of economic refusal was more common among women participating in income-generating activities (Miedema et al., 2021; Sedziafa et al., 2016), this tactic was not limited to them. Women who were financially dependent on their spouses also experienced this kind of neglect (Chowbey, 2017; Jiwatram-Negron et al., 2018; Steinert et al., 2023).

Social norms influenced women's perception of this kind of abuse. In one study, this form of economic exploitation was seen as "male economic irresponsibility" as women identified this behavior as abuse owing to their male partners' inability to fulfill normative expectations of men being

Table I. Study Characteristics, Measurement of Economic Abuse, and Key Findings From Quantitative Studies in LMICs.

Author, Year, Country	Aim	Sample, Location, Type	Constructs of Economic Abuse	Measures	Risk Factors	Consequences
Anzai et al. (2014), Philippines	Explore the prevalence of EA and the role of socioeconomic inequalities	8,478 women, households, probability sample	Named or described three constructs	Used a series of questions to measure lifetime experience of EA: (a) disallowed respondent to engage in legitimate work, (b) controlled respondent's money or forced her to work, (c) destroyed personal property/pe or threatened to harm pet, and (d) whether respondent had ever lost their job/source of income because of their husband	Education, earning differences, unemployment, beliefs in traditional gender norms	
Anzai et al. (2014), Philippines	Examine the impact of EA on psychological distress and suicide attempts	9,316 women, households, probability sample	Named or described three constructs	Used a series of questions to measure lifetime experience of EA: (a) disallowed respondent to engage in legitimate work, (b) controlled respondent's money or forced her to work, (c) destroyed personal property/pe or threatened to harm pet, and (d) whether respondent had ever lost their job/source of income because of their husband		Suicide attempts and psychological distress
Postmus et al. (2022), Cambodia, China, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka	Examine the association between EA and food insecurity	3,105 women, households, cluster sample	Named or described three constructs	Used a series of questions to measure lifetime experience of EA actions by a current or former partner including (a) preventing the woman from earning money, (b) taking her money, (c) throwing her out of the home, (d) spending money on alcohol, tobacco or himself when it was needed for the household		Food insecurity and depression
Ohlan (2021), India	Explore the prevalence of EA among Muslim women	387 women, households, purposive sample	Named or described three constructs			
Yount et al. (2016), Vietnam	Assess determinants of EA	533 women, household, probability sample	Named or described three constructs		Education, employment, pregnancy, intergenerational IPV, poverty	
Gibbs et al. (2018), South Africa	Examine the impact of EA and emotional IPV on mental health and wellbeing	680 women, households, purposive sample	Named or described all three constructs	Used a series of questions to measure past year experience of EA: actions by a current or former partner including (a) preventing the woman from earning money, (b) taking her money, (c) throwing her out of the home, (d) spending money on alcohol, tobacco or himself when it was needed for the household		Depressive symptoms, suicidal ideation
Tenkorang and Owusu (2018), Ghana	Examine the impact of EA on psychosocial and general health	2,289 women, household, nationally representative sample	Named or described three constructs. Named culturally specific form of EA: economic deprivation	Used a series of questions: (a) Employment sabotage: husbands prevented them from working in a paid job and if their husbands prohibited them from working or forced them to quit their work, (b) Economic exploitation: husbands took cash or withdrew money from their bank accounts or personal savings without permission, if they controlled their belongings and/or spending decisions, and if they destroyed or damaged property in which they had a material interest, (c) Economic deprivation: husbands refused to give enough housekeeping money even though they had enough money to spend on other things, and if their husbands denied food or other basic needs		Cardiovascular disease, worse psychosocial health
Yau et al. (2020), Hong Kong	Identify risk factors for EA and the impact of EA on mental well-being	222 men and 282 women, household, stratified systematic sample	Named or described three constructs	Used a validated tool to measure past year experience of EA (SEA 12)	Relationship status, education	Anxiety, depression, psychosomatic symptoms
Alkan et al. (2021), Turkey	Determine the factors affecting EA in Turkey	18,225 women, household, cluster sampling	Named or described three constructs. Named culturally specific form of a construct: taking jewelry given to woman at the wedding ceremony, bride price, and dowry	Used a series of questions to measure lifetime experience of EA: (a) Has your spouse or any of the people you have been with prevented you from working or forced you to leave a job against your will? (b) Have they ever refused to give you money for you to fulfill the needs of the household even though they have enough money for some other expenses? (c) Have they ever tried to take your own money (in a situation where you have an income) against your own will?	Education, spouses' education level, unemployment, urban location, substance misuse, intergenerational IPV, childhood abuse, mental health, parental and marital status	
Gibbs et al. (2020), Sri Lanka, PNG and China	Explore the prevalence of EA and emotional IPV and assess associations with mental and physical health	2,438 women, households, cluster sample	Not clearly defined; no constructs named/discussed	Used a series of questions to measure lifetime experience of EA: - actions by a current or former partner including (a) preventing the woman from earning money, (b) taking her money, (c) throwing her out of the home, (d) spending money on alcohol, tobacco, or himself when it was needed for the household		Health, depression
Asencios-Gonzalez et al. (2018), Peru	Determine the prevalence of EA in formal sector micro-firms managed by women in Peru	351 women microentrepreneurs, random stratified sample	Named or described one of the three constructs	Used a single question to measure lifetime experience of EA: - current or former domestic partner has misappropriated or stolen money from the business from SEA	education, parental status, low income, home-based work	Access to finance, debt, forced debt

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Author, Year, Country	Aim	Sample, Location, Type	Constructs of Economic Abuse	Measures	Risk Factors	Consequences
Salimi et al. (2023), Iran	Examine the psychometric properties of the revised SEA2 for use with married Iranian women	371 unemployed women, not sought therapy, online social networking sites, convenience sample	Named or described three constructs	Experience of EA for the duration of relationship		
Li et al. (2024), China	Identify factors associated with EA among Chinese young adults	445 non-marital cohabitating young adults, online panel, purposive sample	Named or described three constructs	Used a validated tool (SEA12)		
Yau et al. (2019), China	Transcultural adaptation of the Chinese version of C-SEA-12	180 men and 219 women, household, sampling information unclear	Named or described three constructs	Validated an established measure of economic abuse for past year experience of EA (SEA12)		
Ndika et al. (2023), Nigeria	Determine the prevalence and correlates of EA among Nigerian married women	480 married women, household, multistage stratified sample	Named or described three constructs; named culturally specific form: Threw you out of the house	Used an established measure that was not validated in the current context for past year experience of EA (SEA12)	Age, other forms of IPV	
Alawadqa Rula (2020), Jordan	Determine the relationship between EA and a series of demographic variables	500 employed women, household, random sample	Named or described three constructs	Used an established measure that was not validated in the current context (SEA)		Education, marriage, spouses' employment status
Jiwatran-Negron et al. (2018), Kyrgyzstan	Examine the prevalence of EA among women engaged in its relationship with socio-demographic characteristics and other types of GBV	55 substance-use involved women, convenience sample	Named or described three constructs	Used an established measure that was not validated in the current context for lifetime experience of EA (SEA12)	Age, parental status, substance misuse	
Jennings Msyo-Wilson et al. (2023), Uganda	Determine the prevalence of EA among women engaged in sex work	542 who engaged in unprotected transactional sex, randomized clinical trial, community, purposive sample	Named or described three constructs	Used an established measure that was not validated in the current context for experience of EA since start of relationship (SEA12)	Debt, sex work, low income	Debt, sexual risk-taking, HIV preventative care
Kanougua et al. (2021), India	Examine the prevalence of EA and its association with mental health	4,906 ever-married women with a focus on women with disability, younger women, households, systematic random sample	Named or described three constructs. Named culturally specific form of EA: denial of property rights	Used a series of questions to measure lifetime experience of EA: (a) denying her the right to property, (b) coercive appropriation of her belongings or (c) money or use of her bank account, (d) convincing her to make a loan that was not repaid, (e) selling her valuables without consent, (f) lying to her about employment or finances, (g) harassing her for not bringing natal money or property into the marital family or (h) coercing her to do so, (i) preventing her from seeking employment, (j) hiding money from her, (k) taking a loan without her consent, (l) gambling without her consent, (m) not trusting her with money, (n) keeping from having enough money, and (o) coercing her to hand over her income	Marital status, substance misuse, other IPV, employment	Depression, suicidal ideation, anxiety
Yount et al. (2021), Bangladesh	Development and validation of the ECS36	930 married women, households, random sample	Named or described three constructs	Validated lifetime and past year experience measure of EA (ECS 36)		
Khan et al. (2020), Bangladesh	Examine the relationships of EA with depressive symptoms	930 married women, households, random sample	Named or described three constructs	Used a validated tool to measure lifetime experience of EA (ECS 36)		Depression

Note. IPV=intimate partner violence; LMICs=low and middle-income countries; EA=economic abuse; SEA=scale of economic abuse.

Table 2. Study Characteristics, Measurement of Economic Abuse and Key Findings From Qualitative Studies in LMICs.

Author, Year, Country	Aim	Sample, Location, Type	Constructs of Economic Abuse	Risk Factors	Consequences
Chowbey (2017), India, Pakistan, and UK	Extend conceptualizations of EA to include perspectives from South Asian women in Britain, India, and Pakistan and identify strategies used to deal with EA	84 women, community, theoretical sample	Named or described all three constructs. Noted two culturally specific forms of a construct: Exploitation of women's customary marriage gifts, transnational investments	Dowry/bride price, migration, isolation, traditional gender norms, gender power relations, gendered decision-making, resisting gender norms, social-cultural norms	Post-separation access to assets, risk associated with resisting EA
Anitha (2019), India and UK	Employ an intersectional perspective to understand how gender, migration status, race/ethnicity, and class impact experiences of EA	41 women, refugee, police, lawyers, social workers, purposive sample	Named or described three constructs. Noted a culturally specific new construct: coercive control of labor	Transnational hierarchies, gender norms, unequal inheritance laws, divorce, widowhood, age, poverty, colorism, welfare rights, patrilocality, caste hierarchy, traditional gender roles, employment	Employment, poverty, access to welfare, "feminization of poverty within relationships," financial dependence, dependency means remaining in the relationship, insecure immigration status, isolation, low income, financial insecurity, access to support and advocacy, loss of dowry, child maintenance, divorce settlement, extended family abuse
Serpa Pimentel et al. (2021), Tanzania	Examine women's experiences, manifestations, and perceptions of EA	18 women, households, purposive sample	Named or described three constructs. Noted culturally specific forms: male economic irresponsibility	Traditional gender roles and norms, employment, education, gendered decision-making, refusing to contribute to the household, resisting gender norms	Depression, suicidal ideation, financial dependence, dependency means remaining in the relationship, stress, substance misuse
Usta et al. (2013), Lebanon	Identify types and patterns of EA present in Lebanon	20 women, primary health centers, purposive sample; 6 female social workers, NGOs, purposive sample; 18 men, public spaces, purposive sample	Named or described three constructs	Other types of IPV, EA as risk factor for HIV and trafficking, equal inheritance laws, threats of abandonment and divorce, employment, poor finances, arranged marriage, traditional gender roles and norms, divorce settlement rights	Food insecurity, poverty, employment instability, housing, education, financial dependence, dependency means remaining in the relationship, chronic ill health, anxiety, depression, career progression, access to assets, sexual abuse, low self-esteem and confidence
Sedzifafa et al. (2016), Ghana	Examine forms of EA and the relationship between EA and other types of violence in Ghana	30 women who had experienced IPV in the past year, community, purposive sample	Named or described three constructs. Named culturally specific form: chronic economic dependency among partners of employed women	Poverty, socioeconomic inequality, traditional gender roles and norms, bride price, dowry, sexual availability, income, social-cultural norms	Economic security, financial dependence, other IPV, mental and physical health, access to health care, debt, food insecurity, bride price means remaining in the relationship, trauma, and physical harm
Miedema et al. (2021), Bangladesh	Explore types of EA that occur in marital relationships	24 women, households, purposive sample	Named or described three constructs. Named or described culturally specific form: economic neglect, husband's refusal to contribute	Income-generating activities	
Frost et al. (2023), Nigeria	Explore EA among young Nigerian women reporting IPV	25 women aged 18-30 years with past year IPV experience, community organizations, health facilities, purposive sample	Named or described one of the three constructs: Named culturally specific form: sexual favors in return for contributions, economic neglect, refusal to contribute	Pregnancy, children, co-habitation, financial dependency	Financial dependency, sexual abuse, unwanted pregnancy
Boateng and Tenkorang (2023) Ghana	Examine the lived experiences of EA and risk factors	16 women who experienced EA, households, purposive sample	Named or described all three constructs. Noted two culturally specific forms of a construct: deprivation & complete ownership of belongings		Depression, suicidal ideation, financial dependence, dependency
Steinert et al. (2023), India	Examine EA in India and assess how EA interacts with sociocultural factors	74 women (working and non-working), 26 mothers-in-law, 23 husbands, communities, purposive sample	Named or described three constructs. Named culturally specific construct: dowry, refusal to contribute, and control over women's savings		

Note. IPV=intimate partner violence; LMICs=low and middle-income countries; EA=economic abuse.

Control Over Women's Labor. Two other tactics of EA were unique to the LMIC context. The first is the coercive control of women's labor in transnational marriages, another form of women's economic exploitation. Husbands and other members of the marital family forced women to work in family businesses, take up jobs, or perform domestic tasks without compensating them for their labor or giving them any access to their earnings. This complete lack of access to earnings is a distinct form of economic exploitation. In some cases, women were also not provided any medical help when they fell sick after being overworked (Anitha, 2019).

RQ2: Measuring Economic Abuse

Our review included 21 quantitative studies that used a variety of instruments to measure EA. Most studies ($n=9$) used a set of items to measure EA, and these items were often taken from validated measures such as the ECS-36 (Yount et al., 2021), the SEA2 (Adams et al., 2020), or the SEA12 (Postmus et al., 2016). The number of items authors used varied considerably, ranging from 15 in India (Kanougiya et al., 2021) to three in Vietnam (Yount et al., 2016). Although studies used items from other measures, most items corresponded to EA dimensions, including economic restriction, employment and education sabotage, and economic exploitation.

Three studies focused on developing a new measure of EA in Bangladesh (Yount et al., 2021) or validated a measure of EA developed in the US for Iran (Salimi et al., 2023) and China (Yau et al., 2019). Both studies reported positive results after modifying certain items for the local context. For example, the item "Make you ask him for money" was removed in Iran as it was not viewed as EA. Men control finances, and asking them for money is standard practice (Salimi et al., 2023). Four studies used measures validated in the US. Three provided information on reliability but did not provide any other information on the psychometric properties of these measures in the context they were being tested (Alsawalqa Rula, 2020; Jennings Mayo-Wilson et al., 2023; Jiwatram-Negrón et al., 2018; Nduka et al., 2023).

Timeframe of Measurement. Studies differed in the recall period used to measure the experience of EA. Out of the 20 quantitative studies, most ($n=11$) asked respondents to report lifetime experiences of EA, and five asked about experiences in the past year (Gibbs et al., 2018; Nduka et al., 2023; Yau et al., 2019, 2020; Yount et al., 2021). Three studies did not specify the recall period for their measures (Li et al., 2024; Ohlan, 2021; Tenkorang & Owusu, 2018). In two studies, women were asked to report their experiences of EA during the duration of their relationship (Jennings Mayo-Wilson et al., 2023; Salimi et al., 2023).

RQ3: Risk Factors of EA

Across the included studies, traditional gender norms emerged as one of the most dominant drivers of EA in

quantitative and qualitative studies (Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021; Sedziafa et al., 2016; Usta et al., 2013). Some of the risk factors related to traditional norms and customary practices of patrilocality, bride price, and dowry have been discussed in the previous section. Studies also highlighted the role of "male backlash." Women's EA experiences are influenced by their participation in income-generating activities (Miedema et al., 2021). This participation may be perceived as a threat to ideals of masculinity and men's economic dominance, and men may resort to violence in response (Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021; Sedziafa et al., 2016). Women with remunerated work had significantly higher odds of experiencing EA than women not participating in the labor force (Kanougiya et al., 2021; Miedema et al., 2021). Second, social norms influence women's access to financial decision-making and control over joint/familial financial resources. Men often assume that only those who earn or contribute to the family can access finances and decide on their use (Usta et al., 2013). Third, as women are traditionally assigned caregiving roles within the family, it is also commonly assumed that they lack financial literacy and knowledge and should not be involved in household financial matters (Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021).

Beyond sociocultural factors, several studies examined the associations between socioeconomic factors and EA. The role of education was ambiguous. While some studies reported a higher risk of experiencing EA for women with higher education levels (Alkan et al., 2021; Yau et al., 2020; Yount et al., 2016), others found that higher education was protective (Alsawalqa, 2020; Antai et al., 2014; Asencios-Gonzales et al., 2018) or had no significant impact (Mayo-Wilson et al., 2023). More importantly, educational disparities between spouses or partners may be more pertinent in determining the likelihood of EA than women's overall education status. This is supported by findings from Bangladesh, where women with fewer years of schooling relative to their husbands had a higher risk of experiencing co-occurring EA and other forms of IPV (Yount et al., 2016). Similarly, in Turkey, women with higher education faced more EA, but the likelihood decreased significantly if their male partners also had higher education levels (Alkan et al., 2021).

Several quantitative (Asencios-Gonzales et al., 2018; Mayo-Wilson et al., 2023; Yount et al., 2016) and qualitative (Frost et al., 2023; Usta et al., 2013) studies found associations between women's lack of income, poverty, and a higher risk of EA. Qualitative studies suggest that women may be economically dependent on their partners, which may trap them in abusive relationships and force them to tolerate their partner's violent behaviors, including EA (Sedziafa et al., 2016).

Apart from this, studies reported significantly higher levels of EA among women with children or women who were currently pregnant in quantitative (Alkan et al., 2021; Asencios-Gonzales et al., 2018; Jiwatram-Negrón et al., 2018) and qualitative studies (Frost et al., 2023). Associations between women's marital status and EA were also

inconsistent across quantitative studies, with some reporting a higher risk among unmarried women (Kanougiya et al., 2021; Yau et al., 2020) and others indicating the opposite trend (Alkan et al., 2021; Alsawalqa, 2020; Mayo-Wilson et al., 2023). Cohabiting with their partners was associated with an increased risk in quantitative (Asencios-Gonzales et al., 2018; Yau et al., 2020) and qualitative studies (Frost et al., 2023).

Several studies identified possible correlates of EA that resembled the risk factors commonly highlighted by epidemiological studies on IPV. These included partner's alcohol or drug consumption (Alkan et al., 2021; Kanougiya et al., 2021), experiencing other forms of abuse (Nduka et al., 2023; Kanougiya et al., 2021; Antai et al., 2014; Usta et al., 2013), having witnessed or experienced violence during childhood (Alkan et al., 2021; Yount et al., 2016), poor mental health (Alkan et al., 2021), holding attitudes that endorse or are accepting of violence (Antai et al., 2014).

In qualitative studies, jealousy or extra-marital affairs (Boateng & Tenkorang, 2023; Sedziafa et al., 2016) and substance-use (Boateng & Tenkorang, 2023) emerged as risk factors. Studies also discussed links between legal frameworks and women's exposure to EA. Discriminatory laws placed women at a disadvantage in terms of (a) property and inheritance rights, (b) the lack of post-divorce alimony provisions, or (c) the regulation of patriarchal oversight in women's integration into the labor market (Anitha, 2019; Usta et al., 2013).

RQ4: Consequences of EA

In the quantitative studies, the most frequently examined consequence of EA was its impact on mental health. Seven studies found significant associations between EA and adverse mental health. One study reported mixed findings for depression, noting that combined experiences of multiple types of IPV—including physical, sexual, and economic—had the strongest correlation with depressive symptoms (Gibbs et al., 2020). Four other studies examined depression or depressive symptoms, and all found a significant relationship between EA and an increased likelihood of these symptoms (Gibbs et al., 2018; Kanougiya et al., 2021; Postmus et al., 2022; Yau et al., 2020). Similarly, EA was positively associated with suicidal ideation or attempts (Gibbs et al., 2018; Kanougiya et al., 2021), anxiety (Kanougiya et al., 2021; Yau et al., 2020), psychological distress or worse psychosocial health (Tenkorang & Owusu, 2018), and psychosomatic symptoms (Yau et al., 2020). Qualitative studies also noted adverse mental health outcomes reported by survivors of EA, including depression (Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021; Usta et al., 2013), suicidal ideation, stress, and alcohol use (Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021), anxiety and low self-esteem (Usta et al., 2013), isolation (Anitha, 2019), and trauma (Sedziafa et al., 2016).

Other consequences of EA included overall health outcomes, with significant adverse effects on self-reported generalized health quality (Gibbs et al., 2020; Tenkorang & Owusu, 2018) and cardiovascular health (Tenkorang & Owusu, 2018). Mayo-Wilson et al. (2023) also found that among women employed in sex work, sexual risk-taking increased as EA increased, while HIV preventive care-seeking decreased with higher levels of abuse. A few qualitative studies also noted that EA survivors reported chronic ill health (Usta et al., 2013), injuries, and limited access to health care (Sedziafa et al., 2016).

Economic outcomes were investigated quantitatively by a few researchers. Female microentrepreneurs were less likely to receive and use credit for business capital and had more late payments (Asencios-Gonzalez et al., 2018). Both entrepreneurs and sex workers who experienced EA were more likely to seek financial assistance from family members or lending institutions (Mayo-Wilson et al., 2023). A single study found that EA was associated with increased food insecurity, and this relationship was mediated by depression (Postmus et al., 2022). Qualitative studies also found that EA often resulted in adverse economic outcomes, including decreased access to financial assets (Chowbey, 2017); increased unemployment or underemployment, poverty, and use of welfare benefits (Anitha, 2019); sub-standard housing, inadequate food, and employment instability (Usta et al., 2013); and limited women's economic security, preventing economic independence and employment (Sedziafa et al., 2016). Suggesting the "feminization of poverty within relationships", Anitha (2019) found that EA resulted in different living standards for survivors within the same household. One study also reported that women managed EA's impact on their finances, including covertly finding work, education, or training—facing potential physical violence while employing such tactics (Chowbey, 2017).

The qualitative studies included in this review also reported several outcomes of EA which were not examined within the quantitative analyses. First, the concept of dependence was commonly mentioned, with survivors reporting increased dependence on the abusive partner due to a lack of financial assets due to EA (Chowbey, 2017), limiting survivors' ability to leave such relationships (Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021; Sedziafa et al., 2016; Anitha, 2019; Usta et al., 2013). Likewise, some qualitative studies reported on the impact of EA on survivors' post-separation outcomes or potential future outcomes, including limits on immigration status (Anitha, 2019), less educational, training, and self-improvement efforts (Usta et al., 2013), and limiting survivors' entrepreneurial creativity (Sedziafa et al., 2016).

Co-occurring With Other Forms of Abuse. Many of the quantitative studies ($n = 11$) examined the association between EA and different types of IPV, with all studies reporting a significant association between EA and other kinds of abuse (see

Table 3. Critical Findings.

Findings
• Most studies were conducted in Asia, followed by Africa and the Middle East. All studies used cross-sectional data. • Economic restriction was the most experienced tactic of EA across studies. • Refusal to contribute was the most common culturally specific form of EA. Other behaviors included chronic economic dependency, limiting or denying access to housing and other resources, bride price and dowry-related tactics, and exploitation of women's labor. Sociocultural norms, including customary marriage practices of dowry and bride price, emerged as the leading risk factor for EA. • Consequences of EA include negative impact on mental health including depression, anxiety, and suicidal ideation. Economic impacts included food insecurity, poverty, and unemployment. Long-term consequences included immigration issues and limited education, earnings, and training. • Women were also more likely to remain in the relationship due to economic dependence on the abusive partner. • Several studies found that EA co-occurred with other forms of abuse; it is unclear whether experiencing other forms of abuse is a risk or consequence of EA. • Traditional gendered norms limit the legal protection rights available to women in LMICs with limited inheritance, divorce, and property rights, exacerbating their vulnerability to EA.

Note. LMICs = low and middle-income countries; EA = economic abuse.

Table 4). Specifically, EA was significantly associated with physical violence ($n=10$), verbal, emotional, or psychological abuse ($n=10$), sexual violence ($n=5$), and any IPV ($n=1$). Five qualitative studies also described types of IPV co-occurring with EA. EA triggered other forms of IPV, including physical violence (Chowbey, 2017; Steinert et al., 2023) and sexual coercion. In Nigeria, men expected sexual favors from young women in return for any money or food payments (Frost et al., 2023). Male partners coerced women to have sex by threatening to withhold money in Ghana (Sedziafa et al., 2016) and Lebanon (Usta et al., 2013).

Discussion

Our review provides an overview of the current state of knowledge on EA in LMICs, focusing on the conceptualization and measurement of EA, identifying culturally specific forms of EA, and risk factors and consequences of EA to guide future research, policy, and program development. Our review of 30 studies conducted across 20 countries indicates that the field of EA research in LMICs is growing. Notably, most studies included a clear definition of EA and used consistent terminology to conceptualize EA. Studies also investigated EA as a distinct form of abuse separate from emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, indicating the growing recognition of EA as a unique form of abuse. Overall, research in LMICs focused on the three primary constructs of EA: economic restriction, economic exploitation, and education and employment sabotage, consistent with a global review of EA research (Postmus et al., 2020). Studies also highlighted several culturally specific forms of EA that emphasize the role of sociocultural norms in the kinds of EA women faced. Gendered norms around women's and men's economic and social roles, including customary marriage practices, such as dowry and bride price and patrilocality, emerged as culturally specific forms of EA and risk factors in different contexts. These norms also influenced the kinds of legal protection available to women with limited inheritance,

property, and divorce rights, exacerbating women's risk of EA (Anitha, 2019). Sociocultural norms also influenced women's perceptions of abuse. In Tanzania, a husband's refusal to contribute to expenses was conceptualized as "irresponsibility" and seen as a form of abuse as it contradicts prevalent social norms where men are the primary providers (Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021). In Bangladesh, women viewed EA as a type of relationship dynamic, and constraints to economic activity were normalized in marriages (Miedema et al., 2021). While several studies highlighted culturally specific forms of EA, all these tactics could be categorized under the three dimensions of EA. The tactic of refusal to contribute was documented as a distinct dimension of EA in two studies (Steinert et al., 2023; Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021). However, it can also be seen as a form of economic exploitation as the husband's refusal to contribute led to women using their earnings or borrowing, depleting their economic resources.

While formative research on EA has advanced in LMICs, there is a need for more measurement research. Prior reviews have emphasized the need for more research to understand whether existing measures of EA work as well across cultures or whether we need culturally specific measures of EA (Johnson et al., 2022; Yau et al., 2021). Our findings on culturally specific forms of abuse in LMICs also have similar implications for the measurement of EA. While a new measure has been developed in Bangladesh (Yount et al., 2021), and existing measures such as the SEA2 and the SEA12 have been validated in China (Yau et al., 2019) and Iran (Salimi et al., 2023), more research is needed to understand and measure culturally specific forms of EA. For example, studies conducted in India find that marital family members often perpetrate EA alongside husbands (Anitha, 2019; Chowbey, 2017; Steinert et al., 2023), emphasizing the need to use a framework of domestic violence rather than IPV to assess the role of multiple perpetrators when measuring EA. We also need to ensure that the items used in the SEA2 and the SEA12 are valid across *all* cultural contexts. For example,

refusal to contribute is a common form of EA in LMICs that needs to be adequately captured in existing measures of EA (Serpa Pimentel et al., 2021). We also need more rigorous standards for measurement research; several studies used the SEA12 or the SEA2 in a new context and only provided a measure of reliability without including other psychometrics. While reliability is an important criterion, we also need validity estimates to ascertain the quality and meaning of the measure (Jordan et al., 2011). In addition, there is also a need to develop a cross-cultural measure that can be used to estimate and compare the prevalence of EA across contexts, as different studies have used various measures.

Several studies highlighted the cost of EA for survivors. Most studies found evidence of an association between experiences of EA and adverse mental health-related outcomes (Gibbs et al., 2020; Kanougiya et al., 2021; Yau et al., 2020). In addition, most studies assessed the impact of EA alone on mental health outcomes, and we need more studies to evaluate differences in the association between EA alone and EA co-occurring with other forms of abuse to understand the impact of EA above and beyond the effect of different forms of abuse (Johnson et al., 2022). Of the 30 studies in our review, only two examined associations between EA and physical health outcomes, finding a negative relationship (Gibbs et al., 2020; Tenkorang & Owusu, 2018). We need more studies to investigate the impact of EA on a broader range of physical health outcomes. In addition, as Johnson et al. (2022) note, studies should use standardized measures for health outcomes to allow researchers to compare findings across contexts.

Future research should also examine the impact of EA on a broader range of financial outcomes. In our review, qualitative studies were more likely to explore financial outcomes than quantitative studies. Only two quantitative studies investigated the impact of EA on two specific groups of women earners. Sex-working women and microentrepreneurs experiencing EA were more likely to seek financial assistance and experience economic hardship, respectively (Asencios-Gonzalez et al., 2018; Mayo-Wilson et al., 2023). These outcomes were measured using single items and were not validated in previous studies. On the other hand, qualitative studies found linkages between EA and occupational and housing instability, poverty, food insecurity, and an overall reduction in the standard of living (Anitha, 2019; Chowbey, 2017; Usta et al., 2013). Taken together, the findings suggest that EA adversely impacted women's economic security.

While the findings of this review are not unique to LMICs (Johnson et al., 2022), women in LMICs are particularly vulnerable as they also contend with traditional gender norms and lack of legal entitlements that make it harder for them to access employment, education and their share of marital assets, increasing their financial dependence on their marital families. The stigma around divorce makes women more vulnerable to staying in abusive relationships. More quantitative studies on economic hardship and self-sufficiency are

needed to explore this relationship in depth. Research should also include explanatory variables to identify pathways between EA and financial hardship. More research is needed to understand how EA affects women's economic aspirations and agency. While employment can be empowering, EA may restrict women's employment opportunities or force them to take up exploitative jobs without advancement opportunities or unfavorable labor conditions that have long-term impacts on their careers and well-being (Usta et al., 2013). It is essential to assess the effect of EA on financial well-being, including economic freedom and agency (Johnson et al., 2022).

Limitations

This review has several limitations. All the studies used a cross-sectional design. Because of this, we cannot draw any conclusions about the directionality of risk factors or consequences of EA. Several studies also did not include essential confounders. Given the high probability of co-occurrence of EA with other forms of abuse, it is hard to isolate the role of EA on any outcomes. Future studies should use longitudinal designs to examine the directionality and pathways between EA and socioeconomic consequences. Our review focused on studies that examined women's experiences of EA in intimate relationships, and studies on elder abuse were excluded. Future studies should conduct a systematic review of EA experience and perpetration among men and elder abuse, which is an understudied area within EA. The findings from qualitative studies in our review are also not generalizable to the broader population, as most studies sampled women experiencing EA or other forms of abuse. Lastly, our review only included studies published in English, which may have prevented us from including research published in local languages.

Implications

Our review has important implications for future research and practice (see Table 5). First, despite increased research on EA, our evidence is limited to 20 out of 136 countries classified as LMICs. We need to conduct more research on EA in LMICs to broaden our understanding of EA and its linkages with other forms of abuse. Second, only one study examined the role of mediators in the association between EA and an outcome of interest. We need more research with explanatory variables to understand the pathways between EA and outcomes of interest. This will allow researchers to develop an appropriate theory of change for evidence-based interventions and policies. Third, we need to increase the range of outcomes studied as consequences of EA, including financial security and well-being. Studies on EA in HICs have begun to examine the impact of EA on parenting and child development-related outcomes (Johnson et al., 2022), and this research needs to be conducted in LMICs as well. Fourth, we found that EA co-occurs with other forms of abuse, and we need more longitudinal research to understand

the sequelae of abuse and the differences in impact from isolated EA versus EA that co-occurs with other forms of abuse. Additional research is needed with more diverse samples, including LGBTQIA+ individuals, men, adolescents, and older adults. Lastly, studies also used different recall periods in their measures of EA. We recommend that researchers ask for both recall periods as the field of EA research is still growing, and we may be able to understand the lifetime trajectory of EA better once we have more studies that have information on both lifetime and past-year experience of EA. Our review has documented the harmful impact of EA on survivors, and we urgently need to develop interventions to prevent EA. Financial planning and safeguarding should be included in all IPV and DV prevention interventions. Poverty, microfinance, and job-training interventions should include gender transformative programming to address patriarchal norms around women's employment.

Conclusion

This review provides an overview of the current knowledge on EA in LMICs using evidence from 30 qualitative and quantitative studies. Our findings from 20 countries document a high burden of EA among survivors in LMICs. Findings also highlight culturally specific forms of EA linked to sociocultural norms and customary practices. This review also highlights the adverse impact of EA on survivors' mental and physical health and financial well-being. We emphasize several gaps in the literature and provide suggestions for future research and practice. Key recommendations include the need for longitudinal research on EA in LMICs using validated measures and a wide range of financial outcomes to understand EA's short- and long-term effects on survivors' well-being to develop culturally relevant policy and programmatic responses to prevent EA.

Table 4. Types of Abuse Co-occurring With EA.

Author	Physical	Emotional	Sexual	Any
Alkan et al. (2021)	X	X	X	
Alsawalqa (2020)	X	X		
Antai et al. (2014)	X	X		
Asencios-Gonzalez et al. (2018)	X	X	X	
Jiwatram-Negrón et al. (2018)	X	X		
Khan et al. (2020)	X		X	
Nduka et al. (2023)	X	X	X	
Antai et al. (2014)	X	X		
Salimi et al. (2023)	X	X		
Kanougiya et al. (2021)	X	X	X	
Yount et al. (2016)				X

Note. EA = economic abuse.

Table 5. Implications of Findings.

Implications for research	• More research is needed on EA in LMICs, especially in Latin America and Africa. • Studies using measures of EA from HICs should establish their validity in LMICs. More measurement research is also needed to identify culturally specific forms of EA and the best way to measure them across contexts. • A framework of domestic violence, rather than IPV, should be used to assess the role of multiple perpetrators when measuring EA. • Measures should capture refusal to contribute and other culturally specific forms of EA. • More research is needed to examine associations between EA and a broader range of outcomes, including physical health and various financial outcomes, including financial agency and well-being. • Longitudinal research is needed to examine associations between EA and different risk factors and consequences to isolate the role or risk of EA versus other forms of abuse. • Longitudinal research would also allow investigations into pathways between EA and important socioeconomic outcomes, as well as identify the sequelae of onset or co-occurrence of other forms of abuse. • More diverse samples should be used, including LGBTQIA+, men, adolescents, and older adults.
Implications for policy	• There is a need to develop and implement gender-egalitarian laws that protect women's financial rights in marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody. • Financial institutions must be aware of EA and develop policies to safeguard women from experiencing EA.
Implications for practice	• Awareness building around EA is needed. Service providers also need to be trained to identify EA and support individuals experiencing EA. • There is an urgent need to develop evidence-based, culturally sensitive interventions to target EA and its associated risk factors. • Poverty, microfinance, and job-training interventions should include gender transformative programming with local communities to address patriarchal norms around women's employment.

Note. IPV = intimate partner violence; LMICs = low and middle-income countries; EA = economic abuse.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

ORCID iDs

Sangeeta Chatterji  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5836-514X>

Julia O'Connor  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2400-9125>

Janina Isabel Steinert  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7120-0075>

References

- Adams, A. E., Greeson, M. R., Kennedy, A. C., & Tolman, R. M. (2013). The effects of adolescent intimate partner violence on women's educational attainment and earnings. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28*(17), 3283–3300.
- Adams, A. E., Greeson, M. R., Littwin, A. K., & Javorka, M. (2020). The revised scale of economic abuse (SEA2): Development and initial psychometric testing of an updated measure of economic abuse in intimate relationships. *Psychology of Violence, 10*(3), 268–278. <https://doi.org/10.1037/vio0000244>
- Adams, A. E., Sullivan, C. M., Bybee, D., & Greeson, M. R. (2008). Development of the scale of economic abuse. *Violence Against Women, 14*(5), 563–588. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801208315529>
- Alkan, Ö., Özar, Ş., & Ünver, Ş. (2021). Economic violence against women: A case in Turkey. *PLoS One, 16*(3), Article e0248630. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0248630>
- Alsawalqa Rula, O. (2020). Economic abuse of women in Amman, Jordan: A quantitative study. *Sage Open, 10*(4), 2158244020982616. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020982616>
- Anitha, S. (2019). Understanding economic abuse through an intersectional lens: Financial abuse, control, and exploitation of women's productive and reproductive labor. *Violence Against Women, 25*(15), 1854–1877. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801218824050>
- Antai, D., Antai, J., & Anthony, D. S. (2014). The relationship between socio-economic inequalities, intimate partner violence and economic abuse: A national study of women in the Philippines. *Global Public Health, 9*(7), 808–826. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2014.917195>
- Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: Towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 8*(1), 19–32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364557032000119616>
- Asencios-Gonzalez, Z., Vara-Horna, A., McBride, J. B., Santi-Huaranca, I., Chafloque-Céspedes, R., & Alberto Díaz, R. (2018). Factors associated with intimate partner economic violence against female micro-entrepreneurs in Peru. *International Journal of Emerging Markets, 13*(6), 1597–1614. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJoEM-08-2017-0294>
- Boateng, J. D., & Tenkorang, E. Y. (2023). A qualitative inquiry of the causes of economic abuse among women in intimate relationships in Ghana. *Journal of Family Violence, 38*(5), 919–930. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-022-00435-0>
- Chowbey, P. (2017). Women's narratives of economic abuse and financial strategies in Britain and South Asia. *Psychology of Violence, 7*, 459–468. <https://doi.org/10.1037/vio0000110>
- Frost, E. L., Fawole, O. I., Okedare, O. O., Salawu, M. M., Kiene, S. M., Augusto, C., & Reed, E. (2023). Money, economic abuse, and food insecurity: A qualitative study among young Nigerian women with a history of intimate partner violence. *Adolescents, 3*(2), 330–342.
- Gibbs, A., Dunkle, K., & Jewkes, R. (2018). Emotional and economic intimate partner violence as key drivers of depression and suicidal ideation: A cross-sectional study among young women in informal settlements in South Africa. *PLoS One, 13*(4), Article e0194885. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0194885>
- Gibbs, A., Dunkle, K., & Jewkes, R. (2020). The prevalence, patterning and associations with depressive symptoms and self-rated health of emotional and economic intimate partner violence: a three-country population based study. *Journal of Global Health, 10*(1), 010415. <https://doi.org/10.7189/jogh.10.010415>
- Heron, R. L., Eisma, M., & Browne, K. (2022). Why do female domestic violence victims remain in or leave abusive relationships? A qualitative study. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 31*(5), 677–694. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2021.2019154>
- Jennings Mayo-Wilson, L., Bing-Jie, Y., Proscovia, N., Bahar Ozge, S., Wright, B. N., Kiyangi, J., Filippone, P. L., Abel, M., Kagaayi, J., Tozan, Y., Nabayinda, J., Witte, S. S., & Ssewamala, F. M. (2023). Economic abuse and care-seeking practices for HIV and financial support services in women employed by sex work: A cross-sectional baseline assessment of a clinical trial cohort in Uganda. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 38*(1–2), NP1920–NP1949. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605221093680>
- Jiwatram-Negrón, T., Hunt, T., Nikitin, D., Rychkova, O., Ermolaeva, I., Sharonova, N., Mukambetov, A., & Gilbert, L. (2018). An exploratory study of economic abuse among substance-involved women in Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia. *Journal of Substance Use, 23*(4), 358–365. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14659891.2017.1421272>
- Johnson, L. (2021). Exploring factors associated with pregnant women's experiences of material hardship during COVID-19: A cross-sectional Qualtrics survey in the United States. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth, 21*(1), 755. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-021-04234-1>
- Johnson, L., Chen, Y., Stylianou, A., & Arnold, A. (2022). Examining the impact of economic abuse on survivors of intimate partner violence: a scoping review. *BMC Public Health, 22*(1), 1014. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-13297-4>
- Jordan, J. E., Osborne, R. H., & Buchbinder, R. (2011). Critical appraisal of health literacy indices revealed variable underlying constructs, narrow content and psychometric weaknesses. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology, 64*(4), 366–379. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclinepi.2010.04.005>
- Kanougiya, S., Daruwalla, N., Gram, L., Apoorwa Deepak, G., Muthusamy, S., & Osrin, D. (2021). Economic abuse and its associations with symptoms of common mental disorders among women in a cross-sectional survey in informal settlements in Mumbai, India. *BMC Public Health, 21*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-10904-8>

- Khan, Z., Cheong, Y. F., Miedema, S. S., Naved, R. T., & Yount, K. M. (2020). Women's experiences of economic coercion and depressive symptoms in Matlab, Bangladesh. *SSM - Population Health*, 12, 100641. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2020.100641>
- Levac, D., Colquhoun, H., & O'Brien, K. K. (2010). Scoping studies: Advancing the methodology. *Implementation Science*, 5(1), 69. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1748-5908-5-69>
- Li, X., Khan, M. A., Xiao, J. J., & Kong, D. (2024). Actions for solutions: Financial behaviors, power (im)balance, and economic abuse among Chinese young adults in non-marital cohabitation. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 41(6), 1554–1576. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075241227125>
- Miedema, S. S., Hennink, M., Naved, R. T., Talukder, A., Dore, E. C., & Yount, K. M. (2021). Women's income-generating activity and experiences of economic intimate partner violence in rural Bangladesh. *Sex Roles*, 85(7), 373–390. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-021-01225-6>
- Nduka, C. C., Omuemu, V., Adedayo, T., Adogu, P., & Ifeadike, C. (2023). Prevalence and correlates of economic abuse among married women in a Nigerian population. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 39(3–4), 811–827. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605231198244>
- Ohlan, R. (2021). Economic violence among women of economically backward Muslim minority community: The case of rural North India. *Future Business Journal*, 7(1), 28. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-021-00074-9>
- Postmus, J. L., Hoge, G. L., Breckenridge, J., Sharp-Jeffs, N., & Chung, D. (2020). Economic abuse as an invisible form of domestic violence: A multicountry review. *Trauma Violence Abuse*, 21(2), 261–283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838018764160>
- Postmus, J. L., Huang, C.-C., & Mathisen-Stylianou, A. (2012). The impact of physical and economic abuse on maternal mental health and parenting. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34(9), 1922–1928. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.06.005>
- Postmus, J. L., Nikolova, K., Lin, H.-F., & Johnson, L. (2022). Women's economic abuse experiences: Results from the UN multi-country study on men and violence in Asia and the Pacific. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(15–16), NP13115–NP13142. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211003168>
- Postmus, J. L., Plummer, S. B., & Stylianou, A. M. (2016). Measuring economic abuse in the lives of survivors: Revising the scale of economic abuse. *Violence Against Women*, 22(6), 692–703. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801215610012>
- Salimi, H., Hosseinkhani, A., Beeble, M. L., & Abdolvahab, S. S. (2023). Examining the psychometric properties of the revised scale of economic abuse among Iranian women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 38(23–24), 12067–12088. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605231190667>
- Sedziafa, A. P., Tenkorang, E. Y., Owusu, A. Y., & Sano, Y. (2016). Women's experiences of intimate partner economic abuse in the Eastern Region of Ghana. *Journal of Family Issues*, 38(18), 2620–2641. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X16686137>
- Serpa Pimentel, A., Mshana, G., Aloyce, D., Peter, E., Mchome, Z., Malibwa, D., Dwarumpudi, A., Kapiga, S., & Stöckl, H. (2021). Women's understanding of economic abuse in North-Western Tanzania. *Women's Health*, 17, 17455065211042180.
- Steinert, J., Boehret, I., Vasumati Satish, R., Sharma, S., & Chatterji, S. (2023). "We don't get money in our own hands": Evidence from focus group discussions on economic abuse against women in two states of India. *BMJ Global Health*, 8(10), e012576. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2023-012576>
- Stylianou, A. M. (2018). Economic abuse within intimate partner violence: A review of the literature. *Violence and Victims*, 33(1), 3–22. <https://doi.org/10.1891/0886-6708.VV-D-16-00112>
- Tenkorang, E. Y., & Owusu, A. Y. (2018). Does economic abuse affect the health outcomes of women in Ghana? *Health Education & Behavior*, 46(2), 340–348. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198118806970>
- Usta, J., Makarem, N. N., & Habib, R. R. (2013). Economic abuse in Lebanon: Experiences and perceptions. *Violence Against Women*, 19(3), 356–375. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801213486313>
- Voth Schrag, R. J. (2014). Economic abuse and later material hardship: Is depression a mediator? *Affilia*, 30(3), 341–351. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109914541118>
- Voth Schrag, R. J., Ravi, K. E., & Robinson, S. R. (2020). The role of social support in the link between economic abuse and economic hardship. *Journal of Family Violence*, 35(1), 85–93. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-018-0019-8>
- Voth Schrag, R. J., Robinson, S. R., & Ravi, K. (2019). Understanding pathways within intimate partner violence: Economic abuse, economic hardship, and mental health. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 28(2), 222–242. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2018.1546247>
- The World Bank. (2023). *World Bank country and lending groups*. <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>
- Yau, J. H.-Y., Fong, D. Y.-T., & Wong, J. Y.-H. (2020). Risk factors for and mental well-being outcomes of economic abuse in Hong Kong Chinese population. *Violence and Victims*, 35(2), 246–265. <https://doi.org/10.1891/VV-D-18-00057>
- Yau, J. H.-Y., Wong, J. Y.-H., Choi, E. P.-H., & Fong, D. Y.-T. (2019). Transcultural validation of the 12-item scale of economic abuse in Chinese population. *Violence and Victims*, 34(5), 804–817. <https://doi.org/10.1891/0886-6708.VV-D-17-00164>
- Yau, J. H.-Y., Wong, J. Y.-H., & Fong, D. Y.-T. (2021). Economic abuse as a form of intimate partner violence: A literature review of the instruments and mental well-being outcomes. *Violence and Victims*, 36(4), 479–492. <https://doi.org/10.1891/VV-D-19-00082>
- Yount, K. M., Cheong, Y. F., Miedema, S., & Naved, R. T. (2021). Development and validation of the economic coercion scale 36 (ECS-36) in rural Bangladesh. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(13–14), NP10726–NP10757. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520987812>
- Yount, K. M., Krause, K. H., & VanderEnde, K. E. (2016). Economic coercion and partner violence against wives in Vietnam: A unified framework? *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 31(20), 3307–3331.

Author Biographies

Sangeeta Chatterji (she/her), PhD, MSW, is a lecturer (assistant professor) in Social Work at the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Edinburgh. Sangeeta's research focuses on understanding the dimensions and causes of violence

against women and children, developing, testing, and adapting interventions that can prevent violence, and examining structural and economic inequalities that underlie gender inequality and violence against women and children.

Julia O'Connor (she/her), PhD, MSW, MPH, is an assistant professor at the University of Utah in the College of Social Work. Julia's research interests stem from a professional career with survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Her research focuses on violence prevention, namely stopping violent behaviors before they occur, through exploring risk and protective factors for violence, bystander interventions, and those who perpetrate violence.

Ariana Zane is a PhD student in Social Work at the University of Edinburgh. Her research focuses on how risk in the context of domestic abuse is conceptualized and operationalized in multi-agency forums.

Janina Isabel Steinert is an assistant professor at the TUM School of Social Sciences and Technology, Technical University of Munich and a Research Associate at the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford—from where she has also obtained her PhD. Her research interest lies primarily in the fields of global health and development economics, and research topics include intimate partner violence, poverty alleviation, and research ethics.