

The Experience of Domestic Violence on Married Person in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the forms of domestic violence often encountered in the Malaysian community. This study used the quantitative research design through a survey method to obtain research data. A total number of 390 respondents were selected by using simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. The findings showed that there were significant differences in the forms of domestic violence between male and female respondents. Women were more likely to experience domestic violence because of the men's power and control over women. In terms of experienced, it is found that the most dominant form of violence in a household is economic violence. Therefore, top down and bottom up approaches should be intensified by increasing promotional and awareness programs to all levels of society in order to solve the issue of domestic violence. These interventions are crucial in order to reduce the issue of domestic violence, create a society that possesses a stronger bond, restore families to a functional state and to bring about a harmonious family environment.

Keywords

Domestic violence, marital status, occupation, income, and intervention.

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Introduction

Domestic violence is an important issue of health in society [1]. Violence is also seen as a violation of human rights that refers to any behaviors that affect the mental, physical, economic and social health and cause harm to a relationship. These behaviors may occur in silence and also publicly through threats or coercion [2]. Violence refers to physical, sexual violence (compulsory sexual conduct by a partner), economic (control over economic resources), and emotion (actions aimed at controlling and manipulating couples) [3]; [4].

Domestic violence is more common in women than in men. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that one in three women experience sexual assault or violence or both in their lifetime [2]. This problem is considered complex and also results in isolation in the community due to the often-stigmatized individuals' attitude. Domestic violence has a number of these risk factors such as gender, age, substance abuse, finances, social isolation, child abuse history, childhood experiences, poverty and mental disorders [5]; [6]. This may also be due to the nature of attitudes or culture of a community.

Literature review

The Domestic Violence Act 1994 (Act 521) as referred to in paragraphs (a) to (e) of section 2, defines "domestic violence" as limited to (a) wilfully or knowingly placing, or attempting to place, the victim in fear of physical injury; (b) causing physical injury to the victim by such act which is known or ought to have been known would result in physical injury; (c) compelling the victim by force or threat to engage in any conduct or act, sexual or otherwise, from which the victim has a right to abstain; (d) confining or detaining the victim against the victim's will; or (e) causing mischief or destruction or damage to property with intent to cause or knowing that it is likely to cause distress or

annoyance to the victim" [7]. The statistics from the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) showed that there was an increasing number of domestic violence cases from the year 2014 to 2017. In 2014, a total of 4807 cases were recorded and this increased to 5014 cases in 2015. Reports continued to increase in 2016, bringing the total number of domestic violence to 5796 cases. However, the domestic violence cases in 2017 have decreased to 5421 cases.

In the West, a study of violence against women carried out on 24,000 women from 10 countries showed that 13-61 percent of women were physically abused and 10 to 50 percent were sexually abused [2]. However, the prevalence of domestic violence is difficult to achieve quantify due to the nature of the data, poor socio-economic conditions, family environment and some unknown factors [8]. For children who often witness the violence perpetrated by their parents in childhood, they have the potential to learn this behavior. In fact, violence during childhood is the root of all social violence [9]. This matter will be transferred from generation to generation, and called the "cycle of violence" which never stops [10].

Domestic violence has a negative impact on the mental health of the victims. As a result, they are exposed to the possibility of a risk as of physical and emotional stress and may suffer from depression and that affects their work productivity and health impaired [11]. In fact, some victims have decided to committed suicide due to the pressures they face. Due Thus, to the issue of domestic violence is considered a global issue and its effects can affect the quality of life to all aspects of life. In this regard, studies the present study of on domestic violence was conducted on individuals who have been are married or have been married in Malaysia

Method

The present study on the experience of domestic violence against individuals who are married used a quantitative

design for data collection through a survey method. This study was conducted in Malaysia using a multistage sampling technique. A total of 390 respondents were selected to complete the questionnaire that consisted of 98 men and 292 women. Self-report techniques were used in this study. This technique is considered appropriate to answer the questionnaire so that the respondents can give a correct and honest feedback without being noticed by others.

This study used random sampling and probability sampling. The inclusion criteria required for the purposive sampling of respondents in the country is were respondents living in Kelantan and Terengganu, male and female, are married or and have been married or never married. The selection of this population was is set so that to other populations do not have the opportunity to be selected as respondents [12]. In addition, random sampling techniques are easy to use to ensure equal opportunities are were given to individuals who are married or have married to participate as a sample in the study [13]. A total of 390 questionnaires were completed representing both states and were analyzed.

The experience questionnaire discussed four forms of economic, emotional, physical and sexual domestic violence experiences. There are 7 items for economy, 26 items for emotion, 9 items for sexual and 12 items for physical. The five Likert scales have been used and fit the statements in the context of (1) never (2) rarely (3) sometimes (4) often and (5) always. To determine the reliability of the items in the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha (a) was used. For economic items (a = 0.73), emotional (a = 0.91), sexual (a = 0.72) and physical (a = 0.77). According to [14] the good reliability of the items received is between 0.71-0.99.

The data was collected, coded and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 and analyzed using analysis inference form the in ferential analyses which were the t- test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Results and Discussion

This study explains the differences between the forms of violence that men and women often use. Women and men

who are married or have been married were the respondents of the study. The study involved 98 men and 292 women.

Variables	Factor	N	Min	Sd	df	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
Economic	Men	98	2.1399	1.37192	388	-10.943	.000
	Women	292	3.5925	1.04706			
Emotional	Men	98	1.4482	.58293	388	-12.206	.000
	Women	292	2.4145	.70702			
Sexual	Men	98	1.1077	.24843	388	-7.388	.000
	Women	292	1.7568	.85717			
Physical	Men	98	1.5408	1.02742	388	-13.717	.000
	Women	292	3.3042	1.12476			

Table 1: Gender Differences of Forms of Violence

Table 1 shows the gender differences between men and women in the form of violence used by couples. The forms of experienced violence, either economic, emotional, sexual, and physical showed a significant relationship, in which the sig. $p < 0.05$ between men and women even own relationship is reciprocal. In this study, women were found to experience more violence compared to men.

Gender is an important factor that influences people's attitudes towards violence against women. There is a difference between men and women in terms of their attitude towards violence. The t-test results showed that women are more at risk of domestic violence than men. The attitudes of women and men influence violence against women. One of the reasons women often experience violence is because of their lack of awareness of violence and their lack of knowledge on the rights that can be claimed [15]. The education are address can reduce violence against women in society [16]. Men were appear to regard violence as a natural and acceptable phenomenon [17]. The men's extreme attitudes toward women involve behavior patterns that have resulted in them gaining power and control over their relationships [18]. These behaviors include physical violence, threat of violence (emotional abuse) [19] and economics [20]. That one-third of women experienced half of all cases of sexual violence which included sexual assault by a partner, sexual exploitation and coercion [21]

Table 2: Differences in the Forms of Violence According to the Demographics

Factor	Variable	Total Mastery	Sum of Squere	Df	Mean Squere	F	Sig
Marriage Status	Economic	Between Groups	8.369	3	2.790	1.662	.175
		Within Groups	648.042	386	1.679		
		Total	656.412	389			
	Emotional	Between Groups	6.140	3	2.047	3.280	.021
		Within Groups	240.803	386	.624		
		Total	246.942	389			
	Sexual	Between Groups	4.550	3	1.517	2.378	.069
		Within Groups	246.166	386	.638		
		Total	250.716	389			
	Physical	Between Groups	5.793	3	1.931	1.076	.359
		Within Groups	692.906	386	1.795		
		Total	698.699	389			
Occupation	Economic	Between Groups	24.678	6	4.113	2.494	.022

		Within Groups Total	631.734 656.412	383 389	1.649		
	Emotional	Between Groups Within Groups Total	11.823 235.119 246.942	6 383 389	1.971 .614	3.210	.004
	Sexual	Between Groups Within Groups Total	16.640 234.076 250.716	6 383 389	2.773 .611	4.538	.000
	Physical	Between Groups Within Groups Total	38.919 659.780 698.699	6 383 389	6.486 1.723	3.765	.001
Household Income	Economic	Between Groups Within Groups Total	11.338 645.074 656.412	5 384 389	2.268 1.680	1.350	.243
	Emotional	Between Groups Within Groups Total	2.731 244.211 246.942	5 384 389	.546 .636	.859	.509
	Sexual	Between Groups Within Groups Total	1.773 248.943 250.716	5 384 389	.355 .648	.547	.741
	Physical	Between Groups Within Groups Total	22.762 675.937 698.699	5 384 389	4.552 1.760	2.586	.026

Studies have shown that domestic violence still occur even though data from the Malaysian police registered a drop in the number of cases in 2017. This suggests that people do not report to the authorities and even hide issue from the public. There are many factors contributing to the low reporting of cases. These include embarrassment or shame, self-blame, fear of exposure to the media, fear of getting hurt or getting more serious injury, fear of the legal system.

The results of the present study show that married women or women who have married experienced at least one form of domestic violence. All women regardless of age, marital status, number of children, education level, and employment status, substance abuse, and economic status are at a low risk of all forms of violence [22]; [23]. For this study the demographic factors that influence violence are marital status, occupation and household income.

Marital status was found to be significantly related to emotional violence. According to statistics on domestic violence in Malaysia, 74 percent were female victims and 26 percent were male victims including husbands. The Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (2004) [24] showed that the marital status of women is linked to the experience of domestic violence. A total of 42 divorced women experienced physical violence [22]. The situation may be due to women being described as submissive, do not like violence, and give up easily while men are described as assertive, abusive and violent. This happens when some men have a belief that they are the dominant members of society, which allows them to use violence as a means to control and dominate their partners.

In addition, employment has been found to be significant factor in all forms of emotional, economic, sexual and physical violence. Unemployed women are at risk for violence. Women's in the lower income also face great challenges in meeting their personal and children's needs

[25]; [26]. The researcher also found that some spouses exercise their power by forcing their spouse to get a job to improve their financial situation [26]; [27]. In some cases, the spouses try to deny access to jobs to maximize dependency and reduce social relations [28].

In this study, it was also seen that household income also contributes to domestic violence. Low income levels are seen to lead to a significant increase in violence against women. Those who fail to get a good education and do not have the financial resources are likely to become victims of violence. Poverty and issues related to poverty has been identified as a major contributor to the violence [29] [30]. Violence also are prevalent among the low-income group in various countries [31]. Women who depend or are forced to rely primarily on their spouse's economic resources are more at risk of being persecuted or exploited and less likely to leave their spouse [32]. On the other hand, the inability of a family leader to provide sufficient needs causes them to use violence as a way to maintain power and control over their spouse.

Conclusion

It is important for all sectors of society to understand the importance of domestic violence. The annual number of injuries and deaths caused by violence against women and girls is quite high [1]. Based on the findings of the present study, it is suggested that top down and bottom up approaches to be intensified by increasing promotions and awareness programs to all levels of society so that the issue of domestic violence can be resolved and the community is more courageous to present and report cases of domestic violence that are happening now. Moreover, the Domestic Violence Act should take into account the fact that family

affairs are under the jurisdiction of Shariah law for Muslims and civil law for non-Muslims. In addition, the establishment of the One Stop Service Center (OSSC) in hospitals is one of the measures taken to reduce domestic violence. The OSSC provides services such as medical and counseling, and obtains support from NGOs, the police, lawyers and the Social Welfare [33]. This is a very important intervention to reduce the problem of domestic violence, creating a society that has a strong bond, restoring family functionality and create an atmosphere of harmony in the family.

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