

Level of Knowledge and the Phenomenon of Domestic Violence in the East Coast of Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Domestic violence is a serious social problem and can affect the health and well-being of a person. The statistics from the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) showed that there was an increasing number of domestic violence cases from the year 2014 to 2019. A study on domestic violence was carried out to look at four common forms of violence in society; namely economic, emotional, sexual and physical violence using quantitative design through survey methods to obtain data. This study focused on the East Coast of Malaysia; in the States of Terengganu, Kelantan and Pahang through multistage sampling techniques by distributing a total of 390 questionnaires. The results were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 22 using descriptive and inferential analysis (ANOVA). The findings showed that the respondents in Malaysia have a high level of knowledge on the issue of domestic violence. The results also show that the level of education has a relationship with the forms of violence that exist whether sexual, emotional and physical violence. It is recommended that the government speed up the implementation of the Social Work's Bill profession and intensity increase the various programs and activities involving married couples in Malaysia so that cases of domestic violence are reduced.

Keywords: *Domestic violence, Level of knowledge, Education, Physical violence, Emotional violence.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is a global phenomenon that often occurs regardless of place, gender, ethnicity, culture, age or socio-economic status [1]. This phenomenon is widespread. According to [2] some countries accept this behavior as a common thing where men are considered more powerful than women because they hold a position either in employment, religious or community. However, domestic violence can occur regardless of who the victim is and who the predator is. This is because, men also have the potential to be victims [3]. However, statistics show that one in three (30%) women worldwide reported of having experience some form of violence either physical and/ or sexual in their life time [4].

Domestic violence that occurs in society is a threat or violence that involves physical, sexual, economic, psychological or emotional damage [5]. This includes any kind of violence against others to cause harm or maintain power and control over the victim [6]. Statistics released by the Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM) show that cases of domestic violence reported increased dramatically between 2014 ie 4,807

cases to 5,118 cases in 2019 [7]. Typically, the perpetrator is a person who is around and has a relationship with the victim whether it is of a husband, wife, ex-spouse, family members, friends or acquaintances. This violence or threat will have an impact whether consequential or not such as suffering, stress, wounds, bruises, burns and death [8].

In Malaysia, domestic violence is a criminal act under the Domestic Violence Act 1994. This act includes actions such as intentionally placing or attempting to place the victim in fear and physical harm, claiming the victim by force or threat to engage in any conduct or act, sexual or otherwise, confining or detaining the victim as well as committing treason or property damage with intent to cause the victim to feel sad or angry [9].

According to [10] a socio-cultural look at the abuse of power that is often used by men in controlling their partner is seen as solution to the formation of attitudes of the victim. Although cultural traditions in Asia described the acts of violence as a misconduct act, but the stigma that glorifies men and fear of the occurrence of divorce have prevented

women from finding a solution. Because of that, they choose to suffer in silence [11].

2. METHODOLOGY

This study used quantitative design through survey method. The study involved 390 respondents through the distribution of questionnaires. Self-report technique was used to obtain accurate feedback based on the actual knowledge and experience of the respondents. This study also uses multistage sampling technique; namely simple random sampling technique and sampling purposive where three main criteria in

the selection of respondents; namely the first, originating from the East Coast states of Malaysia (Terengganu, Kelantan and Pahang), second, male and female; and third, married or ever married. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 22. Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (ANOVA) were used to explain and describe the results of the analysis on the samples. To determine the level of knowledge, the mean value is measured using the mean and interpretation (level) by [12] as shown in Table 1 below, while ANOVA was used to analyze the difference between the mean in the group.

Table 1. Interpretation of Mean Score

Mean Score	Interpretation
1.00-2.33	Low
2.34-3.66	Average
3.67-5.00	High

3. RESULT

Table 2 below describes the findings obtained from the respondents on their knowledge of the issue of domestic violence. Respondents were allowed to

express their knowledge on the issue of domestic violence based on the 15 items specified. Overall, the level of knowledge of respondents on the issue of domestic violence is high, with the mean value of 3.80 and a standard deviation of 0.964.

Table 2. Level of Knowledge Among Respondents on Domestic Violence

Item	Description	N	Mean	SD	Interpretation
1	Domestic violence is about power and control	390	3.66	1.130	Average
2	Domestic violence is a pattern of violence, abuse, intimidation used to control or maintain power over a partner who is or is in an intimate relationship	390	3.83	1.024	High
3	Domestic violence includes emotional and verbal violence	390	4.10	.841	High
4	Domestic violence is physical violence that causes harm to limbs	390	4.12	.833	High
5	Domestic violence includes sexual violence	390	4.10	.879	High
6	Violence starts with emotional violence followed by physical violence	390	4.13	.828	High
7	Domestic violence often happens to couples who have been married for a long time	390	3.04	1.156	Average
8	Domestic violence often occurs to newlyweds	390	3.10	1.130	Average
9	Domestic violence is threatening with violence even if not with actual physical violence	390	3.83	.885	High
10	A person who commits physical violence to his partner is a "mental patient"	390	3.66	1.084	Average
11	Victims involved in domestic violence do not care about the safety of their children	390	3.68	1.102	High
12	Domestic violence is deliberate violence by putting the victim in fear	390	3.94	.866	High
13	Unrestricted confinement or detention is categorized as domestic violence	390	4.01	.847	High
14	Domestic violence includes disloyalty or damaging property with the intention of causing grief or annoyance	390	3.93	.846	High
15	Domestic violence often occurs in Malaysia	390	3.81	1.003	High
		390	3.80	0.964	High

Table 3 is to examine the forms of violence by demographic factors. The results showed that there were significant differences between education and

emotional forms of violence, namely violence (F = 3,697, sig = 0.001), sexual (F = 4,998, sig = 0.000) and physical (F = 4,312, sig = 0.000)

Table 3. Differences in Forms of Violence with Education

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Economic	Between Groups	17.780	7	2.540	1.604	.133
	Within Groups	604.753	382	1.583		
	Total	622.532	389			
Emotional	Between Groups	14.655	7	2.094	3.697	.001
	Within Groups	216.339	382	.566		
	Total	230.994	389			
Sexual	Between Groups	18.874	7	2.696	4.998	.000
	Within Groups	206.089	382	.539		
	Total	224.963	389			
Physical	Between Groups	51.102	7	7.300	4.312	.000
	Within Groups	646.671	382	1.693		
	Total	697.774	389			

4. DISCUSSION

A perception on domestic violence has been formed in the community, which initially did not consider this issue of terrorism as serious and assume this is a secret that should be hidden because it is a private. However, conceptual knowledge can be distinguished by the attitude [13]. According to [14] the attitudes played out are influenced by people who we have relationships with and are around us. We are also interested in forming relationships with others [13]. According to [15] women's attitudes and low level of knowledge of legal their rights are major factors in the occurrence of domestic violence. The most frequently reported barriers are time constraints, lack of knowledge, education or training on abuse screening and insufficient resources as well as support staff to assist victims [16].

Studies have shown that women who justify violence against her (proxy acceptance of culture) are more likely to experience domestic violence [17]. This situation occurs when a woman simply harbors feelings of grief without expressing them to close friends or family [18]. Therefore, knowledge of domestic violence is very important to strengthen the notion of any member of the affected communities in order to prevent the phenomenon of domestic violence from accelerating [19] and the guidelines on family life should be created as tools to provide education to every couple [4] especially to couples who have just entered the realm of marriage so that all parties can provide effective reciprocal support [20].

Furthermore, education is one of the sociodemographic-based variables associated with domestic violence [21]. According to [22] improved

access to education, employment and socio-economic changes an advanced and well-informed, independent, active women. In addition, education is also closely related to the economy. Time constraints, lack of knowledge, education or training on abuse screening, insufficient resources, lack of support staff especially Social Workers to assist victims have been seen as a barrier for women to report the violence that occurs. Studies found that the majority of abused women are those who do not have high academic achievement [23][24] unemployed [25][26][24][27] and highly dependent on their husbands' income [28][24]. Therefore, they have no personal support for themselves and their children to get out of the clutches of terrorism.

According to [29] unemployment and low education contribute to an increased risk of domestic violence. Women or adolescents who get married at a young age or rural residents who have less access to the latest technological developments and facilities [30] are less educated and have low economic status [31] are more likely or at risk of becoming victims of household violence. The situation becomes more difficult when they divorce [32]. In addition, the policy today that requires the recruitment of skilled workers [33] to ensure a good return to the country in the future.

Thus, education acts as a key factor especially in improving gender equality, strengthening economic status and ensuring the opportunity to get better employment [31]. Education not only focuses on learning in school or university, but can be obtained through mass media [34] such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines, seminars, online courses and many more. Without education whether

formal, vocational or informal, domestic violence is quite difficult to deal with. Therefore, it is important for women to have cross-cultural education about their rights and risks in marriage; moreover it involves law regardless of religion or culture [26].

5. CONCLUSION

The issue of domestic violence needs to be addressed and developed so that the framework implemented is more comprehensive and focuses on prevention and intervention systems. From the perspectives of society, there is a need in raising public awareness and understanding of domestic violence, combating the normalization of domestic violence, overcoming the stigma of survivors and increasing public knowledge of available services. Thus, the Social Work Profession Act is necessary to provide the highest recognition in the field of social work [35]. National Social Policy is rooted in the values and aims to improve the ability of human social development and achieve social cohesion and stability, national security and well-being of society. However, the act of social work in Malaysia has yet to be implemented as the legislative authority to regulate the development of social work in Malaysia [35]. The enactment of the Social Work Bill in Malaysia is highly befitting to restore the functioning of society while dignifying the social work profession. This is because the profession of social work or social worker is the coordinator, which aims to develop self-client, connecting clients with resources, ensure that the system of social services are effective and involved in the establishment or modification of social policy [36] in addition to reducing the phenomenon of domestic violence spirals in the country.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors conceived and designed the study. Nuruaslizawati Ayob conducted the research, analyzed the data and drafts the paper. Siti Hajar Abdul Rauf contributed to manuscript revisions. Azlini Chik proofread the article and checks the technical. The final discussion, all authors agree to be held accountable for the content therein.

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