

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION

Story of Domestic Violence Against Men: The Truth, Untold and Complicated

Siti Marshita Binti Mahyut ^{1*}, Guru Dhillon ²

Multimedia University, Cyberjaya, Malaysia

Abstract— The paper aims to investigate the issue of domestic violence against men and raise awareness of domestic violence against men to the people. This issue is slowly becoming one of the serious issues in the world, not only Malaysia. Many reports have showed that women nowadays are becoming more dominant and aggressive than men. This study conducted a thorough literature review to obtain relevant data. To access the relevant information books, journals, magazines and websites were assessed. Research found out that domestic violence against men is not a concern and even ignored by the people because it is hard to identify. Moreover, male victims always choose to keep silent. These findings have shed light on an important issue and also provided guidance for abused men to seek help when the violence happens in Malaysia. This study also rendered useful suggestions for authorities to address this issue.

Index Terms— Family Law, Domestic Violence Against Men, Identify, Forms, Recommendations

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Introduction

Domestic violence is a common and significant issue in the current society where it can happen to anyone. The issue has been raised since the 1970s, and it still cannot be solved until now as people are ignorant of this issue when the abuse is more psychological other than physical. However, it must be stopped and must be prevented from happening to anyone anymore.

As defined by the Oxford dictionary, domestic violence is an act which is threatening or aggressive behaviour including physical, psychological, sexual, financial or emotional between intimate partners or any family members, regardless of age, race, sexuality or gender ([Domestic Violence London, 2006a](#)). The act of domestic violence can be an abusive behaviour that is used by one partner to control another intimate partner and includes behaviours that can threaten, intimidate, coerce, manipulate, humiliate, frighten, terrorize, hurt, or injure someone ([United States Department of Justice, 2015](#)).

Domestic violence is also known as Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) where it is described as physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression including coercive acts by an intimate partner. An intimate partner is a person whom one has a close relationship with such as spouses, dating partners, or sexual partners. IPV can happen between heterosexual or same sex couples and it does not require sexual intimacy ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017](#)). There are four main categories of IPV ([Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015](#)). Firstly, physical violence includes hitting, or shoving against a person or coercing to commit any acts with the intention of causing harm,

injury, disability, or even death. Secondly, sexual violence includes coercing or attempting someone to have sexual intercourse without their consent due to lack of consciousness. Thirdly, stalking is a way of repeating contact, sending unwanted phone calls or texts, or following from a distance that causes fear to one's safety. The action that communicates verbally and non-verbally is considered as the psychological aggression. That is the intention to harm and hurt a person emotionally and mentally. That is the fourth category of domestic violence.

While the majority victims of domestic violence are women, abuse of men happens more frequently than people think. It is undeniable that men are genetically stronger than women in the physical aspects. But this does not prevent men from becoming the victims of violence and abuse. Other than that, male victims are most likely to suffer more injury than the abused women who suffered because women will be using a weapon as they are not strong enough to abuse the men.

Methodology

This study conducted a thorough literature review to obtain data. To access the relevant information books, journals, magazines and websites were assessed. Relevant data was retrieved from these sources and analyzed to draw the inferences. Following section summarizes the reasons regarding suffering of men in terms of domestic violence.

*Email: marshita.mahyut@mmu.edu.my

Literature Review

Domestic violence against men

The media and government, not only in Malaysia but throughout the world tend to focus on the female victims of domestic violence. It is a universal truth that majority victims of domestic violence are female but the problem of men being abused is getting more common and more serious. In general, what is domestic violence against men? Domestic abuse

against men can be in various ways, such as physical battering, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and threatening to abuse. Domestic abuse against men consists of violence undergone by men in a close personal relationship such as marriage, cohabitation, or dating. Some men, who had experienced domestic violence from their partner, find it hard to get support, because it is hard for the men to accept and talk about their experiences due to several reasons, including embarrassment or shame of themselves (Domestic Violence London, 2006b).

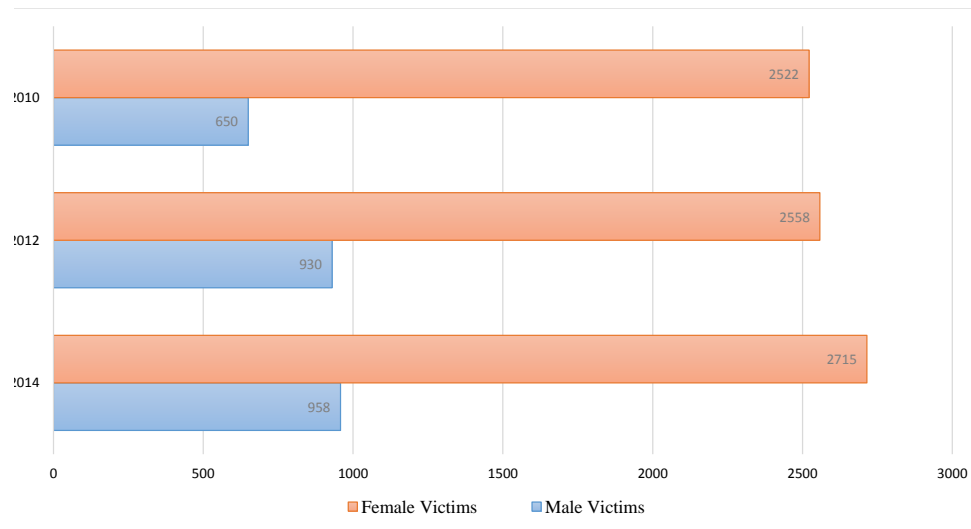


Fig. 1. Cases of domestic violence in Malaysia

The research shows that women are more than men to experience domestic violence and suffer repeated victimization. The Home Office discloses that on average, there were approximately 100 women and 30 men killed in a domestic violence situation in a year. In Malaysia, the truth is that the women are still the majority of domestic violence victims, but unexpectedly, the rate of men abuse is increasing in the recent years. According to the statistics made by the Royal Malaysian Police and the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development, it clearly provides that the male victims of domestic violence are increasing year by year, in which there were 650 cases of domestic violence against men in 2010, 815 cases in 2011, and 930 cases in 2012 (Malaysian Digest, 2014). However, the Minister of Women, Community, and Family development, Datuk Rohani Abdul Karim, said that 958 out of 3,673 reported cases of domestic violence in Malaysia are male victims standing with a percentage of twenty-six in the year of 2014 (Ng, 2014). Therefore, this shows that the rates of domestic violence against men are gradually increasing in Malaysia.

Why don't men report against violence?

From the above statistics, it is known that the number of domestic violence cases against men is steadily increasing but it is not the actual number as there are many cases going unreported. There are a lot of cases where the male victims were being ignored or choose to be unreported, especially in a patriarchal country like Malaysia. Therefore, the number of unreported domestic violence case is far more than the number shown in the report.

The reason behind why men do not report domestic violence is on the ground that some of them are afraid of being judged by the public. Victims,

especially men, tend to go to the hospital or clinic to look for treatment for abused injuries which they pretend it is caused by an accident. It is still a problem for men to openly discuss about being beaten by their wife, especially in the patriarchal society today where men being abused will be treated as a joke. Despite of the most apparent type of men abuse being physical, there are few types of domestic violence, namely emotional abuse and psychological abuse. Domestic violence against men can prompt a variety of issues and endurance relies on a variety of factors. It is vital to comprehend the possible impacts on the victim because the abuse could influence different parts of a man's life. Victims frequently report namelessly on the social networks and the other domestic violence websites about how they feel they are defenceless, miserable, weak, insane, confused, terrified, anxious, stressed, exhausted, and physically sick.

Other than that, it is troublesome and hard to determine the rate of Intimate Partner Violence against men because men will be hesitant to report their abuse or look for help (Watson & Parsons, 2005). The reason is that the society usually recognize the IPV against women more than IPV against men (Lupri & Grandin, 2004). For the past few decades, the society has become aware of the issue of domestic violence against women but the domestic violence against men is being ignored. Society has successfully brought up the idea to eliminate and encourage the people against the domestic violence but however, the issue does not involve domestic violence against men.

Moreover, male victims in heterosexual IPV are being judged brutally to allow themselves to be abused by a woman. In general, men are physically stronger than women. Therefore, it is said that men are supposed to be able to prevent any sort of female violence. This is a perspective which neglects that violent women tend to use objects throughout IPV at a higher rate than violent men (Kumar, 2012).

Besides that, the men are unwilling to report victimization because they think that is embarrassing. Hence, the men victims of IPV always hide their pain to prevent the outsiders and others from judging them and having their manliness questioned. For some men, this equivocal conduct is based upon the trepidation of being teased by society, and by apprehension of individuals saying that the woman is the genuine victim, and more likely than not acting in self-protection (Migliaccio, 2002). For a man to concede he is the victim of female-executed IPV requires the relinquishment of the polish of machismo which society anticipates from men, and to concede being submissive to a woman.

While there are many services provided and established for women for the past few years to solve the problem of domestic violence against women, men are being ignored and they cannot find a way to express or help them. However, it is hard for a man to confess and report that he is being abused by his wife and there are several reasons why.

Firstly, men are unlikely to report or stand up against domestic violence because of the social stigma or the concept that the societies are having. From ancient times till now, societies believe that men are superior to women just because men are the ones who are protecting the country, family as well as women of the tribe. In other words, it means that people always think that men are stronger than women. However, this view shall not exist and it is inapplicable to the current society.

The world is now spreading the ideal of gender equality to archive equal treatment between men and women where the societies are free from discrimination. The gender biases have fixed the idea of men to think that they must maintain the dominant position against their wives. They think that they must be able to control and take care of their families. Therefore, once a man is being abused by his wife, he might think that the world will be laughing and teasing him. So, men will feel ashamed if they report that they were being bullied or abused by their wives and then choose to remain silent when domestic violence happens.

As people keep belief in the common perception that men are stronger than women in physical and mental aspects, the problem of domestic violence against men will keep existing and the male victims will keep pretending they are dominant in the family. They suffer great shame that they are the ones who were beaten down by a woman or failed in their role as a protector and a provider for the family. From this kind of socio-cultural stereotype that people are having, men fear being judged negatively by others. Therefore, men are less likely to report or tell their friends that he was being abused by his wife and that is why, domestic violence against men is difficult to be identified by the society.

We must eliminate the traditional gender concept that thinks a "real man" shall be able to "control" his wife. The definition of a "real man" shall not be defined in this way as it is wider than just the ability to control the women. But it is true that a real man must never hit women so as the real woman shall not hit her husband. Gender equality must be promoted and preserved to solve the social problem towards men.

Other than that, the idea that domestic violence is always done by men to defenceless women has already been embedded into the mind of the community. In the common sense, majority of the people believe that women are the victims and men are the abusers. That was shown in the society and backed up by the criminal statistics, where it shows that eight of ten victims of Intimate Partner Violence are women as people showing up at the police department are usually female (Sharp, 2015). However, this does not mean that women are the only victims of the IPV. The research has shown that the report of domestic violence against men is usually being invisibilized.

The famous feminist, Erin Pizzey has successfully taken up the cause of domestic violence against women in the 1970s by setting up the world's first domestic violence shelter for women. At first, the aim of this organization was focused on removing female victims of domestic abuse from

their abusers known as the men (Kay, 2014). The feminism had spread the idea that men are naturally violent towards women, and the campaign was successfully brought up by the society until now which led the people to think and accept that "domestic violence" was equal to the violence against women.

According to the concept that domestic violence is synonymous to violence against women, men dare not report to the public authority. Men, who call the police to report domestic violence against them, fear that they will end up being the ones getting arrested. There are few studies which have publicized that women who assault their male partners will most probably avoid from being arrested than men who assault their female partners, and that female wrongdoers of IPV are regularly viewed by law implementation agencies and the courts as victims as opposed to wrongdoers. As all things considered, men are afraid that if they do report to the police that they are involved in domestic violence against men, they will most probably be assumed as to be the aggressor, and be arrested (Cook, 1997).

A report presented by the US National Family Violence Survey stated that when a female victim called for the police to arrest the male perpetrator, the man was ordered out of the house in 41.4% of cases. However, when a male victim called for help, the woman was ordered out of the house in 0% of cases. In fact, there are as high as 12.1% of male victims who were arrested by the police due to mistaken belief of a man being the aggressor. Somehow the police and the court are most likely to favour the side of the female (Gelles, & Straus, 1988).

Moreover, one of the reasons why men do not leave when domestic abuse happens is because that they want to protect their children. Men can be reluctant when they have children as the children will be at risk of harm if men leave the family. Besides, taking the children to leave the abusive partner is not a good way because it will be threatened as the husband is abducting the children. However, obtaining the custody of the children is challenging for the fathers, but it will be the best way to protect the children.

In a nutshell, it is noted that this concept must be eliminated and shall not exist anymore. As long as the misconception persists that men are always the abuser and women are always the victim, it will be hard for the male victims to feel comfortable when they are reporting their abuse. The society must change the mindset and start to recognize the seriousness of this issue to break the silence and help the male victims.

Factors Why Domestic Violence Happens

Everything happens for a reason, domestic violence, as well. There are few factors that cause domestic abuse and one of the factors is the psychological issues (Firestone, 2012). There are two emotional dynamics which lead to domestic abuse. One of them is the destructive thought process or critical inner voice while another one is a harmful illusion of a connection between a couple which is referred to as a fantasy bond by psychologist Firestone.

The destructive thought process is that the abusers have destructive thoughts towards themselves and their partners. Every man expects that they should be stronger, more masculine, and more powerful than women. They will always have a voice in their minds saying that "If you're unable to control her, then you're not a man" or "She is making fun of you. Who does she think she is?" This voice is a destructive thought process as it is telling people negative things about themselves and their relationship partner (Psych Alive, 2009a). These negative thoughts will affect one by undermining his positive feelings about himself and others. Therefore, when a man is being abused by their relationship partner, they feel ashamed and angry, thus, triggered to act on violent impulses.

On the other hand, a harmful illusion of the connection between the

couple is an illusion that they cannot live without each other. This illusion is also referred to as a fantasy bond (Psych Alive, 2009b). This dynamic makes a couple feel that they are responsible for each other's happiness and completing each other's life. These two beliefs set up an environment for abuse. The creation of a fantasy bond supports the behaviour that one can victimize another person in some way as it supports the idea that one has the power to control over the other in a relationship. Hence, this gives people the chance to mistreat and be angry towards their partner as they think their partner was entitled to them. Due to the feelings of being unable to live without their partner, one may feel desperate to get back their partner even through abuse. This shows that the fantasy bond will amount to a lack of personal responsibility, separateness, and accountability, and this offer chances for one to carry out abuse.

Besides that, domestic violence is genderless. People nowadays are easy to be influenced by an interaction of situational and individual factors (Goldsmith, 2016). Abusers may learn violent behaviour from their surroundings such as family or society and other cultural influences as they grow up. Children who have seen violence frequently or have been a victim before may believe that violence is a rational measure to solve a conflict between people. Boys who witness domestic violence against women are more possible to abuse women when they grow up as they find out that women are not to be respected while girls who witness domestic violence in their families are more likely to be abused by their husbands.

In additions, women nowadays are more open-minded where sometimes, they could consume more alcohol than men do. Alcohol does affect the proper thinking of an individual and this causes them to be unable to think or do something unreasonable. While most of the domestic violence happens because of alcohol, it is a catalyst which pushes the people to do something that they are afraid to do in normal time. Abusive women will become more aggressive after they have consumed alcohol.

Forms of Domestic Violence

Generally, the society will usually relate domestic violence or abuse to physical injury. In fact, most of them think that the definition of domestic abuse is only wide enough to cover physical injury. Actually, they did not realize that domestic violence can actually be divided into three major categories. The three major categories are named as physical abuse, mental abuse, and sexual abuse. All these types of domestic violence may occur between the relationship of heterosexuals which is a relationship consisting of a male and a female or the relationship of homosexuals which is a relationship between two same genders.

Physical abuse is one of the most common types of domestic violence among the society. However, people tend to only see physical abuse coming from the stronger person or believe that the man here is the aggressor and the woman, who is thought to be the weaker person, is the victim. However, men sometimes will be regarded as the weaker person in a family so people shall not keep judging a book by its cover. Someone physically looking strong does not make him become violent. For instance, the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development had reported that during the year 2014, the number of domestic abuse reported were 3673 complaints and 958 of them were reported by males. This is approximately 26% of the total number of the complainants.

After that, to support that not only women are the victims when it comes to domestic violence, Hope Solo, who is the famous goalkeeper for U.S. women's national soccer team, was arrested and charged under domestic violence for assaulting her husband (Malaysian Digest, 2014). Subsequently, a Hollywood actress, Emma Roberts was also charged for battered her boyfriend to nose bleeding. There are many other cases which show that the husband or the boyfriend is physically assaulted or battered by the girlfriend or the wife. Even the former president of United States,

Bill Clinton was alleged to be constantly beaten up by his wife. This was mentioned in the biography of "Hillary's Choice". Domestic violence does not bias to anyone. Even the world leader can be one of the victims of domestic abuse. Therefore, it is not impossible for a normal person or husband being battered by the wife.

Besides, when the normal perpetrator of the domestic abuse consumed drugs or alcohol, they might easily get angry over the victim and may turn the situation to be worst. The abuser hits, kicks, slaps or does any other action that might bring physical damage to the victim's body without personal consciousness. On top of that, physical abuse also includes the act of controlling what the other party tries to wear or where the victim wants to go.

On the other hand, after the husband or the boyfriend is abused by the wife or the girlfriend, they feel humiliated and most of the husbands or boyfriends will not dare to report this to the authorities. The reasons why men choose not to report the abuse to the authorities were as stated by Fontes (2016) in one of his articles named "Men Don't Tell".

"When a man is a victim of his wife's physical abuse, he is both shamed by the assaults of his wife and shamed by society for not 'controlling' her better. Men are considered 'wimps' for letting their wives beat them or for complaining about their wives' attacks. For many men, 'taking it like a man' means don't complain and don't show you are vulnerable or in pain!"

"With the prospect of being viewed as 'wimps' and/or having the assaults by their wives not believed or minimized by the general public and law enforcement, it's no wonder few men report their abuse or discuss it openly."

The next major category of abuse is the mental abuse known as the psychological abuse. Mental abuse does not actually create visible wounds on the body of the victim. Instead, it causes emotional pain and left scars in the victim's mind. This will cause the victim to have wounds on their mind in the future such as low self-esteem and so on. It was also said that men are more sensitive to mental abuse than physical abuse. There are few examples which prove that men are indeed more sensitive to mental abuse. For instance, when a man is called with degrading terms such as "coward", "impotent", "good for nothing" and so on, it hurts the ego of the man and slowly, it will leave scars on the victim's mind.

Besides, there are other examples such as yell and scream at the husband, insult them in public, and control all the finances of the husband. However, it is undeniable as some stated that if the husband or the boyfriend chooses to ignore the negative statements from the wife or the girlfriend, there will not be any damage done to men's mental state and thus there will be no mental abuse. But, there is one term in psychological field known as "classical conditioning". This classical conditioning means that if a man is being called as a "coward" or any other degrading word every day, then after sometime, the man will start to believe the negative statements. It is also true that genetically, men are stronger than women, but psychologically, men are also as fragile as a woman can be (Horvath, Misra, Epner, & Cooper, 2016). So the stereotypes about mental abuse or any other forms of abuse to men must be removed.

Thirdly, the next type of abuse will be sexual abuse. It is weird to put men under the sexual abuse category. Even the Penal Code of Malaysia didn't allow men to sue women for rape. This shows that even the law is more biased towards women instead of holding the equality in law and equality in genders. Men can also be subjected to sexual abuse if the wife or the girlfriend requests the husband or the boyfriend to do anything sexually that they don't want to do. If the word "sexual abuse" is interpreted in a wider meaning, it can also mean that the wife prevents the husband from using contraceptive method such as condom to prevent pregnancy in wife. Other few examples are unwanted kissing or touching, rape, threatening the husband or the boyfriend to have sex with wife or any other people, and so on.

It is crucial for us to keep in mind that domestic abuse does not only exist in relationship which involves different genders but it also exists even in the same-sex relationship such as homosexual, bisexual, and transgender (Robinson & Segal, 2017). Even though these mentioned relationships are prohibited under Malaysian Law and religions, but there will always be these kinds of relationship existing in hidden. So there is a need to uphold the right for them to avoid domestic abuse. There might also be domestic abuse under the LGBT relationships. The LGBT relationships are namely lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender relationships. Usually, under the LGBT relationships, the abuse will threaten the victim to tell other people about the sexual orientation of the victim. Besides, the abuser will keep on emphasizing to the victim that the authorities will never help the relationships which involved same gender, bisexual or transgender. This will prevent the victim from reporting the case to the authorities. As a result, the victim can only bear the humiliation from the abuser and maybe even suffers from physical abuse and sexual abuse as well. So, this shows that not only men under heterosexual relationships need to be protected, men under the LGBT relationships must be protected from domestic abuse as well.

Forms of Domestic Violence Under Domestic Violence Act 1994

In Malaysia, the domestic violence issue is governed under the Domestic Violence Act 1994. The act was proposed by a Joint Action Group comprising several women's organizations against domestic violence against women and it was passed by the parliament in 1994.

The Domestic Violence Act 1994 itself is gender-neutral and it is mentioned under Section 2 of the Act where it is applicable to his or her spouse, his or her former spouse, a child and incapacitated adult or any other member of the family. However, there is no doubt that the Domestic Violence Act 1994 is enacted to cure the problem of domestic violence against women and where the domestic violence against men is being ignored. However, the Deputy Women, Family, and Community Development Minister, Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun said the Domestic Violence Act was "gender-blind" but in fact, the Act does protect women's rights more than men (Zainal, 2016).

Other than that, the Act was over-focused on the physical evidence of violent crimes which means that domestic violence only constitutes when there is actual violence. It is known that when physical violence does occur, it is too late to solve and save the victims. After the amendments, domestic violence is extended to include mental, emotional, and psychological abuse. This amendment has offered the victims a greater protection and makes it the duty of the police to investigate.

Under the Section 2 of the Domestic Violence Act 1994, the domestic violence includes the following acts where the person wilfully attempts to place the victim in a fright of physical injury; causes physical injury to the victim by such an act which is known or ought to have been known, resulting in physical injury; forces the victim by force or threatens to engage in any conduct or act, sexual or otherwise, from the victim has a right to abstain; confines or detains the victim's will or causes mischief or damages or destruction to property with intent to cause or know that it is likely to cause distress or annoyance to the victim. In short, the act covered the domestic violence of person causing physical injury where it is known or ought to have been known that physical injury would be the result, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, intimidation, harassment, and any behavior that may cause harm to a person.

There is no need for the proposed Men's Affairs Department in Putrajaya as it is women who comprise most of the abused victims, women's right groups said. Lee Wei San, who is the senior program manager of All Women's Action Society (AWAM), mentioned that there is no need for a new legislation which governs the issue of domestic violence against men

as the act itself covered both genders. She also says that violence is never acceptable regardless of gender. However, the Ministry has been working hard to remove the misconception that men did not suffer domestic violence (Lin, 2016). On the other hand, the government should also pass an act about the violence against men. It is because in our country, they also had a lot of the cases about violence against men occurring in the family. Hence, the government and related authorities should protect men, regardless of the gender.

Recommendations on Domestic Violence Against Men

Regardless of the gender of the victim of domestic violence, violence itself is bad and it must be prevented. Violence will not happen when everyone is aware of this issue. We must start to spread the awareness to everyone and warn them that violence will not bring us to the answer to the problem but it will cause more problems. However, people nowadays still have the idea that violence against men is not that serious but in fact, violence is a serious matter, regardless of the gender of the victims.

For instances, a social experiment was conducted by a YouTube channel name Ock TV to expose the double standard of domestic violence and tried to see how people react when domestic violence happens in public. As a result of the experiment, when a woman is abused by a man in public, everyone reacts instantly whenever they realize the man is physically abusing the woman and when the man is trying to clarify that he was actually doing a social experiment but no one listens to him. On the other hand, nobody reacts when a man is getting abused by a woman in public as they think the girl is getting mad at the man. In short, at every single time, nobody helps a man when he is abused by a woman while when a woman is getting abused, everyone intervenes. This shows the social stigma in our society and this is why domestic violence against men persists. One day if this social stigma exists, the problem will never be solved.

The number of people suffering from partner violence has increased from year to year. Therefore, some prevention should be carried out to decrease the number of victims of domestic violence as prevention is better than cure.

First and foremost, teach the individuals and the society to be familiar with possible symptoms and indications of the existence of domestic violence, which allows us to help the victims. There are different types of signs and physical symptoms, not just one. Physical symptoms are beatings because domestic violence does not only limit to physical violence, it also includes other forms of violent behaviour such as emotional abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, financial abuse, and others. For instance, a victim of domestic violence may not look like one as they choose to suffer in silence instead of telling it to others. Hence, it is crucial to identify the signs to prevent the domestic violence.

Next, a way to solve domestic violence is to let more people know about domestic violence, know its effect, and learn how to intervene safely. Domestic Violence shelter and women's organizations can cooperate with the society, local institutes or local companies to organize some talks, awareness raising campaigns, town hall meetings, and group sessions to talk about domestic violence and make sure the community will say out when they are suffering from domestic violence instead of keeping it silently.

Furthermore, if you suspect that your neighbour is being abused, one of the approaches is by visiting them by using the excuse of borrowing something as an excuse to ring the bell. Bring another person along with you if you feel that there will be threats, especially if the abuser has dangerous objects or is drunk or intoxicated by drugs. When you witness or hear your neighbour suffering from domestic violence, immediately contact the authorities or local emergency services and provide important information which could help the authorities to begin the investigation. In addition, if you are unable to get help from local police when you answer the victim's

call in person, make sure you bring another friend to accompany you.

Nonetheless, always support and listen to a victim of domestic violence. Let him/her know that you believe them and do not judge their choices. Let the victim feel safe when he or she is confessing to you so he or she might be able to tell you what is happening and ask help from you because victims usually feel being set apart and belittled by their partners. Moreover, if you suspect your friend or the people around you facing domestic violence, let them know that you are willing to standby for their text or call for emergency. In addition, you may contact them randomly at least once a day to check whether they are alright. If the victim is your neighbour, be on guard on the house and prick your ears for any signs of violence.

Besides, provide some relief to the victim who is being kept at the house without relief. For instance, bring the victim to have a walk, offer to buy some groceries for them when having grocery shopping or help them take care of their children when the perpetrator is out, so they can have a rest. Next, take note of the dates, times, injuries, and any other observations when you witness the domestic violence. This documentation may help to boost a victim's courage to pursue legal action against their partners. The most important thing is do not make decisions for the victim, but you can support them when they make any decision, even if they are not ready to leave the relationship yet. You can ask if they want to report to the police for the abuse and support their decision. However, you can help them plan a safety plan if they are ready to leave the relationship. Although you can't help them make decisions but you can tell the victims that no one should be abused, beaten or threatened.

Resources for Abused Men

The government is taking several steps to render assistance to the victims of domestic violence against men in the country. One Stop Crisis Centre (OSCC) is a program which was established by the Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development to help the victims of the domestic violence regardless of gender. The program was set up in every governmental hospital for identifying victims of domestic violence and makes ease for the victims to report. The OSCC provided services and assistance such as medical treatment and examination, the collection of specimen, the collection of statement, counselling, and shelter as well as legal assistance ([One Stop Crisis Centre, n.d.](#)).

In Malaysia, there are not many authorities specialized in relevant about the issue of domestic violence against men as the number of abused men is really little as compared to domestic violence against women. However, the recent proposal to set up a Men's Affairs Department in the International Islamic University of Malaysia by the Associate Professor Dr. Shamrahayu Abdul Aziz was rejected and critiqued by the others. The proposal of such a department is to set up a place to specialize in dealing with men's affairs since there was no avenue for Malaysian men to seek help whereas women do have their own department ([Andres, 2016](#)).

The Minister of Women, Family, and Community Development, Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim, stated that the number of men facing domestic violence in Malaysia is still small but this does not mean that the government is not concerned about the well-being of men. The victims can always seek the ministry's help under the Family and Welfare Department. The authorities are not biased towards women but they are trying to prevent violence, regardless of the genders.

Like other countries, Malaysia's domestic violence outreach and support groups tend to help women only. However, the outreach provided by other countries is as double as what our country provides as the government, people as well as some of the non-governmental organizations are really concerned and put effort to solve the problem.

On the other hand, Malaysians shall be more concerned and active to solve problems like this. For example, a non-profit organization in U.S.

named "Male Survivor" aims to support healing and hope to male victims who suffered abuse. The organization does keep holding the seminars and tries to bring up awareness of this issue to the society as well as encouraging the male victims to report themselves. The director of the organization mentioned that everyone has the ability to do something to help the world or at least, someone else's world. Hence, the government of Malaysia shall put some effort to raise the awareness of domestic violence against men to solve the problem before it becomes more serious. Besides that, we need an organization like the Safe Place. This organization provides counselling service for the male victims to help them come out from trauma and reclaim their life. Other than that, the organization has its own men's survivor support group which is formed by men who previously suffered from domestic violence. They share and connect their experience to find a better way to solve the problems others are facing.

After that, to solve the problem of domestic violence against men from the root, the organization must work hard to change the social stigma of the people who think that man are naturally stronger than women. As the time change, the thinking of the people shall be changing also. We must be a free-thinker to live in a world free of inequality.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has some potential limitations which must be addressed in future. Domestic violence against men is not widely accepted and people do not have much awareness regarding this issue; due to this, authors were not able to retrieve maximum relevant data. In future more research in this domain is encouraged to get deeper insights regarding this issue.

Conclusion

Women are not the only victims of domestic violence and people shall be aware of men being abused by women. Newspaper, social media, and radios play a vital role to change the thinking of the people.

However, rather than creating more awareness campaigns to solve it from the root, endeavour should be taken on building the implementation. We have to give our hands to help the abused men to overcome problems. Prevention is better than cure. We must have more organizations set up to solve this problem before it is too late. However, the minister has rejected the proposal of setting up a new Men's Affairs Department, and there are few organizations and programs to help those men who are being abused. Therefore, men shall search alternatives to help themselves from getting out from that situation.

In contrary, there are many programs and organizations which are defending and helping the women who are being abused by men. In our opinion, since there is an existence of domestic violence against men, the organizations shall open their hands to help the men like what they did for the women. What they are really defending is not against men or women but they are against violence. Violence itself is bad, regardless of which gender is performing it. We must not tolerate and let the problem spread to become bigger.

In conclusion, men do have a feeling and suffer from pain like other women do. We must not have gender biasness when it comes to domestic violence. The government must put some effort to solve every small problem before it gets bigger. The people shall also be more open-minded to change the social stigma in order to solve the problems. More outreach programs for abused men and women are needed to make a country violence-free.

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