

Influential Factors Among Male Population, Which Associated with the Economic Violence Against Women in Laos

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Abstract This article examined the influential factors among male population, which associated with the economic violence against women in Laos. The study was based on the Quantitative Research Methodology. The structured interview questionnaire was used to collect data from the sample population of 350 men, among 350 households settled in the rural areas of Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR. The Multiple Regression Analysis technique was applied to analyze data to identify the key influential factors associated with economic violence against women. The data collection was conducted in August 2015. The study showed that the majority of the male population are men whose aged between 30 and 39 (33.1%). 46% of the population engage in primary education, and 43.7% of them engage in secondary education. 83.1% of the population are rice farmer or other agricultural activities. The majority of the population (40.6%) has perpetrated the economic violence against women. On the specific issue of economic violence, 35.4% of the male population admitted that they do not like the idea of letting their wives to work outside their house. This study found that the health condition of men has a significant influence on economic violence against women, at the statistically significant level of 0.05. In accordance with the stipulated hypothesis of this study, data analysis showed that both the factor on experiencing violence and the factor on witnessing of violence have a significant influence on the level of economic violence against women in Lao, at the significant level of 0.01.

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Introduction

Violence is an act or behavior that causes damages to life or property. Violence act or behavior can be generated by the natural force, by accident, or by human beings. Violence also carries another meaning or it could mean something that limits the capacity or potential of people. Violence can happen at all time, and it happens to anyone and anywhere regardless of race, genders or ages. We have consistently heard news about violence in various media, especially regarding the violence against children or women. Several studies indicated that men usually caused violence. Men are the root cause of violence, and the majority of victims usually are either women or children [13].

Lao PDR currently has been a country with an increase of violence against women [19]. The form of violence occurred in Laos is usually caused or perpetrated by men onto women. From a survey on violence against women in Laos during the period of 2014 and 2015 [7]. The survey conducted with the sample size of 3000 Lao women whose aged 15–64 years old. The data showed that violence against women did occur in Laos, and more than 50% of the existing violence cases are perpetrated by the loved one (husband) against their own wife. More than 43.31% of women were either physically or sexually abused. This could be considered as an important serious problem for the country. In addition, the same survey found that the majority (43.2%) of the abused women victims are afraid to tell anyone about being abused, they usually did not report the violence incidence to anyone or to any organization because they are either ashamed of the abuses or are afraid of the potential social stigma [19].

Besides physical and sexual violence, there is another type of violence. Economic violence is considered as a form of domestic violence which affect women's life and livelihood. Economic violence usually includes but not limited to the prohibiting or banning of their wife from working outside their house or community, limiting the spending money or on hand money of their wife, or even stealing money from their wife. The victims of economic violence usually have trouble in making a quality of living, and they usually are lacking necessary resources for making a living [16]. A number of studies exposed consequences of economic violence to women. There is a possibility that women may be unable to manage money since they inexperienced in financial management due to limitation from the intimate partner [5]. In addition, economic violence affects psychological and physical health through the stress associated with poverty and facing an uncertain financial future [12, 14].

In Lao PDR, a rate of economic violence has been increasing due to Globalization impacts, for instance, urban development has been invading to the rural area of Laos. The circumstance caused higher demand for household consumption among households in the rural area, such as mobile phone, computer, etc. Household leaders, normally men, had to find ways to fulfill their needs, and it

consequent to economic stress within households [10]. Moreover, Sananikone et al. [11] mentioned economic stress was caused by the cultural norm of men on the role of household leader. Existing cases of domestic violence indicated the lack of effective implementation of laws and policy in Laos. The Lao Women's Union had interviewed more than 1200 both men and women from 6 Provinces. The interview found that drinking alcohol, using addicted substances, or having the financial problem, increased the degree of seriousness of violence against children and women [2]. Therefore, this article is interested in factors that have influenced in Lao men in rural areas or the cause of economic violence against women. The result from this research could be used as a baseline for policy recommendation in order to prevent the economic violence against women and children in the future.

Research Objective

To examine the influential factors related to economic violence against women that is perpetrated by Lao men in the rural community.

Literature Review

The concept on violence: WHO [20] had defined violence as using force or power with an intention to threat, to assault, or to offend other people, a group of people, or community, and it results in injuries, death, hearting feeling, and preventing the development of human potential. In general, this definition is resonant with description of violence by the Promotion and Coordination Office of the National Women Committee [17], which defined violence as an act that violating the rights of an individual, limiting people's freedom in both public and private spheres, inflicting both physical and mental suffering in the victims. Violence is behavior that is not in line with the general practices or norms of society [1].

This article focuses on the economic violence, which means violence act perpetrated by a man to a woman (in this case refer to husband to wife) with force or threat. The violent act or behavior are presented to control the earning of the wife for his own benefit, or forcing others or the wife to pay his financial debts [11]. In addition, some experts viewed violence in terms of the structural aspect, such as Inthonpraseuth [6], who described the structural violence as violence that could happen directly or indirectly. Directly violence is from personal experience or related to the social structures that were created by people with the power to take advantages, while indirectly violence leads to cultural violence. Cultural violence could be embraced in religions, ideology, or languages etc. From this aforementioned concept or theory, there is an expansion of knowledge beyond the individualist thinking that usually perceived a person committing violence because of his mental problem or his personal character, which is seen as out of his control. He committed violence because he gets drunk for example. A more complex explanation or theory or Multidimensional Approach considered multiple factors influencing violence prospects, all factors are linked at all various levels—

individual factors, family backgrounds, existing situation or circumstances where violence occurred, and socio-cultural factors. The acceptance of violence within the patriarchy system, or cultures that prefer men over women, are all key factors causing violence against the opposite gender or women in this case. Furthermore, characteristics of individual nuclear family, which values privacy and individualism diminished the important role community or social protection. Lack of social protection from community or neighbors encouraged the repeated violence. Some social conditions such as the high rate of unemployment, or the high rate of crimes in the area, or illegal activities, easy accessibility of alcohol or addicted substances, or pornography, or individual factor such as mental stress, poverty, the drinking problem, peer pressure, could all contribute to encouraging violence. Additional risk factors at the individual level include the direct experience of violence or witness of violence in the family during childhood and the cultural value that accepts violence or using force in solving problems or conflicts [20]. Therefore in this study, it is hypothesized that factors at the individual level, social economic level, personal experience or exposure to risk factors, men's perception or acceptance of domestic violence, might have certain degrees of influence on economic violence against women in the rural community of Laos.

Methodology

This research used Quantitative Research Methodology to identify the influential factors that influenced Lao men to perpetuate economic violence against women or their wife. The unit of data analysis is at the individual level. The research sample population is the married men in Sangthong district of Laos. For the population size at infinity, 350 people were recommended as an operational sample size—based on Tashakkori and Teddlie [15]. Research tools include the questionnaire that is developed according to the concepts, theories, and results from the previous qualitative study. The questionnaire comprised of 9 main parts: (1) demographic characters of the population; (2) health condition of men or perpetrators, (3) childhood experience of violence; (4) witness of violence in childhood; (5) characteristic of family; (6) family background; (7) perception of gender and violence; (8) economic status or social status; and (9) perception on policy, law, and violence. The questionnaire had been checked based on the content validity technique and was tested with a similar group of 30 men in 2 villages of Sangthong district of Laos, resulting with the reliability value at 0.891, which is considered meeting the standard for data collection. Data collection was conducted in March 2016. Data analysis was based on the content analysis and the multivariate analysis—using the multiple regression analysis for testing and finding factors that have certain degrees of influence on economic violence against women perpetrated by male population in Lao. And, data was presented from the table and based on descriptive data technique.

Results

Characteristics of the Male Population in Laos

The result from the analysis showed that the majority of the male population in the rural area is between the ages of 30–39, or 33.1% of the total sample population, and 46% has primary education and 43.7% has secondary school education. Most are in agriculture or 83.1%, with the annual income of 10,000,000 kip (or around 40,000 baht) or 39.2%. In terms of the health condition, the study found that the majority of the male population has a high level of good physical health and emotional health, or at 54.9, and 38% are in the middle range in terms of good physical and emotional health condition. For health condition related to using addicted substances, the study found that majority of the male population in the rural areas use addicted substances, drinking alcohol and playing gamble, or at 58, 83.7, and 32.9% respectively.

Social-Psychological Factors

The majority of the male population have a middle level of understanding regarding sexuality, acts of violence and laws, or 72.6, 59.7 and 71.4% respectively. Specifically, 62.9% agreed that a wife should be obedient or listen to her husband; 50.0% believed that, in general, a husband has more rights than his wife because he paid the bride price; and, 56.0% thought that the current laws on violence needed to be improved as they are too strict on them. More than half, or at 52.9% of the total male population strongly disagreed that participation in the anti-violence activities in the community would decrease violence against women. Regarding witness of violence in the family, the study found that the majority has experienced seeing or witnessing some violence in the family, or at 63.7%. For specific experience on violence in the family, 12% acknowledged that they have witnessed their parents having verbal violence many times during their childhood. Regarding being abused or experienced outbreaks of violence during childhood, the study found that 1 in every 3 male population has experienced acts of violence in their family. During their childhood, 18.6% has sometimes experienced physical violence perpetrated by people in their own family, and 11.4% has much time experienced emotional abuse inflicted on them by their own family members.

Economic Violence Against Women

The majority of the male population had perpetrated economic violence against their wife, at 50.4%, with the average of 0.60 (S.D. = 0.98), And it is noticeable that the highest value is 8.0. Regarding permission for wife to work outside, 35.4% prohibited their wives from working outside, and 18% demanded total access to their wives' bank account (or expecting to use the money that their wives have earned); and, 9% of the same total population acknowledged that they had taken their wives' money or belongings without her permission.

Influential Factors on VAW

This study identified factors that have certain influences on general violence against women based on the Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA), which is one of the Multi-variate analysis techniques. Under the MRA, all variables—both independent and dependent variables—must carry data type at least at the interval scale, or the ratio scale. For variables with data type lower than the interval scale, or for data at the nominal or the ordinal levels, dummy variables must be created before they can be used in the MRA. Before using the MRA, all pairs of dependent–independent variables must be tested statistically to ensure that none of them have Correlation Coefficient value of equal to or more than 0.75 in order to avoid the multicollinearity problem in the relationship analysis [8] According to the standard Correlation Coefficient table, the study found that all pairs of dependent–independent variables have the Correlation Coefficient value of less than 0.75, which meant all of them are applicable in the MRA.

When conducting the MRA multivariate statistic test on all pairs of independent–dependent variables that have the Correlation Coefficient value of less than 0.75, this study found that only some independent variables on Table 1 have the influence on the dependent variable on economic violence against women.

1. *Emotional health* The independent variable on emotional health, which has negative influential relationship on economic violence against women with the (b) value equals to (–) negative 0.170, which could be interpreted as with every one unit increased in the good emotional health of men, there would be a corresponding decreasing of economic violence against women by 0.170 unit.
2. *Witness of violence in childhood* The independent variable on witnessing violence in childhood has the positive relationship with the dependent variable on economic violence against violence, with the (b) value of 0.363; this meant that with every 1 unit increase in the witness of violence experienced in childhood, there would be a reciprocal increase in the economic violence against women by the same level of 0.363 unit.
3. *Experienced violence in childhood* The independent variable on experienced violence during childhood, which has the b value of equal to 0.440. Based on this $b = 0.440$, it is safe to say that with every one unit increase in the violence experienced in childhood there would be 0.440 unit increase in the economic violence against women.

When comparing the Beta values of all these three influential independent variables, based on the Table 1, the study found that the dependent variable on economic violence received the highest influence from the independent variable on experienced violence in childhood with beta of 0.440, followed by the independent variable on witness of violence in childhood (with beta = 0.363), and emotional health (with beta = 0.170). All the three independent variables used in this study for predicting the direction of influence (or b) and intensity of influence (beta) have the statistically significant level of 0.01 or less, with the R² value equal to 0.285 (Table 1).

Table 1 The results of the analysis of influential factors on economic violence against Lao women perpetrated by male population in Laos

| Variables | b | Beta | Sig. | Order |
|---|---------|---------|-------|-------|
| Age | – 0.002 | – 0.025 | 0.649 | |
| No school (1) | – 0.282 | – 0.055 | 0.456 | |
| Highest education at primary school level (1) | – 0.211 | – 0.108 | 0.432 | |
| Highest education at secondary school level (1) | – 0.255 | – 0.130 | 0.326 | |
| Vocational level (1) | – 0.029 | – 0.004 | 0.945 | |
| Occupation as farmer (2) | 0.060 | 0.023 | 0.686 | |
| Annual income | – 5.047 | – 0.008 | 0.884 | |
| Addition | – 0.069 | – 0.147 | 0.024 | |
| Alcohol | 0.102 | 0.040 | 0.487 | |
| Gambling | – 0.063 | – 0.039 | 0.485 | |
| Emotional health | – 0.031 | – 0.170 | 0.028 | 3 |
| The witness of violence in childhood | 0.283 | 0.363 | 0.003 | 2 |
| Experienced violence in childhood | 0.161 | 0.440 | 0.000 | 1 |
| Perception level of gender | 0.019 | 0.031 | 0.564 | |
| Perception level on law | 0.043 | 0.060 | 0.250 | |
| Perception level on violence | 0.027 | 0.065 | 0.223 | |
| a | 3.063 | | | |

$R^2 = 0.285$, $F = 4.247$, Sig. of $F = 0.000$. The reference for the 2 model variables: (1) The highest education at tertiary school level, (2) Occupation as none farmer

Conclusion and Discussion

From the research results, it is found that the majority of the male population, or 40.6%, have inflicted economic violence against women, particularly regarding prohibiting wife to work outside their house or 35.4%. The result supports Tolman and Rosen [18], who found that most husbands have perpetrated violence against their wives, leading to wife developing certain health problems, or wife being depressed or nervous. Furthermore, Fawole [4] reached an important study indicates that women were not allowed to improve their own economic status because the husbands do not allow wives to work outside their houses. Women are not allowed to manage money in their own households due to the persisted value and culture that have been practiced as part of tradition. This is one of the type of violence that affects or has tremendously impacted women in negative manners. Regarding influential factors on economic violence against women in rural areas of Laos, the study found 3 factors including the experience of violence in childhood, the witness of violence in childhood, and emotional health. This finding confirms the previous studies or body of knowledge such as Benson et al. [3] that found factor on experienced violence in childhood caused husband to perpetrate violence especially the economic violence. Men or husbands are usually stressed out or nervous, which in return having negative impact on their wife's wellbeing in general—this

viewpoint resonant with the WHO [20] and Rocca et al. [9] that described the health condition of the perpetrator, both the physical and mental health conditions as the key reason or cause of violence. When husband's health is weak, his mind and will are weak too. Husbands would express their weakness through various violent acts against their partners. To prevent economic violence against wife, it is important to address the root cause of the problem, starting from the basic teaching of boys and girls at early age in order to prevent violence from occurring in the first place. Therefore, it is to say that the strong family institution is the starting point to prevent physical violence against women or economic violence against women.

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