



Family background in upbringing, experience of violence, and authority relationship among married, Thai, Muslim couples in Pattani province experiencing domestic violence



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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were to investigate family background in upbringing, experience of violence, and authority relationship among married, Thai, Muslim couples in Pattani province experiencing domestic violence. The informants of this study consisted of 20 spouses experiencing domestic violence, 20 parents and 20 relatives of the spouses. The data were collected through discussions and in-depth interviews, and then analyzed using comparative logic of concepts, theories, research reports, and context. The study found that married, Thai, Muslim couples in Pattani province experiencing domestic violence had had a strict upbringing, experienced violence in witnessing their parents quarreling and beating each other, had experienced severe punishment in childhood, believed that women have an inferior status to men, and that men are dominant.

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Introduction

The problem of domestic violence has become a social phenomenon with social, cultural, and family conditions as factors that designate and contribute to spousal relationships in Thai society, and various phenomena reflect an increase in violence and complications between married couples that make the problem more difficult to prevent and to solve. Such problems affect victims as well as witnesses physically and mentally, and undermine happiness in the family. Domestic violence has become prevalent in society, in families from any economic status, profession, race and religion, and as a result, more organizations in the government and private sectors give importance to prevention and solving the problems (Kongsakon & Pojam, 2008; Laeheem, 2014). This is different from the past

when Thai society did not place much importance on nor recognized domestic violence because it used to be considered a personal matter between the husband and wife, and that husbands were the owner of their wife and had the right to do anything with their wife while their wife could not resist, and others should not interfere. Most people used to think that it was normal for spouses to quarrel because they were so close to each other and they were compared to the tongue and teeth that often hit each other. Moreover, domestic violence is not considered a serious crime that has impact on society as a whole, and when a case was reported, police officers usually reconciled those involved and did not file the report. As a result, spouses who committed violence were not punished suitably, and thus, they did not have to enter the process of behavioral change (Kongsakon & Pojam, 2008; Pradabmuk, 2003; Puawongpaet, 1994).

Most violence between spouses is committed by husbands against their wives with the intention of using force to threaten and to harm them physically and mentally, to

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coerce them to do or not to do something, sexually harass them, and limit their freedom, all of which developed from conflicts and quarrels (Intarajit & Karinchai, 1999; Laeheem & Boonprakarn, 2014; Triemchaisri, 2001). Victims are usually injured physically and mentally, and frightened into thinking all the time that they are going to be attacked. Furthermore, children who witness such an incident regularly will learn and absorb violence leading to their negative attitudes towards family relationships and they may think that violence is an answer to all problems. As a result, these children will have violent behavior not only during their childhood but also later in life, and will commit violence against their peers, spouses, and children (Klongpayabarn, 1999; Kongsakon & Pojam, 2008; Promrak, 2007).

There are many causes of domestic violence but one of the most important is the family background, particularly the background in upbringing, experiencing violence, and the authority relationship. A study found that strict upbringing and violence in the family could result from family members showing negative behavior toward each other to a more severe extent than usual because of being furious or other accumulated negative emotions (Malley-Morrison & Hines, 2007). Family is an important factor contributing to increasing violence, especially in a family with a strict upbringing and violence, with such a background acting as a stimulus to display violence or to accept violence as normal in daily living and as an alternative to problem-solving (Darling & Steinberg, 1993; Laeheem, 2013; Remschmidt, 1993). Experiencing violence in childhood by witnessing parents quarreling and beating each other, of being severely punished during childhood, and of expressing violent behavior during childhood were the most common risk behaviors that resulted in domestic violence (Kongsakon & Pojam, 2008; Laeheem & Boonprakarn, 2014; Parimutto, 2011). Most married couples involved in domestic violence had experienced severe violence in their childhood in witnessing their parents quarreling and beating each other, in being severely punished, and in using violence against their peers and those around them (Kongsakon & Pojam, 2008; Parimutto, 2011; Pongwech & Wijitranon, 2000). Important causes of domestic violence include wrong attitudes and values concerning the authority relationship, gender inequality, and husbands who have power over their wives and want their wives to consent in all matters (Puawongpaet, 1994; Straus, 2001). In addition, the authority relationship in terms of women's inferior status, and a belief in male dominance, or patriarchy in which the male gender is the one of power, strength, leadership, the household leader, and a belief that using violence is normal for males because it makes males true men—all these lead to violence against women that affects them physically and mentally. In addition, they lead to sexual harassment of women, and to women always being taken advantage of (Archawanitkul & Im-am, 2003; Moser & Winton, 2002; Punamsap, 2005).

Therefore, it is essential to conduct a study on family background in upbringing, experiences of violence, and the authority relationship among married, Thai, Muslim couples in Pattani province experiencing domestic violence. The study aimed to determine the upbringing styles of married, Thai, Muslim couples in Pattani province, whether

they witnessed their parents quarreling and beating each other, whether they were severely punished in their childhood, whether they thought that women had an inferior status, and whether they believed in male dominance. The results of this study will be useful to individuals and organizations concerned with policy forming for preventing and solving problems related to domestic violence before the problems become more severe and develop into social problems that will be difficult to solve in the future, and to aid cooperation to identify ways to solve the problems in a timely manner.

Literature Review

Meanings of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence between spouses is behavior showing an intention to use force or physical power to threaten or to harm others or to violate personal rights physically, verbally, mentally, or sexually by forcing, threatening, hitting, kicking, punching, limiting, and obstructing rights, and freedoms in public or personal life. This can result in physical and mental suffering for the victim (Arpapirom, 2000; Wichitranon & Phongwet, 2000). It is the use of power apart from the use of physical strength to harm others. It is an action arising from a power relationship, threatening or intimidating using power, leaving or ignoring which results in physical, mental and sexual suffering, committing suicide, and self-injury in various ways, which happens immediately or years after the first act of violence (Pongwech & Wijitranon, 2000; Yoddumnern-Attig, 2003). Domestic violence also refers to using force to harm family members physically, mentally, sexually or to harm life, and to violate rights and freedoms in various ways, which are unfair actions in order to get power to control them or to make them yield (Corsini, 1999; Laeheem & Boonprakarn, 2014).

Types of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence between spouses can be classified into three types. Type 1 is physical violence, which refers to the use of force or a tool as a weapon to hurt the victim such as pushing, slapping, hitting, punching, beating, jerking, squeezing the neck, throwing things, and injuring severely with a weapon or a sharp object, among others. Type 2 is mental violence, which refers to any action or ignoring to act which causes the victim sorrow or losing rights or freedom by acting verbally or through gestures and action such as verbally despising, satirizing, scolding, bawling, yelling, embarrassing, being indifferent, threatening, and showing anger. Type 3 is sexual violence, which refers to an incident where a husband abuses his wife, a father abuses his children, an elder relative such as a brother, an uncle, a grandfather abuses his younger relative, among others. Such actions are usually sexual molestations or sex-related offenses. For example, the husband uses physical force to have sex with his wife in a way that she does not like or want or has sex with her without caring about her pleasure, the husband forces his wife to sell or have sex with other men, the husband rapes his wife (Laeheem & Boonprakarn, 2014; Promrak, 2007).

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