

## The Muslim Women's Role on Domestic Violence in Southern Border Provinces, Thailand

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### Abstract

The Domestic Violence occurs all over the world, in Asia, Thailand and in the Southern Border Provinces in the past until now. The Objective of the study aims to investigate on Muslim Women's role in Southern Border Provinces, Thailand. The domestic violence affected the victim women in physical health and mental health by their husbands' verbal and their husbands' actions because of the husbands' drug addiction, the social norms and the patriarchy. The study utilized qualitative method during January–November 2023. The community recommended, that included two Imams, three Muslimah Victims and seven Muslimah in Counseling Women's Room or Muslimah's Women Club<sup>1</sup> in Southern Border Provinces, Thailand. The findings revealed that it has the counselors those were the Muslim women in Muslimah's women club<sup>2</sup> to consult, empower and voice for the victim women affected the Domestic Violence and they proposed it should have the Khut'bah<sup>3</sup> for the males for look after the females and it should have the Counseling Room or the Muslimah's Women Club every provinces in the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand for conduct well-being the victim women and they proposed the Ministry Social Development and Human Security and the Government to construct the new Act for advocating the victim women forever.

**Keywords:** The Muslim Women's Role, Counseling Women Room, The Southern Border Provinces, Thailand

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## Introduction

Domestic Violence occurs in the world, Asia, Thailand and in the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand. Domestic Violence is violence that occurs in a domestic setting, such as in a marriage or cohabitation. Globally, it estimated 736 million women, almost one in three subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence or both at least once in their life around 30% of women aged 15 and older and around 55% of women live in Asia have experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime .In Asia and the Pacific, there are as many as 75 per cent of women have experienced sexual harassment. 20,000 women were killed by intimate partners or family members in Asia in 2017, alone. Although the percentage of women and girls intentionally killed by their intimate partners or family members is greatest in Africa, Asia has the largest number of women and girls killed overall.

In many countries across Asia and Pacific, the proportion of women who report having experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime is substantially higher than the global average of 27 per cent; at 35 per cent in India, 38 per cent in Timor Leste, and 50 percent and over in Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Bangladesh. In most cases of sexual violence, the perpetrator is not a stranger, but a partner, a family member, a friend or neighbour. Ninety-one per cent of survivors in Thailand and 86 per cent of survivors in Vietnam stated that they knew their rapist prior to the incident.

In China, there is 38 per cent of women experienced psychological violence by their own partners. In Indonesia, there is 49 per cent of girls under 14 have undergone some form of female genital mutilation, although it is outlawed.

For understand Domestic Violence in Thailand. Despite of the enactment of the new Domestic Violence Victim Protection Act of 2007, it still falls in providing adequate safeguards for those enduring abuse within their homes, it emphasized by non-governmental organizations. Furthermore, the legislation heavily relies on reconciliation between the abuser and the victim. This is a major factor that contributes minimally to the protection of the victim.

### Domestic Violence in Thailand

Moreover, the data from the Public Health Ministry indicates that over 8,600 women annually experience either sexual violence. This, mainly younger people, or physical violence. This is predominantly in domestic or familial settings. The Injury Prevention Division of the DDC compiled injury statistics from more than 50 hospitals across Thailand. This for the period 2019–2021, it showed an annual average of over 8,500 women subjected to physical abuse.

Among these victims, women on the aged in the range of 20-24 make up over 16% of the victims. With a majority of 60% experiencing by physical abuse, often within the confines of their

homes. Additionally, young women aged between on the ages of 10-14 years of age. They account for more than 31% of the cases of sexual assault (*Bangkok Post*, November 2022).

### Thailand Domestic Violence Stats

With COVID-19, it was noted that domestic violence increased. In a survey done in 2001 with more than 1,600 respondents. It is more than 40% of those interviewed said that they saw an increase in domestic violence among family members. The Women and Men Progressive Movement Foundation noted that in 2021 watching 11 online newspapers.

There were just over 370 cases of domestic abuse. Just over 63% were husbands killing wives. Likewise in the next category, it is just over 65% were boyfriends killing girlfriends. For both groups, 60% was attributed to jealousy while 34% were breakups. Then 43% were murdered by knives, 34% with sharp objects, and 8% were assaulted (*Bangkok Post*, 2022).

**In 2022 there have been several NGOs asking to lighten the load by enacting the following:**

- 1) Ensure that prostitution is not legalized and that vaping in Thailand remains illegal.
- 2) Access to shelters for women experiencing domestic abuse.
- 3) Better enforcement of child maintenance by the government.

There are also ethnic customs that need to be reviewed. This is mainly in the North of Thailand where you will find 13-year-old children getting married. Once they give birth there is difficulty in registering their children. This is mainly because they are still children.

Those who fall under the LGBTQ community also have their issues with domestic abuse.

### Definition of Domestic Violence

The term “Domestic Violence” encompasses various actions with the intent to harm the physical, mental, or emotional well-being of any member of the Family. A member of the family is any person who depends on (spouse, ex-spouse, cohabitants, and children) or lives in the same household (adopted children).

This also comprises deliberate actions that could potentially jeopardize the health or safety of individuals in the family unit. Additionally, it involves coercive or manipulative tactics utilizing immoral influence to dictate the actions or inactions of family members or to make them accept wrongful behaviors. It’s important to note that this definition excludes actions resulting from negligence.

## The Purpose of the Act

The enactment of the new Domestic Violence Victim Protection Act of 2007, it still falls in providing adequate safeguards for those enduring abuse within their homes.

**Unique Nature of Domestic Violence:** Domestic Violence cases are intricate and sensitive. They involve close personal relationships and possess distinct characteristics. This differentiates them from general cases of personal assault.

**Need for Victim Protection:** Given the specific dynamics of domestic violence. It is considered more appropriate to establish laws that prioritize the protection of victims rather than applying traditional criminal procedures.

**Rehabilitation and Deterrence:** Laws aimed at protecting victims of domestic violence provide opportunities for offenders. This to reform themselves and serve as a deterrent against future offenses.

**Protection of Vulnerable Parties:** Children, juveniles, and other individuals within the family. They have a fundamental right to be shielded from violent acts and unfair treatment.

## The Issues with the Act

**The limited Authority Due to Notification Requirement:** One key challenge is that officials can only take measures in domestic violence cases. If there has been a prior notification from the distressed individual who intends to take legal action.

**Protection of Personal Information:** Concerns are raised regarding the protection of personal information of family members involved in domestic violence cases.

**Media Coverage and Violation of Personal Rights:** The text also mentions issues related to media coverage of domestic violence cases. This which sometimes result in unreasonable violations of personal rights.

**Inconsistencies with Human Rights and Constitutional Principles:** There are concerns that the legal framework for domestic violence cases might not align with international human rights standards.

**Challenges with Officials' Work Mechanisms:** Problems are identified with the working mechanisms of officials, including shortages of personnel. As well as challenges in terms of command and organizational structure within government agencies.

## The Domestic Violence in Thailand

For understanding the Domestic Violence in Thailand. Despite the enactment of the new Domestic Violence Victim Protection Act of 2007, it is very beneficial to protect the victim women. It is the safeguards for prevent them for enduring abuse within their homes, as emphasized by non-governmental organizations. Furthermore, the legislation relies on reconciliation between the abuser and the victim. The Act are able to protect the Victim Women. The applied to the offender shall be conditions governing the agreement. The Court on inquirer is to take into consideration the opinions of the victim or any family members involved.



Figure 2.The Map of Thailand

## Thailand ranks among the top 10 countries in the world for violence against women and girls

The Domestic violence likes to be the cultural norm in Thailand, the traditional society accepts the patriarchy by some word says that “If you love a cow, tie it. If you love a child, spank it.” The Headlines in Thai newspapers attest to the growing trend of household violence, and physical abuse to rape and murder. The Data collected by the Women and Men Progressive Movement Foundation from a 2022, the study of 11 Thai newspapers plus online media sheds light on the daily reality of domestic violence. A total of 372 news articles reported cases of domestic violence during the year, with 24.7% because of linked to alcohol abuse and 17.2% to drug use. The majority of the cases (52.4%) are murders. Physical harm around for 22%, followed by suicides at 14%, sexual violence at 8.1%, and other forms of abuse at 3.5%. These findings reveal a troubling inclination towards severe violence within Thai families. It’s very harmful.

### The Children Impact

The Children who grow up in families where there is violence may suffer a range of behavioural and emotional disturbances. They imitate the situation. The intimate partner violence has influence with the child. The social and economic costs of intimate partner and sexual violence are enormous and they effect on Women. Women may suffer isolation, inability to work, loss of wages, lack of participation in regular activities and participation with any persons in the society because they must take care their family and their children.

### Lock down of the COVID-19

The lockdowns during the COVID-19, it increased the domestic violence dramatically because of social and economic impacts pandemic and its social and economic impacts have increased the exposure of women to abusive partners and it has known risk factors, while the limiting their access to services. The situations of humanitarian crises and displacement may exacerbate existing violence, such as by intimate partners, as well as non-partner sexual violence, and they made the victims got depressed. For preventing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many governments around the world have implemented lockdown or mass quarantine measures because the purpose to prevent the virus spread but it impacted the members in the family. It had the Domestic Violence and child abuse and it related the isolation. The analyzed Canadian police calls for service data from 2015 to 2020. It was relevant both domestic violence and child abuse. They increased the domestic violence rapidly.

## The Domestic Violence in the Deep South of Thailand

There are many causal factors of domestic violence, but an important one is the females' inferior status where male dominance is valued and it is believed that men must be the head of their family, own all the family assets, and control the behavior of their family members. They were wrong attitudes and values about the role of males and females, and authoritative power in the family, gender inequality, especially in the family where the husband has authority over his wife, and wants her to agree in all matters. Additionally, he makes her dependent on him so that she sees that a divorce will affect their children (divorced women are disliked by society) and she will have to live alone with no one caring for her (Kasetchai Laeheem& Kettawa Boonprakarn,2017). Specifically, the domestic violence affected the victim women in physical health and mental health by their husbands' verbal and their husbands' actions because of the husbands' drug addiction, the social norms and the patriarchy.

The Domestic Violence in the Deep South in 2020, there were a total of 3,030 cases at the Narathiwat and Yala. The counseling offices or Muslimah's club combined, according to documents shared with the Globe. The physical violence was a component in 23% of these cases 201 cases in Narathiwat and 486 in Yala and during 2019-2023, there were 1,346 cases and the become the widows 742 cases. Furthermore, addition to her own women's network, Pusu brought together the Muslimah's Club in Narathiwat, Muslim Women Welfare Association in Yala and the Thailand Association of Social Workers. With the support from OXFAM Thailand, they set up the offices in Narathiwat and Yala and it trained to be counselors and the volunteers and it also brought in a team of trainers from Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

The Data of of Muslimah's Club in Yala, there were 1,346 cases got the Domestic violence between 2019-2023 and they used the service center. In Muslimah's Club in Narathiwat, there were 1,534 cases between 2017-2023 and they got mental health 1,147 cases and physical abuse 387 cases. The Domestic Violence occurred common causes of violence are illegal drugs and they neglected their wives and their husbands didn't support them in "Nafkah" and the problem polygyny.

The Domestic Violence occurs in the world, in Asia and in Thailand. It made the Women Victim got depressed, traumatic disorders, isolated, specifically in the Deep South of Thailand. There are two Muslimah's Women Club in The Islamic Council's provincial Headquarter in Narathiwat and Yala to consult and empower the Women Victim when they got mental health,

and physical abuse from their husbands. The women play the significant role for advocating, protecting, consulting and empowering the victim women for conducting their wellbeing and their soul.

### **Women's Role in Southern Border Provinces, Thailand**

The civic society comprises of many organisations in Southern Border Provinces of Thailand. They are all women, such as Civic Women, Women's Network to End, We Peace, Muslimah's Club in Narathiwat and Muslimah's Club in Yala, Muslimah's Association in Songkla. They voice and propose to have the counseling room or Muslimah's Club to empower the victim women in Southern Border provinces of Thailand. They advocate the women affected the Domestic Violence and propose the issue to the government to stop the Domestic Violence simultaneously. They advise the Islamic Council's provincial headquarters should collaborate with Muslimah Club for conducting well-being for the victim women but some men, some religious leaders and some Islamic Council's provincial headquarters didn't support the women and the women organisations to work with them. They think the women must separate with the men because they are afraid of "Fitnah" <sup>3</sup>

Civic women tries to collaborate with the Islamic Council's provincial headquarters in Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and Songkla provinces. They propose them to have the Counseling room or Muslimah's room to solve, consult and empower the victim women.

We Peace and the project promoting Civic Society, NGO's and people were held the project for stopping the Domestic Violence and promoting the Peace. The main project to empower the women's role for protecting the Domestic Violence and promoting the Peace in the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand.

Muslimah Association in Songkla looks after the victim women affected the domestic violence in Southern Border Provinces of Thailand by sending them from Women's Network to End.

Women's Network to End, The women's groups in the Deep South of Thailand were againsts the a conservative religious context, They brought taboo topics such as domestic in voice for the victim women in the Deep South of Thailand.

The organization ,those are Civic Women, We Peace ,Women's Network to End , Muslimmah Club in Narathiwat ,Yala and Muslimah Association in Songkla work for men and women affected the violent situation, the humanitarian and Domestic Violence ,the Coordination Center for Children and Women in Southern Border Provinces works for Children and Women .The center is channel to coordinate ,to gather resources to receive complaints and to address and find solutions on children and women particularly on issues to conflicts and violations of



human rights ,Duayjai Group work for children and women affected the violent situation ,the violations of human rights and the humanitarian and Wanita Club works for promoting the women's production in Southern Border Provinces.

<sup>3</sup>Fitnah : temptation, civil strife,trial,sedition ,conflict or presecution



**Figure 3:** The southern provinces of Thailand showing the Malay-Muslim majority areas

### The Muslimah's Women Club in Narathiwat and Yala

The Islamic Council's provincial Headquarter in Narathiwat and Yala collaborate with Muslimah's Women Club. Muslimah's Women Club's president in Narathiwat is Mrs.Sareena Cheloh and Muslimah's Women Club's president in Yala is Mrs.Nidah Itaelae. They consult and empower the women affected the Domestic Violence in their family. Some of them were abused, some of them were neglected and some of them got mental health. They had a total of 300 cases in 2018 and resolved 100 of them from their one room with large windows opening to a view of the comings and goings at the Islamic Council's provincial headquarters in Narathiwat (Duanghathai Buranajaroenkit, 2021).

Muslimah got the Domestic Violence, they don't go to the government agencies for assistance, because they use different language (Jawi) and because of their ignorance of the law, said Roseedah Pusu, a journalist in Pattani a journalist in Pattani who started the Women Network. It occurred the Violence Situation in the Deep South in 2007.

### **Muslim Women join forces against domestic violence in Deep South**

The women's groups in the Deep South of Thailand were againsts a conservative religious context, they brought taboo topics such as domestic violence to propose the government for protect them and find the ways to advocate the victim women. The women's groups and NGOs has constructed their own counseling networks, Muslimah's Women Club for Women Victim at two officers at the Islamic Council's provincial headquarters in Yala and in Narathiwat.

The cause of the Domestic violence is Patriarchy deeply in the minds of many Muslim Women. They must believe and respect their husbands. If they dispute with their husbands, it's wrong with the God. The word "Torat" (believe and respect their husbands) in their mind and their husbands' action. They accept male social dominance, they tolerate and rationalize domestic violence. They always choose to remain silence more than "voice".

### **Religious Leaders in the Deep South of Thailand**

Religious leaders (including Imams) play an essential spiritual role in the Malay Muslim communities in Thailand's three southernmost provinces. However, when addressing marital disputes, many of them often overlook the struggles of women, and frequently suggest that women should remain loyal to their husbands as a matter of honour. In 2022, during a visit to the Women's Majlis at the Islamic Council in Yala province, a staff member shared several concerning cases with the author. In one instance, a woman arrived to file a complaint. Her face was covered in blood, and she was crying and screaming angrily that her husband had bludgeoned her with a hard object rather than reporting to the police, the Imam sought to mediate between the husband and wife, urging them to forgive each other( Duagyewa Utarasint,2023). Imam is the mediator between the husband and wife. When the victim women return home, they need divorce with their husbands because of the men didn't afford the payment (Nafkah) for them and many times, they got abuse

In 2019, VAW reported, there were 240 cases of violence against women in Narathiwat province the causes of violence are illegal drugs or drug addiction and gambling (48%), followed by polygyny (33%), and other reasons (19%). In 2020, the Narathiwat and Yala Provincial Islamic Counselling offices or Muslimah's Women Club reported ,there were 3,030 such cases. Malay-Muslim women's local culture, deeply rooted in patriarchy, by Muslim-Malay tradition .Female

victims of violence in the Deep South endure in silence. Their suffer is by cultural, munequal access to the justice, and they must accept the male's action.

### **The Manual, Regulations and Measures the Protection Children and Women in the Deep South of Thailand**

There is the manual and Measures for Protection Children and Women in the Deep South Thailand. If there is the victim women got the domestic violence, they can voice. There are social workers, psychiatrists and attorneys to protect them simultaneously. They work with interdisciplinary team for solve this problem. (Coordination Center for Children and Women in Southern Border Provinces,2021).

### **Islamic Teaching**

The Qur'an affirms men's and women's human dignity equally (17:70) "We have certainly honoured the children of Adam).Yet it does not deny differences men and women (Surah al - Hujurat 49:13: "We created you from male and female". Islamic teachings and principles underscore equal partnership between men and women. The Quran does not specify particular characteristics of any gender or suggest how either gender should behave towards and respect each other. According to the Qur'an, woman is not blamed for the "fall of man." Pregnancy and childbirth are not seen as punishments for "eating from the forbidden tree." On the contrary, the Qur'an considers them to be grounds for love and respect due to mothers. Both genders are recipients of the "divine breath" since they are created with the same human and spiritual nature (nafs-in-waahidah).

### **Research Objective:**

To investigate on Muslim Women's role in Domestic Violence in Southern Border Provinces, Thailand.

### Methodology:

The research is done through qualitative approach to collect through extensive interviews casual conversation formal and informal observations and it analyzed the research data. Indepth portraits of a small number of two Imams, three Muslimah Victims and seven Muslimah in Counseling Women's Room or Muslimah's Women Club in Southern Border Provinces in January–November 2023 in June–December 2023. A total of interviews semi-structure with opened-end questions were conducted purpose of the study.

### Result:

#### The Victim Muslimah viewed that:

*“ I have never visited anywhere ,I am housewife, I have done everything in my family, my husband abuses me because of drug addiction and they have other wives and he neglect me. I would like to have someone to hear me, I went to Muslimah's Club for listening me”. The Women's Role are very meaningful to solve my problem”.*

*“ My husband punishes me and he neglected me because he has someone else, I am glad to have Muslimah's Club for listen me and empower me”*

*“ I am glad to have Muslimah's Club because it has women to listen us, I am not available to talk with the men or someone else, it's privacy” and I would like Imam to talk “Kut'Bah” on Friday for husbands to look after their wives properly”*

#### The Imam viewed that:

*“I agree to have Muslimah's Club for Victim Women but it must have separate the room from male”.*

*“ All of us agree, Women talk with women, it's better, they are able to empower and consult the Victim Women better than men”.*

*“ I agree to have Muslimah's club to empower the victim women and I think we can collaborate for solve family problem together”.*

### The Muslimah's Club Viewd:

*"We are delighted to have Muslimah's Club for do activities with their family. They can listen more because we are the mediator if they can't live together, they understand the situation. We empower them not only women but for their family. In family should listen together and we would like to have the Muslimah's Women Club in every provinces in the Deep South of Thailand and the another provinces those, there are muslims and we think they are able to voice for protecting themselves and for building their justice".*

### Conclusion:

The factors affecting domestic violence were husbands. The domestic violence affected the victim women in physical health and mental health by their husbands' verbal and their husbands' actions because of the husbands' drug addiction, the social norms and the patriarchy. Muslim Women s Role and the Muslim organization voice ,empower ,consult and advocate the victim women for conduct their wellbeing and they propose the religious leaders must collaborate with the Muslimah Club and they proposed it should have the Khut'bah for the males for look after the females and it should have the Counseling Room or the Muslimah's Women Club every provinces in the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand for conduct well-being victim women and they propose the government to stop the Domestic Violence forever.

### Limitation of the study:

It lacks of research in Domestic Violence in Southern Border Provinces,Thailand

### Recommendation and Suggestions

- 1) The religious leaders should talk "Kut'bah" advice the husband Role on Friday for their family.
- 2) The men must have the responsibility and give Nafkah to their wives.
- 3) Follow Hadith and Qur'an in the Family and respect each other.
- 4) Be trust and be honour for their wives.
- 5) The couple must have the duties and responsibility in their family.
- 6) Muslim Women's Role must be strong and should collaborate with Women organization and another organisations for assisting the victim women sustainable.

- 7) It should have Muslimah's Club every provinces of Thailand those they have Muslimah, specifically in the Deep South of Thailand.
- 8) Training the Law for women to protect themselves and work with the multidisciplinary team and the Juvenile Court for protect the victim women
- 9) Propose to Ministry Social Development and Human Security and the Government to have the new act and increase the penalty to Domestic violence perpetrator for stopping the Domestic Violence forever

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