



Original Research

Domestic Violence During The Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Background: *Coronavirus-19 (COVID-19) outbreaks experienced by all countries in the world followed by regional and national lockdown. Restriction movement in Indonesia since April 2020 – July 2021 has influenced people's lives. This situation tends to increase in cases of domestic violence.*

Methods: *Design was quantitatively descriptive research. Population was all married women who living with their partner during the pandemic COVID-19. A number sample of 106 women was recruited by snowball sampling. The study place at Cilegon city Banten Province, Indonesia in June 2021. Instrument for measuring domestic violence was South Asian Violence Screen consist of 11 items; and Scale of Economic Abuse questionnaires Indonesia version consist of 26 items. Data collection was done by online and analysis data performed by frequency distribution*

Results: *The results found that 41 (38.67%) respondents experienced domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. The most forms violence was psychic violence experienced by 32 respondents (30.19%) while 8 respondents (7.55%) experienced more than one violence. Family income (OR= 1.735 (95%CI= 0.697 – 4.322) and spouse' age (OR= 1.882 (95%CI= 0.529 – 6.697) tend to get domestics violence.*

Conclusions: *Domestic violence during pandemic COVID-19 should be a concern of health workers. Women who are experience domestic violence sometime not dressed up to report. There must be ways and strategies to dare to speak up and report.*

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : January 16th, 2022

Accepted : February 21th, 2022

KEYWORDS

covid-19, domestic violence, intimate violence, lockdown;

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Cite this as: Nurbaeti, I., & Khairunnisa, T. T. (2022). Domestic Violence During The Covid-19 Pandemic. (JKG) *Jurnal Keperawatan Global*, 118-127. <https://doi.org/10.37341/jkg.v0i0.395>

INTRODUCTION

Outbreaks of COVID-19 caused a widespread impact both on the order of people's lives and on various public sectors such as economic, social, and of course health services (Haleem et al., 2020). One of the social impacts that occur in women is the increase in the incidence of Domestic Violence (UN, 2020). Domestic violence is any act against women that result in the onset of physical, sexual violence, psychological, and/or domestic neglect (the Ministry of Health the Republic of Indonesia, 2016). Since COVID-19 pandemic, domestic violence has increased.

The United Nations (UN) in 2020 stated that violence against women increased significantly globally after the COVID-19 pandemic. Violence against women is also largely caused by economic pressures, stress and also social restrictions as an effort to break the COVID-19 chain (UN, 2020). This condition is reinforced by an increase in reports of domestic violence cases in Cyprus, Spain which reached 20-25%.

The UK has also seen a significant increase of 40% (Bradbury-Jones & Isham, 2020). Not only the UK and Spain, the UN (2020) also reported that the increase in cases of violence in women reached 25-30% in France and Argentina a few days after the lockdown policy set by the government was set. In addition, data from the Legal Aid Institute of the Indonesian Women's Association for Justice also showed that there were 110 reported cases of domestic violence since the imposition of Large-Scale Social Restrictions from March 16 to June 20, 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused changes and policies that restrict people to do everything outside. Social distancing policies, office closures (work from home) and school from home set by government affected countries indirectly force every activity to be carried out in the house. When spending time indoors, families spend more time in close contact. Simultaneously, disruption of livelihoods and the ability to earn a living will significantly reduce access to basic necessities and health services can lead to the onset of household stress.

Decreased social access exacerbates domestic violence, women will have difficulty contact with family and friends who act as support givers and complaints (Roesch et al., 2020). Lockdowns organized by several countries also led to an increase in workload. Housewives are considered responsible for feeding, taking care of the house and also the whole family. School closures also tighten the burden, where mothers must also guide their children to study at home (Barbara et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic caused changes and policies that require people to do everything at home. Social restrictions make the community inevitably only able to interact with families who will get boredom. Women in pandemic times, especially housewives, experience an increase in workload. In addition, the declining and psychological economic side that is affected by the pandemic is increasingly squeezed household stress. The phenomenon of domestic violence is also still considered taboo and the number of reported events only a piece of actual occurrence. The increase in domestic violence cases during the pandemic that has been estimated is not in accordance with the reported case in the real data.

Afandi et al (2017) found in Pekanbaru, Riau province, Indonesia, case of Domestic violence before pandemic COVID-19 was 10.9% with victims were almost female (93.8%). Furthermore, Aisyah and Parker (2014) in their qualitative study found that marriage women perceived if they had difficulties to escape from domestic violence cause of men's authority, society norm and moral righteousness, also adequacy as breadwinners.

It is belief if domestic violence rises during pandemic COVID-19, but limitation of study. In the other hand, the online reporting system imposed by local government not be done optimally. In order to gain knowledge domestic violence during COVID-19 pandemic, researcher was interested to find out a picture of domestic violence in women during the COVID-19 pandemic in Cilegon city, Banten Province, Indonesia.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study is a study with descriptive quantitative design to describe the phenomenon of domestic violence as well as the characteristics of women who experience domestic violence. The sample number of 106 people, the sampling technique used in this study is Snowball Sampling with the following criteria: 1) respondents are married women; 2) respondents domiciled in Cilegon city; 3) respondents lived with a partner during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Instruments consist of three parts. First is demographic questionnaire. Demographic questionnaire including information about respondents and their spouses: the age of the respondent, the respondent's level of education, working status, number of children, family income, age of spouse, spouse' education.

Second is a modified questionnaire the South Asian Violence Screen (SAVS) that developed by Lenore et al. (2020). We translated into Indonesia version. SAVS, consist of 11 items, is used to assess forms of physical-sexual and psychological violence. SAVS modification had been tested on 20 respondents with a validity score range of 0.590 – 0.978 and a Cronbach alpha score of 0.939. The categorization results of this questionnaire on each domain form of violence with a score of ≥ 9 were declared to be experiencing physical-sexual and psychological violence.

Third questionnaire is to examine forms of domestic neglect or economic violence namely modification of the Scale of Economic Abuse questionnaire (SEA) which developed by (Adams et al., 2008). We translated into Indonesian version consist of 26 items. SEA had been tested validity and reliability to 20 respondents in April 2021. Result of a validity score in range of 0.433 – 0.985 with a Cronbach alpha score of 0.982. The categorization of assessments in this study using the median value in the study. A score of ≥ 81 as cut off participants experienced economic violence or domestic neglect.

Data collection was conducted after getting permission from local government in Cilegon and obtained ethical clearance. Data collected by online through google form in one month started June to July 2020. Researchers in this case asked for assistance to officer at women's empowerment office of Cilegon City to find respondents whom met inclusion criteria.

Researcher then contacted the candidate of respondents, gave explanation about research including purpose, benefit, confidentiality and participant could be withdrawn anytime without any consequences. They filled out the informed consent after agreeing to participated in this study. Finally, Researcher provided an online form to the respondent, the they filled around 15 minutes.

Respondents sent back the researcher after filled out the questionnaire. Respondents who had been selected then, next send to the prospective respondents who if in accordance with the criteria of inclusion and with regard to the content of the questionnaire continuously till the number of samples was completed. Univariate analysis uses frequency and percentage distributions. The univariate analysis described Characteristics of respondents, domestic violence including physical violence, psychic violence, sexual violence and domestic neglect in the pandemic period; and violence based on characteristics and added analysis for odd ratio (OR).

This research has been declared to pass the ethics clearance by the ethics committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta with approval number Un.01 / F.10 / KP.01.1 / KE. SP/04.08.029/2021. All respondents in this study had been given a written research explanation and also agreed to be research

respondents with informed consent. In an effort to protect respondents, the identity of the respondent will be kept confidential and will not be disseminated.

RESULTS

A total of 106 respondents was recruited in this study. The finding showed that age of respondents mostly in range of less than 60 years old (99.06%), half of respondents got bachelor education (50.94%), more than half was a working woman (54.71%), more than two-third had 2 or more children, more than half had family income more than US\$300, almost all have had spouse age less than 60 years old and more than half of spouse' education was bachelor and magister education (Table 1):

Table 1. Respondent' Characteristics

Respondent' Characteristics	n	%
Age (yo)		
< 40	53	50.00
40 – 60	52	49.06
> 60	1	0.94
Level of Education		
Elementary	1	0.94
Junior High School	3	2.83
Senior High School	35	33.03
Bachelor	54	50.94
Magister	13	12.26
Working Status		
Employed	58	54.71
Housewife	48	45.29
Number of Children		
0	8	7.54
1	17	16.04
2 or more	81	76.42
Family Income		
<= Rp. 4.246.081,- (eq <=US\$ 300)	49	46.23
> Rp. 4.246.081,- (eq > US\$ 300)	57	53.17
Spouse' age (yo)		
< 40	48	45.29
40 – 60	55	51.88
> 60	3	2.83
Spouse' education		
Junior High School	1	0.94
Senior High School	45	42.46
Bachelor	52	49.06
Magister	8	7.54

The results showed that 41 (38.67%) of respondents experienced Domestic Violence. The most form of domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic was psychological violence (30.19%). Furthermore, a total of 8 (7.55%) respondents experienced more than one form of violence: physical – sexual, psychological and

domestic neglect during the COVID-19 pandemic and 1 respondent reported physical-sexual violence (Table 2).

Table 2. Domestic Violence Form

Violence Form	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
Physical - sexual	1	0.94	105	99.06
Psychological	32	30.19	74	69.81
Physical - sexual and Psychological	5	4.72	101	95.28
Physical-sexual, Psychological and Domestic Neglect	3	2.83	103	97.17
Total	41	38.67%	65	61.32%

Then we continue analysis domestic violence and respondent's characteristics. Based on table 3 showed that domestic violence nearly experienced by all characteristics of respondents. Family income and spouse' age tend to experience domestics violence in this study. Family that having low social-economics (income same or less US\$ 300) at risk experience domestics violence 1.74 times (95%CI 0.697 – 4.32) than family eith income higher than US\$ 300. Spouse' age contributed 1.88 times (95% CI= 0.529 – 6.697) do acting domestics violence to their wives.

Table 3. Domestic Violence and Respondent's Characteristics

Characteristics	Domestic Violence				OR (95% CI)
	Yes		No		
	n	%	n	%	
Age (yo)					0.783
< 40	18	34.00	35	66.00	(0.194 – 3.164)
40 – 60	23	45.09	29	54.81	
> 60	0	0	1	100	
Level of Education					0.815
Elementary	0	0	1	100	(0.434 – 1.530)
Junior High School	2	66.67	1	33.33	
Senior High School	18	51.43	17	48.57	
Bachelor	15	27.78	39	72.22	
Magister	6	46.15	7	53.85	
Working Status					0.756
Employed	23	39.65	35	60.34	(0.298 – 1.920)
Housewife	18	37.50	30	62.50	
Number of Children					0.805
0	4	50.00	4	50.00	(0.499 – 1.300)
1	3	17.65	14	82.35	
2 or more	34	41.98	47	58.02	
Family Income					1.735
<= Rp. 4.246.081,- (eq <=US\$ 300)	17	34.69	32	65.31	(0.697 – 4.322)
> Rp. 4.246.081,- (eq > US\$ 300)	24	42.11	33	57.89	

Characteristics	Domestic Violence				OR
Spouse' age (yo)					1.882
< 40	15	31.25	33	68.75	(0.529 – 6.697)
40 – 60	25	45.45	30	54.55	
> 60	1	33.33	2	66.67	
Spouse' education					0.479
Junior High School	1	100	0	0	(0.222 – 1.035)
Senior High School	20	44.44	25	55.56	
Bachelor	19	36.54	33	63.46	
Magister	1	12.50	7	87.50	

DISCUSSION

The results showed that 38.67% of respondents experienced domestic violence. The figure is equal to the incidence of violence in the UK which reached 40%. This figure is higher than the UN report in 2020 that violence against women reached 25-30% in France and Argentina and in Spain in a range 20-25% (Bradbury-Jones & Isham, 2020).

Some of the things that can be behind the occurrence of domestic violence include a decrease in income and an increase in household spending during the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown policies, work from home or study from home. UNICEF reported that the most prominent impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the household sector was a 74.6% drop in family income. The decrease in income during the COVID-19 pandemic was exacerbated by high spending during the COVID-19 pandemic. UNICEF stated that nearly a quarter (24.4%) of the 12,260 families interviewed in the economic analysis stated that their spending increased due to high food prices during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both of these factors can increase household stress during the COVID-19 pandemic that can cause domestic violence (da Silva et al., 2020).

Reported that lockdowns can be associated with feelings of anger, frustration and confusion (Brooks et al., 2020). Study from home and Work from Home simultaneously increases household stress. Parents are required to accompany children at home to learn and simultaneously also have to complete their own work. Research conducted by (Kartika et al., 2020) states that as many as 84 (66.7%) parents experience moderate stress while accompanying their children to school from home.

As a result of this situation, quarantine during the COVID-19 Pandemic will have more tension, the emergence of feelings of irritability, family conflict, and domestic violence and even violence in children (Janssen et al., 2020). Pandemics followed by economic downturns and also various policies that must be met at the same time can be a catalyst for tension in the relationship of stabbing that leads to the incidence of domestic violence.

This study shows that most mothers experienced as much psychological violence (30.19%), some even experience not only physical-sexual violence but also psychological and domestic neglect (7.55%). This yielded was similar with previous research. Research conducted by (Gosangi et al., 2021) found that physical violence due to domestic violence experienced an increase in incidents and also severity compared to the incidence of physical violence due to domestic violence that occurred during the three years before the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is reinforced by the research by Gebrewahd et al. (2020) that showed domestic violence increased during the pandemic by 24.6% with the highest forms of

violence being psychic violence (13.3%) followed by physical violence (8.3%) and sexual violence (5.3%).

Similarly, research (Gama et al., 2021) states that 13.6% experience domestic violence with forms of psychic violence (13%), sexual violence (1%) and physical violence (0.9%). The study found that psychic violence (37.7%) followed by physical-sexual violence (8.5%) and most recently domestic neglect (2.8%).

The results of the study found that women in the middle adult (40- 60 years old) experienced the most domestic violence than women of other age groups. This is in line with the results of the study (Maidarti, 2013) women over the age of 35 experienced more domestic violence than those under the age of 35. At this age there are several things that cause disputes in stabbing. In addition, Hurlock (2010) states that in adulthood, it is a time when there is a change in role where their children have started to leave the house and couples again become dependent on each other.

The relationship between gender roles and dominance is a core problem for domestic violence. The gender role of men embraced by the community believes that the husband should act as a leader of the household, the higher education of the wife than the husband can hurt the role of men as leaders. When the role of leader and his dominance in decision-making in the family threat men will tend to use violence against his wife to reassert his position as a leader of the household (Bonnes, 2016). Couples who have different educational differences also tend to have different views on the division of homework, childcare, overcoming financial problems and also decision making.

When women improve education when their partners have a low education, this can make couples feel insecure especially when women begin to have perspectives on gender equality in the household (Bonnes, 2016). Furthermore, according to (Abramsky et al., 2019), women who contribute more than their partners in family finances will increase the risk of domestic violence in physical and sexual form but not in the form of domestic neglect. Families with high incomes tend to be easier to overcome family problems, but when women contribute more than their partners this can cause household losses, women tend to take issue with their partner's inability as the head of the family that will lead to poor relationship dynamics.

Domestic violence during COVID-19 pandemics also occurs in some developing countries that can be considered similar to Indonesia. A survey conducted by The Jonno Foundation or human rights organization in Bangladesh reported that 1,672 women and 424 children experiencing domestic violence for the first time since the enactment of the lockdown in the local area (Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), 2020). In addition, The National Commission for Women in India reported a 2-fold increase in complaints of violence against women through helplines compared to 2019 (607 to 1477 cases) (United Nation ESCAP, 2021). Furthermore, Fiji reported an extreme increase in helpline used during the lockdown period, finding 87 cases in February, 187 cases in March and reaching 527 cases in April (UN ESCAP, 2021).

This study had some limitations. The study was conducted online form, whereas researchers did not face physically with respondents and researcher could not dig further the exact of domestic violence experienced by respondents. A setting study in one city in Banten Province where Banten Province consist of eight districts. Snowball Sampling technique where respondents will recommend the next proposed respondent, this technique provided mostly similar characteristics.

CONCLUSION

Domestic violence should be a concern on the part of all sides. Nearly half of the respondents experienced domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic in the city of Cilegon. Of the three forms of domestic violence, psychic violence is the most common form of violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Women generally experience domestic violence but not all are dressed up to report. There must be ways and strategies for women who experience violence on the ladder to dare to speak up and report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thanks to UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta Indonesia which provide opportunity to conduct this study, officer Women's and Children Protection Area Cilegon City and also to all women who participated in this study.

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