



## The Impact of Economic Factors as Causes of Domestic Violence in the Family (A Study of Besilam Village, Langkat Regency)

Beby Sendy<sup>1\*</sup>, Yossie Rossanty<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Fadhiil Hawawari<sup>3</sup>

Jurusan Hukum, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi

**Corresponding Author:** Beby Sendy [bebysendy9@gmail.com](mailto:bebysendy9@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

Domestic Violence (DV) is a pervasive phenomenon that causes significant harm to all parties involved, encompassing social, psychological, and economic dimensions within the familial context. This study seeks to examine and elucidate the economic factors that contribute to the incidence of domestic violence in Besilam Village, Langkat Regency. Employing a qualitative research design through field study methods, data were collected via in-depth interviews with individuals who had either experienced or witnessed domestic violence, supplemented by participatory observations within the local community. The findings underscore the critical role of economic factors in precipitating domestic violence in the study area. To mitigate domestic violence in this village, a multidimensional approach integrating economic, social, and educational strategies is imperative. Moreover, the involvement of governmental and institutional stakeholders is essential in providing protective measures and support services for victims. Social campaigns aimed at enhancing public awareness of the adverse impacts of domestic violence are equally crucial. Domestic Violence (DV) also encapsulates gender-based violence within the private sphere. This form of violence frequently occurs in close personal relationships where the perpetrator is a familiar and trusted individual, such as a husband against his wife, a father against his child, an uncle against a niece or nephew, or a grandfather against a grandchild. Additionally, domestic violence is often characterized as violence against women perpetrated by family members bound by consanguinity.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Domestic violence (DV) against women in Indonesia has emerged as a pressing social issue with profound and far-reaching consequences. As a complex and pervasive phenomenon, DV not only jeopardizes the physical and emotional well-being of its victims but also exacts significant costs on society as a whole. Often framed as gender-based violence, DV predominantly occurs within the private sphere of the household, where the perpetrator is frequently someone known and trusted by the victim. These relationships typically involve husbands and wives, fathers and children, and grandparents and grandchildren, although the scope of DV extends beyond these familial bonds. It can also manifest within dating relationships or involve domestic workers residing within the household. While DV is primarily conceptualized as violence perpetrated against women, it is crucial to acknowledge that other vulnerable individuals within the family, such as children and elderly family members, may also become victims of such abuse. This broader recognition underscores the complexity of domestic violence and the need for a comprehensive approach to addressing it.

The prevalence of domestic violence (DV) in Indonesia has led to an increasing call for legal reforms and proactive intervention. Despite growing awareness and efforts to support victims, the longstanding societal silence and cultural normalization of violence within the household have allowed this issue to persist. In response to this persistent crisis, Indonesia enacted Law No. 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence (Domestic Violence Elimination Act), a significant step toward addressing the complexities of domestic violence. As articulated in Article 1 of the Act, domestic violence encompasses any act resulting in physical, sexual, or psychological harm, as well as neglect within the household. Furthermore, it extends to include threats, coercion, or unlawful deprivation of liberty.

The objectives outlined in Article 4 of the Domestic Violence Elimination Act aim to prevent all forms of domestic violence, protect victims, ensure legal accountability for perpetrators, and promote the preservation of a harmonious family structure. These objectives underscore a holistic approach that emphasizes not only the punitive measures against offenders but also the prevention of violence and the safeguarding of victims' rights. However, despite the legal framework established by this law, significant challenges remain in its effective enforcement. Cultural attitudes and entrenched social norms continue to impede progress, and the law's implementation is often hindered by various structural barriers. This paper seeks to critically examine the effectiveness of the Domestic Violence Elimination Act in reducing domestic violence and to explore the broader social and cultural dynamics that continue to shape attitudes toward domestic abuse in Indonesia.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In accordance with Article 10 of the Domestic Violence Elimination Act, victims of domestic violence are afforded a range of specific rights aimed at ensuring their safety and well-being. These rights include access to protection from family members, law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, advocates, social institutions, and other relevant parties. Such protection may take the form of

immediate or temporary measures, including a protection order issued by the court. Additionally, the Act guarantees that victims are entitled to receive medical care tailored to their health needs, ensuring that they are provided with appropriate treatment for any physical or psychological harm incurred as a result of the abuse.

The Act further emphasizes the importance of safeguarding the victim's privacy by mandating special measures to protect the confidentiality of their identity throughout the legal process. Victims are also entitled to the assistance of social workers and legal support throughout the judicial proceedings, ensuring that they are not left to navigate the complex legal system without appropriate guidance. In addition, the Act extends the right to spiritual counseling, offering emotional and psychological support to help victims during their recovery. These provisions are designed to provide comprehensive assistance to victims, addressing not only their immediate safety concerns but also their long-term recovery and access to justice.

Domestic violence (DV) is explicitly addressed in Article 5 of the Domestic Violence Elimination Act, which prohibits individuals from committing acts of violence within the household. Specifically, the Act delineates four forms of domestic violence: (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence, (c) sexual violence, and (d) neglect of household responsibilities. Law No. 23 of 2004 defines domestic violence as any act perpetrated against an individual, particularly women, that results in physical, sexual, or psychological suffering, or neglect within the household. This definition is further expanded to include threats of such acts, coercion, and unlawful deprivation of liberty within the domestic sphere. Through these legal provisions, the Act aims to address the various dimensions of domestic violence, recognizing its multifaceted nature and the diverse forms it may take within familial relationships.

Criminal law, in its broader context, is concerned with actions deemed prohibited by society and the corresponding criminal sanctions applied to those found guilty of such actions. Violence, as a societal issue, is not a novel phenomenon; however, it manifests in various forms, often through the use or threat of force. The methods and evidence of criminal acts involving violence vary according to the nature and specifics of each case. Domestic violence (DV), as a specific subset of criminal activity, has historically received insufficient attention and lacks comprehensive legal coverage. In particular, domestic violence typically occurs within the private sphere of the household, involving perpetrators and victims who are family members residing under the same roof. The forms of violence in these situations can range from physical abuse to psychological harm, including verbal threats and intimidation.

Domestic violence is not confined to any single demographic group; it transcends social class, status, education level, and ethnicity, affecting individuals across various sectors of society. The response to perpetrators of domestic violence necessitates the imposition of criminal sanctions, which are explicitly outlined in Articles 44 to 50 of Law No. 23 of 2004. When acts of domestic violence are substantiated through legal proceedings, perpetrators who

are found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt may face criminal penalties, reflecting society's commitment to addressing this pervasive issue.

A critical aspect of addressing domestic violence lies in understanding the underlying factors that contribute to its occurrence. Among the most significant determinants is the economic condition of the household. Many individuals involved in domestic violence situations come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, characterized by financial hardship, high living expenses, limited educational opportunities, restricted employment prospects, and, in some cases, early marriages. These socioeconomic challenges serve as crucial factors that exacerbate the incidence of domestic violence, highlighting the need for comprehensive interventions that address both the legal and economic dimensions of the issue.

In traditional family structures, the man is often perceived as the head of the household, bearing the responsibility to provide for and protect the family under all circumstances. However, in practice, this idealized role frequently encounters challenges, particularly when conflicts arise over the allocation of household resources or unmet needs. In such situations, physical and psychological violence, along with economic neglect, often emerge as mechanisms through which disputes are addressed. This dynamic places women in a position where they must increasingly rely on their own resources and adopt a proactive stance in managing household affairs—an area in which they were previously dependent on their husbands.

In many instances of domestic violence, the failure of family members to engage constructively with external social and economic conditions exacerbates tensions within the household. A significant contributing factor to this phenomenon is the economic imbalance within the family unit. Economic hardship often serves as a catalyst for frustration, particularly when the family's financial condition prevents the fulfillment of expectations and aspirations associated with an ideal family life. This frustration, stemming from unmet economic needs, may lead to the perpetration of antisocial and inhumane behaviors, including domestic violence. Thus, the intersection of economic stress and interpersonal conflict within the family contributes to the perpetuation of violent dynamics, further entrenching patterns of abuse.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study utilized a qualitative descriptive method with a jurisprudential model, where both primary and secondary data were collected and analyzed to understand the situation and conditions within the research area. The research was conducted in Besilam Village, Langkat Regency, between December 2023 and March 2024, with a particular focus on domestic violence issues. An interview with Mr. Rahmat, the Secretary of Besilam Village, provided valuable insights, revealing that approximately 20 to 30% of the village's population, out of a total of 2,456 households, have experienced domestic violence. To analyze the data, a qualitative descriptive approach was employed, which involves carefully describing and interpreting the collected information by documenting various aspects of the situation under study. This approach enabled us to construct a comprehensive and general understanding of the actual conditions of

domestic violence in the village. Following the analysis, the next step was to outline criteria derived from the general description, which formed the subject of the research.

## RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research problem formulation in this study, based on the aforementioned background, can be articulated as follows: This research is both critical and urgent in order to enable Besilam Village, Langkat Regency, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the domestic violence issues within the community. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What is the relationship between family economic conditions and the occurrence of domestic violence in Besilam Village, Langkat Regency?
2. What role does financial control and economic dependency play in increasing the risk of domestic violence within families?
3. How do social welfare programs and economic empowerment initiatives contribute to the reduction of domestic violence cases in Besilam Village, Langkat Regency?

This study is anchored on several key objectives that will provide a foundation for addressing the legal challenges identified. These objectives are as follows:

1. To examine the relationship between family economic conditions and the occurrence of domestic violence in Besilam Village, Langkat Regency.
2. To explore the role of financial control and economic dependency in heightening the risk of domestic violence within families.
3. To evaluate the impact of social welfare programs and economic empowerment on the reduction of domestic violence cases in Besilam Village, Langkat Regency.

The hypothesis posited by this study suggests that Besilam Village, Langkat Regency, remains insufficiently aware of the socio-legal consequences of domestic violence, particularly within the context of marriage. Specifically, cases of femicide, the murder of wives by husbands or former husbands, are prevalent. Statistical data reveal a significant percentage of such murders are committed by intimate partners. Common instances of domestic violence are as follows:

1. Husband towards wife, or vice versa.
2. Father towards child, or vice versa.
3. Mother towards child, or vice versa (including infanticide by mothers).
4. Sibling towards sibling, nephew, in-laws, or vice versa.
5. Family member towards domestic helper.
6. Other forms of familial violence.

Furthermore, various forms of abuse within the family are noted, including:

1. Husband towards wife, or vice versa.
2. Father towards child, or vice versa.

3. Mother towards child, or vice versa (including infanticide by mothers).
4. Sibling towards sibling, nephew, in-laws, or vice versa.
5. Family member towards domestic helper.
6. Other mixed forms of violence.

It is important to emphasize that both husbands and wives possess equal rights and responsibilities within the family structure and society. Both are entitled to engage in legal actions in the context of their domestic roles. According to Article 2 of the Domestic Violence Elimination Act, the scope of "household" encompasses:

- a) Husband, wife, and children (including adopted and stepchildren).
- b) Individuals with blood relations, marriage ties (e.g., in-laws, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, and parents-in-law), foster care relationships, and guardianship arrangements, who reside within the household, as well as individuals employed to assist with household duties during the period they reside in that household.

Field research findings corroborate that the wives (women) who experience domestic violence are married to men with a wide range of educational backgrounds, from elementary school to master's degrees. The husbands' occupations vary, including laborers, civil servants, military and police personnel, state-owned enterprise employees, and entrepreneurs. The victims, who may be working or not working, possess diverse educational qualifications, with some wives earning higher incomes than their husbands. These findings underscore the complexity of the issue and the need for a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence in Besilam Village.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Domestic violence is shaped by multiple, interconnected factors, including economic conditions, the dominance of patriarchal cultural norms, the erosion of social solidarity, a lack of empathy in impoverished communities, and the inadequate enforcement of the Domestic Violence Prevention and Handling Act (DVPH Act). Through a comprehensive factor analysis, supported by relevant theoretical frameworks and corroborated by prior empirical research, the patriarchal hegemonic culture has been identified as the central and most profound root cause of domestic violence. Addressing this issue requires not only immediate intervention but also sustained efforts to refine and develop strategies aimed at dismantling deeply entrenched patriarchal structures.

In light of the findings from the study on domestic violence in Besilam Village, Langkat Regency, several policy recommendations emerge as crucial for addressing the root causes of domestic violence, particularly those stemming from patriarchal cultural practices.

First, Gender Education and Awareness should be given priority. It is imperative to implement comprehensive gender education programs that foster a deep understanding of equality and the fundamental rights of both women and men. These programs should aim to shift societal attitudes by promoting the idea

that gender equality is essential for sustainable family and community development. Moreover, public campaigns should be launched to raise awareness about the critical need for balanced roles and responsibilities between husbands and wives, which would encourage a more egalitarian approach to family dynamics and reduce the propensity for abusive behaviors.

Second, Training for Attitude Change is pivotal in addressing ingrained patriarchal attitudes. Tailored training programs and workshops should be designed to challenge and transform the attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate patriarchal norms and domestic violence. To ensure the effectiveness of these initiatives, it is essential to involve key community stakeholders—such as religious leaders, local influencers, and policymakers—in advocating for positive shifts in societal attitudes towards gender roles.

Third, the Promotion of Women's Participation in all spheres of life—social, economic, and political—must be vigorously encouraged. Empowering women to actively engage in public life is critical for dismantling patriarchal structures. Providing women with the necessary training, resources, and opportunities to enhance their skills in various fields is essential not only for their personal empowerment but also for broader societal transformation. This approach will help create more inclusive and supportive communities that uphold gender equality.

Fourth, Strengthening the Law and Ensuring the Effective Implementation of the DVPH Act is of paramount importance. It is essential to reinforce the enforcement of laws related to domestic violence, ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable and that victims receive the support and protection they need. Public awareness campaigns should focus on the DVPH Act, ensuring that it is understood by all segments of society and properly implemented at all levels. Only through consistent legal enforcement can domestic violence be effectively prevented and mitigated.

Finally, Economic Empowerment of Women must be a central component of any long-term strategy to address domestic violence. By fostering women's financial independence, society can reduce their vulnerability to domestic abuse and increase their overall agency. Initiatives that promote women's economic empowerment—such as providing access to financial resources, offering vocational training, and supporting entrepreneurial ventures—can break the cycle of dependency and abuse, enabling women to make independent decisions and participate fully in both the domestic and public spheres.

These recommendations aim to create a more equitable, supportive, and just environment for women, targeting the root causes of domestic violence and fostering long-term social change. By addressing both cultural and structural factors, these efforts seek to promote gender equality and reduce violence within the home, ultimately contributing to the creation of safer, more inclusive communities.

## ADVANCED RESEARCH

In writing this article the researcher realizes that there are still many shortcomings in terms of language, writing, and form of presentation considering the limited knowledge and abilities of the researchers themselves. Therefore, for the perfection of the article, the researcher expects constructive criticism and suggestions from various parties.

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