TAKUSA (Battered Husbands): Their Tempestuous Experiences

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Abstract: Battered Husbands (TAKUSA or Takot Sa Asawa) are unusual societal issues. An abused husband suffers the same emotional, verbal and physical abuse as a battered wife, but is less likely to report these crimes to authorities. The study was conducted to divulge the actual scenario on the tempestuous experiences, psycho-social behavior, and coping mechanisms of the battered husband (TAKUSA). Qualitative type of research through case study approach was used. Ten (10) selected respondents who met the criteria set by the researcher from among 120 recommended samples using purposive sampling. The Third Congressional District of Nueva Ecija, Philippines composed of Cabanatuan City, Palayan City, Bongabon, Laur, Gen. Natividad, Gabaldon and Santa Rosa was the study locale. Prior consent was established before the conduct of the study. Interviews, observations, and checklist were the main instruments. Results revealed that the respondents have varied lifestyles, tempestuous experiences, reactions, and coping mechanisms. It deduced that the battered husband has low self-esteem and social acceptability; manifestations of stress, anxiety and depression. Such feelings are recommended for psychological interventions, conduct family counseling and development of intervention activities, identify and establish a supportive network of relationships where they can voice out their problems.

Keywords: Sociology, Qualitative, Case Study, Cabanatuan City, Philippines.

1. INTRODUCTION

When many of us hear the words "domestic violence," we automatically assume the victim would be a woman and the attacker would be a man. After all, men are traditionally viewed as the more aggressive of the two sexes, and the victims of most domestic abuse situations are indeed women. But a surprising number of domestic violence episodes do involve women as the aggressors, creating a new category of victim known as the battered husband. An abused husband suffers the same emotional, verbal and physical abuse as a battered wife, but is less likely to report these crimes to authorities. (Rubicks, 2011)

The relationship between a battered husband and his abusive spouse can be very complex. The husband often employs the same defensive tactics as a battered wife, including denial, withdrawal and disconnection. The shame of owning up to a spouse's abusive behavior could cause a man to defend her around others. Some excuses may be that his own actions triggered her violent response, or she's only reacting to post-natal stress. Denial can be a powerful coping mechanism for men in this situation, especially if they dread the idea of having meaningful discussions with their abusive spouses. (Sandra, 2010)

Another characteristic of men in this situation is the tendency to disconnect from his own domestic problems. A battered husband will often spend more and more time at work, or take up a hobby outside of the home. In order to avoid potential conflicts, he may decide to sleep in the family car or spend his waking hours in a private den or office. A violent spouse may also be abusive towards children, either in the form of physical attacks or excessive punishments for minor infractions. A battered husband could remain in the abusive home strictly to protect his children from further abuse. A battered husband may also find it difficult to pursue legal remedies against an abusive spouse. A number of states have domestic violence laws requiring law enforcement officers to arrest at least one of the combatants if physical injuries are visible. An abused husband may have been the victim of severe mental and emotional abuse for hours, but one defensive slap could tip the balance in the abusive spouse's favor. Enforcing a temporary restraining order against an abusive wife could also become problematic for a husband, especially if children are involved. (Fardesth, 2011)

GENERAL OBJECTIVE:

To divulge the actual scenario on the tempestuous experiences, psycho-social behavior and coping mechanism of the battered husband...
The study was conducted in the 3rd Congressional District of Nueva Ecija composed of two component cities, Cabanatuan and Palayan and municipalities of Bongabon, Sta Rosa, Laur, General Tinio, Gabaldon, and General Natividad, Philippines.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

MacInnes (2009) cited in Edwards (2011: 20) argues that gender is ‘an ideology people use in modern societies to imagine the existence of differences between men and women on the basis of their sex where in fact there are none.’ In other words, gender is only a concept constructed by society and if this is the case then the arguments for a gendered issue are ultimately linked back to society. Society has a major influence on male victims of domestic abuse in that traditionally men were privileged at the expense of women (Eirik 2009: 77, Palin-Davis 2009: 25). Men were viewed as the breadwinner who would enforce and maintain control in the household, whereas women took the role of nurturer. These stereotypical views are installed in society and reflected repeatedly by the media so people are reluctant to believe women could perpetrate violence as men are the dominant sex. Gender roles were defined before the public notion of patriarchy came to the forefront of beliefs using the ‘Skimington’ and the idea of ‘riding the donkey backwards’ (George 2010: 137). Men who were found to be beaten by their wives were publicly humiliated to conform to society’s rules that they are the dominant sex and women are subordinate (George 2010:118). This had the effect of repressing male victims therefore it is these views that keep male victims invisible. Jackie Richardson, a practitioner at the Montgomeryshire Family Crisis Centre, states that ‘society has a very anti-man attitude as far as domestic violence is concerned’ (The Observer 7/12/2011) suggesting that all men are acknowledged as perpetrators due to the hurt and pain a minority has inflicted on women. I am not justifying these men’s actions but ‘our anger towards men as victimizers blinds us to men who are victims’ (Farrell 2010: 221).

Kimbrell (2010: 48) argues that domestic violence whether male or female should not be about society or gender but should be seen as a ‘human issue’ were all victims can get the help they need to rebuild their lives (Richardson in The Observer 7/12/2010). George (2010) argues that battered men deserve help along with Dobash and Dobash (2010) who acknowledge that responding to the needs of male victims should be identical to responding to the needs of female victims, therefore equal services, refugees and funding should be available for men as well as women.

At this moment in time this is not the case; men have significantly less help available to them. Hines et al (2010) concluded that after research into the characteristics of callers to a male helpline, domestic violence is a ‘human issue’ rather than that of a gender issue, which they originally believed, as victims, regardless of their gender, they experience similar feelings, emotions and behaviors. They pleaded that ‘violence by women should be taken seriously so that the goal of ending all violence can be achieved’ (Hines et al 2007: 69).

Many men deny that they are victims of domestic violence in order to still feel masculine. Others feel too embarrassed to seek help and advice and those victims that do try and seek help from the police or social services are sometimes ridiculed (Mankind Initiative 2010, 3/4) as such agencies do not believe men can be victims of domestic violence due to social constructions. Geis (2010) argued that we disregard information that is inconsistent with societal stereotypes. The Dispatches: ‘Battered Men’ Survey (2011) concluded that 49% of men never sought help from the police because they felt the police would be unsympathetic or disbelieve them. Hence, there is a culture of silence amongst male victims of domestic violence (The Evening Chronicle 28/11/04)

Another reason preventing abuses men from suing is pride. They prefer to keep it confidential. Men have their pride, too, and they do not want to come out publicly.

2. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative type of research through the case study approach was used. Interviews and sample observations were extensively employed to gather the significant data in each individual case. Questionnaire and checklist on the psychological make-up of each sample was also used. Related stories by significant people gave a fairly complete
picture of each individual. Case history of each individual was undertaken.

THE SAMPLE
The samples were ten (10) selected battered husbands, selected purposefully and passed the criteria set by the researcher namely: openly volunteered battered husband for more than five (5) years, legally married with at least two children and living independently. Permission to interview was sought prior to the conduct of the study.

PROCEDURE OF ANALYSIS
Each respondent was presented without their real identity. A pseudonym for each individual was used. Presentation of data for each case followed the items enumerated in the objective of the study. Secondary sources of data were secured from their in-laws, wife, children, peers, neighbors; relatives were incorporated in the presentation of each case study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

1.1 AGES
Four (4) or 40% of the respondents has an age that ranges from 31-35 and four (4) or 40% have an age that ranges from 36 and above, two (2) or 20% of the respondents have an age that ranges from 26-30 years old.

The majority of the battered husbands are matured individuals.

1.2 OCCUPATION
Three (3) or 30% of them have no job, two (2) or 20% are farmers, one (1) or 10% is a tricycle driver, one (1) or 10% is a jeepney driver, one (1) or 10% is a construction worker, one (1) or 10% is a sales boy and one (1) or 10% is a government employee.

The majority of the respondents has no stable job.

1.3 MONTHLY INCOME
Eight (8) or 80% of the respondents have an average monthly income of P0 – P5, 000, while there is One (1) or 10% with P5,001 – P10,000 a month, One (1) or 10% with P10,001 – P15,000.

The majority of the respondents have low monthly income.

1.4 NO. OF CHILDREN
Seven (7) or 70% of the respondents have 0 – 3 children, two (2) or 20% have 4 – 6 children and one (1) or 10% of the respondents has 7 – 10 children.

The majority of the respondents have a small number of children.

1.5 AGES WHEN MARRIED
Five (5) or 50% of the respondents who are 15 – 20 years old are married, four (4) or 40% got married at the age of 21 – 25 and one (1) or 10% got married at the age 26 – 30 years old.

Majority of the respondents got married at their early age.

1.6 LENGTH OF MARRIAGE WHEN ABUSE STARTED
Four (4) or 40% of the respondents are 11 – 15 years married when the abuse started, while two (2) or 20% are 0 - 5 years, two (2) or 20% are 6 - 10 years and two (2) or 20% is 16 years and above.

Majority of the respondents had been abused for so long.

1.7 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
Three (3) or 30% of them are college graduates, three (3) or 30% are high school level, two (2) or 20% are high school graduates, one (1) or 10% is high school level and One (1) or 10% is an elementary graduate.

The majority of the respondents are well-educated.

2. LIFESTYLES

2. THE OBSERVATIONS ON THE LIFESTYLES OF THE BATTERED HUSBANDS ACCORDING TO THEIR:

2.1 IN LAWS
The observations on the lifestyles of the respondents according to their in-laws are: they never speak regarding their status in their house, and spending their time helping their children has a weighted mean of 4.3 and verbally interpreted as strongly agree. If they have a job they cannot endure and quit and do not want to seek job has a weighted mean of 4.2 and interpreted as strongly agree, “were in the house most of the time” has a weighted mean of 4.3 and verbally described as strongly agree, asking money from their wives most of the time and drinking liquor with their peers have a weighted mean of 4.2 and verbally described as strongly agree, following their wives order at home and slept in their house most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.4 and verbally described as strongly agree.

The battered husband according to their in-laws are responsible in their house, most of the time help their children, drink liquor most of the time with their peers, and described them as an easy go lucky person.

2.2 WIFE
The observations on the lifestyles of the respondents according to their wives are: spending their time helping their child's assignments in school and followed their wives order has a weighted mean of 4.6 and interpreted as strongly
agree, were in the house most of the time and never speak regarding their status has a weighted mean of 4.0 and verbally described as agree, they drink liquor with their peers most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.2 and interpreted as strongly agree, sleeping their house most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.2 and interpreted as strongly agree, do not want to look for job having a weighted mean of 4.0 and verbally interpreted as agree, they asked money from their wives most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.0 and verbally interpreted as agree, if they have a job they cannot endure and quit has a weighted mean of 4.2 and interpreted as strongly agree and have vices like smoking and drinking liquor has a weighted mean of 4.0 and verbally described as agree.

According to their wives their husbands are responsible, seem no intention to grow, find hard to look for a good job, always with peers and have vices like drinking and smoking.

2.3 CHILDREN

The observations on the lifestyles of the respondents according to their children are: spend time helping our school assignments and followed the order of our mother in our house has a weighted mean of 4.8 and verbally interpreted as strongly agree, they are in our house most of the time, and never speak regarding their status in our house has a weighted mean of 4.0 and interpreted as agreed, sleep in our house most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.2 and verbally described as strongly agree, drink liquor with their peers most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.0 and interpreted as agreed, asked money from our mother most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.2 and interpreted as strongly agree, do not want to look for job has a weighted mean of 3.9 and interpreted as agree. And if they have a job they cannot endure or quit the work has a weighted mean of 4.2 and interpreted as strongly agree, if they have a job they cannot endure and quit working has a weighted mean of 3.9 and interpreted as agree, drinking liquor most of the time with their peers has a weighted mean of 3.9 and interpreted as agree, and sleeping in their house most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.7 and verbally described as agree, and have vices like drinking liquor and smoking has a weighted mean of 3.7 and described as agree.

According to their children, their father is responsible, supports their needs, cooks their food, does household chores, and they do not have knowledge that their father is battered.

2.4 NEIGHBORS

The observations on the lifestyles of the respondents as observed by their neighbors are: They were in the house most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.6 and verbally interpreted as strongly agree, spent time helping their children in school assignments has a weighted mean of 4.7 and interpreted as strongly agree, never spoke regarding their status in their house has a weighted mean of 4.8 and verbally described as strongly agree, they asked money from their wives most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.7 and verbally described as strongly agree, and they followed their wives’ order at home has a weighted mean of 4.3 and verbally interpreted as strongly agree, did not want to look of a job has a weighted mean of 4.1 and verbally interpreted as agree and if they have a job they cannot endure and quit working has a weighted mean of 3.9 and interpreted as agree, drinking liquor most of the time with their peers has a weighted mean of 3.9 and verbally described as agree and having vices like drinking liquor and smoking has a weighted mean of 3.9 and described as agree.

According to their neighbors, they are always at home; they always saw those washing clothes, and they were sleeping most of the time.

2.5 PEERS

The observations on the lifestyles of the respondents according to their peers are: Spending time helping their children in school assignments has a weighted mean of 4.3 and verbally interpreted as strongly agree, not wanting to seek job has a weighted mean of 4.0 and interpreted as agree, asking money from their wives most of the time has a weighted mean of 3.9 and verbally described as agree. Following their wives order at home has a weighted mean of 4.8 and verbally interpreted as strongly agree, were in the house most of the time has a weighted mean of 3.9 and verbally interpreted as agree, and sleeping in their house most of the time has a weighted mean of 3.9 and described as agree, drinking most of the time has a weighted mean of 3.5 and interpreted as agree, if they have a job they cannot endure and quit their work has a weighted mean of 3.9 and described as agree, never spoke regarding their status in their house has a weighted mean of 3.9 and described as agree, and having vices like drinking liquor and smoking has a weighted mean of 4.0 and described as agree.

According to their peers they were responsible, doing everything for their family at home, they were drinking with peers, and supporting were them to be responsible and showing to respect their wives.

2.6 RELATIVES

The observations on the lifestyles of the respondents according to their relatives are: never spoke regarding their status in their house has a weighted mean of 4.3 and verbally interpreted as strongly agree, were in the house most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.0 and described as agree, spending their time helping their children in school assignments has a weighted mean of 4.3 and interpreted as strongly agree, not wanting to seek job has a weighted mean of 4.1 and verbally interpreted as agree, and if they have a job they
cannot endure and quit their work has a weighted mean of 3.9 and interpreted as agree, following their wives’ order at home has a weighted mean of 4.1 and described as agree, asking money from their wives most of the time has a weighted mean of 4.0 and interpreted as agree and vices like drinking liquor and smoking cigarette has a weighted mean of 4.3 and described as strongly agree.

According to their relatives, they described the respondents as a responsible father, no stable job, doing household chores, playing sports and having limited socialization in the community.

2.7 HABITS OF THE RESPONDENTS:

The respondents habits are: playing sports such as basketball and watching television has a weighted mean of 4.7 and interpreted as strongly agree, attending mass every Sunday and assisting children in their assignments has a weighted mean of 4.6 and interpreted as strongly agree, reading newspaper and drinking liquor has a weighted mean of 4.7 and interpreted as strongly agree, always in the house has a weighted mean of 4.3 and verbally described as strongly agree, spending time with friends and family and doing household chores has a weighted mean of 4.2 and interpreted as strongly agree, and being with friends and peers has a weighted mean of 4.7 and verbally described as strongly agree.

The battered husband are typical responsible husbands, they are always in the house, doing household chores, assisting children in their assignments, and playing sports and having limited socialization in the community.

3. EXPERIENCES

3.1 EMOTIONAL

Feeling controlled where to spend our time has a weighted mean of 4.7 and interpreted as strongly agree, preventing us from leaving the house has a weighted mean of 4.6 and interpreted as strongly agree, feeling us that we are sexually unattractive has a weighted mean of 4.7 and interpreted as strongly agree, suspicious that we were unfaithful and showing acts of jealousy has a weighted mean of 4.4 and interpreted as strongly agree, accusing us of flirting with other woman has a weighted mean of 4.1 and interpreted as agree, talking other people that there were something wrong with us has a weighted mean of 4.9 and interpreted as strongly agree, insulting us and my family has a weighted mean of 4.7 and interpreted as strongly agree, insulting us even our religious background or beliefs has a weighted mean of 4.0 and interpreted as agree.

The respondents felt being controlled by their wives, thinking that they were not allowed to leave the house, not giving financial support, flirting with somebody and being insulted in any manner.

3.2 VERBAL

Treating them like a child and letting do things which their wives ordered has a weighted mean of 4.7 and interpreted as strongly agree, criticizing their clothing, possessions, opinions, and decisions and accusing them of flirting with another woman, speaking of compliment has a weighted mean of 4.4 and interpreted as strongly agree, accused us of no intimacy while they were the one who were seldom or never intimate with us has a weighted mean of 4.2 and interpreted as strongly agree, insulting and making fun of our family has a weighted mean of 4.4 and interpreted as strongly agree, telling that they were dull and stupid has a weighted mean of 4.1 and verbally described as agree, using derogatory names and insulting us in front of our friends has a weighted mean of 3.9 and interpreted as agree, and ridiculing our children and blaming us for their terrible upbringing has a weighted mean of 3.5 and interpreted as agree.

They received verbal abuse to wit; they were given derogatory names, ridicules in front of their friends and relatives, threatened to be ostracized, and treated like a child.

3.3 PHYSICAL

Being ordered to wash the clothes daily, and did slapping our face has a weighted mean of 4.8 and interpreted as strongly agree, keeping us slept in other areas of the house and threw kitchen wares on us when we have misunderstanding has a weighted mean of 4.7 and interpreted as strongly agree, doing household chores even we had just arrived from our work has a weighted mean of 4.4 and described as strongly agree, not giving us decent clothes to wear has a weighted mean of 4.2 and interpreted as strongly agree, not allowing us to leave the house on weekends has a weighted mean of 4.3 and interpreted as strongly agree, and they strangulates us has a weighted mean of 3.3 and interpreted as moderately agree.

Physical abuse was experienced from their wives, they were slapped on their face, kicked in any part of their body, throwing plates to them and they were not allowed to be with their wives during bedtime.

3.4 SEXUAL

Limited sexual acts and avoiding sex has a weighted mean of 4.4 and interpreted as strongly agree, encouraging them to have sex with other women has a weighted mean of 3.5 and interpreted as strongly agree.
as agree, demanding having sex regardless of how I feel has a weighted mean of 3.0 and interpreted as moderately agree, forcing and pressuring them into sexual acts has a weighted mean of 3.2and interpreted as moderately agree, forcing them to watch porn movies, and to look at porn pictures has a weighted mean of 3.0 and verbally described as moderately agree.

In terms of sexual responsibilities their wives did limit their sexual activity, encouraged sex with other women, forced and pressured them into sexual acts, forced them to watch porn movies, and just to look for porn pictures

3. COPING MECHANISMS OF THE BATTERED HUSBANDS

The coping mechanism and that the respondents revealed are praying to God has a weighted mean of 4.8 and interpreted as strongly agree, denying the situation has a weighted mean of 4.9 and interpreted as strongly agree, seeking the advice of people known to them has a weighted mean of 4.7 and interpreted as strongly agree, going to sleep to forget the situation as a weighted mean of 4.8 and interpreted as strongly agree, and rationalizing the behavior of their wives and keeping quiet has a weighted mean of 4.7 and verbally described as strongly agree.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Many of the respondents were matured, having no stable job, low monthly income, having a small number of children, got married early, had long years as couples, and well-educated. The majority of the respondents has unfavorable self-esteem and social acceptability; have manifestations of stress, anxiety, depression and an easy go lucky person. According to their wives they were responsible husbands, seemed no intention of growing, no stable job, always with their peers and had vices like drinking and smoking. According to their children, their father were responsible, supporting their needs, did cooking their food, and unaware that their father were battered. According to their peers, they were responsible, doing everything for their family, did drinking with them, and used to respect their wives. According to their neighbors, they were always at home; seen washing clothes and sleeping most of the time. According to their relatives they were responsible father, no stable job, do household chores, playing sports and having limited socialization in the community. The respondents were controlled by their wives, preventing them to leave the house, not giving financial support, accusing of flirting with other women and insulting them in any manner. They received verbal abuse to wit; given derogatory names, were ridiculed in front of their friends and relatives, threatened to be ostracized, and treated like a child. Physical abuse was experienced from their wives, they were slapped on their face, kicked in any part of their body, thrown plates to them and they were separated during bedtime. Their wives wanted limited sexual activity. Their coping mechanisms are praying to God, denying the situation, seeking the advice of people known to them, sleeping to forget the situation, rationalizing about the behavior of their wives and keep quiet about being battered husbands.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The couples should establish rapport between them, and respect each other. The couples should review their status, change their attitude, behave properly and develop self-esteem. The DSWD showed survey the number of battered husbands in their area, conduct family counseling and develop intervention activities. Identify and establish a supportive network of relationships where they voice out their problems. Certain law shall be passed giving the right of the battered husbands similar to Republic Act No. 9262 Anti-Violence against Women and Their Children Act of 2004. A related study should be conducted in order to further determine the extent of abusive acts of the wife.

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