

PERCEPTIONS OF WIFE-BEATING BEHAVIOUR AND SEXUAL RIGHTS AMONG MARRIED WOMEN IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Gender-based violence is one of the most prevalent human rights violations, due to gender inequality and lack of awareness of their rights on the part of the women. Women's empowerment within the household is closely linked to gender-based violence, but there is still a lack of research on this topic. This research used data from the 2012 Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey (IDHS) to portray women's empowerment in Indonesia and examine its correlate in terms of their perceptions of wife-beating behaviors, and awareness of their sexual rights. Such perceptions are indicators of women's empowerment as the more empowered ones are likely to disapprove of wife-beating and are more aware of their sexual rights. These hypotheses are borne out by findings from IDHS. In that survey, about two-thirds of the respondents reported that wife-beating behaviors are not justifiable at all, and more than half are aware of their rights to negotiate for safer sex. Multivariate analysis shows that women's objection to wife-beating and the knowledge of their rights to refuse sexual intercourse with husband were correlated with age, urban living, and education of both husband and woman, but not with the number of living children and employment status. Interestingly women were more likely than men to condone wife-beating. Almost one in three women still condoned wife-beating and many more were not aware of their sexual rights, and this will perpetuate gender-based and domestic violence. This research sought to identify the groups of women who condoned wife-beating and who were unaware of their sexual rights. It is hoped that appropriate intervention strategies such as information and educational campaigns, as well as stricter enforcement of the laws will be implemented to overcome the problems of gender-based violence.

Key words: women empowerment, wife-beating, sexual rights, domestic violence, Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Gender-based violence is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world according to World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and it is gaining attention as a public health issue and violation of human rights (Ebrahim & Atteraya, 2017; García-Moreno & Stöckl, 2009). The WHO reported that in 2013, 1 in 3 women worldwide has been beaten, coerced into sex or abused in some other way, often by an intimate partner. Due to the unequal status of men and women in the society, women are more exposed to various forms of violence including sexual exploitation which may lead to sexually transmitted infection (Taborga, 2009). Recognizing the seriousness of this problem, UNFPA has made ending violence against women as its strategic priority since the early 1990s. The Program of Action adopted at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development recognized that "advancing gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women, and the elimination of all kinds of violence against women, and ensuring women's ability to control their own fertility, are cornerstones of population and development-related programmes", and that "research on sexuality and gender roles and relationships in different cultural settings is urgently needed, with emphasis on such areas as abuse, discrimination, and violence against women...". Under the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), adopted at Millennium Summit in 2000, one of the eight goals set by the United Nations was promoting gender equality and empowerment of women. The need to empower women and to eliminate gender-based violence was reaffirmed in the outcome document of the United Nations Summit on the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda reiterated that all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls will be eliminated (United Nations, 2015).

Some researchers asserted that women's empowerment is one way of reducing violence against women (Ebrahim & Atteraya, 2017; Abramsky et al., 2011; Moghadam, 2007). However, there are difficulties in measuring domestic violence. Many cases of wife-beating have gone unreported as the victims were embarrassed or did not know where to report such violence (Gracia, 2004). Moreover, the measurement of the various aspects of women's empowerment is often not that straightforward, despite various attempts in the literature to have a common definition (Varghese, 2011). Kabeer (1999, pg 437) defined empowerment as "the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them". Some researchers used women's educational attainment, age at marriage and employment status to measure women's empowerment for want of a better measure. However, using these variables as measures of empowerment is problematic (Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender, 2002; Bloom, Wypij, & Gupta, 2001), as they represent an approximation of women's empowerment rather than their real ability to exercise the power (Gupta & Yesudian, 2006). In a multi-dimensional context, the measurement of women's empowerment becomes even more complex due to a different level of power that women have in making various decisions (Williams, 2005). For instance, women in Thailand may be free from being a victim of domestic violence but were restricted in terms of their freedom of movement (Mason, & Smith, 2003).

Improvement in the socio-economic status of women has been found to reduce violence against women. Working women in India are less likely to be a victim of domestic violence as compared to non-working women (Ghosh, 2007). In Egypt, better-educated women were less likely to be the victim of domestic violence (Sa, 2004). According to Gupta, and Yesudian (2006), women's age is a significant variable in predicting women's justification for wife-beating among Indians. Older women and those who had been married longer were at greater risk of domestic violence (Ghosh, 2007). However, there is lack of consistency in the findings on the relationship between the number of children and women's status. Acharya et al. (2010) found that Nepalese women's autonomy improves with the number of children. On the other hand, Yount and Carrera (2006) found that Cambodian women with more living children are more likely to be beaten by the husband; but the likelihood of domestic violence is lower in households with a higher standard of living, measured by household assets and amenities. Similar findings were reported in the 2012 Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey (IDHS), notably, women from richer families are less likely to condone domestic violence for any given reasons, and are better informed in negotiating safer sex with the husband as compared to those from poorer families. Past research, however, had rarely dealt with women's sexual negotiation power or attempted to treat it as one of the indicators of women's empowerment. Yet, the importance of measuring women's ability to negotiate sexual intimacy has received more attention, as reflected by the emerging studies on sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) (Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender, 2002).

Data for this paper were taken from the 2012 Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey. A direct approach was used to measure women's empowerment by examining women's attitude towards wife-beating behaviors and the rights to refuse to have sexual intercourse with their husbands. Indonesia, the most populous Muslim country, was chosen for this study as it has a large population where gender inequality remains wide, and physical and sexual violence against women is still common (Obie, 2018). The persistence of violence against women could be related to the gender norms and values and the low status of women in different social and cultural settings (Eidhamar, 2017). Although women have equal rights as men under Indonesian law, in practice, men generally have more power, rights and says. Various efforts have been made to highlight the importance and roles of women in the society and to promote gender equality. Indonesia's commitment to promoting gender equality was reflected through its commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Program of Action adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) 1994, and participation in various conferences on issues pertaining to women. The Indonesian government has also reaffirmed its commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment¹ in 2010 following a review of achievement of MDGs.

Despite catching up with men in areas such as education and health, Indonesian women are still disadvantaged in terms of employment and participation in decision making at the various levels. The Gender Inequality Index of Indonesia was at 0.467 in 2015, and it was ranked 105 out of 159 countries. This index is a measure of gender inequality in three dimensions namely health, empowerment (education and political participation) and labour market participation. Women in Indonesia earn substantially less than men. The 2016 Human Development Report shows that Indonesian women's estimated gross national income per capita was less than half of that of men². According to Badan Pusat Statistik (2015)³, during the period 2013-2016 women were paid about 1.5 million Rupiah per month, as compared with 1.8 million Rupiah for men, partly because of the gender difference in the hours of work – an average of 40 hours a week for women as compared to 44 hours for men. The relatively low status of women in the family and society may increase the prevalence rate of violence against women. Therefore, it is important to explore women's attitude towards wife-beating behaviors and attitude towards negotiating safer sex, and the socio-demographic variables that influence their attitudes on these two aspects as a reflection of women's empowerment.

This paper contributes to the literature by identifying individual characteristics of women who condoned wife-beating and who were not aware of their sexual rights, which may perpetuate gender-based violence. Despite the availability of data from the Demographic and Health Surveys in about 90 countries, there is still a dearth of research on the opinion of women on wife-beating and their awareness of their rights to negotiate safe sex in Asia. Women's acceptance of wife-beating and the lack of awareness of their rights, including the rights to refuse sexual intercourse with their husbands may have "rationalized" the norms for wife-beating and forced sex. A norm that brings substantial negative impacts on women's well-being. It is hoped that this paper will contribute to a better understanding of factors resulting in the persistence of physical and sexual violence against women, for the policymakers to implement appropriate intervention strategies to overcome the obstacles in promoting women's empowerment within the household and in the society to achieve gender equality and to eliminate gender-based violence.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. The method section that follows discusses the data source in terms of sampling design, the coverage, the selection and measurement of the dependent and independent variables, and data analysis. This is followed by the presentation of results from the bivariate and multivariate analyses; and then a discussion of the results, before concluding with some policy implications and recommendations.

METHODS

STUDY AND SAMPLING DESIGNS

¹ Commission on Status of Women 2010. The 54th session, General Discussion, 6th Meeting. New York, 2 March 2010.

² 2011 Purchasing Power Parity. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/IDN>

³ BPS, Survei Angkatan Kerja Nasional Agustus 2015 diolah Pusdatinaker, from the website: Pusat Data and Informasi Ketenagakerjaan. Table A.4 and A.5. <https://bps.go.id/website/pdf/publikasi/Keadaan-Pekerja-di-Indonesia-Agustus-2015.pdf>

This study is based on 2012 Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey (IDHS), the seventh in a series of similar surveys conducted in Indonesia since 1987. The Woman's Questionnaires are largely based on standard DHS phase VI questionnaires (March 2011 version). The model questionnaires were adapted for use in Indonesia. The response categories were modified to reflect the local situation, according to the main report of IDHS 2012⁴. The results of this analysis may be compared with those based on DHS in other countries to examine the common and different factors affecting women's empowerment in different contexts.

The sample of the 2012 IDHS was selected using stratified two-stage sampling design (IDHS, 2012)⁵, thus sampling weights were applied in all subsequent analyses in order to generate the nationally representative sample. In the 2012 IDHS, a total of 45,607 ever-married women in the selected households were interviewed. A more detailed description of the study design of the 2012 IDHS can be read from the main report of the survey.

In this paper, we confined the sample to 32,361 currently married women to focus on the attitudes of women towards an act of violence potentially committed by the husbands. The one percent of respondents who did not respond to the question on their opinion on wife-beating and awareness of their rights to refuse sexual intercourse were excluded from the analysis. We would like to thank Demographic Health Survey (DHS) for the permission to access the data.

MEASUREMENTS

The study aimed to analyze two related aspects of women's empowerment, i.e. women's attitude towards wife-beating behaviors and attitude towards negotiating safer sex. The first dependent variable was based on the responses of the women as to whether wife-beating is justified in each of the following five situations:

- (i) if the wife goes out without telling the husband
- (ii) if wife neglects the children
- (iii) if wife argues with husband
- (iv) if the wife refuses to have sex with husband
- (v) if wife burns the food

The second dependent variable was based on the responses on whether a woman can refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband under the following four situations:

- (i) husband has sexually transmitted infections
- (ii) husband has other women
- (iii) the recent birth
- (iv) tiredness or not in the mood

The respondents had to answer "Yes" or "No" to each question. Those who answered "No" to all the five questions on approval of wife-beating are regarded as more empowered (coded 1) than those who answered affirmatively at least once (coded as 0). Those who answered affirmatively to all the four questions on whether they can refuse to have sexual intercourse with the husband are regarded as more empowered (coded 1), than those who had answered "No" to one or more questions. Those who answered, "Don't know" in any of those questions were treated as having less power in their respective category, as they were less affirmative about their rights. This group ranged from 1.3 percent to 6.6 percent across the nine items.

The independent variables comprise selected socio-demographic variables such as women's age, place of residence, wealth quintile, women's educational level, marriage duration, women's employment status and husband's education levels which were hypothesized to have effects on the dependent variables. These variables were used in several studies on this topic (Acharya et al., 2010; Ebrahim & Atteraya, 2017; Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015; Abramsky et al., 2011).

DATA ANALYSIS

The data were analyzed using SPSS 22.0. The frequency tables were produced to show the distribution of the sample for all the study variables. Bivariate analyses with chi-square tests were used to examine the associations between socio-demographic variables and attitude towards wife-beating, and negotiating safer sex. Multivariate logistic regression was applied on both the dichotomous dependent variables to assess the effects of the socio-demographic variables in the multivariate context. All the socio-demographic variables were presented as categorical variables.

RESULTS

The sample distribution by selected socio-demographic characteristics of the study population is shown in Table 1. Slightly more than half of the respondents were from the urban areas. The distribution of respondents across age groups was rather even, with those aged 25-44 making up about three quarters, ranging from 17 percent aged 25-29 to 20 percent aged 35-39, while those

⁴ Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik—BPS), National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN), and Kementerian Kesehatan (Kemenkes—MOH), and ICF International. 2013. *Indonesia Demographic and Health Survey 2012*. Jakarta, Indonesia: BPS, BKKBN, Kemenkes, and ICF International.

⁵ For more information, please refer to the main report of IDHS 2012.

aged below 25 and 45 and over making up the remaining 11 percent and 15 percent respectively. About one third each were married for less than 10 years, 10-19 years and 20 years or more. A little more than half of the women had 2-3 children, about one third had no child or only one child, and only 13 percent had four or more children. Majority of the respondents had either primary (38 percent) or secondary education (47 percent), while about 12 percent had tertiary education, and only 4 percent had no schooling. The educational distribution of the husband was almost the same as that of the respondents. Close to 60 percent of the women were currently working. Those in the poorest quintile made up only 15% of the sample, and this rose steadily to 23% for those in the richest quintile.

Overall, nearly two-thirds of the women (64.6%) did not agree that wife-beating is justified under any circumstances, while 35.4% agreed that wife-beating is justified due to one or more reasons such as neglecting the children or going out without telling the husband. Figure 1 shows that neglecting children is the most commonly cited reason for women to condone wife-beating (27.6%), followed by going out without telling the

Table 1: Percent of women disagreeing with wife-beating and being aware of their rights to refuse sex with husband by socio-demographic variables

	% distribution of the sample	% disagreeing with wife-beating	% aware of sexual rights
Age Group		***	***
Below 24	11.4	53.6	59.9
25-29	16.8	60.6	62.2
30-34	18.9	64.9	60.7
35-39	19.9	67.7	56.4
40-44	17.9	69.2	56.8
45-49	15.2	70.8	54.9
Marriage duration (years)		***	***
Less than 10	35.2	61.4	61.0
10-19	34.0	65.5	59.5
20 or more	30.9	67.8	54.5
Number of living children		***	***
0-1	34.4	61.8	59.7
2-3	52.2	66.9	58.7
4 or more	13.4	63.7	55.5
Women's education level		***	***
No education	3.7	67.7	45.0
Primary	38.1	62.2	54.8
Secondary	46.5	64.2	61.9
Higher	11.7	75.1	63.1
Husband's education level		***	***
No education	2.4	63.6	43.5
Primary	37.2	62.4	55.6
Secondary	48.5	64.3	60.9
Higher	11.9	75.2	62.8
Currently working?		***	***
No	41.8	63.5	58.3
Yes	58.2	65.5	58.8
Place of residence		***	***
Urban	53.4	70.1	60.8
Rural	46.6	59.4	56.5
Wealth Index		***	**
Poorest	15.3	56.2	56.5
Poorer	18.5	60.6	58.0
Middle	20.3	63.8	58.7
Richer	22.8	68.1	59.5
Richest	23.1	73.1	60.0

Note: ** Significant at 95%, *** Significant at 99%

husband (25.6%), refusal to have sexual intercourse with husband (10.9%), arguing with husband (7.5%) and if she burned the food (3.3%). The proportion of Indonesian women who agreed with wife-beating is much higher than their counterparts in the Philippines on all reasons and is also higher than their counterparts in Bangladesh on the ground of neglecting children, going out without telling the husband and refusing to have sexual intercourse with husband.

Surprisingly, the women were more likely than the men to condone wife-beating under any circumstances. For instance, while 10.9% of the women agreed that it is alright for a man to beat his wife if she refuses to have sexual intercourse with him, only 2.8% of the husbands condoned wife-beating on that ground (Figure 2).

Close to 60% of the women reported that a woman had the rights to refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband under any circumstances. Having a recent birth was the most commonly cited reason for refusing to have sexual intercourse with husband (93.1%), followed closely by if the husband has STI or another woman (85% each). However, 31.3% did not agree that being tired and not in mood could be used as a reason by a woman to refuse sexual intercourse with her husband (Figure 3).

Figure 1: Percent of women agreeing on wife-beating is justified under the various situations, selected Asian countries

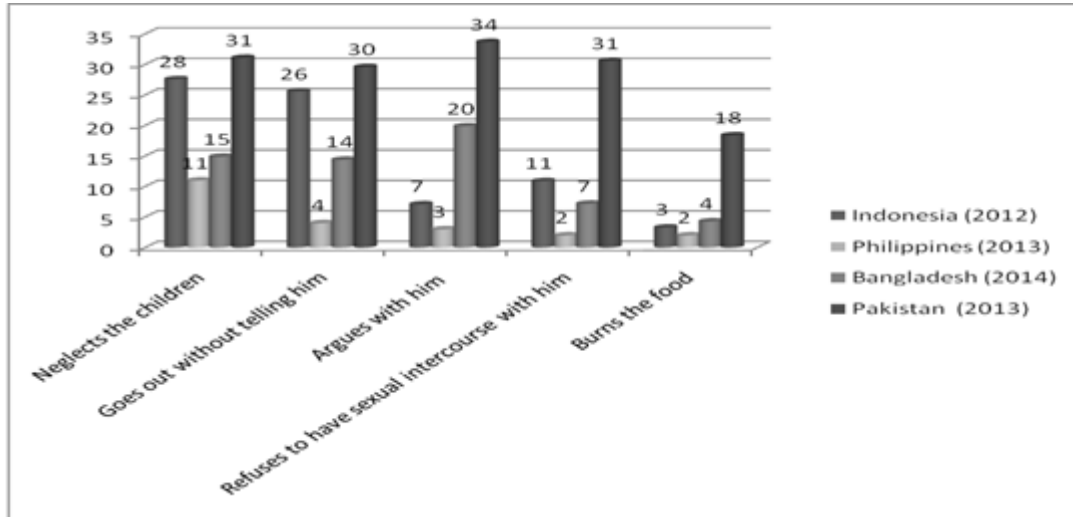


Figure 2: Percent of women and men agreeing on wife-beating is justified under the various situations

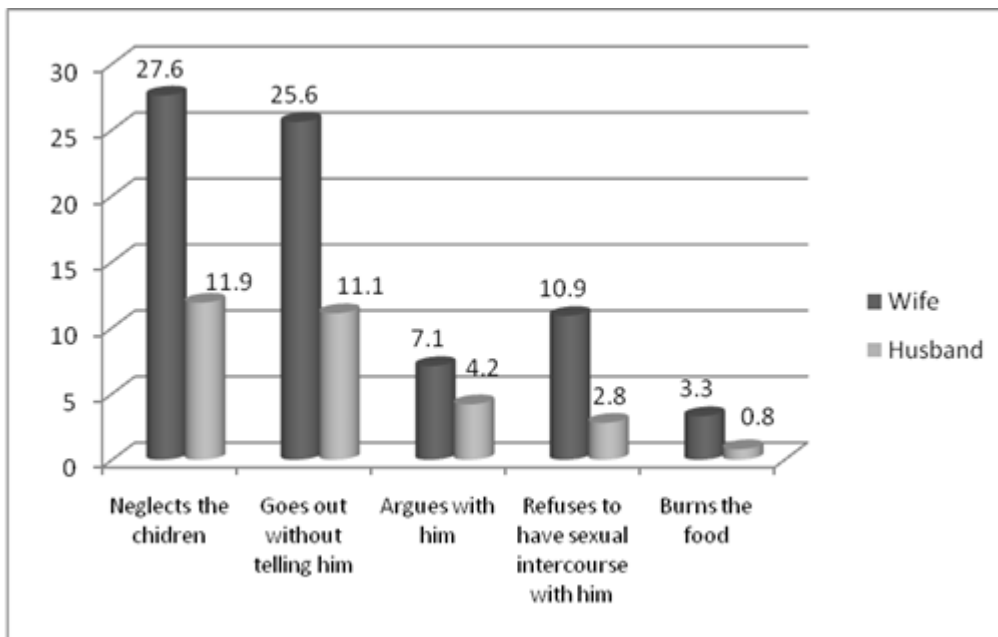
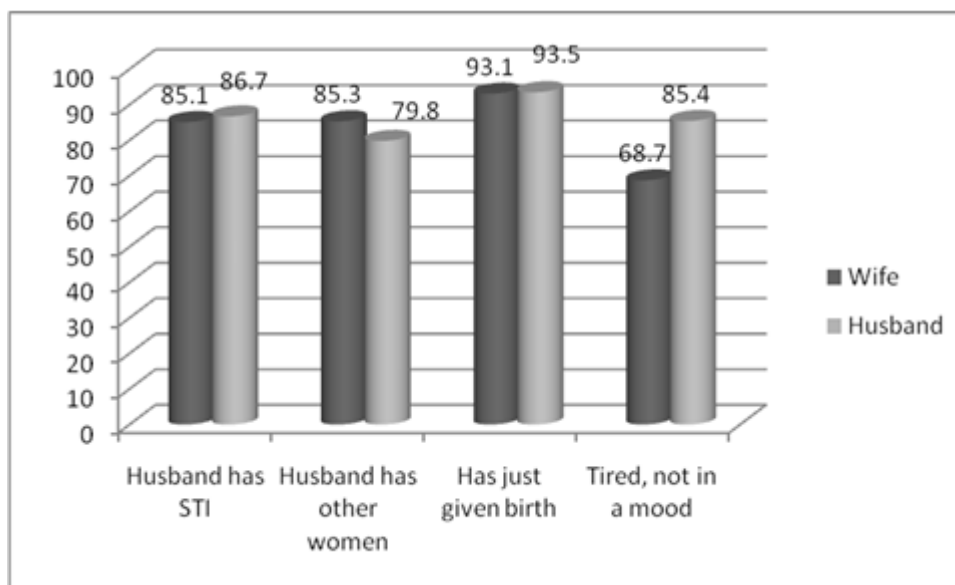


Figure 3: Percent of women and men who reported that a woman had the rights to refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband under various situations



All the independent variables in this study have a significant association with the attitude towards wife-beating, and attitudes towards negotiating safer sex, with the exception of women's current work status on refusal to have sexual intercourse with husband (Table 1). The results of bivariate analyses in Table 1 show that older women (70.8%) were less likely to condone the wife-beating behavior and therefore, more empowered as compared to younger women (53.6%). On the other hand, younger women (62.2%) were more aware of their rights to refuse sexual intercourse with their husband as compared to older women (54.9%). Women who had been married for a longer duration were less likely than those who were married more recently to condone wife-beating behaviors (67.8% versus 61.4%). Compared to those who were married for a shorter duration, women who had been married for a longer duration were less aware of their rights to refuse sexual intercourse with their husband (54.5% versus 61%). The findings on the association between marital duration and the two dependent variables are to be expected, as women who had been married for a longer duration were older than those who were married more recently. The variable "number of children" does not have a consistent pattern with women's perception of wife-beating, but lower parity women seemed to be more aware of their rights to refuse sexual intercourse with the husband as compared with higher parity women.

The educational attainment of women and men had a positive effect on women's empowerment in terms of women's perception of wife-beating and their sexual rights. Women with higher education were much more likely to disagree with wife-beating under any circumstances, as compared to those with secondary or primary education (75% versus 64% and 62%). Women with higher or secondary education were more likely to be aware of their rights to refuse sex with the husband as compared to those with primary or no schooling (about 62 to 63% for each group versus 55% for primary and 45% for those with no schooling). Rather similar patterns were found for husband's education.

The current work status of women had a relatively little effect on women's perception of the justification for wife-beating and no effect on their perception of their rights to refuse to have sex with husband. Urban women were more empowered than rural women with respect to their disagreement with wife-beating and awareness of their sexual rights. There is a strong positive correlation between women's empowerment and household wealth. Women from wealthier household were more likely to be empowered in the two aspects (wife-beating and sexual rights) as compared to those who came from the poorer household (Table 1).

The independent variables are inter-correlated with confounding effects on women's empowerment. For instance, older women were married for a longer duration than young women, and younger women had higher educational attainment as compared to older women, and each of these variables may have confounding effects on the dependent variables. Hence, logistic regressions were used to assess the "net" effect of each variable, holding other variables constant. Table 2 presents the results of logistic regressions on women's disapproval of wife-beating and their awareness of their sexual rights (to refuse sex with husband) under any circumstances. All socio-demographic variables presented in Table 1 were included in both models. All variables except current work status have significant associations with women's attitude towards wife-beating (Model 1) in the multivariate context. The odds of women disapproving wife-beating increased monotonically from 1.34 among women aged 25-29 to 2.7 among women aged 45 and over as compared to those aged below 25 (OR 2.7, 95% CI 2.36-3.08). Controlling for other variables, women aged 35-49 were less aware of their rights to refuse sexual intercourse with their husbands as compared to the younger women (odds ratio ranging from 0.82 to 0.89), in consistent to the finding of the bivariate analysis, partly due to the differentials in educational attainment between younger and older women.

In the bivariate analysis above, women who were married for a longer duration were more likely to disapprove of wife-beating. However, controlling other variables in the model, women with longer marriage duration were less likely to be empowered (OR

0.81, 95% CI 0.72-0.90) in terms of their disapproval of wife-beating as compared to those who had married for less than 10 years. In the multivariate context, marriage duration did not have an effect on women's awareness of their rights to refuse sexual intercourse with husband, although women who were married longer were found to be less likely to be aware of their sexual rights. In contrast to the finding in the bivariate analysis, women with four or more children had lower odds of disapproving wife-beating (OR 0.83, 95% CI 0.75-0.9), as compared to lower parity women. The number of children did not have an effect on women's awareness of their sexual rights.

The discernible educational differentials on women's opinion on wife-beating at the bivariate level were attenuated after controlling for other variables. However, the strong effect of education on women's awareness of their sexual rights persisted after taking into account other variables, with an odds ratio of 1.52 (CI 1.34, 1.72) for the secondary educated, and 1.58 (CI 1.36, 1.85) for the higher educated, as compared to those with no schooling. Interestingly, husband's educational attainment emerged as significant determinants for both the dependent variables. Women whose husband had tertiary education had higher odds of disapproving wife-beating (OR 1.5, CI 1.27, 1.76), and awareness of their sexual rights (OR 1.34, CI 1.14, 1.56) as compared to those whose husband had no schooling. In contrast to the finding at the bivariate level, women's current work status was insignificant with regard to their opinion on wife-beating behaviors but remained significant on awareness of their sexual rights in the multivariate context.

After controlling other variables in the models, rural women were still less empowered than their rural counterparts, in terms of disapproval of wife-beating (OR 0.73, CI 0.73,0.81) and awareness of their rights to refuse sexual intercourse with their husbands (OR 0.87, CI 0.82, 0.91). Women from the wealthier families tended to be more empowered than those from the poorer families. The odds ratio for women's disapproval of wife-beating increased monotonically from 1.14 among those from the poorer families, to 1.5 (CI 1.32, 1.59) among those from the richest families, as compared to those from

Table 2: Adjusted odds ratios (OR) and confidence interval (CI) for attitude towards wife-beating and negotiating safer sex by socio-demographic variables

	Disapproval of wife-beating		Aware of sexual rights	
	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
Age Group				
Below 24	1		1	
25-29	1.34***	(1.24,1.46)	1.03	(0.96,1.12)
30-34	1.7***	(1.55,1.87)	0.96	(0.88,1.06)
35-39	2.10***	(1.89,2.34)	0.82***	(0.74,0.91)
40-44	2.41***	(2.13,2.72)	0.89**	(0.79,0.99)
45-49	2.7***	(2.36,3.08)	0.89	(0.78,1.005)
Marriage duration (years)				
Less than 10	1		1+	
10-19	0.88**	(0.81,0.95)	1.07	(0.99,1.15)
20 or more	0.81***	(0.72,0.9)	0.998	(0.9,1.11)
Number of living children				
0-1	1		1	
2-3	0.976	(0.92,1.04)	1.06^	(0.998,1.13)
4 or more	0.83***	(0.75,0.9)	1.041^	(0.96,1.14)
Women's education level				
No education	1		1	
Primary	0.86***	(0.76,0.97)	1.21**	(1.08,1.36)
Secondary	0.88	(0.77,1.003)	1.52***	(1.34,1.72)
Higher	1.06	(0.9,1.25)	1.58***	(1.36,1.85)
Husband's education level				
No education	1		1	
Primary	1.25**	(1.1,1.42)	1.18**	(1.04,1.33)
Secondary	1.22**	(1.07,1.39)	1.28***	(1.12,1.45)
Higher	1.5***	(1.27,1.76)	1.34***	(1.14,1.56)
Currently working?				
No	1		1	
Yes	1.004^	(0.96,1.05)	1.06**	(1.01,1.11)

Place of residence				
Urban	1		1	
Rural	0.73***	(0.73,0.81)	0.87***	(0.82,0.91)
Wealth Index				
Poorest	1		1	
Poorer	1.14***	(1.06,1.23)	0.969	(0.9,1.04)
Middle	1.22***	(1.14,1.32)	0.932	(0.87,1.005)
Richer	1.37***	(1.27,1.48)	0.90**	(0.83,0.97)
Richest	1.5***	(1.32,1.59)	0.84***	(0.77,0.91)

Note: **Significant at 95%, ***significant at 99%. ^Stepwise removed variable at 0.1 removal. †0.05 < p-value < removal at 0.1.

the poorest families. Contrary to expectation, family wealth had a significant negative effect on women's awareness of their sexual rights among those from the richer (OR 0.90.CI 0.83. 0.97) and richest families (OR 0.84. CI 0.77. 0.91).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In all the recent Demographic and Health Surveys, questions on attitudes towards wife-beating of wives, and women's awareness of the sexual rights have been included. These variables are deemed to be indicative of women's status and empowerment. Attitudes that view the beating of wives by husbands as justified are indicative of women's lower status. Such attitudes signify acceptance of norms that give men the rights to use force against women, which is a violation of women's human rights. Violence against women has serious consequences for their mental and physical well-being, including their reproductive and sexual health (Campbell, Woods, Chouaf, & Parker, 2000; Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottemoeller, 1999).

Most socio-demographic variables used in this analysis are significantly associated with women's attitudes toward wife-beating and the awareness of their sexual rights. Women's education was found to have significant direct and indirect effect on women's empowerment. Although women's education becomes insignificant in explaining their attitudes toward wife-beating in the multivariate context, its effects are mediated through other variables. On the other hand, a few variables such as number of living children and educational variables that were found to be significant at the bivariate level became insignificant in the multivariate analysis. These findings suggest the need to examine the effects of a variable in the bivariate as well as multivariate levels. The analysis also found that the two dependent variables - disapproval of wife-beating and awareness of sexual rights, which were used as measures of women's empowerment, were not always consistent across socio-demographic variables in multivariate context. This supports the notion that measurement of women's empowerment is multi-dimensional in context (Williams, 2005). For instance, in the logistic regression, while marriage duration has no effect on women's awareness of their rights to refuse sexual intercourse with husband, it has a significant negative effect on their empowerment with respect to disagreeing with wife-beating, but the reverse was true for women's education. Hence, different strategies are needed to bring about gender equality and empowerment of women. Nevertheless, rural women tend to be more vulnerable in both aspects of women's empowerment as suggested in the multivariate context. This could be associated with potential stronger influence of social and cultural norms of women's lower position in rural areas. Therefore, strategies targeting rural women may resulted to better overall outcome in combating wife-beating behaviors and violation of women's sexual rights.

The overall findings show that one in three married women still condoned wife-beating and almost half were not aware of their sexual rights, and this has exacerbated since 2002. The proportion of married women who condoned wife-beating with at least one specific reason had increased from 25% in 2002 to 35% in 2012. The proportion who agreed with wife-beating "if a woman neglects her children, goes out without telling the husband, argues with him, and refuses to have sexual intercourse with the husband" had increased from 20%, 18%, 5%, and 7%, (BPS & ORC Macro, 2003) to 28%, 26%, 7%, and 11% respectively over ten-year period. Based on available data from DHS, the proportion of married women who condone wife-beating in Indonesia is relatively high among developing countries. Contrary to expectation, the women were more likely than the men to condone wife-beating under any circumstances, and this indicates women's acceptance of the norms that give men the rights to beat their wives. This

is supported by the country report⁶ in 2004 that stated one of the obstacle in empowering women was, the resistance among women on government's efforts on policies and program to empower them. This obstacle may not have been completely addressed over the years. This reflected that the government's past efforts in improving the status of women have not been effective. Thus, alternative strategies such as on education and continuous dissemination of information on gender equality and human rights are needed to achieve the objectives to empowering women, and consequently reducing violence against women. It may require longer period to reflect changes on perceptions, behaviors and norms.

A considerable number of women were not aware of their sexual rights. Such lack of awareness will perpetuate forced sex by the husbands. Education may be the key to reduce such violence following a strong significance of educational variables among men and women on awareness of sexual rights. This aspect of human rights and family relationships should be incorporated into the school curriculum. There is also a need to introduce and enhance family life education. Greater awareness of the role of men and women in a relationship, the importance of a good family relationship and mutual respect and love, as well as the acceptance of human rights should be promoted. The constant promotion of women's rights could potentially change the perceptions and norms that women are less superior than men. Laws could also be enforced to protect women along with other groups of victims from gender-based and domestic violence. Although the findings of the effectiveness of arrest or law enforcement in reducing violence against women have been largely mixed (Heise, 2011), there was some evidence that suggested a reduction of such cases if arrests were made (Maxwell, Gurner & Fagan, 2011) especially among married men (Heise, 2011). On the other hand, community and religious leaders can also play an important role in alleviating gender-based violence by providing counselling services. With rising education and the awareness of human rights, as well as the government's continuous efforts to achieve gender equality, it is hoped that gender-based violence and domestic violence can be reduced and eliminated.

Although this study comprises a large sample size and representative of the population, it has its limitation in some areas. Other variables such as exposure to mass media, religious affiliation, region, and women's roles in household decision-making may have significant effects on the two dependent variables in this study. However, because of the skewed sample distribution (with 90% having been exposed to mass media, especially TV), this variable was not included in our analysis. Additionally, one may ask, to what extent the opinion on wife-beating is reflected in the actual behavior? Unlike other countries that conducted the DHS, the IDHS did not collect information on violence against women, and hence, in-depth analysis was restricted to some extent. Moreover, the Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey in Indonesia also did not collect such information. It is recommended that future surveys collect such information for more in-depth analysis to guide policy.

As highlighted by UNFPA, "violence against women and girls is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world. It knows no social, economic or national boundaries". Hence, a comparative analysis across countries on women's and men's opinion on wife-beating and sexual rights of women, as well as the prevalence of violence against women will be of great interest. More in-depth analyses of the causes and consequences of violence against women within each country are needed to guide policy formulation and the adoption of appropriate and effective intervention strategies, such as marriage counseling, to target those groups that are at risk of such violence.

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