Awareness of Domestic Violence Prevention Methods

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**Introduction**

Domestic violence is a crime that many people see as a private matter that should be ignored and the reasoning behind that is many people feel like it isn’t their business. However, domestic abuse is a horrible thing and ignoring it should never be an option. Domestic violence is a worldwide problem and it even happens here in the CNMI. In 2013, there were 134 cases of domestic violence; 19 of those had children involved (Camacho 2014). Many victims of the crime do not report them due to various reasons such as love for the batterer, feeling of uselessness, or fear of the batterer (Fisher 2015). The crime can occur in any household and anyone could be an assailant, be it your friendly neighbor, boss, or even relative. Domestic violence is a horrendous crime that traumatizes anyone who witnesses the event. There are many signs that show domestic violence and we need to know the things that should be done in order to prevent this from happening.

Due to the high amounts of cases it is important that the community knows how to prevent this. The main problem that this research report will cover is “How well do citizens in the CNMI understand domestic violence and methods in preventing domestic violence?” The hypothesis of this research report follows: “If research is done as to whether or not the citizens of the CNMI are informed of prevention methods in domestic violence then the results will show that approximately 20% will be well informed on these methods.” The reasoning behind this hypothesis is due to the information received by Camacho. It is important, not only in the CNMI, but for the entire world to be aware in the methods can need to be taken in order to prevent domestic violence

**Background**

The victims of the crimes go through many things that could potentially leave that person damaged for life. There are many different forms of domestic violence which includes “physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression (Massey-Hight 2017).” The abuser in the relationship feels the need to have control over the victim, so most of the time the abuser looks to financially abusing the victim (Fisher 2015). In financial abuse, the abuser will generate debt under the victim’s name, take away things of monetary value such as a car or phone plan, or having the victim leave their job (Fisher 2015). This form of abuse will leave the victim dependent on the abuser (Fisher 2015), limiting their chances to leave the relationship due to financial instability. Domestic abuse can also happen little at a time, starting from shouting, arguing or shoving escalating into some much more serious such as breaking of a limb, psychological trauma, or even death of the victim (Massey-Hight 2017). At first, domestic violence was only seen as physical aggression from the culprit onto the victim (Fisher 2015). However, after this issue came into public view, reanalysis of the crime was sought out and the true definition of the crime was “any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone (Fisher 2015).”

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) launched a survey in 2010 called the “National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) in order to gather data and statistics on domestic violence in the United States (Breiding et, al. 2014).According to the survey, the data states that approximately 6,152,000 (37.3%) women in the United States have experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking in the year of 2010 and 4,851,000 men (30.2%) have experience rape, physical violence or stalking in the year of 2010 (Breiding et, al. 2014). The survey was also done among Pacific Islanders showing that about one fifth or 19.6% of the population have experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking (Breiding et, al. 2014). This translates to about 1,110,000 Pacific Islanders who have been affected by violence in their lifetimes (Breiding et, al. 2014). The impact of domestic violence in the United States shows that women were more likely to experience any forms of violence from their partner. 24.3% of women have experienced physical violence from their partners compared to the 13.8% of men who have experience physical violence from their partners.

It is important for everyone to understand the seriousness of domestic violence and the ways to prevent it. The public health field has recognized domestic violence and took action into developing models in order to help prevention of the crime (Wolfe & Jaffe 1999.) The second public health model suggests three methods and strategies towards prevention (Wolfe & Jaffe 1999). The primary prevention method is meant to decrease the number of incidences before the crime even occurs (Wolfe & Jaffe 1999.) Examples of the primary prevention method could be spreading the awareness of domestic violence throughout schools onto students and teaching them alternative conflict resolution skills (Wolfe & Jaffe 1999.) The secondary prevention method helps to decrease the possibility of the crime occurring after some early sign have been observed (Wolfe & Jaffe 1999.) Secondary prevention methods include home visitation and community meetings based on dating violence (Wolfe & Jaffe 1999.) Tertiary prevention strategies are aimed to resolve problems once it is evident that there is harm being done (Wolfe & Jaffe 1999.) These methods include targeted intervention programs (Wolfe & Jaffe 1999.) With these preventions in mind, the CNMI should look towards finding ways to get the public more aware and to help prevent domestic violence.

There are many ways to prevent domestic violence in our community. It is of utmost importance to everyone because domestic violence is a very traumatic experience to everyone who is involved in this crime. Domestic violence touches everywhere including our small community and anyone can be affected by the problem. Those who are affected by this problem need assistance in order to realize that they need help from ulterior platforms such as therapy or programs. Domestic violence can be found anywhere in the globe; from the biggest of cities, to our small community here in the CNMI.

**Literature Review**

The literature resources used in this research project were limited to online articles, reports, and videos on the topic of domestic violence prevention as well as statistics that could be used in the background of this report. The researcher chose these limitations in order to solely focus on domestic violence prevention methods and how it should be incorporated into the community in the CNMI. These literature resources allowed the researcher to produce proper questions for the general public in order to help answer the research question: “How well do citizens in the CNMI understand domestic violence and methods in preventing domestic violence?” Most of the resources that were used in the research project discussed many different methods into prevention of domestic violence which were incorporated into the questionnaires used in this report. The literature that is being presented will be presented in *Alphabetical Order.*

The first literature resource used in this report was written by Jayson Camacho in 2014. The resource was an article produced in order to be included in a local newspaper in the CNMI called the Saipan Tribune. The main purpose of the article was to discuss the finding in domestic violence cases in the CNMI. Camacho shared the amount of cases reported on domestic violence in the CNMI in 2010-2013. This was necessary for this research report in order to have a base of statistics that is in the community in the CNMI.

The article, *Intimate Partner Violence in the United States — 2010,* it shows all the statistics reported on domestic violence in 2010. The article bases its statistics off a survey launched in 2010 called the “National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS). All of the findings that were reported from this survey were communicated through this article, going in to full detail of the results which includes physical violence across many different national orientations. This helps with this research report because it also includes the statistics on Pacific Islanders which can also help as a base for statistics in the report.

In Riana Fishers article, *‘Why Don’t They Just Leave?’ Domestic Violence Goes Beyond Physical Abuse,* she goes in detail as to what the assailant will do in order to keep the victim trapped in the abuse. Fishers explains that financial abuse will seriously affect the victims life not only in their financial instability, but also their emotional burdens. Financial abuse will leave the victim dependant on the assailant who often controls all household finances and taxes. The articles shares that there are many services that are out there in order to help the victims of financial abuse get back on their feet. This articles is relevant to this research report because it helps understand that domestic abuse goes beyond physical abuse and how victims can recover from the financial abuse.

In the article, *Preventing Intimate Partner Violence Across the Lifespan: A Technical Package of Programs, Policies, and Practices,* written by Phyllis Niolon et al., It goes over many different methods into preventing domestic violence in all three ways of prevention which is spreading awareness through the community, intervening with those on the path to domestic violence, and getting involved with those apparently involved in domestic violence. The article emphasizes on many ways to prevent domestic violence through the community, sharing six different ways as to how to help decrease reports of domestic violence. The article shares with how these different prevention methods affects the community and the results that it has produced after it is implemented. This helps with this research report because it helps design questions as to how to help prevention domestic violence in the CNMI. There are many different methods that can be seen in this report that has not been implemented yet in the CNMI.

In the article written by Constance Massey-Hight, *Characteristics of Domestic Violence: The Controversy over Age or is It Something Else?,* it goes over the many different characteristics that are show by victims and assailants of domestic violence. It goes over the many different racial behaviors and how these factors can affect domestic abuse. This article helps because it talks about Pacific Islanders and this could be used in order to help create prevention methods in the local community in the CNMI.

All the resources presented were involved in domestic abuse through statistics, prevention methods, and characteristics. The prevalence of these articles are apparent as to why it is to be included in this research report. Using all the key ideas presented in each article, creating a viable research method on domestic violence prevention awareness is made easier.

**Methodology**

Domestic violence is a very serious crime that involves one partner being hurt by the other partner through various different methods such as verbal or physical violence. This issue is seen worldwide, which includes the very small community on Saipan. Due to the rising numbers of domestic violence reports on Saipan, understanding if the citizens know about domestic violence is an absolute necessity. There are many ways to go about data collection on domestic violence in the CNMI however this essay will be focused on the use of surveys. This essay will describe the process the researcher went through in order to utilize this method so he could thoroughly collect and analyze data on the primary research question: “How well do citizens in the CNMI understand domestic violence and methods in preventing domestic violence?” The researcher went through three main steps through data collection using surveys which are: developing the survey, distributing the survey, and analyzing survey data.

For the first step in developing the survey, the most important thing to consider is to make sure the questions being created are good and relevant to the research question. The researcher began by creating the first draft of the survey on an online site called *SurveyMonkey®* which is a free online website for creating surveys*.* During the development stage, the researcher had two different drafts; both of which were reviewed by peers. The final product of the survey was completed on March 20, 2018. It contained 10 questions, one asking for the participants age and gender, four on the topic of domestic violence, and five on the topic of domestic violence prevention. The survey was aimed towards the demographic of those who are 18 and over because the researcher believed that this is the age group in which domestic violence is most likely to occur.

After developing the survey and establishing the demographic it’s aimed at, the next step was the distribution of the final survey. The researcher had planned to collect results from 40 different individuals who were over the age of 18. After completing the survey on the *SurveyMonkey®* website, the url to the survey was copied and distributed electronically through direct and indirect communication methods such as online posts, direct messages, and posts on group forums. The researcher also asked for friends and family to help distribute the link to the survey to expand the outreach of the survey even further. The collecting of data and distribution of the survey went on from March 22, 2018 to April 3, 2018 and the data was ready to be analyzed and prepared for the final research project.

Finally, thorough analysis of the survey answers was conducted. The final result of the survey ended with 44 respondents with the average completion time of 3 minutes and 48 seconds. The survey was mainly aimed to see if citizens on the CNMI had understood domestic violence and prevention of domestic violence. The researcher collected all the answers and categorized each answer for each question so that it could be easier to collect statistics from the data. Analysis for all the data is still currently ongoing and the researcher is hoping to have some helpful statistics that is able to be put into the final research project.

**Analysis**

Surveys are very good ways to collect data from a large population without having to use much resources. For this research project, a survey was distributed to the projected demographic of those who are of 18 years and over. The survey was distributed and conducted from the day of March 22, 2018 to the day of April 3, 2018. The final results were collected and was ready for analyzation. A total of 45 participants were included for the study having most of the participants being between the ages of 30 to 35 years old, however this age group will not bias the study in any way. The survey focused mainly on the topic of domestic violence prevention, and whether the participants understood the correct ways to prevent domestic violence.

Of the 45 participants in the study, 25 were female, 12 were male, and 8 did not specify their genders. The survey had a 100% completion rate with an average time of 3 minutes and 48 seconds to complete. Each participant had complete anonymity towards their identities due to the website security on *SurveyMonkey* so linking their responses towards them was troubling towards the research.

**Findings**

When asked direct questions about domestic violence towards their personal lives, 8% of the participants chose not to answer while the other 92% proceeded to answer the questions. Due to the anonymity of the survey, participants felt more comfortable to reveal personal experiences with the researcher through the survey. When asked about the official definition about domestic violence which is, “Any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone (Fisher 2015),” 22.2% of the participants strongly disagreed, 4.44% were neutral, and the remaining 73.34% agreed or strongly agreed with the definition. Approximately 1/4th of the participants may see domestic violence in a different way than is presented through the official definition while approximately 3/4th see the definition as true and just for the meaning of domestic violence. When asked for a written response as to why the participants feel like women experience rape, physical violence, or stalking more than men, most of the participants wrote mainly on “physical build” or “mental manipulation.” Perhaps this could be used in future research as to how to prevent domestic violence. As for the participants knowledge of domestic violence prevention, the weighted average of correct responses towards domestic violence prevention methods was 62.91%. This number is more than expected from the beginning of the research report with an estimation of ~20%.

**Discussion**

After thorough analyzation and evaluation of the results, it can be implied that the people of the CNMI are somewhat aware of ways to prevent domestic violence. The original thought process the researcher had when going into this research project was that the people of the CNMI had very little to no knowledge of how to prevent domestic violence. In many places of the world, domestic violence is seen as a private matter that someone should not stick their noses into, however the people of the CNMI see it differently and this issue is not something that someone should not look the other way for.

In the survey, participants were asked whether they believed that the pathway towards domestic violence started as a child, teenager, or adult. In the article, *Preventing Intimate Partner Violence Across the Lifespan: A Technical Package of Programs, Policies, and Practices,* written by Phyllis Niolon et al., it strongly emphasizes that the pathway towards domestic violence starts in most cases as a child. Niolon et al. goes over many different ways to preventing domestic violence through children, including spreading awareness through schools so that children could be more aware of what behaviors to avoid. As seen in the survey, 75% of the participants chose the correct answer which is that the pathways towards domestic violence does indeed start as a child.

The question which had the most incorrect answers was “Which factor least influences whether someone will commit domestic violence or become victim to it.” The choices that the participants had were: Through childhood experience in family, through social-emotional disposition, through media influence such as television, or through current workplace/occupation. In the article *Preventing Intimate Partner Violence Across the Lifespan: A Technical Package of Programs, Policies, and Practices,* written by Phyllis Niolon et al., it specifically states that all of these factors affects domestic violence EXCEPT for media influences. Only 20% of the participants answered this question correctly, most of those answered through workplace/occupation.

Participants were asked whether ignoring domestic violence would make you more prone to becoming victim of it or not. In the article written by Constance Massey-Hight, *Characteristics of Domestic Violence: The Controversy over Age or is It Something Else?,* it states that those who ignore domestic violence going on in the community will make other feel like it is an okay thing to do. This will in turn cause more and more cases of domestic violence throughout the community of the CNMI. The participants answered this question with an average of 70% answering the question correctly.

It can been seen that overall, the participants included in the study had a good knowledge of domestic violence and what should be done in order to help prevent this from happening. An average of 62.91% of the participants had understood this concept, however this number could be improved through various future research and policy implementation.

**Future Plans**

Throughout this research project, it can be said that most people of the CNMI have general knowledge on how to prevent domestic violence in the community. However, the number of people who are aware could be greatly improved. If any steps can be taken towards helping to spread the awareness of domestic violence, this research paper could be used in significant stand point towards the topic for it shows that although most people are aware of how to prevent domestic violence, there are far too many people who still need to be informed.

Based on the information gathered in this research report, more and more people need to become aware of how to prevent domestic violence. ~70% of the participants in this research project understood what should be done to help stop domestic violence, however the remaining ~30% still could use some information. It is very important for the citizens of the CNMI to be aware of domestic violence because anyone could become victim to the crime. Necessary actions should be taken in order to help prevent domestic violence, such as implementing the second public health model which has three methods and strategies towards prevention of domestic violence (Wolfe & Jaffe 1999.)

**Conclusion**

Domestic violence is a very serious crime that no one should take lightly, especially the people of the CNMI. Many people fall victim to this crime including citizens in the CNMI, as seen reported by Jayson Camacho in the Saipan Tribune, so ignoring this crime could just put anyone in the way of becoming victim of the next domestic violence case. The best method towards preventing domestic violence is to spread the awareness throughout the community, as suggested by Niolon et al. The CNMI should be ready and on board towards completely getting rid of this horrible crime and the best way to do this is to have more and more people informed of domestic violence prevention.

Going into this research project, the researcher had to investigate many methods towards the prevention of domestic violence. Many methods are provided in order to prevent domestic violence, however, the officials in charge of domestic violence in the United States are known as the Center for Disease Control (CDC.) After researcher the methods provided by the CDC in the article *Preventing Intimate Partner Violence Across the Lifespan: A Technical Package of Programs, Policies, and Practices,* written by Phyllis Niolon et al. the survey could be successfully implemented with correctness and justification through citation.

It can be seen in the research project that although most of the participants had general knowledge of domestic violence prevention, there were still some participants who were not informed which could cause problems for the CNMI in the future. There are many ways to prevent domestic violence, and the Citizens of the CNMI should be aware of all these methods in order to completely rid of the crime in our community.

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