Social media engagement and domestic violence awareness: women victims' experiences

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Article Info	Abstract
	Women must grasp the idea of domestic abuse in order to anticipate if they spot incidents of it. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the relationship between perceptions of domestic violence and online community engagement on social media. This study used a survey method by distributing questionnaires through social media. The population were women social media users and used purposive sampling techniques with the criteria that respondents were married or had been married, had been victims of domestic violence (physical or mental), and had accessed domestic violence issues on social media in the last six months. Data collection was carried out in July-August 2024. The data was obtained from 300 women and analyzed using the SPSS 25 application. The results show that there is a significant correlation between perceptions of domestic violence and online community engagement in the community of domestic violence victims on social media. However, the strength of the relationship is low. Further analysis shows that the differences in respondents' community engagement levels were divided into three perception ownership groups. The findings suggest that women victims of domestic violence might join groups on social media to receive direction and counsel meant to assist with their issues.

INTRODUCTION

Internet-based media has now become the main means of communication, both in private and public spaces. Social media platforms are widely used to obtain information, discuss, and seek reinforcement for what one wants to fulfill. They function not only as a

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source of information but also as a place for users to meet through their social networks (Martin-Gomez & Muñoz, 2024).

On the other hand, many women are victims of domestic violence. The number of complaints of violence against women reported to Komnas Perempuan throughout 2023 reached 4,374 cases; psychological violence dominated these cases with 41.55%, followed by physical violence at 24.71%, sexual violence at 24.69%, and economic violence at 9.05% (Susilawati, 2024). Attention to women related to gender equality needs attention, especially since it is the 5th Sustainable Development Goal set by the United Nations in 2015.

Social media acts as a place to gather, establish social networks, and other benefits in a virtual community that can be utilized by women victims of domestic violence, as a means of mental recovery (Eunice et al., 2024; Johnston et al., 2023). On the other hand, women victims of domestic violence need media that can reduce the psychological burden related to the problems experienced (Grogger et al., 2024). Social media offers a platform to make users more aware of violence against women (VAW)(Maharani et al., 2021). The utilization of communities on social networks is a study that needs to be developed in order to accommodate women victims of domestic violence to be able to find alternative solutions to their problems. Previous studies have seen a link between the mental recovery of women victims of domestic violence and involvement in the community in society (Indrawati & Sukma, 2020; Sabina et al., 2023). This study further evaluates the involvement of women victims of domestic violence in online communities, which has not been done much. The involvement in this study examines the activity in online communities, including interaction with networks, membership, and participation in community activities.

The role of society in domestic violence and how it is handled has been widely researched (Gracia & Thomas, 2014). Given that domestic violence is not only a social or public health issue but also a largely unreported offense (Gracia & Thomas, 2014). Therefore, gaining a better understanding of perceptions of VAW can help to understand the context in which it occurs. Domestic violence is not an isolated occurrence within families but is broadly relevant to the idea of risky family environments with child development issues (Afolabi, 2014).

Society's perception of domestic violence, which positions women as weak and subordinates them, needs to be improved. According to (Azizah & Kurnia, 2022), people still consider domestic violence a bad thing and should be hidden because of the shame of being considered unable to maintain family harmony. Nurak (2019) shows how the

community understands various types of domestic violence; 52.9% said that mistreatment of family members is one example of domestic violence, 50% disagreed that the cause of domestic violence is the personal problems of each family, and 62.9% said that husbands commit domestic violence because of the wife's fault. Women need to understand the concept of domestic violence so that they can identify domestic violence-related events. The main reason why people do not disclose their experiences of domestic violence is due to a lack of public recognition caused by normalization or social silence and fear of stigma, as well as a lack of trust in the prevailing system (Sivarajasingam et al., 2022).

Effective user participation is created more through identification and internalization in online communities than in communities prioritizing content or information posting. Identification refers to how much users identify with the community and their sense of belonging and attachment (Zhou, 2011; Lu, 2019). Identification drives users' need to maintain their social identity, which leads to their active participation, while internalization reflects the shared values and goals between users and their influences (Zhou, 2011). The YouTube platform has proven to be a tool to enhance community participation within microscale communities in Semarang (Kaloka, 2023). Users become engaged in online communities and participate more actively when they believe their views and goals are encouraged and consistent with others (Zhou, 2011).

The interaction of women victims of domestic violence in communities on social media through their social networks can be explained by Social Information Processing Theory, which looks at how interpersonal relationships are developed through computer-mediated communication. By interacting through social media, it is expected that women victims of domestic violence can open up more to be able to communicate the problems they face, have more friends to discuss with, and foster community involvement.

Subramani and O'Connor (2018) felt that by sharing their emotions on social media sites, victims of domestic violence could get emotional and social support. Studies in twenty different countries have shown that the internet provided women with new knowledge and information, thereby influencing their values (Cardoso & Sorenson, 2017). In addition, Leggett (2017) suggested that the internet may be utilized to help domestic abuse victims combat domestic violence and that their reintegration into society is improved by using internet technologies. At the same time, studies related to social media involvement and perceptions of domestic violence against women emphasize the possibility of social media as a device for influencing people's perceptions of domestic violence (Bazan, 2024).

Based on the study of the relationship between social media involvement and perceptions of domestic violence, no one has studied the differences in the level of perception of domestic violence based on demographic factors. This study presents a novelty by looking at the perception of domestic violence in more detail, the differences in the level of perception based on employment status, education, and age.

This study aims to evaluate the relationship between perceptions of domestic violence and online community involvement with domestic violence issues on social media. The research questions that are the focus of the analysis are: 1) Is the perception of domestic violence held by women victims of domestic violence related to their involvement in online communities? 2) Do age, education, and working status contribute to the formation of perceptions of domestic violence among female victims of domestic violence?

Therefore, this study presents the following hypotheses:

- H1: There is a significant correlation between the perception of domestic violence held by women victims of domestic violence and online community engagement

- H2: There are differences in perception between the different working statuses of women victims of domestic violence

- H3: There are differences in perception between the different education of women victims of domestic violence

- H4: There are differences in perception between the different ages of women victims of domestic violence

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceptions of domestic violence

According to the World Health Organization (2015), domestic VAW is defined as a form of violence or behavior in intimate relationships that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse, and controlling behavior. Anyone can experience domestic violence regardless of gender, age, or racial orientation (Onobumeh et al., 2015).

Family experiences during childhood are one of the most relevant influences on perceptions of domestic violence, as stated in social learning theory (Boyd & Richerson, 2005). As explained, learning occurs through observation and exposure to domestic violence in childhood and will be reflected in domestic violence behavior at an older age (Kernsmith,

2006). However, later personal experiences also contribute to shaping individual perceptions (Copp et al., 2019).

Women's perceptions of what constitutes domestic violence are important, as this can influence women's responses when faced with experiences of violence in their own lives (Goodson & Hayes, 2018). Culture plays a role in defining violence, determining what constitutes an act of violence, and whether it is normal behavior (Gennari et al., 2017). Therefore, women's perceptions can determine what they consider acceptable. Previous studies have shown that domestic violence is widely accepted and justified among Islamic women (Childress, 2018; Echavez et al., 2016). Baron et al. (2024) stated that moral reasoning can be employed to justify punitive violence, particularly through consequentialist reasoning that assesses the benefits and cost of an action. In this study, perceptions of domestic violence were seen as awareness of potential forms of domestic VAW (Radzia et al., 2023).

Online community engagement

Online communities are defined as groups of people and/or organizations that interact together and share goals, interests, or hobbies. These interactions are mediated and supported by technology and driven by group norms and specific protocols (Al-Khasawneh et al., 2023). Furthermore, due to technological developments in online communities, there are other knowledge-sharing exchanges and activities.

Community engagement is a crucial strategy employed globally to attract and involve stakeholders and solicit community opinions and participation in various programs (Nursey-Bray, 2020). Hsu et al. (2012) showed that online community engagement increases when community members are motivated to engage in collective action, share what they know, and give enough time to the virtual community. Online community engagement in this study looks at how women victims of domestic violence benefit from their involvement in online communities.

The social learning theory and Social Information Processing Theory

This study pertains to two interconnected theories applicable to the research subject: 1) The social learning theory emphasizes the role of cognitive variables in the learning process. This theory highlights the significance of observational learning, wherein individuals obtain knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and beliefs by witnessing the behaviors of others and their subsequent outcomes. This study indicates that women who have suffered domestic violence can derive insights from their experiences, and that engagement with social media can

enhance knowledge and influence attitudes to foster a more supportive environment. 2) Social Information Processing Theory. This theory examines how individuals make decisions and develop attitudes within a social context. Individuals significantly depend on the social information present in their surroundings to influence their attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions. Female victims of domestic violence utilize social media networks, which shape perceptions and subsequently inform attitudes and behaviors towards their social community.

METHODS

This study used a survey method by distributing questionnaires through social media. The population was female social media users, and sampling used purposive sampling techniques with the following criteria: 1) married/ever married, 2) ever been a victim of domestic violence (physical/mental), 3) ever accessed domestic violence issues on social media in the last six months. Data collection was carried out in July-August 2024; the respondents expressed willingness to provide research data and complete the consent. The data obtained from a sample of 300 women were then analyzed using correlation analysis techniques and analysis of variance using the SPSS 25 application.

Table 1. Rotation matrix of components (variables)

Items	Variable 1 *Community Engagement*	Variable 2 Perception
Engagement9	0.836	
Engagement3	0.834	
Engagement7	0.818	
Engagement12	0.814	
Engagement6	0.809	
Engagement5	0.800	
Engagement10	0.795	
Engagement4	0.787	
Engagement2	0.784	
Engagement8	0.779	
Engagement11	0.765	
Engagement1	0.752	
Perception5		0.720
Perception7		0.708
Perception2		0.609
Perception4		0.581
Persception3		0.558
Perception6		0.536
Perception1		0.473

Source: Processed by Researchers

In addition to the demographics of respondents obtained in collecting research data, two research variables will be evaluated for their relationship, namely perceptions of domestic violence and online community engagement of female victims of domestic violence on social media.

Test the validity of the instrument using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA); this analysis identifies and organize a number of questionnaire items into a construct under one particular component/variable (Chua, 2014). In addition, to determine the reliability of the instrument, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient is used, where each variable has met the tolerance limit ($\alpha > 0.7$), the variable perception of domestic violence has a value of $\alpha = 0.704$, and the online community engagement has a value of $\alpha = 0.949$.

Table 1 demonstrates the importance of the research instrument, with the validity of the items being well distributed and clustered on each variable. Cheung et al. (2024) suggests using items that have a loading factor above 0.4 for the limit of an item being declared valid.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographics of respondents

Table 2 below displays the demographics of respondents and research variables.

Table 2. Demographics of Respondents (N = 300)

Item		
Employment status	Have a job	: 241 (80.3%)
	No jobs	: 59 (19.7%)
Education	Junior school	: 5 (1.7%)
	High school	: 84 (28%)
	Diploma	: 48 (16%)
	Bachelor	: 152 (50.7%)
	Magister	: 11 (3.7%)
Age	Mean : 27.79	SD : 5.42
	Min : 19	Max : 47
Perception	Mean: 4.34	SD : 0.41
	Min : 3	Max : 5
Online Community Engagement	Mean: 3.56	SD: 0.83
	Min : 1	Max : 5

Table 2 shows that most respondents were working women (80.3%), with more than 50% having tertiary education. Respondents are female, with an average age of 27.79. The perception variable has an average of 4.34, while online community engagement has an average of 3.56.

Table 3. Distribution of Online Community Engagement Variables

Indicator	Agree/ Strongly Agree
1. Become a member of the online community for victims of domestic violence	54.7%
2. Interacting with community members who pay attention to victims of domestic violence	61.3%
3. Social media users who participate in the community of victims of domestic violence	67%
4. When facing difficulties, some people in the community of victims of domestic violence comfort and provide encouragement	64.3%
5. When facing difficulties, some people in the domestic violence victims' community express interest and concern regarding welfare	61.7%
6. When facing difficulties, some people in the community of victims of domestic violence help provide advice (solutions)	72%
7. Being a member of the domestic violence victims' community is very important	64.6%
8. I will feel lost if I do not join the online community of victims of domestic violence.	59.6%
9. Feel bound by the community of victims of domestic violence that are followed.	49%
10. Actively participate in the activities of the online community of victims of domestic violence.	47.3%
11. Spend a lot of time participating in online community activities for domestic violence victims.	43.6%
12. Provide input/comments related to the activities of the online community for victims of domestic violence	62.3%

Source: Processed by Researchers

Based on Table 3, the statement from the indicator that received the most agreement from respondents was 72%: By doing online activities with the community of victims of domestic violence, they felt that they got help with advice (solutions) related to the difficulties they faced. The smallest percentage was 43.6%, indicating that not many agreed that they spent a lot of time with the online community of victims of domestic violence.

In agreement with the statement of the indicator, the most significant percentage understands that the number of domestic violence against women is increasing by 94.3%. Table 4 also shows the lowest percentage value of 79.4%, understanding that the fifth sustainable development goal (SDG) relates to ending all violence and exploitation against

women. Overall, the majority of respondents expressed a good understanding of the issue of domestic violence.

Table 4. Distribution of Perception of Domestic Violence Variables

Indicator	Agree / Strongly Agree
1. Ending all violence and exploitation against women is the fifth sustainable development goal (SDG).	79.4%
2. Domestic violence against women is a global issue.	89.7%
3. The number of domestic violence against women is increasing.	94.3%
4. Physical violence is one form of domestic violence.	93.7%
5. Psychological violence is a form of domestic violence.	91.3%
6. Financial/economic abuse is a form of domestic violence.	81.6%
7. Emotional abuse is a form of domestic violence	89%

Source: Processed by Researchers

Correlation Analysis

There is a significant correlation between perception and community engagement of 0.213 (Table 5); the correlation is classified as low. H1 is accepted. Then, grouping was further done on the perception variable to evaluate the low relationship between the two variables. Perception is divided into three groups: i) low (value less than mean-SD), ii) medium (value between mean-SD and mean+SD), and iii) high (value greater than mean+SD).

Table 5. Correlation between Perception and Community Engagement

		Perception	Engagement
Perception	Pearson Correlation	1	0.213**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	300	300
Engagement	Pearson Correlation	0.213**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	300	300

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows that the group of women with moderate perception possession has a more significant number than the low and high categories. Based on the mean, Levene's test results

show homogeneity of variance among the three groups with a value of 1.888 and a significance of 0.153. Table 7 states a difference in the level of community engagement between the low, medium, and high perception groups, with a significance level of 0.00. The post hoc test shows that the community engagement of the low perception group is different from the medium and high perception groups.

Table 6. Grouping of Perception Variables (N=300)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
Low	46	3.67	0.254	0.037	3.00	3.86
Medium	211	4.36	0.244	0.016	4.00	4.71
High	43	4.94	0.069	0.011	4.86	5.00

Table 7. Analysis of Variance Perception Group (N=300)

Perception	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.696	2	6.848	10.409	0.000
Within Groups	195.394	297	0.658		
Total	209.090	299			

Analysis of Varians Based of Working Status, Education, and Age.

Based on the T-test in Table 8, which tests for mean differences in respondents' perceptions of the working and non-working groups, there is no difference between them.

Table 8. T-Test Based on Differences in Working Status

Equal variances	Levene's Test		t-test for Equality of Means			Mean	Std. Error
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Difference	Difference
assumed	0.008	0.931	-1.290	298	0.198	-0.07793	0.06039

The variance between the working and non-working groups is homogeneous, with an F value of 0.008 and a significance of 0.931. The significance value of the t-test is 0.198, indicating no difference in the mean perception between those who work and those who do not work. H2 is not accepted.

Table 9 shows the average perceptions of each education level group, with the Bachelor group having a lower average perception value than the other groups. The Levene test, based

on the mean, has a value of 0.909 and a significance of 0.404, which states that there is homogeneity of variance among the three groups based on education level.

Table 9. Perception groupings based on education level

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
High School / less	89	4.3579	0.43475	0.04608	3.14	5.00
Diploma	48	4.4769	0.34328	0.04955	3.86	5.00
Bachelor / more	163	4.2855	0.41736	0.03269	3.00	5.00

Table 10. Analysis of Variance Education Group

Perception	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.411	2	0.705	4.157	0.017
Within Groups	50.391	297	0.170		
Total	51.801	299			

Table 10 presents the results of the Analysis of Variance, a significant test that has unveiled differences in average perceptions among the three education groups. The results, with an F value of 4.157 and a significance of 0.017, underscores the importance of our research. This result states that there is an average difference in perceptions among respondents with a background in the three education groups, a finding that will undoubtedly impact the field. H3 is accepted.

Furthermore, to evaluate the differences in perceptions among age groups, the following age groups were made:

I. less than mean-SD or less than 22.4 years

II. between mean-SD and mean+SD or 22.4 - 33.2 years

III. more than mean+SD or more than 33.2 years

Table 11 shows that the group III has a lower mean perception than the others. Based on the Levene test, the value was 1.517 with a significance of 0.221, indicating homogeneity of variance among the three age groups.

Table 11. Perception Grouping by Age

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
I	41	4.2520	0.41040	0.06409	3.14	5.00
II	21	4.3721	0.40168	0.02702	3.00	5.00
III	38	4.2289	0.48084	0.07800	3.00	4.86

Table 12 Analysis of Variance Age Group

Perception	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.013	2	0.506	2.961	0.053
Within Groups	50.789	297	0.171		
Total	51.801	299			

Table 12 shows the results of the test for differences in average perceptions based on age grouping. The test obtained an F value of 2.961 with a significance of 0.053. This result indicates no difference in average perception between age groups. H4 is not accepted.

Discussion

Respondents were female victims of domestic violence both physically and mentally, with an educational background of more than 50% with higher education, and more than half were employed with an average age of 27.79 years. Most of them stated that they involved themselves with the community of domestic violence victims on social media. They felt the benefits of joining the community, especially when facing difficulties; other community members comforted and encouraged them (64.3%), and they felt it was essential to be a community member (64.6%). Community involvement fosters interaction with other members (61.3%), and they can provide input on community activities (62.3%).

Most respondents' perceptions showed a good understanding of domestic violence, knowing that the number of domestic VAW is increasing (94.3%). Physical violence was of the most significant concern compared to other forms of violence. Many studies pay attention to the issue of domestic violence. Idham et al. (2020) stated that to show the wife's obedience to her husband, some women still follow the advice of their parents to accept

violent treatment from them. Women respond to domestic violence by being silent, resigned, and not fighting back; they do so by considering many things, such as wanting to improve their household relationships and paying attention to the development of their children (Ashar et al., 2023). Fairuzza et al. (2023) found a negative impact of parental verbal violence received by children in childhood on their mental health during adolescence.

The relationship between perceptions of domestic violence and involvement in online communities was significant, although the degree of association was low (r = 0.213). Community membership plays a vital role for victims of domestic violence by providing insights that increase understanding, offering social cohesion, and encouraging open dialog (Websdale, 2012). This suggests a relationship between the understanding of domestic violence victims and their involvement in the community. Dharmasetya (2024) showed the potential of social media as an education and social mobilization platform to prevent domestic violence and that online campaigns have great potential to engage communities, raise awareness, provide accurate education, support domestic violence survivors, and encourage collective action in domestic violence prevention efforts. Interactions in online communities have unique communication styles, diverse levels of engagement, greater accessibility, dynamic community structures, and collective learning experiences, advantages over traditional forms of community with direct face-to-face support (Lindgren 147).

Reprianto et al. (2022) provide an example of a community related to domestic violence on Instagram @perempuanberkisah which aims to be a medium for women's empowerment and a safe place to share knowledge and learning. Many women need a safe place to tell their life stories, which can interfere with their mental health. Community members can do counseling with psychologists. The women's storytelling online community conducts digital campaigns to uphold gender equality and justice.

Further evaluation was conducted to examine the trim level of the relationship between perceptions of domestic violence and community engagement. Perceptions were grouped among respondents, including low, medium, and high category perceptions. Furthermore, it was found that there was a difference in the level of online community engagement among the three groups. The differences were made possible by the lack of a linear relationship (positive or negative) between the three groups of perceptions and community engagement. This means that groups with higher levels of perception do not necessarily have higher online community involvement.

As most of the respondents were employed, the findings suggest that their working or non-working background did not make a difference in their perceptions of domestic violence. Different findings (Sambo, 2023), a study among working-age women in Tohu, Nigeria, showed a significant relationship between women's perceptions of domestic violence and their employment status. Socio-cultural differences played a role in the dissimilar findings. Furthermore, the division of respondents' age groups (I, II, and III) also showed that differences in age groups did not make a difference in women's perceptions of domestic violence.

The background of the respondents' educational groups (high school, diploma, and bachelor's degree) contributed to differences in perceptions of domestic violence. The results of the study are relevant to the previous finding (El-Abani & Pourmeddi, 2021) among Libyan immigrants in Manchester, UK, that participants' perceptions of domestic violence are influenced by education level, knowing attitudes towards domestic violence is necessary for prevention policies from the government and society because attitudes will affect the occurrence of domestic violence.

Social information processing theory can help explain the phenomenon of online community involvement of domestic VAW as follows: 1) women can help each other and provide emotional support, and they can form meaningful relationships through the exchange of text messages; 2) it allows women to connect with a broader network and gain access to different perspectives and resources, including those who may not be able to meet in person. 3) it provides a rich source of information on domestic violence, legal sources, and coping methods; 4) anonymity and textual forums can encourage more open and honest communication, and it is more comfortable to discuss sensitive issues without fear of judgment; 5) it allows users to analyze and critique social norms related to domestic violence collectively.

CONCLUSION

The study was conducted on 300 women who had been victims of domestic violence, either physically or mentally, where their status was married or had been married. Findings suggest a relationship between the perceptions of domestic violence held by women victims of domestic violence and their involvement in online communities. The strength of the relationship is low; it is known from the grouping of the level of understanding of perceptions (low, medium, and high) that there are differences in the level of community

involvement in different perception groups. Furthermore, employment status and age did not contribute to differences in the level of perceived understanding of domestic violence. However, the level of education of women victims of domestic violence contributes to differences in the level of perceived understanding of domestic violence.

The results imply that women victims of domestic violence can join communities on social media to get guidance and advice that can help with the problems they face. For women victims of domestic violence community, improve the content in order to increase the significant perception of domestic violence.

The limitation of the study is that it only looks at the benefits of online community involvement for women victims of domestic violence; for future studies, it can be completed with negative aspects that may be received from online community involvement, for example, disinformation, commercialization, hate speech, and others.

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