

The National Policy of Malaysia toward Violence against Women

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Abstract

The purpose of this literature review paper is to evaluate the national policies and short term planes in Malaysia on improving women's life and prevention violence against women by considering the role of national policies. In Malaysia national policies have been implemented in the form of short term planes to improve different areas such as economic, cultural and social development in which our emphasis and focus is on the role of effects of these policies on preventing violence against women. The researchers focus on Malaysia because one of the goals of this state in its national policy is to promote the position of women both in household and society. The study conducted to evaluated national policies in violence against women and its effect on women life. In this case this review shows that Malaysia tries to support the rights of females, and to ensure their security by establishing legal policies and other measures. Furthermore, another finding of this study this study is the growth of violence against women had increased during 2000 to 2012. Therefore, it is essential to improve the widespread measures through the legal ways to respond the problem of violence against women in general.

Keywords: Violence against Women, Policy, Malaysia

1. Introduction

Malaysia pursue to enact the 20 years economy document and to provide short-term policies to develop its country. National policy increase access to educational, job opportunities and changes in their socio-cultural environment and are involved women and girls to be a part of the development agenda (Amirthalingam 2005, Teoh and Chong 2008). National policy of Malaysia's Vision 2020 nation building agenda women as a partner. The Government of Malaysia has been duty-bound to be much more cognizant of its obligation as a State Party to CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) (Wotipka and Ramirez 2008).

Malaysia has taken many initiatives to protect the rights of women and girls, and to ensure their safety and security. This is done through establishing and constantly improving policy legitimate, institutional framework and other measures (UNICEF. 2009). One of the major goals of these documents in Malaysia is to promote the position of women in the different areas (UNICEF. 2006, Doraisami 2008, Vlachantoni and Falkingham 2011).

As the violence against women in the family and society which is the main barrier of the development in the societies (Niaz 2003, Organization 2005, Garcia-Moreno, Jansen et al. 2006). This research could contribute the policy makers both to reduce this social problem and to achieve their aims in the 20 year document earlier. Furthermore, the consequences of these policies would be good pattern for others countries to advance the position of women. The aim of this study is to evaluate the policies and the implemented strategies by Malaysia about violence against women (Elek 2003, Omar and Hamzah 2003, Bacchetta 2004).

2. Women in Constitution of Law and Criminal Law in Malaysia

In Malaysia, Article 8(2) of the Constitution was adjusted to contain gender as one of the forbidden of discrimination in 2001. This was addressed as an advanced move and hailed by women's groups, because it was as an obligation by the state to achieve its commitments under the CEDAW Convention. Another Act is the Domestic Violence Act (DVA) that was approved in 1994 and executed in 1996. DVA attached to Penal Code classifications and processes for offended and criminal ones because criminal laws are federal issues and relevant to all Malaysians, however family laws diverse for Muslim and non-Muslim residents. As a result by attaching Domestic Violence Act to Panel Code, domestic violence Act applicable to all the residents (Ahmad 2005, Pacific 2005, binti Abdullah 2009, Gender 2013).

3 National Policy Frameworks in Malaysia toward Violence against Women

Women were a main objective in national policy of the 6th Malaysia Plan (1991 – 1995), in this national policy focus on improvement of women in society (Unit 1991). Also, in in the Sixth (1991-1995) and Seventh Malaysia Plans (1996-2000) VAW recognized as one of the importance concerns. Furthermore, Malaysia approved the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995 (Unit 1991, Malaysia and Ekonomi 1996). In 1976, the National Advisory Council on the Integration of Women in Development (NACIWID) was shaped in reply to the UN determination to assimilate females into enlargement procedures (United Nations General Assembly 1975). The Secretariat for Women's Affairs (HAWA), was supported its work that formed in 1983 (CEDAW 2004, Doraisami 2008).

Another policy in order to improve women position in society was established a specific Ministry for Women's Affairs In 2001. There are four organizations in the ministry including: The Department for Women's Development (JPW), the Social Welfare Department of Malaysia (JKMM), the National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN) and the Social Institute of Malaysia (ISIM). In the Eighth Malaysian Plan (2001-2005) there was a shift in ordering females' role in the household and reproductive functions in considering females' rights and concerns. Also, Eight Plan has identified features by providing measures to escalation females' involvement in the economy through occupation and training, and barriers faced in family law (Linton 2008, sm Kee and Randhawa 2009). The visibly reduced status of VAW in Eight plan is only in relation with the concern of sexual harassment and there is no specific legislation that identifies sexual harassment. Voluntary Code of Practice on the Prevention and Eradication of Sexual Harassment in the place of work launched by The Ministry of Human Resources. Also Sexual harassment is launched. In this line, this point can be considered as weak point of the eight plan of Malaysia towards violence against women (Unit 2001, sm Kee and Randhawa 2009).

4. Implementation of Policies on Violence against Women in the Malaysia

There are some strategies in Malaysia which have performed on violence against women.

- The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development is responsible for identify females' concerns that has increased its budget from RM 1.8 million (US\$ 0.5 million) in 2001 to RM 30.5 million (US\$ 8.6 million) in 2005, indicating the country's thoughtful obligation to the case.
- Improving some of the rules in order to extend the primacies and rights of the victims of violence. Such as the amendments to the Penal Code, where broader explanation of rape and given harder penalties to those found guilty; an amendment to the "Employment Act" that includes addresses sexual harassment at the place of work; an amendments to the Domestic Violence Act that include broader explanation on domestic violence which contain emotional, mental, psychological and physical abuse.
- Establishing One-Stop Crises Centers (OSCC) in all hospitals in order to support victims of violence in 1996. The purpose of these centers is to support of victims of violence, as well as domestic violence and sexual assault in order to access treatment at one centralized place. The center affords investigation, definitive care, proper medical appointment and medical reporting with priority given to woman doctors to attend to victims of violence. This is teamwork of multi-sectorial for the controlling of violence (Hii 2001).
- Creating a system known as "Talian Nur 15999", a 24-hour-a-day helpline recognized to support early intervention for victims of violenc.
- Organizing "one stop center" in order to support victims of violence and keep them in special palace's to be attended to.
- supporting the violence survivors by lodging reports and adding information about the events that the victims have encountered through Organize Victim Care Centers by trained police
- Carrying out awareness by the Department of Social Welfare by means of campaigns periodically via mass media, posters and billboards in several vantage places in 2002. However, its effect has been limited especially in the urban regions.
- . Organizing a program known as Wave (Women against Violence) by the Department of Women's Development. This program informs public about their laws and rights and educates them about different abuses in society, also informs them how to deal with the circumstances when violence occurs.
- Providing safe houses by the Social Welfare Department for abused females, there are 28 safe houses for abused women that run by the Welfare Department
- Making temporary shelters for Muslim survivors of domestic violence by The Islamic Religions Department. They have afforded services such as legal and counselling services to them.
- Considering a hotline number 1-800- 883040 by the Welfare Department for public If there is seen any kind of violence, they can call this number to give all their information to the enforcement officers (See and Essau , Hawa Ali 2003, Pacific 2005).

5. Statistics on Violence against Women in Malaysia

As shown in table number of domestic violence against women was the highest compare to rape and sexual harassment. Domestic violence increase slowly between 2000 to 2012. Likewise amount of rape in Malaysia increase during these years. However, amount of sexual harassment decreased between 2000 and 2003 and increased among 2002 to 2007. Amount of sexual harassment was the lowest compare the other type of violence.

Base on statistic on violence against women in Malaysia, policy makers should be pay attention on domestic violence as a one of important type of violence.

Table1: report violence against women in Malaysia

Police reports	Domestic Violence	Rape	Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
2000	3468	1217	112
2001	3107	1386	86
2002	2755	1431	84
2003	2555	1479	82
2004	3101	1760	119
2005	3093	1931	102
2006	3264	2454	101
2007	3756	3098	195
2008	3769	3409	unavailable
2009	3643	3626	unavailable
2010	3173	3595	unavailable
2011	3277	3301	unavailable
2012	3488	2998	unavailable

<http://www.wao.org> (2012)

6. Conclusion

Violence against women in the family and society is the key obstacle of the development in the societies. National policies in Malaysia try to decrease this social concern in order to promote the position of women. Because national policy of Malaysia vision 2020 nation building agenda is consider women as a significant other. Also Malaysia attempts to protect the rights of women and girls, and to ensure their safety and security by different measures.

According to police report the number of women who engaged violence during 2000 to 2010 has increased. This report includes different type of violence such as domestic violence, rape and sexual harassment. This paper shows that the national policy about the rights of women who engage violence in order to improve the situation of women in the society however the increase number of women showed that this policies and measures should be improve in order to promote the position of women in the society

To enhance the quality life of women in family and society, the government should make policy that would decrease the violence in society and household field and should more emphasis on providing of facilities and services such as provision of houses to accommodate victims. As well, the government should recognise the role of NGO in decreasing violence against women by upgrading them through the provision of financial support in order to setting up of facilities and services for victims.

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