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Domestic Violence in Cross-National Households in Japan: Examining Abuse Patterns, Victim Narratives, and Societal Awareness

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Abstract (774 words)

This research sheds light on the issues of DVⁱ. It examined and compared the most common forms of abuse, such as physical, sexual, emotional/psychological, economic, and some forms of coercion and manipulations. It investigated the correlation between clusters and forms of mistreatment and examined peculiarities of international householdsⁱⁱ in Japan. Specifically, it involves families of Russian-speaking migrantsⁱⁱⁱ and Japanese.

Violence against women and girls is one of the most severe crimes worldwide. In order to effectively prevent and address DV/abuse, it was essential to acknowledge and include every victim. Thus, the primary objective^{iv} and significance of this study was to illuminate the issue of DV and abuse within international households. Through the analysis of survey results and interviews^v, case study, inductive coding methods, and qualitative and quantitative approaches, the study endeavored to offer insights and data on DV and abuse within these households.

The author divided abuse/DV into five forms or sub-forms (García-Moreno et al., 2005, p.16). However, all these forms were grouped together and analyzed as one simultaneous process. Without any doubt, physical and/or sexual abuse can be easily acknowledged, specified, examined, and presented (WHO, 2009). However, usually, it appears together with coercion or emotional abuse (The Alliance, 2019; García-Moreno et al., 2005). On the other hand, it can be assumed that economic abuse is comparatively uncomplicated to detect. However, it might be easily caused by coercion, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse.

On the contrary, brining into question the theories of García-Moreno (2005), Islam (2018), and The Alliance (2019), the author aimed to illustrate that no specific type of abuse is common among particular groups or nationalities. That abuse/DV is a worldwide issue and can be detected anywhere in any form. Therefore, within the scope of this study, it is essential not to divide abuse and DV by groups and not to

compare it between countries. However, rather using the case study method (storytelling) pinpointing it. Raising awareness in Japanese society as well as among migrants in Japan.

This research aimed to prove that there is a list of victims. This qualitative research investigates their stories and narrations to highlight and illustrate the issue of abuse and DV in cross-national households in Japan. Second, to gain national and local support for starting further NPO and NGO. Third, to list the obstacles cross-national households might face. Fourth, to avoid the stigma that some nationalities are more tendered to do some mistreatments than others. Finally, to avoid comparative studies between Japan, Russia, and other countries in terms of quality, quantity, and frequency of abuse.

This study applied a mixed-methods approach, combining social surveys and in-depth interviews. A sample of 83 participants (from a pool of 9,118 Russian residents, with a 90% confidence level and 10% error margin) was surveyed, including 18 in-depth interviews, while qualitative case study analysis was conducted on results of OEQ survey over 83 participants.

DV/abuse in Japan has been analyzed by scholars, with studies categorizing abuse by type (physical, psychological, sexual, economic, and social) and highlighting government and societal measures. Psychological abuse is the most prevalent (64.8%), and while reporting remains low (40% of victims do not seek help), consultations at support centers have increased (*Gender Equality Bureau, 2023*). In Russia, DV statistics reveal fluctuations, notably a sharp decline in 2017 due to decriminalization. Public opinion remains divided, with men more likely to support decriminalization, while women strongly oppose it. Studies show physical and sexual abuse as the most recognized forms of DV, with gendered differences in perceptions of abuse (Statista, 2022).

Finally, this study illustrated a range of DV in Japan. While 16.9% of respondents reported experiencing physical abuse, psychological/emotional abuse, financial control, and coercion appeared as more prevalent (however, often unrecognized) forms of mistreatment. For example, some women described their partners controlling household expenses, refusing to provide financial support, or forcing them to work while hiding their income. In one case, a respondent's husband did not reveal his earnings. Another participant described being left with children and receiving no financial support. Furthermore, the study found that many victims struggled to differentiate between rude behavior and abuse. Case studies also illustrated reproductive control and sexual coercion, with some women describing a lack of freedom over their fertility due to male coercion in the family. Notably, only three women explicitly acknowledged experiencing sexual abuse. All of them later agreed to discuss their experiences in an interview. It illustrated that sensitive issues are more likely disclosed in conversation/interview rather than anonymous surveys. Additionally, cultural misunderstandings and role expectations played a role in financial and emotional abuse, with some women feeling trapped in relationships due to visa dependencies or economic abuse.

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ⁱ In this research, abuse is used to identify acts of maltreatment committed by individuals who, due to their role, position, or age, hold power over the victim. Abuse is characterized as a long-term pattern of behavior in which one person attempts to control, manipulate, or dominate another individual. In contrast, violence refers to a singular act of mistreatment. The author seeks to blur the line between these two terms, focusing on patterns of abusive behavior and illustrating cases of domestic violence.

ⁱⁱ An international household is defined by the presence of a Japanese citizen as one partner and a foreigner or holder of foreign citizenship as the other partner. This research primarily focusses on Russian-speaking migrants married to Japanese citizens. The term Russian-speaking migrants is an umbrella terms and indicates migrants who were born in Russian Federation. However, the survey data analysis highlighted that some Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Belorussian and some individuals who were born in USSR also participated in the survey.

ⁱⁱⁱ The term “Russian-speaking migrant” was applied to this group of respondents in order to indicate their Russia-related identity, their ability to communicate in Russian language or/and use Russian as their first language, their Russian identity or their connection to Russian culture.

^{iv} The objective was to illustrate the current situation in international households in Japan and to provide valuable insights into the types and cases of abuse and DV in international households in Japan. The author highlights that abuse and DV across every sector of society and family. However, it is essential to underline that it does not affect everyone or every family in the same way. Thus, one of the most critical objectives of this study was to provide a qualitative investigation of forms of abuse in cross-national households to illustrate particular examples, instances, and cases of abuse among these families.

^v To provide a wide range of questions, measure abuse and its sub-forms, as well as conduct the survey for both qualitative and quantitative analysis applying a combinations of open-ended questions, close-ended questions and questions with multiple answers the *Survey Module on Violence against Women Interviewer's Manual developed for UNECE* written by Henrica A.F.M. Jansen (2021), *WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women* published García-Moreno et al., (2005) and the research published by Linder & Widh (2014) and Eriksson L, et al. (2022) were cited and applied as examples here.